

David's Testament

Opened up in Fourty

SERMONS,

Upon II. Samuel 23. 5.

Wherein the *Nature, Properties, and Effects* of the **COVENANT of GRACE** are clearly held forth:

By 'that Eminent Servant of JESUS CHRIST, Mr. *Alexander Wedderburn*, First Minister of the Gospel at *Forgan* in *Fife*; and thereafter at *Kilmarnock* in the *West*.

Psal. 25. 14. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and he will shew them his Covenant.

E D I N B U R G H,

Printed by the Heir of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to Their most Excellent Majesties. Anno Dom. 1691.

To The truly Noble
M A R G A R E T,
Countess of ROTHES.

Madam,

BEfore that Pious and Eminent Person
The Dutches of *Roths*, Your Lady-
ships Renowned Mother, was by Death
Removed, I designed, according to the In-
tention of my Husband (who is now en-
tered into the joy of his Lord) to Dedi-
cat this part of his Labours to her Grace.
And now when these Papers, by advice of
Faithful and Godly Ministers, are to be
exposed to publick view, I judged it my
duty to pay that Respect to Her Grace's
Memory, as to prefix your Ladyships Name
thereunto (which no doubt, if my Hus-
band were alive, he himself would have
done) which I the more confidently ad-
venture upon, as that I know your Lady-
ship to be the Lively-portrature of the
A 2 Graces

The Epistle Dedicatory.

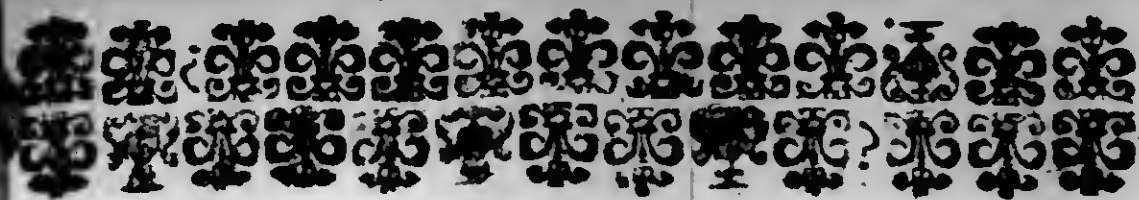
Graces and Vertues of your Noble, and now Glorified Mother, and to be of such Wisdom and Prudence, Humility and Self-Denyal, as to excuse any thing of unsuitableness, that may be in this, for one of my Station and Sex. But being unwilling to Allow your Ladyship any diversion from the perusal of the Book it self, I shall only pray, that the Lord may preserve your Ladyship, and carry your hopeful Sons through the hazard of None-age, and as they are Heirs of two Noble Families, to make them shine as Stars of the first Magnitude, amongst the Peers of this Nation; and begs leave to Subscribe my self,

Madam,

Your Ladyships singularly and perpetually obliged Servant,

H. T.

Relict of Mr. Alexander Wedderburn.



The Epistle to the
R E A D E R.

Christian Reader,

I Shall not detain thee, by expatiating to the commendation of the Author, and this part of his Labours; For the Author, his Memory is still savory, to all who knew him, especially to those of the Shyres of Hysc and Aire, where first and last he exercised his Ministry; And no wonder, for as he was well versed in Polemick Divinity, so was he a singular Casuist. He had the Tongue of the Learned to speak a word in Season to the Weary; He knew when to Lance, and when to pour in Oyl, when to dispense a Corrosive, and when a Cordial; in a word, he was both a Son of Thunder, and a Son of Consolation. As for these Sermons, I am hopeful they will commend themselves, to all who have senses spiritually exercised, such will not quarrel at the Simplicity and Plainness of the Style, he used not in preaching, to put the Scaffold above the Building, no, his design was not to tickle the ear, but to reach the heart; had he purposed to commit these Sermons to the Press, and survived to review them, they had been more polished, but now they come out to publick view, as they dropped from his mouth, and as he preached them, without Alteration or Addition. It is true, many have written both well, and at great length, on this sweet subject; but it is so fertile, that it will still afford new matter, to such as arrest their Spirits, to pore on it; Thou wilt find here, the Securities that the Covenant affords, the Properties of it, that it is Everlasting, Sure and Ordered in all things; as also the Superstructure, This is all my Salvation, and all my Desire; And the sweet Harmony and Concord, that is betwixt God's Promises, and his Providences, well spoken to; But besides these, I suppose, thou wilt find the
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The Epistle

duppe of Personal Covenanting, and the Method and Order that is to be kept, in laying claim to the Promises of the Covenant, as fully handled here, as any where else.

Reader, I would earnestly intreat thee, now when all things earthly are so uncertain; to make sure this Covenant Relation to God, that he is thy God, and thou art His, by a perpetual Covenant; it's a greater Say, to be able to say on good ground, My God; than to say, My Kingdom; I have been often affected with some sort of Compassion, at the reading the two Testimonies that two Heathen Monarchs, gave to the Majesty of God, Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 2. 47. and 3. 28, 29. and Darius, Daniel, 6. 26, 27. But alas! poor Souls, none of them could say, My God, but the God of Daniel, and of the three Children.

To perswade to make sure Covenant-Relation, know, it's this that gives confidence in our addresses to God, and that Faith gets readiest gripping on, in all thy straits, I shall only instance three Exigencies among many.

First, under outward Tossings and Pressures from men, David 1 Samuel 30. 5, 6. Is in great distress, and no wonder, the Amalekites had spoiled Ziklag, had carried away his two wives, and his own men had threatened to stone him, in his great distress, so verse 6. Expresses it, he encourages himself in his God. When he is in the wilderness of Judah, haunted by Saul, Psal. 63. 1. It's here again refreshing, O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; and when inclosed in the Cave, Psal. 142. and verse 4. All refuge fails him, man cared for his soul, this refreshes him, v. 5, Thou art my refuge, and my portion, in the land of the living.

Secondly, This Relation is eyed by Faith, and pleaded under desertion; Psal. 22. 1. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Psal. 88. A psalm wholly spent in sad complaints, and yet verse 1. Heman begins pleading Covenant-Relation, O God of my Salvation; Isaiah, 49. 14. But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me; there unbelief and sense gets the start, but Faith as it were at the same breathing eyes this Relation, My God hath forgotten me.

Thirdly, This Relation is refreshing at approaching Death, when the Cisterns of all created comforts will be broken, and
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To the Reader.

may be, the old Tempter turns a keen Accuser, as in this Text, the matter of the ensuing Sermons, 2 Samuel 23. 5. Although my house be not so with God, &c. David's house was not so with God as it should have been; Ammon had defiled it with incest, and Absalom with unnatural Murder, Rebellion and Incest, and David himself with Adultery and Murder, and yet over the belly of this guilt, he can draw comfort from this Covenant-Relation, and venture the weight of his Salvation, on this so well Ordered Covenant, and Sure. I might instance more Cases, but I spare.

It's this Relation that makes all God's Attributes refreshing to us, He who is a God of Salvation is My God, Psal. 68. 20. and Psal. 79. 9. The Church pleads for help on this Relation, Help us, O God of our Salvation: He who is All-sufficient, who is Faithful and True, whose Mercies exceed all Dimensions, is my God; Yea, it will make his Justice, which of all his Attributes, doth most terrifie a sinner, under accusations of guilt, it will make it refreshing, He who is Just is my God, and his Justice requires not a double Ransome, being satisfied in my Cautiener Christ Jesus, 1 John 1. 9. If we confess our Sins, He is Faithful and Just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I shall close with an excellent Sentence of Reverend Mr. Dods to this purpose, and it is this, a person who can satisfactorily answer two Questions, needs never be discomposed in what ever exigency; and the Questions are, Quest. 1. whose art thou? I am Gods by a Covenant-Relation. Quest. 2. where art thou? I am about my Duty. These two were refreshing to Paul, when near to be shipwrecked, Acts 27. 23. The Angel of the Lord, whose I am; There his Covenant Relation; and whom I serve, there he is at his duty.

That He who alone carrieth that title, The God of all Consolation, may make these Sermons refreshing to thee, is the prayer of

Thy well-wisher, more willing, than
able to promote thy comfort.

W. T.

SERMON. I.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

I Purposed this Summer, if the Lord give time, to have handled some of Christ's select Names, but have now resolved before I come at them, to handle the Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace; *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant, Psal. 25.* I shall in the entry of it beg of God, that he may be with us, in going thorow the handling of it; and I obtest you, as ye would not have his Covenant a Witness against you, seriously to ponder, and to seed, by what ye shall hear spoken about it. I could not find one verse in all the Bible, wherein the nature, properties, and effects of the Covenant, were more briefly summed up, than in this verse, *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, &c.*

For understanding the meaning of the words, the first verse of the Chapter tells us, that they were the last words of David the Son of Jesse, imitating Jacob, Gen. 49. And Moses, Deuter. 32. making their Testaments, and shewing what were their greatest encouragements, when they were dying; he remembers some old experience of God toward him, that he was the man whom God had anointed, and lifted up, and made the sweet singer of Israel, and v. 2. *The spirit of the Lord spake by me; he likewise encourages himself in Christ, whom he describes in the fourth v. I confess there*

are some Interpreters apply the words in the fourth v. to Rulers, because of a word in the third v. but the current of Interpreters understand them of Christ, *And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain*: a notable similitude, expressing the sweetness, brightness, and fruitfulness of Christ, so that after he has mentioned these two great encouragements in the verses that we have read, he pitches on that which secures all his other encouragements: *David* had a very sinful house, there was murders in it, and incest in it of *Amon* and *Tamar*, there was adultery in it, and lying, and a number of evils, and when he was a dying, he reflects on what had been in his house, and the result is, *my house has not been so with God, Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, &c.* Which words, tho some refer them to Christ, who yet was not sprung out of the Root of *Jesse*, but was to be exhibit in the fullness of time, yet I rather take them, as relating to *David's* personal case, as ye shall hear when I come at it.

This being briefly the scope of the words, I will not be able in the work of this day, to enter on them, or to take them up in particulars; I will only take one general Observation from the scope of the words, and I look on it as a notable Porch and Introduction to all the Sermons, that are to follow on the Covenant, and of the order and sureties of it, and all the rest of the ingredients mentioned in the Text. The Observation is this, *That one of the greatest of encouragements at death, and when a man is about his last words, is, to have an interest in the everlasting Covenant.* These are the last words of the Son of *Jesse*, and there is his greatest encouragement, [*My house is not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, &c.*] Whether we understand by house, the house of his Body, or of his Family, or of his Kingdom, as some do, or whether we take it in all the Three, he had grounds of fear from them all, but the great encouragement, when he is speaking his last words, is taken from his Interest in the everlasting Covenant: This Observation is the very scope of the words, when all things are bidding

us adieu, and when we are quitting all our Charters, and Lands, and leaving them to others to possess, an Interest in the everlasting Covenant is a great encouragement then; it's remarkable, *Heb. 11.* and two last verses of the chap. *All these having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us:* Mark here now, what was the encouragement of all these Cloud or Witnesses, when they came to die, it was their Faith in the Covenant, they died in Faith, and obtained a good report through Faith, not having obtained the Promise, but believing it.

For clearing of this, I will premise two things to make way to the confirming of it. 1. An Interest in the everlasting Covenant is of absolute necessity, through the whole course of our Life; there are four or five things will evince this. 1. The Covenant is the Light and guide of a Believer's Life, *Isai. 42. 6. and 7. v.* [*If the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and keep thee, and will give thee for a Covenant to the people, for a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison house.*] Mark how the two go together, he is given for a Covenant and a Light; for if it were not upon the account of the Covenant, we would not know how to set down one step in our way to God. 2. The Covenant and an Interest in it, is the door by which we come to know, that we are translated out of nature into a state of grace, (therefore *Isaiab 56.* Every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my Covenant, them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; and their burnt offerings and sacrifices, shall be accepted on mine Altar.) and *Pf. 50. 5.* [*Gather my Saints together to me, that have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice,*] In effect the closing with the Covenant is our effectual calling. 3. The Covenant is the Foundation of all the Relations, and Consequences of all the familiarity grounded on these Relations, betwixt God and his People; The ground why we call him, *my God, and my hope, my rock, my husband, my Lord*, the ground of all these Relations and Familiarity founded on them is the Covenant. 4. The Answer of all Challenges, nay of all Temptations, comes also from

the Covenant; Ordinarily Challenges proceed from the Law, and the Threatnings and Curses of the Law: The best answer to them is, we are not under the Law, but under Grace. which is in effect to say, we are under a Covenant of Grace. Lastly, The great help to perform Duty is the Covenant, if we be commanded to repent, to pray, to believe, to suffer, we must always run to some Promise of the Covenant for strength; and it is remarkable, there is no Command in all the Law, but in the Covenant there is some Promise relating to that Duty, and strength for performing of it is holden out in the Promise; for in effect, if we look after Light, or clearing in our effectual calling, or if we would lay a sure Foundation, of either an Interest in, or familiarity with God, or hold off Temptations, or Challenges, or have strength to perform Duties, it's necessary in the whole course of our Life, that we know our Interest in the Covenant; but this is especially necessary at death: which before I yet confirm, I will add one Caution, which is this; That it may fall out, that a person with whom God hath made an everlasting Covenant, yet they may be unclear about their interest in the Covenant; when they come to die, they cannot say among their last words, the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant; among many things there may be these Three, that may have influence, in the darkning of ones Interest in the Covenant at Death, and when they are about their last words, 1. When one has been given much to doubting in the whole course of their Life, readily God may give them, though not a Hell for it, yet he may give them a flood of it at their Death; he loves to write the sin on the chastisement, therefore often *Adonibezek* said, when they caused to cut off his Thumbs and his great Toes, threescore and ten Kings, having their Thumbs and great Toes cut off, gathered their meat under my Table. as I have done, sayes he, so hath the Lord requited me, *Judges* 1. 7. Frequently the sin of folks Life, he loves to write it on their end; so he does with *Pharaoh*, when he desired to be honoured by him, he has this sin among many, he would have all the Males of the Children of *Israel* drowned, and *Moses* also was laid out to be drowned, until *Pharaoh's* daughter found him; and what is his end, he is drowned in the

the red-sea, the great predominant sin of his Life is written on his end; when the life is full of doubtings, readily like *Pharaoh*, he loves to write their sin on their chastisement. 2^{dly} One may be darkned about their interest in the Covenant at death, because of some un-repeated guilt, and however that guilt shake not their Interest in the Covenant, it may shake their clearing about it; often at death it comes to be as it was with *Joseph's* Brethren, when he is giving order to bind them, and they looked for nothing but death, all this is come on us, say they, because we heard not the cry of our Brother. It's observed, that we never read a word since the day that he was let down into the Pit, that any of them was challenged for it, and when they are in *Egypt*, they cannot discern *Joseph* to be their Brother, nor can they have any hope from him; the reason his, they had not repented for leaving him down into the Pit, readily un-repeated guilt has great influence on the doubting of ones interest in the Covenant at death; however *David* was guilty of Murder and Adultery, yet he penned the 51 *Psalms*, and had his bones broken for it, therefore at death he can say, the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, &c. 3^{dly} One comes to be darkned in their Interest in the Covenant, when either by Gods providence, or their apprehension, there seems to be an inconsistency with the Promises of the Covenant; take for instance *Josiah*, there is a special Promise made to him by *Huldah* the Prophetess, when he sends to her, after the reading of the Law, (thou shalt go to the grave in peace, before the captivity come on) who would have thought that *Josiah* would die in Battel, and be killed by *Pharaoh-Necho* in the valley of *Megiddo*, after he had such a Promise: Take again for instance the fifth Command, Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee. And yet many are taken away in the strength and vigour of their youth, they can hardly reconcile the Providence and the Promise, or then it is so in their apprehension; our discouraged Spirits at Death, are like these that look through black spectacles, we misconstrue Providence, every thing appears black through these Spectacles, while it's white. Now readily one of these three, either some un-re-

pent guilt, or some Providence at Death, that seems not to agree with the Promise, or the absolute Sovereignty of God, may produce a great cloud about ones Interest in the Covenant, when they are at their last words; yet notwithstanding of both these Cautions, the point holds firm, that it's a great encouragement at death especially, to be able to assert an Interest in the everlasting Covenant.

To confirm this in general I will speak a word to theethree,
 1. I desire ye may take notice of the Tenor of the Covenant;
 2ly. Take a view of the knowledge of an Interest in this Covenant; and
 3ly. I shall consider both the Covenant, & an Interest in it, as tryling with death, & a believers last words, and these three will discover what a priviledge an Interest in that Covenant is, when it's discerned at death. *First*, Take a view briefly of the Tenor of the Covenant, 1. The Covenant is a Transaction betwixt God and man, about mans greatest concerns, It concerns his Soul, and that is the choicest part of him, It concerns his Eternity, nay the Covenant, as ye will hear, It concerns two Worlds, this present World, and that which is to come, for godliness has the promise of this Life, and that which is to come; the Covenant concerns the Soul, and the greatest Interests of the Soul, It is only these Covenanted, that can reach the Souls Interest; he was indeed a fool, that thought he could tell his Soul good news, on the account he had his Barns full, *Soul, take thee rest for thou hast enough laid up for many years*, It was good news to his Ox or his Ass, but to tell it to his Soul, he was a fool, and the Scripture terms him so; for it's only these covenanted things that concern the Soul. 2ly. Take notice, that infinite wisdom has contrived the Covenant, to be the only way of conveyance of Interests, the great Interest of the Soul, the Justification of It, the Adoption of It, the Sanctification of It, the fellowship of It with Jesus, the glorifying of It eternally, they come in to the Soul no other way but by the Covenant; they that talk of meriting for It, or working for it, or buying of It, they do not understand what they say; the Covenant holds out the greatest Interests, and the only way of attaining them, and coming by them, is in the Covenant way, 3ly. Not only does this Covenant hold out the greatest Interest, God can-

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not make greater promises than he hath made to the Soul, he cannot promise greater things than Himself, and there is no other way for attaining them, than by the Covenant. So in the 3d place, The Covenant gives sufficient security for them. to speak with reverence, God becomes a Debtor by vertue of his Covenant; I confess there are many Divines that say, they like not the word, that God should be Debtor to Man, they think It below his Glory, and Majesty, yet they cannot deny, but he is a Debtor in a twofold sense, 1. He is Debtor to his own faithfulness, *If we believe not, yet he abides faithful, he cannot deny himself*; It is not said, if we believe not, *he cannot deny us*, but *if we believe not, he cannot deny himself*. he is Debtor to himself. 2dly. It's not denied, but he is Debtor to Christ, for all the Promises of the Covenant are first made to Christ, and through Christ they come to be ours, as ye saw a man that makes over his inheritance to his Son, and the Son marrylog a woman, it comes to be the womans through the Son she has right to it, because of marrylog the man; the Father is principally, if not properly Debtor to Christ, for all the promises of the Covenant, and he becomes Debtor to us, and our Right to them is like the Womans Right, tho the Father did not make over the Right first, and principally to her, but to the Son, yet she has a Right to them, because of marrylog the Son: some may scruple at that, he is a Debtor to us, but he is both a Debtor to his faithfulness, and to his Son, so that our Right to the Promises comes to be unquestionable, and as fully secure, as if God were a debtor to us; and if he alter the promises, he must both deny himself and his Son; and O! what a mercy is it in such a strait as death is, to have the Promises in so great assurance. Now taking up the Covenant in these three respects, O! what special encouragement must it be at death, when all things are bidding us adieu, to have our great Interest by such a way of conveyance, so secured, as the Father must both deny himself and his Son, before our Right to them be contradicted.

Secondly, our priviledge to have an Interest in the Covenant at death will appear, if ye take notice what the knowledge of an Interest in the Covenant is: I deny not, but

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there may be an interest in the Covenant, God may have made a Covenant with us, and we not know of it, yet consider what a privilege the knowledge of an interest in the Covenant is, and I will open this in three things. 1. The knowledge of our interest in the Covenant, is that which renders it useful for us, in all the commanded Duties of the Law; take for instance, if ye be called to believe, or love God, which is the sum of the Law, the ready way a Believer has to perform this Duty is to search out some Promise, and to lay it before God; but unless they know their interest in the Covenant, with what cheerfulness and confidence can they go to the promises: I will not say, as I find a certain Divine say, I thought it a hard word, that a person to love Christ, that is not in Covenant with him, is like a woman lying with another mans husband, it's a kind of adultery, to love the person ye are not in Covenant with; but yet the great encouragement to improve the Promise, in order to performing duties is, to know the Covenant to be ours, otherwise with what confidence and hope, can we plead the promise of help in Prayer. 2/y. The knowledge of our interest in the Covenant is exceeding useful to bear off all temptations, the great answer to challenges and fears is, we are not under the Law, but under Grace; the truth is, as a Divine observes, the most part of our temptations and challenges, they come from the Law, the threatenings, the curses, the commands of the Law, but the Tempter brings not our Bond against us, he charges a Believer with a Bond, that he is not lyable to, and the great Answer we have to them all is, we are not under the Law, but under Grace; that is the way to bear off Challenges, when he presses with such a Debt, thou hast broken all the precepts of the Law, and thou art lyable to all the Curses thereof; we may Answer, thou hast taken the wrong Bonds; for we are not under the Law, but under Grace. 3/y. The knowledge of our interest in the Covenant lets us see our duty; there are a number of Duties, that we are called to do, that ordinarily we lay quite by, because of the want of the knowledge of our interest in the Covenant, such as rejoicing in God, delighting in God, and they are the duties that are likest Glory, and yet for all the commands given about them,

them, because of the want of the knowledge of our interest in the Covenant, we neither can rejoyce, nor delight in Him.

Thirdly, That at all times, and in all cases, the knowledge of our interest in the Covenant, is most necessary at death, when like David we come to speak our last words; it's true, it's necessary through the whole course of our life, but never more necessary than at death, especially if ye take death up under a two-fold formality. (1) Death is the thing that parts us and all other things, a man then quites his inheritance, by death he loses his legal right to it, so that if there were a possibility he could come back again, he would find that death had taken away his propriety to it, death has taken away the propriety from Lands, it loses the relation to the Husband, to the Wife, to the Children; it parts all, a man then must give up all his Writs and Lands to another, and his Right to them will be as legal as if they were made over by Disposition; O how refreshing will this be then, that God shall be theirs, and glory theirs. (2/y) Death, as it dissolves all unions and relations made for lifetime, it takes away a mans Right to his Inheritance, the Woman is no more bound by the Marriage covenant to her Husband, death has loosed the Contract, so death comes as a curse, it was inflicted in the beginning as a curse, when God cursed the Man and the Serpent; now a title to this Covenant, makes the thing that was a curse a blessing; it's now, *Blessed are they that die in the Lord; and all things are yours, and ye are Christs.* (3/y) Consider death as it's the March-stone betwixt time and eternity, we stand as it were on the March-stone when we are going to die, we are going from the one in to the other; now a Title to the everlasting Covenant, when we stand on the top of the stone, and bids adieu to Sun, and Moon, Husband, and Wife, to Children, to Lands, and Possessions, to bid them all adieu, and claim to an interest in the Covenant, and to all the privileges of it, what a special encouragement is this? when a man is making his Testament, he puts in nothing to himself, his Lands and Possessions must go to others, or to his friends, and he has nothing to himself; it's remarkable, *Jacob* when he was a dying, he calls all his

his Children, and gives them all Legacies, when he was making his Testament, but he puts in some thing for himself, in on little verse in Gen. 49. *Lord, I have waited for thy salvation;* so that if ye will take a vlew of the Covenant, as it contains the great concerns of time and eternly, and what a priviledge it is to have an Interest in it; he that made us out of nothing, might have Commanded us all duties that he has Commanded, and annexed no more, but if ye do not these duties, I will eternally damn you; and cast you in hell, and ye shall drink of the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, so long as I am God; but so condescending has grace been, that God hath been content to transact this Covenant-ways, and among the rest ye have this, If any keep my Commandments, he shall have my peace, my pardon, nay more, he shall have my self, nay more, he shall have my Son, and my self for all eternity: now, to have a Title to this everlasting Covenant, when we are giving up with all our Lands and Possessions, and death is loosing all Relations, and when we are meeting with that, which is a curse in it self, then to be able to say, *yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant. &c.*

SERMON II.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

THese are the last words of David the son of Jesse, the sweet singer of Israel; many excellent Psalms hath he penned, and many sweet songs had he sung, but like the nightingale, that they say sings sweetlest before his death, he reserves this song to be sung among his last words; [Although my House be

be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, &c.] I proposed this general Observation from the scope of the words, *That the great encouragement at death, and when we come to speak our last words is, an interest in the everlasting Covenant.* I confirmed this from the tenor of the Covenant, the advantages of an Interest in it, and from the trysting of these two together with the time of death, I will only clear one Question and so apply this point.

Quest. It may be questioned, Is not Christ the great encouragement of the Soul, when we come to speak our last words, and why do we ascribe this to the Covenant? I thought it necessary to clear this in the entry of this noble Theme, which I will do with these two considerations.

Ans. 1. It were a very great injury to take from Christ, and give to the Covenant what is his due, all the lustre of the Covenant is like the Moon that borroweth its light from the Sun, the Moon would be but a dark Planet, except it had light derived from the Sun, so all the lustre and excellency of the Covenant flowes from Christ.

And I will open here a fourfold reference that Christ hath to the Covenant, 1. He was the Purchaser of it, for as much grace as there is in the Covenant, there is not a promise in it, but it is bought, and bought at the full value; how free soever it be to us, they were not so to our Cautioner, but all the promises of Peace, of Pardon, of Sanctification, they stood him the price of his blood, and so he is the Purchaser of the Covenant. 2. He was the Mediator of the Covenant, he treated it, and in effect drew the Articles of it; the Father when the Covenant was in treating, he knew he had to do with fools, that could not, nor had no skill of their own writ drawing, the Son was the fit person concerned in both parties, therefore he has a liberty from the Father, to draw the Articles of the Covenant as he pleased, which he did in one of the strangest wayes, he satisfies the Father, and abundantly satisfies us, and it was difficult to satisfy both Parties, but he took the difficulty on him, therefore he is called Heb. 12: Among the many honourable names he gets in the Bible, he gets this, *Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant.*

3. He is the Surety of the Covenant, Heb. 7. *In so much as he was the surety of a better Testament*, he is the Surety, the Cautloner of a better Covenant; Therefore I will offer two things in reference to this, 1. He is the Cautloner for the Fathers part of the Covenant. 2. He is the Cautloner for our part of the Covenant. 1. For the Fathers part of the Covenant, it is well Observed by one, he had to do with a party that had three defects, when he made the Covenant, First, they were Dyvors, and not responsable, and therefore belov'd to have a Cautloner. Secondly, they were witless, and had no skill to draw their own Wrts, and therefore left it to the Son to draw the Covenant. Thirdly, they were unbelievers, and readily would not take him at his word, therefore he wrot the Covenant in the blood of his Son, and gave him to be Executor of all the things contained in the Covenant, and that he had promised, and is in a manner Surety for him; therefore ye have Christ often telling his Disciples, that they needed not doubt of his Fathers part of the Covenant, for he had given him all power in Heaven and Earth, for performing and accomplishing the Covenant, so he is Surety for us.

Quest. Ye will ask, what hath he undertaken for us? I will have occasion to speak of this afterward, but I will tell you two things he hath undertaken?

Ans. 1. To get our consent to the Covenant, *all that the Father hath given me shall come unto me*, that is to say, they shall imbrace the Covenant; Indeed this was a great undertaking, and that he may be true to that trust, he sends his Word to reveal the Covenant, his Rod to presse it, his Spirit to perswade to imbrace it. 2. He has undertaken to pay all our failings, otherways the Father could not deal with us, for we are Dyvors; and Adam when he was perfect, the Father knew in the state of Innocency, what it was to trust man without a Cautloner; so he undertakes to the Father, that we shall give our consent, and for any failing or transgression, he shall be comptable for it, and it shall be on his score.

And lastly, he is the Substance of the Covenant, he is the marrow, the very marh of the Covenant, therefore all the pro-

promises of the Covenant are nothing else but the execution of his three Offices; all the promises of pardon, and of peace, are the execution of his Priestly Office; all the promises of teaching and guiding, are the execution of the promises of his Prophetical Office; all the promises of ruling, defending, & subduing our enemies, are the execution of his Kingly Office; So all the promises of the Covenant, are but Christ, representing himself as King, Priest and Prophet of his Church; So to take from Christ and ascribe to the Covenant, would be very Injurious to God, for he is the Purchaser, the Mediator, the Surety, and Substance of it. Secondly, to Answer the Question, the doing of this is no injury to Christ, to say that when we are at our last words, the great encouragement is the Covenant, no more than to ascribe to the Rayes of Sun, or the pype or conduit that convoyes the water from the fountain, that we are warmed with the Rayes of the Sun, or that we are Quenched by the Water, that comes from the pype; for this derogats nothing, either from the Sun, nor from the Spring; So this derogats nothing from Christ, to say that our great encouragement at death comes from the Covenant, for Christ is the Spring, and the Covenant is the Conduit that convoyes the water from the Spring; and Christ is the Sun, & the Covenant is but the Rayes that comes from the Sun, both its heat and its Rayes come from his Son; and this is necessary in two cases, 1. To shew that sometimes in desertion when he hides, or withdraws, or frowns, all the Promises, and all the Ministers, nay if Angels should Preach, they will not prove conduible for an outgate, or for scattering terrors; the reason is, the pype cannot communicat water without the Spring, and the Rayes cannot communicat heat without the Sun; it's remarkable 2 Kings 4. when the Shunamites child died, the Prophet Elisha sent his servant, and his staff, but the child remained dead, untill the Prophet came himself: so the Covenant, and all the Promises abstracting from Christ, if they were in the mouth of Angels, cannot be an encouragement untill he come himself, conferences and discourses bringing reasons, convlucing reasons, from the Covenant, from

the freedom, from the fullness of It, will not bring one from desertion, until he come himself.

On the other hand, It's necessary to rebuke them, that catch a Promise of the Covenant, and will feed upon It; and say, they will come to Glory, and God has made a Covenant with them, and God has made a Promise to them, and yet has no interest in Christ, It's even as ye saw a man coming through a Garden, and he claught a Branch of an Apple-tree, and he goes and layes It in his chest, and expects he will have Fruit of It in the Spring; But the Branch cannot bring forth Fruit, except It abide in the Root; so what we say of encouragement among our last Words from the Covenant, it derogates nothing from Christ, more than a man should glory, of such an Apple-tree I plucked Apples, It derogates nothing from the Tree; for abstract the Branch from the Root, It will bear neither leaves nor Apples; so the poynt holds true, that the only encouragement when we are going to die is from the everlasting Covenant.

Use 1. For Application, *First*, Is this the great encouragement, when we will be at our last words, and we will be there ere It be long, an interest in the Covenant, it serves to reprove these who are seeking their encouragement elsewhere, some take their encouragement in Life and Death from the World, (Soul, take thee rest, thou has enough laid up for many years) as one observes well, he might as well laid down a Promise for his body to feed on, as to lay down enough for his Soul to feed on: some has common convictions, some has moral qualifications, and possibly some go a little higher, but all these seek their water out of gutters, and come not to the right Barrel for the wine; the great encouragement is the Covenant, and an interest in it.

Question. Before I go any further in this *use*, I will clear this practical Question, How shall a Person know, and by what Rules, shall they try, if they make their great encouragement to be the Covenant of God? *Answer.* For opening this a little I desire you may take notice, that the Covenant takes in two things, Promises and Duties: now if we would try, if the Covenant will be our great encouragement, or if we make

It our great encouragement, we must first cast an eye to the Promise, and then to the Duties. 1. Then, for the Promises, the design of them being to exalt Grace and Christ, a Person may examine and find, if they bring in their greatest Consolation from the Covenant, in these Three or Four Cases.

First. When they are cheerful, not so much on the account of the possession of promised Mercies, as on the right to the Mercy; there are many indeed if they get sense, and if they get the accomplishment of any Promise, they presently are ready to be much cheered against Death and Terrors, ay but remove that, they can lay no weight on the Covenant Itself; It's indeed a desirable thing, to have our hand full and the sensible accomplishment of promised Mercies, but when Persons want that Possession, and they lay no weight on the Covenant Itself, and on a right to it, that is to bring in your Consolation from your Enjoyment, rather than from the Covenant. It's remarkable, *Song 2.* The Bride is in a deserted case, and what hath she to keep up her heart under all desertions in that Chapter, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*; Her right to the Covenant, and Interest in It, even when there is a cloud betwixt him and her, makes her sing, and in that she is encouraged: So that when we have no enjoyment to crack of, but readily Discouragements from the want of them, then to be cheerful, It looks like one that brings in their Consolation from the Covenant of God. 2^d. When one can, notwithstanding of guilt, be comforted from the Covenant, this proves a great evidence of ones making the Covenant their great encouragement many a time; and no wonder, Guilt is a humbling thing, no wonder it fill the Soul with Terrors from God, for he abhors It, yet when one can, notwithstanding of Guiltiness, if the Temptation and the Challenge they meet with, say, thou hast broken this Command, and a Second, and a Third, and there is not one of them, If God pitch on It, but God may condemn thee for; go and tell the Tempter, ye take the wrong Bond, I am not under that Covenant, I am under a better Covenant, where the Debt is to be required of the Surety, and my work is to go to him for pardon, when Challenges and the smell of Guiltiness makes them not cast away their hope,

hope, but tell the Tempter, it's not your Bond, there is a Pardon to be gotten on the account of the Righteousness of another; That is one Evidence, that thou bringest in thy Encouragement from the Covenant, according to the design of the Covenant, when notwithstanding of the want of Sense from the Covenant thou sticks by it. 3^{ly}. They rightly improve the Covenant for Encouragement, that sometime take their guilt, as an Argument to press on God the accomplishment of the Promise, the thing that chases one from him, as Peter, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*, yet he hangs by the Covenant, and will make it an earand to run to him, and an Argument to press it on him, *Psal. 41. 4. v. I said, Lord, be merciful to me; heal my soul: for I have sinned against thee*; Nay more, *Psal. 25. pardon mine iniquity*, and his Argument is, *for it is very great*. What kind of reasoning is this? Any would think, of all the impertinent grounds to bring to God this were one, but take right measures by the Covenant, it's no *Antinomian* principle, *The your iniquities were as scarlet, they shall be white as wool, though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers*; It's not we, but the Mediator has put in these things in the Covenant, and payed the Price abundantly above the value of them. 4^{ly}. One comes to Evidence their Encouragement to come in from the Covenant, when they make use of providence always with a reference to the Covenant; all Providences are by them looked on always with a Reference to the Covenant: Now there are Four Influences, that a Believer will find in providence encouragement from, if ye measure Providences by the Covenant. 1. The Covenant is a key to open the Mystery of the Providence, readily ye may come under a Lash or a stroke from God, and be at that *Rebecca* was at, *If I be so, why am I thus?* The Covenant will open the Providence, ye will find that in Faithfulness he hath corrected you, ye will find, that ye could as easily want your meat as a Rod, if he be faithful to his word. 2^{ly}. It Evidences the Wrath and Curse of the Providence to be removed, one is laid low, and another back by a Fever, or a Consumption, but they have Dregs and all, for they have no Interest in the Covenant; But for these who are interested

interested in the Covenant, the Cautloner as to thee, in the Covenant, has sucked out the Dregs of all their cups; he that brings in his consolation from the Covenant, he first takes the Covenant as a Key to open the Providence, and then he sees that all the Poyson and Gall that was in his neighbours Cup, is sucked out by the Cautloner of the Covenant. 3^{ly}. The comparing Providences with the Covenant, is a noble way to keep up hope under the darkest Providence: was there any so darkned as *Abraham* was? The Lord seems to be very kind to him, he converses with him, and he promises, *I will give thee Seed, and in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*; and the next day he bids him go to Mount *Moriab* and offer his Son *Isaac*, the Seed of the Promise, in a burnt offering unto the Lord; would any body have thought, who would take such a way, one day to make a Promise, and another day to cast it down? he took it not as one casting away his Promise, for he knew that he was faithful that had promised, therefore he went and put his hand to the knife to kill him: So when we take Providences, and look on them with a respect to the Covenant, we have a Key to open the Mystery of the Providence; and if ye would have a sure Rule to try, if ye be bringing in your consolation from the Promise, and from the Covenant, try how much ye can rely on the credit of a Promise against Providence, sense, challenges for Guilt, and notwithstanding of them all, to cleave to a Promise. But 2^{ly}. They that would try, if they bring in their encouragement from the Covenant, they must also look to the Command; these things would appear a plausible Doctrine, and an *Antinomian* would imbrace them all, to hear a Minister preaching, that against sense, and all the darkness of Providence, there should be adherence to the Covenant, but there must be an eye to the commanding part, and a Person is bringing in his encouragement from the Covenant, that doth these three things from the commanding Part. 1. Every Command has a suitable Promise, and ay when he has a call to obey the Command, a Believer has also a call to run to the Promise; wherever ye are called to pray, if two or three were met together in Christs Name, if ye were visiting a Sick Person,

or if ye were going about your own particular case to God, if ye have a call to the Duty, ye have likewise a call to the Promise, which is necessary to be observed; and the neglect of it makes many heartless Duties, when we labour to bring out of our own Gifts, the qualifications of the Duty, we bring forth the thing that is not there ben; wherever ye can instruct, that God puts such a Duty on you, let it be to do, or to suffer, the same call from the Command, calls for the Promising Part of the Covenant, and he is not rightly improving the Covenant for Consolation, that runs not to the Promise, when he has a call to the Duty. like a Man rowing a Boat, if ye roll with one Oar, it will go continually about, and make no progress, but if ye roll with both the Oars, it makes the Boat go even, and makes swift progress; so when we go to the Commanding Part without the Promising Part, we roll but with one Oar.

2/y. He uses the Commanding Part of the Covenant for his encouragement, that is, he is as tender of his Obedience, as he is tender of his Comfort: It is a Question some Divines move, whether is Sanctification or Consolation most necessary? All determine that Sanctification is necessary for our being, but Consolation is only necessary for our well-being; we may go to Heaven, and have very little of comfort, but we cannot go to Heaven without Sanctification; and he is rightly laying the Foundation, to have the Covenant his encouragement, when he comes to his last Words, that is minding the commanding Part, and Duties in the Covenant, as well as the promising Part, nay that is rather bound to the commanding Part, than the promising Part: for we may go to Heaven without Consolation, but we may go to the Pit if we want Sanctification.

3/y. He uses the commanding Part of the Covenant for his encouragement, that minds the whole Commands of the Covenant, and is not partial in the Commands of the Covenant: he that is partial in the Commands of the Covenant, doeth as a man that goes into a Garden, and he plucks a Flower here, and another there, and passes by the rest; no, we must have a respect to all the Commands, whether ye be Master or Servant, Lands-lord or Tenant, Buyer or Seller, the Commands of the Covenant must regulate you in your Families, in the Mercats, in your change-houses, in your Work,

and in your Shoppes, and in all the things that ye go about; and he that would have the Covenant his encouragement, must roll the command and the Promise together, and must be as tender of the command, as of the Promise, and must have a respect to all the commands; and he that can make use of the Covenant in all these respects, whether he have sense or not, such a one, when he comes to his last words, and must be quieting with all his Relations, and all his Lands, and Chartors, he will have a special ground to sing *David's Nightingale* song, The Lord has made with me an everlasting Covenant, &c.

Use 2. But there are other two uses yet remaining, the 1. is this, To encourage Believers to learn to make use of the covenant, make more use of the covenant than ye do, I know it's the great ground of despondency and heartless worshipping of God, either we believe not, or we do not improve the Covenant, and how many are there guilty of both, when they come in straits, and when there is a command from God, or a cross from Men; they are ready to go, like a Woman with her hands on her Loins, they cannot sing, that the Covenant is full, and sure, and free.

Question. I would excite thee O christian with three Questions about it, 1. I ask you, is there any thing out of the covenant that ye would have in, or is there any thing in that ye would have out? No, there is not one Syllable; I like the Observation some has made of the covenant, if we had been altogether, and had all our heads laid together, there is not one Syllable out that should have been in, and in that should have been out; what is there, what disease, what condition of Life, if thou were acquainted with the covenant, that thou would not find abundantly satisfied within the covenant? So that we may say of it, as that word, *Song 7. 13. At our gates are all manner of pleasant things, new and old, which I have laid up for my well-beloved.* Some take that as relating to the covenant, are there not all manner of pleasant Fruits to be found in the covenant; but I ask thee, what aileth thee? is there any thing out that thou would have in, or in that thou would have out? is there any ease or difficulty but this covenant will satisfy it? why then is your countenance

countenance sad? But 2ly. Ye will say, the Exception runs not against the fullness of the covenant, but against the freedom of it, there are many conditions in the covenant, say ye; but I tell you, there is no condition in the covenant but one, even such as if a Man were going to marry a Woman, and she should say, I am poor and has no Tocher. good; he will tell, that shall not hinder the marriage; but says she, I am black; but am fair, says he, and will make thee fair through my comeliness; but says she, I will not marry thee, except thou be content to give me leave to be a whore; the truth is, the Covenant is so ordered in the point of freedom, it's not our blackness, or poverty, that hinders it; they have no ground to except against the marriage, but because the Bridegroom will not give them liberty to be a whore; no, he has drawn it in these terms, that all by-gones shall be by-gones, and fair play in times to come; *Thou hast played the whore with many lovers, and see whom thou hast not layen with under every green tree, on every high hill, yet return unto me; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and he will abundantly pardon.* But 3ly. Ye will say, your consolation is houghed without the sureness of the Covenant; I will only say this, God may indeed act contrary to the covenant of nature, and yet not be unfaithful; he may make the Iron to swim, he may make the moon go back ten degrees, and the Sun stand still, he may make the Babylonish Fire, not to burn the three children that were cast into it; but if he should alter one Article in the covenant, or not accomplish one Promise in the covenant of Grace, he behoved to deny Himself and his Son, for he is become Surety in the covenant, and all power in Heaven and Earth is committed to him, to execute the Articles of this covenant; for it's in a manner written with his Sons Blood, and so why go ye with your hands on your Loins, ye that have any Title or Interest in the covenant; for it's both Full, Free and Sure.

SER-

SERMON III.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

I Took from the scope of the Words the last day, on^e Observation, and handled it in two Sermons, That the great Encouragement at Death, was an Interest in a well ordered and sure Covenant. What was said of that, I will not repeat now, but I come particularly to make some entry on the Words, and in the Work of this day I shall consider them in this mould and method, and ye have in them these five things, 1. Ye have the nature of the thing, which supports David when he was at his last Words, it was a Covenant, he is supported by a Covenant. 2ly. Ye have the Parties Transacting in this Covenant, God and me, *God has made with me a Covenant.* 3ly. Ye have the properties of this Covenant, and they are Three, it's everlasting, it's ordered in all things, and it's sure; Three remarkable Properties. 4ly. Ye have the Superstructure, or that which David builds on this Covenant, that has these Three Properties, and two things he builds on it, First, his Salvation. Secondly, satisfaction to all his desires, *And this is all my salvation, and all my desire,* The Lord hath made with me a Covenant, and it's everlasting, it's ordered in all things, and it's sure, and I build on it all my Salvation, and all my desire. 5ly. Ye have the Anticipation of two Objections; Two things might be objected against Gods entering in Covenant with David. one upon Gods part, another on his part. First for David's part he was a sinful Man, guilty of Murther, Adultery, and Lying, and many things, and he had Incest in his house, would God

make an everlasting covenant with the like of him? Another Objection might have been made, God crost him, and Providence looked not like such a Covenant. To remove these Two Objections, ye have Two *Altho's* in the verse, There is one in the beginning of the Verse, another in the end, *Altho my house be not so with God, and altho he make it not to grow*, so these Two *Altho's* remove two great difficulties, that might be brought against the Consolation of the everlasting Covenant; ye may see here a large Field and a Marrowie, that I resolve to dwell on possibly longer than on any one Verse in the Bible, and I beseech you, not only pray for help, but carefully to observe, what shall be said, either of the Covenant, or Personal Covenanting, or of the Properties and Grounds of Encouragement, *all my desire, and all my salvation.*

To begin with the First of these, the nature of the thing which supports *David* at his last Words, it's a Covenant, the word in the Hebrew *Berith*, though all agree to render it *Covenant*, yet there are many differences about the Root of it, some deriving it from one word, some from another; it answers to the Greek word *διαθήκη*, which we have translated in the Scripture-sense Testament, the Covenant and Testament being one thing, so the old and new Testament, they are in effect on the nature of them, the old and new Covenant: but I resolve not to dwell on it. In the general, I will only take this Observation, and so far as I can win through it, follow it in the work of this day.

Doct. The Observation shall be this, *That the Consolation of a Believer, comes not from a Command, nor from a naked Promise, but it comes from the Covenant.* The Lord has made with me a Covenant, it is not said, the Lord commanded me a Covenant; nor is it simply, the Lord has promised me, but the Lord hath made with me a Covenant.

Before I come either to Confirm or Improve this Truth practically, there are two three general Considerations I must give you, to open and be a Key unto what is to be spoken on this head: It's necessary ye know first, what a Covenant is, Heathens, Christians, Lutherians, Jesuits, and Protestants, have written large Tractats of the nature of a Covenant.

It

It is necessary, that I glance a little at the opening of four things, that all agree in to make up a Covenant, and the four laid together make up the Definition of a Covenant, 1. In a Covenant there must be distinct Parties, a man may make a Promise or Vow his alone, binding himself, but he cannot make a Covenant alone, a Covenant necessarily supposes distinct parties; neither find we in Sacred or Ecclesiastick, or prophane Histories, mention of any thing, that ever went under the name of a Covenant, but on supposed distinct Parties. 2ly. A Covenant supposes an agreement betwixt thir distinct parties, the Parties treat and they agree on some Articles and Heads, and both of them come under conditions; It's true, there are Covenants of exact Justice, and there are Covenants of Grace, and according to the nature of the Covenant so is the Agreement, and the condition of the Covenant, but there is nothing more necessary and essential, to the making up of a Covenant, than two Parties agreeing on such and such Conditions and Terms. 3ly. A Covenant supposes an Obligation on both Parties, to the Tenor of the Agreement and Condition, for in effect there cannot be a proper Covenant, but it induces an Obligation and a Bond, suppose it be either a *Despotick* Covenant, as they call it, or suppose it be a Covenant betwixt Master and Servant, or suppose it be a Covenant for Traffick, or for Marriage, suppose it be but a Covenant of Friendship, yet it's an Obligation on both Parties, on the Terms on which they have agreed, and both of them become engaged to the Articles of the Agreement, by vertue of the Covenant. 4ly. Ye would notice, that of all Obligations the Obligation of a Covenant is most sacred; therefore it is well observed by some, the light of nature, nay the very Scriptures themselves, they cannot devise a more inviolable ty, than the ty of a Covenant, the great reason is, even among Heathens, when they transacted Covenants, they would not only draw them in writ, and seal them with lifting up their hands, but sometimes they would do it, with drawing blood of their Thumbs, and sealing it with their blood; the Light of Nature cannot devise a stronger ty, than the ty of a Covenant; when the Covenant is lawful in its materials, no men, nor society of men can loose the ty of a Covenant, the reason is,

because the ty of a Covenant binds the Conscience, and there accretes a Debt to God, because of the Invocation of his Name, and no man can remit that which is due to God, It's God only that can remit a lawful Covenant; so ye see what a Covenant is, and laying all the four together, ye may see what is scattered in many Books about the nature of a Covenant, and I will give you this Definition of a Covenant, taking it as it is stated betwixt God and Man, — *It is an Agreement betwixt God and Man, on certain Articles and conditions, wherein the most sacred and inviolable ties are interposed, that possibly can be imagined, both to bind on God's part, and our part; and Gods coming under a covenant with man, and mans coming under a covenant with God, they come under the most sacred ty, that nature, morality, or grace can find out.*

But I will add a second Consideration to this, which is this, That among all the Wonders that have come to pass in the World, and since the Foundation of the Earth was laid (and there are many wonderful things come to pass, proving the Wisdom, Power, Justice, and Goodness of God) yet hardly is there any thing more wonderful than Gods coming under a Covenant with Man, and the thing that makes it wonderful among many, are these two, 1. As he was mans Creator, and gave him a being out of nothing, he might have commanded all his Creatures, whatever he thought fit to command them to do, without any Covenant, he needed have done no more but told them, If ye do not what I Command you, I will cast you to Hell; no Superior, especially being infinitely a Superior, would have done otherwise. 2^d. This makes it wonderful, in regard a Covenant seems to be a Treaty among equals, It's not ordinary to make Despotick Covenants, betwixt Princes and Subjects, or Covenants betwixt Masters and Servants; but betwixt Friends and Equals, or Persons in Marriage; they that come under a Marriage Covenant, ordinarily there is some Equality of their Blood, or of their Lot; but to come under a Covenant with him, and yet he to be our Maker, *thy Maker is thy Husband*, are words of wonder. Therefore it may be a great Question in the entry of this Theme, what is the reason that should move God,

God, who, being mans Maker, and might call for all he could do without a Covenant, to enter into a Covenant with him? It's so great a Mystery, that Mr. *Durham* denys, that there is any proper Covenant of Grace, he says, it's so far below God, to make a Covenant. There are many Reasons given, why he hath entered in Covenant with man, and when they have branched them all out in seven, eight, nine, or ten Branches, they resolve all in Grace, in Love, in Condescendency. There can be nothing imagined to induce him to deal with man by Covenant but this, It's true man is honoured thereby, and encouraged to do him service, and made inexcusable by it, if he do him not hearty service, who has been pleased to come under a Covenant with him, and to abase himself, and to encourage him in his Service; and when they have branched all the Reasons in all their Members to the outmost, there is nothing that could move so great a Lord, to enter in a Covenant with such base things, but altogetherly his Condescendency, his Grace, and his Love; especially if ye take in the Tenor of the Covenant, a Covenant on such Terms, that he shall take his own Son and offer him up in a sacrifice, to let us go free; and of all the Acts of Grace, that ever he yet shewed, or will shew, nay I may say more, of all the Acts of Grace he can shew, there cannot be a greater.

The third Consideration that I will give you about this, is, that God has made two Covenants with Man, I know indeed there are some of our Country men speak of three Covenants, some of four, *Cameron* a Professor in *Glasgow* and *France*, is for a Covenant of Nature. Mr. *Dickson* has said much to prove a Covenant of Redemption; the current of Divines reduce them to two Covenants, according to that word, *Gal. 4. 24. which things are an Allegory; for these are the two Covenants.* I will not debate whether they be two, or three, or four Covenants, the Covenant of Nature, the Covenant of Redemption, the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Grace; I will only speak to the two Covenants, that God has condescended to deal with man Covenant-ways, and there are at least two signal Covenants, the Covenant of Works & the Covenant of Grace; I'll not dilate much on the

the Covenant of Works, for it's in the Covenant meant by the Text that I am on; it would take many Sermons to tell, wherein the Covenant of Works agrees with the Covenant of Grace, and wherein it differs, I will readily have occasion to hint at it; but this Covenant of Works is not the everlasting Covenant ordered in all things and Sure, only because it falls so directly in my way, I will clear two Questions about the Covenant of Works, and shall say no more of it, and they are indeed the two greatest difficulties that ly about it.

Quest. First it's asked, what Evidence is there that God made a Covenant of Works with Adam? we find not in all the Book of *Genesis*, in all the Writings of *Moses*, any thing that would seem to confirm this, that there was a Covenant made with Adam; there was a Command and a Threatning given him, but what ground was there to think, that there was a Covenant made with him.

Ans. For Answer to this, I will not deny, what Mr. *Burgeſſe* acknowledges, that readily Adam might scarcely know, that he was to bind for him and all his posterity; I know not if that can be fully and particularly evinced from Scripture; but that Adam came under a Covenant of Works with God, two things will make it appear. 1. In the new Testament, *Gal. 4. 23.* The transaction made betwixt God and Adam is called two Covenants, expreſſely there meant by the bond-woman and the free; But 2. All the parts of the Covenant are mentioned in the Book of *Genesis Gen. 2, 16. and 17. Verses, Of all the trees of the garden thou mayeſt freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eaſteſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die;* Theſe words are a direct Covenant; for 1. There is a Duty Impoſed, *thou ſhalt not eat of it;* and there is a Threatning, *thou ſhalt ſurely die;* the Threatning contains a Promise, Importing this, ſo long as thou eaſt not of the tree, thou ſhalt not die; Adam upon the other hand accepted this Command on theſe terms, not only did he not object againſt the terms, but accepted them, by taking him to the privilege of eating all the Trees of the Garden; & when he violat and tranſgreſſed the Command, his conſcience

ence terrified him, and he ſewed fig-tree-leaves together to hide himſelf from God, the terror of his Conſcience ſupported his condeſcendency to the Command and Threatning; that was a direct Covenant, for all the terms of the Law were written in his heart, and they were con-natural to him, he had them from his creation, he had the Law written in his heart as diſtinctly as we have the ten Commands. Many other things are brought to prove, that it was a diſtinct Covenant of Works made with Adam before his fall, and as his tryal was put to the Tree in the miſt of the Garden, and *Moses* gives us account of all things of a Covenant, both on God's part and Adam's part.

Quest. 2. I'll clear another difficulty, now after the fall who are the perſons that are under this Covenant of Works made with Adam?

For clearing of this, I will only give this one poſſion. That all natural men, and all that are not effectually called, they are under this Covenant of Works. I have often had a deſign to follow this point, the reaſons of this are, 1. They are in the firſt Adam, there can be no real claim to the Covenant of Grace, untill we be Interreſſed in the Covenant, we can no more plead the privileges of the Covenant of Grace in a natural ſtate, than a woman can plead the Articles of a Contract, that is not married to the man, ſhe that has married the man may claim all the Articles of the Contract concerning her; untill we be effectually called, and in our effectual calling united to Jeſus, which is but the Articles of the contract of marriage betwixt Chriſt & Believers, we have no more right to the Covenant of Grace, than the woman that has not married the man: this is a moſt dreadful ſtate, for to be under a Covenant of Works admits of no repentance; if a man ſhould mourn as many tears, as there are waters in the Sea, if they be under a Covenant of Works, they find no place for repentance. Next, the Covenant of Works admits of no cautioner, a perſon under the Covenant of Works pleading to Chriſt, is like a man preſſing another to pay a Debt, and his name was never named in the bond; can a man be Cautioner, and his name never named in the bond, the Covenant of Works admits not

not of Christ for a cautioner: So he that is in the first *Adam*, and not effectually united to Christ, the Covenant in which he is, admits neither of Repentance, nor of a Mediator; the truth is, to go and discourse to you of this Covenant of Works, of the nature and properties of it, it might draw out a great length, all that I designed to say, is that there is such a Covenant made with *Adam*, and that all natural men are under it.

4. That I may come to the Covenant mentioned in the Text, *the everlasting, and well ordered, and sure Covenant*, I must premise before I enter on this Covenant, some few generals about it; I will name some of them now, and follow the rest in the afternoon.

First, This Covenant has four names given it in the Bible, and truly all the four do excellently express and open the nature of it. First it's called a *Testament*. Secondly, it's called a *Promise*, *the Promise made to Abraham, this is the Covenant made with Abraham*. Thirdly, it is called a *Decree*. And lastly it's called a *Covenant*. Now these that would rightly take up the Nature of the Covenant, would consider something of all the four; for in effect we cannot rightly take up the nature of it, except we search a little in these four names given unto it.

First, It's called a *Testament*, *Heb. 7. 22*. When Christ is spoken of to be the Mediator of it, he is said to be *Surety of a better Testament*; now the consideration of it as a Testament, renders it exceedingly Sweet; I will name but four things in a Testament that agrees to a Covenant. 1. a Testament it comes not to be valid, except it be ratified with the death of the Testator; if the man that makes the Testament live, he may revoke, or alter it, or turn it in another strain than it was; but when his death comes to be interposed, all the Legacies left by the Testator become firm and valid, and must be obeyed; it's a sacred thing to obey the will of the dead, the light of nature has made Heathens tremble, at doing contrair to the will of the dead; this Testament is ratified in all the Articles and Clauses of it, by the death of the Testator: this is that which renders it excellent, that the Lord has made the Covenant a Testament; and

ratified it by the death of the Testator: So what we are to say of the Covenant as a Testament, it's still to be remembered, that there is no alteration to be made now, more than there is of the will of the dead; we are not to contrive new Articles in the Covenant, or to think that any Article in it will not be subscribed; for the Testator is dead, and has ratified the Covenant with the death that he did undergo at *Jerusalem*, in all the Articles of it. 2. It has this as a Testament in it, that in effect, in a Testament there is no more required but to accept the Legacies that the Testator leaves; it's not like a man's Testament, as it is in a Covenant of Traffick, wherein one binds to give so much Cloth, and the other binds to pay so much Money; ordinarily a Testament is without such Trafficks; but in the Covenant Legacies are left, and the persons to whom they are left, it's required of them that they accept, and there is no more required of them, but that they accept: this makes it of the nature of a Testament. 3. It has this in it of the nature of a Testament, and wherein it exceeds all other Testaments, that the Legator leaves Legacies, and he leaves others to give them; but he in the Covenant first leaves the Legacies, and then he gives the Legacies; it's remarkable when he is about to die, he calls his Disciples, and tells them he is going to *Jerusalem*, and he behoved to die there; It was in his fare-well Sermon, and they were much against his going, and he tells them, I will leave you a Legacy, *My Peace I leave you*, and he puts in the thing that never man did put in any Testament, and *My peace I give you*; so that it has the nature of a Testament in it, consisting of Legacies. 4. It has this of a Testament, which is also singular, it's not ordinary in Testaments, (Lawyers observe that both the Law of Nature, and all other Laws, have made against it) that men should dispose of an Inheritance by Legacies and Testaments; the reason is, because they think folk when they are dying, are not so composed, therefore the wronging of Heirs comes to be excepted in disposing of Inheritances; but in this Testament, it's not Peace, or Pardon, or Communion with God, that he leaves only, but it's a Testament wherein he Communicates the Inheritance, without wronging of the

the Heir; So it has something of a Testament in it, it takes in Inheritance as well as Moveables, and so it's formally a Testament, and therefore the Spirit of God, and the current of Interpreters on the Scriptures thought fit, to call the Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, the same on the matter with the Old and New Covenant; but I pitch on the name of Testament, as it were to shew his latter will, both to shew what Curses he leaves, and what Blessings he leaves, and the way how to get the one, and eschew the other; they are confirmed by the Death of the Testator, nay the Heir is rather glorified by the Testament, though it take in the Inheritance.

SERMON. IV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

I have shewed you what a Covenant is, that it is a Sacred *ty* among parties agreed about some Article. There is no man, nor society of men, can loose the ties of a lawful Covenant, but it binds (if it be *vinculum reale* as they call it) the persons and their Posterity: Morallists have acknowledged this, by the light of nature demonstrable by many Arguments: I came to speak of the Covenant of Works, and touched only on it in two heads; First, to prove that it was made with Adam, and that all the unregenerat are under it; and in the close, I came to speak of the Covenant of Grace, and the first thing about it I resolved to notice was, the names given it in Scripture. It's called a Testament, Heb. 7. 22. *He is Surety of a better Testam^{ent},*

ment, that is, of a better Covenant; I shewed you, why it is called a Testament, the Testator has left Legacies, and he is dead, and the Legacies are of great Importance. I will insist no more on this, only considering the Covenant as a Testament, I will press these two things on you.

Use. First, I would exhort you, to get the Legacies that Christ has left in his Testament, ye may readily ask, how shall we come by these Legacies? ye would hearken to a word of advice.

First, understand what is left you, I will tell you two things which the Testament bears, it bears tokens and moveable things, and it bears an inheritance; his peace, his joy, his consolation, are indeed moveable and very alterable things, but the Testament bears likewise an Heritage; for the Law may be dispensed with in Christ; the reason why Jurists will not admit of a dying person to dispose of inheritances at Death, they suppose they will be roving, and their sickness is distempering them: but this cannot be supposed in Christ, therefore his Testament bears first tokens, and moveables, and then an Inheritance; now the way to know if the Testament bear you to the Inheritance is, First, to know if the Testament bear you to the tokens and moveables, it bears you to his Pardon, his Peace, his Repentance, and Grief for Sin, they are moveables indeed; But if ye be in the Testament for Such Moveables, ye are likewise in the Testament for the Inheritance; It's Remarkable his Testament is not made up of Blessings only, but also of Curses, there are many curses contained in his Testament, and some get no more in the Testament, but like some debolish Children, when the Father has called them together to make his Testament, he gives one his Blessing, and a second his Blessing, and a third is fallen in Adultery, and he gives him his Curse, Jacob has it so in his Testament, *Simon and Levi brethren in evil, cursed be &c.*

2^d. I will give you another direction about the Covenant as a Testament, to take hold of things ordinar in Testaments, I like the observation one has, writing on the Covenant, he says, that a Testament ordinarily a person cannot have benefit by it, until it be Confirmed by Law, ay but it is not

not so in Christs Testament, ye must take heed that ye do not Confirm it by Law, the reason of it is, Christ hath Confirmed it himself; for Christ to prevent this when he made the Testament, said, *my peace I leave you*; But some will say, he may leave his Peace to us, but we will not get it, until it be Confirmed by Law, no, *my Peace I give you*; when a thing is both left and given, it needs no Confirmation; there are many gets Legacies left them, and they must have them Confirmed by Law, but we need no Confirmation of the thing that is given, so that any that gets a part of this Testament, whether it be of the Moveables, or a Title to the Inheritance, if they question it, until they get it Confirmed by Law, they do not know the nature of this Testament, for there needs no more, since he both leaves and gives.

34. In reference to this Name of the Covenant, as it's called a Testament, I would give you this direction, that ye may have a part of his Testament, consider to whom the Legacies in the Testament are left, sometimes in the Testament they are spoken of as folks that were of kin to Christ, they are called his *brethren*, his *sisters*, his *friends*; sometimes in the Testament they are spoken of as folks, that he loved to converse with, I say unto you my friends, fear them not that can kill the body, and can do no more, &c. sometimes they are spoken of in the Testament, as folk that the Father had given him; they have many Names in the Testament, there are some but babes, some young men, some fathers; now I would have you take the Testament in the full latitude of it, if ye would feed comfortably on it, whether ye be in kin, or whether ye be Brethren, or Sisters, or in any near Relation, if ye cannot find your Names in the Testament under that Notion, go & enquire if there be any Friendship betwixt you, tho ye be not in Kin, yet folk will leave Legacies to their friends; if none of these will hold, try if ye be babes, or young men, there uses not to be much Friendship betwixt wise men and babes, yet babes may be in the Testament, for the Testator may have Kindness to them on the account of some Relation; lay all these Names together, to whom the Legacies are left, and if ye find ye have not been a Friend, Try if ye be of kin,

Kin; if none of these will hold, Try if ye be Babes; the Father had given him all power in Heaven and Earth, and it must be a rich Testament he leaves, and to have a Right to it we should labour to shuffle our selves in among them that have a Right to this Testament; many would shuffle themselves out of this Testament, ye should rather consider what a rich Heir he was that made the Testament, and try all the Qualifications and Designations of the persons to whom the Legacies are left. To be brief, it's a comfortable sense of the whole Covenant, that it is a Testament, for it stands ratified by the Death of the Testator, and if the Father alter any thing of the Covenant, he will alter the will of the Dead, which looks not like Him. This is the first name given to the Covenant, it's a Testament ratified by the Death of the Testator, and they have a secure Legacy, that has an Interest in the Testament, we need not pay for it, for they were not Legacies if we behoved to buy them, we have our Right to them not by Price, but by Testament.

The second Name I find the Covenant get in Scripture, it's called a Promise, so ye find it *Ephes. 2. 12.* That at that time, ye were without Christ, being aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of Promise; So ye will find it, *Gal. 3. 16, and 17. verses*, twice called a Promise; and ye will find it frequently get this Name in Scripture, this Name of a Promise added to a Testament, is very considerable; and there are two things that I will speak a little to here, *First*, Why the Covenant is called a Promise. *Secondly*, What encouragement a Believer may have, from calling it a Promise.

Quest. First, Why is the Covenant called a Promise? There are three or four Reasons, why the Covenant is called a Promise, one of them relates to God, a 2d. to the Covenant, and a third to Believers.

Ans. First, In reference to God, a Promise it's an Act of Dominion, a man that makes a Promise, he hath the thing he promises under his Command, or else he promises foolishly. 2ly. A Promise it's an Act of Condescendency, he that is content to make a Promise, condescends to the hum-

mor and desire of them to whom he makes it. 3ly. A Promise is an Act of Liberality; but the main thing here, a Promise is an Obligation, it brings a ty on the Person that makes it.

Now the truth is, the Covenant is all the Four. In regard of God, it's an Act of his Dominion, of his condescendency, of his Liberality, and it brings an Obligation on him; but these are not the special Reasons, why it comes to be called a Promise, the special Reasons are from the nature of the Covenant, and the nature of the Covenant has two things in it, that makes it properly to be called a Promise.

note First, The great things in it are Promises, it was not so with the Covenant of Works, the great things in it were Commands, and therefore ye find it often called in the Bible a Law, the Covenant of Works will be called the Law, for the great design of it was to give commands, but it is not so with the covenant of Grace, it's not Law and commands; that is not the special design in it, but it's Grace and Promises. 2ly. It comes to be called a Promise, in regard there is no Command in it all, but there is a promise of strength to obey the Command; ye see me sometime at Examining, putting you to this, there is no Duty in all the Covenant, but there is a Promise relating to that Duty; and if ye remember the Observation ye heard the last day at Examining, a Christian has never a call to a Command, but in that call, he has a call to the Promise; When we are commanded to obey, to do, or to suffer, Christ never calls us to a Duty in the Covenant, but he calls us likewise to a Promise of it, whether it be to Prayer, Repentance, Believing, Loving of Christ, or Suffering for Him; So that it comes to be no wonder that it be called a Promise; for in effect, there is nothing required in all the Covenant, but it's promised; Suppose there were a man that should bid another man come to his Shop, and buy such a piece of Cloth, and in the mean time should round to his Ear, I will give thee Money to buy it even as much as the price of it will come to; that is rather a giving, than a selling; we indeed buy in the Covenant of Grace, but it's without Money and without price, and any thing that we part with for the Covenant, it is but that which would undo us; as if ye saw a Woman that has a Child, the

hath gotten a Knife in his hand, and she is fear'd it undo the Child, she will go and Treat with the Child, I will give this Apple, and this pleasant thing, and that, providing thou wilt quite the knife, she is afraid the Child cut his fingers with the knife, or undo himself with it, and the Child will not quite it, without buying it; the Gospel drives such a bargain as this; for in the Covenant of Grace, all that God does in the point of Command, is only that we quite the knife that would cut our fingers, and He will give us all the Apples, and pleasant things contained in the Covenant, so it's no wonder it be called a Promise.

3dly, It's called a Promise in regard of us, there are two things in regard of us, that makes it be called a Promise, and the Antinomians will have it called by no other name, they deny it to be a proper Covenant, they say it's only a Promise, but it's in regard of us called a Promise, on their two accounts (1) Because we have contributed nothing to the procuring of the Covenant, but it's all entirely of Grace; as if a man were sending to his neighbours house for something he has payed for, he might send for it, and readily crave it as a debt; but when he sends for any thing promised, he must not go exactly, and observe all the passages of craving it, he had no right to it but by a Promise; many a time when God gives not his people that fulness of peace, of joy, of consolation, that readily they would have, they sit down and quarrel, as readily the thing they would have were payed for; but thy right to it was but by Promise, And a given thing should not be looked in the mouth. 2ly, It comes to be called a Promise, in regard of us, in respect the thing we do in the condition of the Covenant, it's no way proportioned to the thing promised; there are great things promised, and we have no influence on it; What would all our service do to influence this Promise, I will take away the heart of stone? What did we contribute, when we first bargained with him, did we not resist the Promise, did we not say, I will go after my lovers? What warnings did we sit out, before we brought our neck under his yoke? All these prove that the Covenant is a Promise.

And from this Name of the Covenant, I would have you notice three or four things, before I go further; Is the Covenant called a Promise? Then, 1. Mistake not the Covenant, ye will hear presently, it has another Name nor a Promise, as if it were no way consistent with the Law, Antinomians say so, it's a conditional Promise, go not ye to take up the Covenant, as if it were only a Promise, and had no condition at all: I deny nor, but there are absolute Promises in it; I will speak of them afterward. But, 2ly. Here the great encouragement, that Believers have for their security, they are under a Covenant; the Name whereof is a Promise; Suppose one of you were drowned in desertion, and a second exceedingly weak, and suppose a third were reproached and despicable; yet if ye have from one that has both power and faithfulness; a Promise, that is refreshing; If one should ask a man that were in great debt, how will ye win out of it? I have a Promise, says he, ye have no pith nor power to pay your debt, I have a promise from one that is rich, that can pay it; here is the great encouragement that Believers have, and they have no other thing to keep up their heart, but only this, I have a Promise. 3ly. I mark it for this end, that I may put thee to the thing I was pressing the last day, to take it up as a Covenant of Promises; what am I? says one, my house is not so with God. what am I? says another, I have a crossed life in this world. But will any of these hinder him from making a Promise? Thy Charter is not Merit, thy Charter and mine is not Purchase, but allanerly Promise; and the only expectation we can have of wearing the Crown, and walking in the City that hath the twelve Gates, is allanerly Promise. If Satan and our deceitful heart question thy right, and say, thou deserves Hell, and thou has many marks of going to it; yet if thou have a Promise, and a Title to the man that gives the Contract, and draws the Articles of it, thou may be very sure, thy Covenant is a Covenant of Promise, that is the second Name. The third Name that is given to the Covenant, it's called a Command; ye have it getting this Name, Gen. 17. *Abraham is commanded to circumcise, in the tenth verse, every male child among them, this is my Covenant which*

(shall

shall be betwixt me and you, and thy seed after thee, every male among you shall be circumcised, and ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins: If ye compare this with the 13 and 14 verses. He that is born in thy house, and bought with thy money, shall be circumcised, and my Covenant shall be an everlasting Covenant, and the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off, he has broken my Covenant, that is, my Command: Here ye have the Covenant, called under the Name of a Command: And here I would inquire a little into two things, 1st, Why the Covenant goes under the name of a Command? 2ly, How we should improve this Name of the Covenant as a Command?

As to the First, It goes under the name of a Command, He has broken my Covenant, that is, my Command, on these two grounds; 1. The Covenant of Grace, it does not only oblige to all the Commands of the Covenant of Works, but to some more, this may seem a strange assertion; there is no Command in all the Law, but the Covenant of Grace binds to it, *I came not, says Christ, to destroy the Law, but to fulfil the Law, Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, thou shalt not covet thy Neighbours goods, &c.* The Covenant binds to all these, and to many more, it binds to Faith in Christ, to Repentance, which the Covenant of Works did not; so no wonder it be called a Command: for this Covenant binds to all the Duties commanded in the Covenant of Works, and to many more. 2ly, It comes to ground under the name of a Command, it was the same Covenant of Grace that Abraham had a seal of in Circumcision; it's called a Command in regard never were persons so obliged to obey the Command, as these that are taken within the Covenant of Grace: The taking of us within the Covenant of Grace, is like a Woman Married, that is more obliged against Uncleanneſs, than she was before her Marriage, the relation is in Christ, the Influences are from Christ, The persons under the Covenant of Grace, Antinomians say, they are not so bound to the Command as others; but they mistake it quite, if any person be bound in the world to the

Command, it's they that are not bound by the Law only, but by Love; the case is as it was with *Moses* Mother, *Pharaoh's* Daughter calls her when she found *Moses* among the Flags, and commanded her to nurse the Child; the best Motive that moved her to nurse the Child was, Love, she stood by to see the Child among the Flags, and when she took up the Child, Love influenced her as much as the Law; So, when there is a Covenant relation to Christ, the person in Covenant has an eye to him, not only from the Command, but from Love; So that no wonder it be called a Command, for it has all the Commands of the Law, and some more, and the obligations to obey, are stricter than under the Covenant of Works.

Quest. 2. But here is a great Question, ye say the Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of Works; we love to hear Grace exalted, and called a Testament, and a Promise, but that it should be called a Command, looks this like a Covenant of Grace?

Ans. It's true, it's called a Command, and it binds to all the Duties that the Covenant of Works binds to, and a great many more, it binds to Believing in Christ, to Repentance, which the Covenant of Works had no dream of; but this takes nothing away from the freedom of it, therefore hearken to two or three remarkable things about the Command, and it will shew you, that though it be a Command, the Command takes nothing away of the freedom of it. 1. Take notice, that though it have so many Commands, as many as in the Covenant of Works, and more, yet it will not stand on perfect obedience to them, sincere obedience it's one of the clauses of it, and O! but it's a sweet word, He will accept of the Will in stead of the Deed: Never one Treated with a Servant, to give him a Fee, if he were willing to go to his Plough, and go his Errands, and if he did not go, he indentured not to accept of the will for the deed; but as a Father with a Child, so he pities them that fear him, it's a Command indeed, but he accepts of the sincerity of the will; it's a remarkable way of dealing in this Covenant, that he had with *David*, he was sitting in his house, and grieved to see the Ark of God in the fields,

fields, *what am I*, says he, *that I should dwell in a house of cedar, and the Ark of God in curtains?* *Nathan* was sent to him, and told him, *because it was in thy heart to build me a house, I will build thee a sure house.* So there are Commands in this Covenant, that go under the name of a Command, but the Commands will be accepted in the point of obedience, the Will will be accepted for the Deed. 2ly, It contributes to evidence the freedom of it, in the point of a Command, in that there is nothing commanded, but it's promised; It was not so in the Covenant of Works, they had habitual Grace, the Grace that *Adam* was created with, he was to have no other stock but that; *Make to your selves a new heart, and renew a right spirit within you:* If any will take that Command, and not look to the Promise, they might say, I may lie down and die, there is no hope of Heaven for me, I can no more make a new heart, than I can make a new Heaven, or a new Earth; but *a new heart will I also give thee, and I will renew a right spirit within thee:* There is no Command, but there is a Promise suitable to it; that was not according to the Covenant of Works, there was no promise of a new heart, or of assisting in Prayer, in the Covenant of Works, though there be as many Commands in the Covenant of Grace, as in the Covenant of Works, and many more, yet since we bask beside *Mel* we need not be discouraged. 3ly, Not only will he give to will, and strength to will, but which is a great mercy, it admits of repentance, when we have done an ill turn to our selves; if we had wept as many Tears as there are Waters in the Sea, *If we should give the fruit of our body for the sin of our soul*, if we had offered our Children to God, for what we had done, it was all to no purpose, *In the day thou eats, thou shalt die;* but though this Covenant be Commands, and yet though they be broken, if we go and mourn over them, the Covenant admits of Repentance. And lastly, which takes away the gall of being a Command, it admits of a Cautioner, and the Covenant is so ordered, that if we can go and mourn, and lay the weight on Jesus, it's all one, as if we had not broken it at all; so that it is a Command, of all that the Covenant of Works command, and of many more;

moe; for there are many things commanded in the Covenant of Grace, that were not commanded in the Covenant of Works; and yet the calling of the Covenant a Command, takes not away the grace and freedom of it. So ye have heard of the Covenant of Grace, and of the three Names given to it, that are handled this day, it's a *Testament*, a *Promise*, and a *Command*; but the Name I especially designed to handle is, the calling of it a *Covenant*.

use. I will not fall on the Covenant now, only I exhort you to three things, which I resolved to press in the close of this Sermon.

1. From all the work of the day, learn the difference betwixt the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Works; if ye be out of the state of Nature, and can prove your effectual Calling, and that God has wrought a work of Conversion within you, I know no temptation, nor discouragement, that needs to afflict you with the fear of Hell; make but sure under what Covenant ye are, and that God has indeed brought you to be born again, and stated you under a Covenant of Grace, the Glory ye look for, how simple, how low, how guilty soever ye be, it's left to you as a Legacy in Christ's Testament, and the Father will not control the will of the Dead: If thou can come to be stated under a right Covenant, thou needs not fear to plead as a Debt of Justice, Lord, give me thy Peace, and thy Pardon; If thou should say, I am simple, poor, and ignorant, but will these make exception against the things left in Testament by Christ? The Mediator has left them in the Testament, and if thou know once the things left thee in Testament, nothing can obstruct thy Peace, however there may be a Fatherly anger, there is nothing that can obstruct fundamentally and radically thy Peace about thy great interest; for they are thine by virtue of a Testament, and the Father cannot but fulfil the Will of the Dead. Learn then to know what Covenant ye are under, for if ye be in Nature, all your grief for sin, all your repentance for sin, all your pleading to Christ, is all in vain, your Covenant admits neither of Repentance, nor of a Cautiouser. O the danger of men that are not effectually called on this account!

2. I would have you look on this Covenant as a Promise, when ye get any thing of it, either accomplished, or a word let in to you of it, remember how ye held it, *Isaiab* has many a sweet Promise, *Jeremiah* has many a sweet Promise, *Ezekiel*, *Moses*, and all the rest of the Prophets, has many a sweet Promise, and how come they to be set down there? They were not besought by us, we did not so much as seek them to be set down, far less were they purchased by us, they came only by Promise, and take in what is requisite to a Promise, these things are the fruit of his condescendency, of his liberality; and they bring an obligation on him to accomplish them.

3. And I close with it, from the work of this day ye may see that the Covenant is a Command, *they have broken my Covenant*, that is, they have broken my Command; there are many practical *Antinomians* among us, they run away to the Promises, and forget that the Covenant is a Command; no it's a Truth, that I am not afraid to Preach, there is nothing that the Covenant of Works requires, but it's required in the Covenant of Grace, and a great deal more; there were many things never called for in the Covenant of Works, that are called for in the Covenant of Grace; and yet the Believer needs not be discouraged, they are all promised, the Will will be accepted for the Deed; but if thou sit down carelessly, and cast off the Command, and pleads to the Covenant as a Promise, thou takes not up the Covenant aright; of all persons bound to keep the Covenant, it's thou that art in Covenant with him, like *Moses* Mother, that nursed the Child, not only out of Command, but out of Love; but of all the Rebels that ever sinned against him, are these that sin against this Command.

SERMON V.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

I Entred the last day to speak of the Covenant of Grace, and the first thing I proposed concerning it was, to consider the Names it gets in the Bible; I have spoken of it as a *Testament*, and I have exhorted you to labour to try, if your Names were in the Testament; It's called a *Promise*, and it's likewise called a *Command*; of all which ye heard the last day, but the proper Name of it, it's called a *Covenant*, it's true *Antinomians*, they deny that properly it's a Covenant, for they say, it's free and without conditions; but in effect this Covenant of Grace, whatever Grace appears in it, it's properly a Covenant.

There are three things that properly make up a Covenant, and all the three concur in this Covenant; First, there are parties indenturing, and treating, and concluding together. 2. There are articles and terms on which the agreement is made. 3. There is the interposing of Obligations for ratifying the Articles, for the Covenant carries a Curse in the bosom of it against the breakers of the Covenant; and where these three are, there is properly a Covenant, these three I would make appear to you: for the Parties, I will not speak of them now, when I come to the second Branch of the *v. God hath made with me*, I will speak of the Parties; The thing that I will insist on to evince the nature of this Covenant to you, is, the Articles, & the Obligations that are interposed, for the ratifying of these Articles; the

the clearing of these two will contribute much to open the nature of the Covenant; Therefore hearken and ponder them: As for the Articles, that ye may know what ye do, when ye covenant with God, or pretend to be in Covenant with him, it were difficult to run through all the Articles treated in this Covenant.

That I may glance a little at them, I desire ye may take notice, that among Men there are four sorts ordinarily of Covenants, and the truth is, the Covenant of Grace it's not properly one of them, but it is something complex made up of them all: And they that would understand the nature of the Gospel Covenant, must take in all the four, 1. Men use to make Covenants of Peace and War, Kingdoms and Nations they use to enter into such Leagues for Peace and War. 2. There are among men Covenants of Traffique and Commerce, wherein either particular Nations, or particular Merchants, will indenture & bargain, and enter in Covenant for Traffique and Commerce. 3. There is among men Covenants, such as pass betwixt Master and Servant, betwixt Princes and Subjects, which they call Despotick Covenants. Lastly. There are among men Marriage Covenants, wherein there passes a Treaty betwixt a Man and a Woman. Now the Covenant of Grace, is not simply one of these four, but he that would rightly take up the nature of it, must consider it as taking in all the four, and when we come under a Covenant with God, or have an Interest in his Covenant, we are concerned in all the four.

First, There is betwixt God and us in the Covenant of Grace, a Covenant of Peace and VVar; It's remarkable the Scripture calls it a *Covenant of Peace*, Isaiah 54. 10. The Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of Peace and VVar, and there are four things that ye will observe among men concur in a Covenant of Peace and VVar, and all the four concur in this Covenant.

First, Ordinarily in a Covenant of Peace and VVar, there is a Reconciliation betwixt the Parties that come under a Covenant of Peace and VVar, readily this is the first step in a Covenant of Peace, Man had fallen in a state of enmity with God, and God in a state of enmity with man, God was bending his Bow, and preparing his Arrows to shoot, and firing them

them on the strings, and he is angry with the VVicked every day; Now when a person comes under a Covenant with God, the first thing that is treated is, a Reconciliation, so that on Gods part, as Isaiah 1. 18. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* And the Sinner on the other hand triumphs in a Peace with God, Rom. 5. *at the beginning, being justified by Faith, we have peace with God:* So there is a Reconciliation made up by this Covenant, the first Step and Article of it is an Article of peace. 2. In Covenants of Peace and VVar, there is not only a Reconciliation, but there is a Fellowship, the Covenant of Peace resolves in Fellowship; it is a rare thing for men to treat a Covenant together, meerly to lay by Feud, and not to have future Friendship; the Covenant of Peace takes in the Reconciliation & Peace, & then adds a Friendship, so that now we may have access to God with boldness, we may go tell him our case, we may beg supplies out of his fulness; the great rise of this is, the Covenant is a Covenant of Peace, it hath both taken away the Feud, and established a Friendship. 3. In Covenants of Peace and VVar, there uses to be an owning of one anothers Interest, their Friends the same, and their Enemies the same; Now this is in the Covenant of Grace, and in this part of it, as it's a Covenant of Peace, God Indentures, that our Friends shall be his Friends, and our Enemies shall be his Enemies, and his Enemies shall be our Enemies; Therefore he appears to Paul like one bound in a Covenant of Peace with the Saints at Damascus, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* on the other hand, we come to be concerned in his Interests, his Truth, his People and all his Concernments; *Do not I hate them that hate thee, says David? yea, I hate them with a perfect hatred:* The Covenant bound him to it, for it's a Covenant of Peace and VVar. Lastly, As there uses to be a Reconciliation, and an establishment of Friendship, and having common Friends & common Enemies, so in these Covenants, Princes and Others they bind to mutual help, they bind to help one anothers Interests in distress; so doth God in the Covenant of Grace, the Lord engages to be our Strength, our Saviour, our Buckler, our Shield, he engages to be a present help in time of need; and on the other hand, we en-

age according to our power, to help him, to come out and help the Lord against the mighty, and to help his People and all his Interests; this is necessary in a Covenant of Peace, and it's necessary to be noticed by Believers on a threefold Account.

1. Many a time they are ready to be shaken exceedingly, in the point of their Peace with God, for why, they find such an ill Heart, such dullness in prayer, they find readily such failings in Conversation, so that they conclude presently, my peace is broken off, no, the first notion under which thou took up the Covenant is a Covenant of Peace, and so long as it stands, thy peace stands; So when there comes to be a breach of Peace, we are still to look into the Covenant, the nature and tenor of it, and to draw out an Extract of the Articles and Terms on which thy Peace comes to be made up; when he made the Reconciliation, and drew the Articles of the Covenant, he drew it not in these terms, *ay when ye sin and provoke me, this Covenant shall be altered*, no, it stood on surer Principles in the Covenant; therefore when thou thinks thy Peace altered, if thou be in Covenant, the Covenant on which thy Peace stands must be altered. 2. It's necessary to be observing the Obligation that lies on Christ's people, to be Christ's Friends, and Enemies to his Enemies; it's a covenanted Obligation in this, that when any of his People are low, ye may think it Charity to help them, but if thou help them not, thou breaks the Covenant, for the Covenant is a Covenant of Peace and War, so that in effect, when any of his friends or servants are in distress, if thou can help them and does it not, thou art in danger of the curse of the Covenant; Therefore take it up ye that would understand the nature of it, and would know what ye do, when ye say, I go and make a personal Covenant with God, and renew a personal Covenant with him, understand what ye do when ye speak of it, it's a Covenant of Peace and VVar, and wherein ye are to have common Friends and common Enemies, and to give help to his People and Friends, it's a Covenant of Reconciliation of Peace with himself, so when any of his Friends stand in need of your help, it's not only an Act of Charity or Compassion, but the neglect of it is a breach of the Covenant,

ye are bound to it by the Covenant; therefore If ye would understand the nature of the Covenant, It's in the first place a Covenant of Peace & VVar, of Reconciliation, of Freindshtp, & for the future, of having common Freinds & common Enemies, & to give help to his Freinds on the account of the Covenant.

Secondly, among Men Covenants are Covenants of Traffique and Commerce together: I believe in these four, I will give you a glance of the tenor of the whole Covenant; It's ordinar for Nations, because every Nation cannot supply it self fully, but it stands in need of the Commodities of other Nations, therefore Princes will enter into a Covenant of Traffique, and exchange Commodities with other, by exporting or importing them; Now the Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of Traffique and Commerce with Heaven, and therefore ye have sometimes a Believer called a Merchant, *The wise Merchant goes and sells all that he hath, and buyes the Field where the Pearl is:* And ye have Christ himself holden out in the Scripture, under the formality of a Merchant, *Come, buy Wine and Milk and Honey, without money, and without price.*

For clearing this formality of the Covenant, as it's a Covenant of Traffique, I would have you to notice three or four things. 1. That Man as he violat the covenant of VVorks, he came under enmity against God, and the Covenant of Peace was broken up, so that by that Fall all Traffique with Heaven was broken up, to this day the natural Man has no kind of Merchandising or Traffiquing with Jesus, readily he may come to Ordinances, and to the Mercat of the Gospel, but he has no Traffique with Christ, his Covenant admits of none, there is neither buying nor selling betwixt Christ and him; but the opening of this everlasting Covenant, and getting an Interest in it, opens a Traffique betwixt Christ and Believers, and ye will find in the Covenant these three or four Things relating to this Traffique.

First, Ye will find the goods we traffique for, holden out in the Covenant, and they are of many kinds, there is *wine, milk, honye, spices, gold, oyl, fine linen, eye-salve,* in effect there are fields, and fields wherein the Pearls are, the Covenant offers, and opens a traffique, a commerce, a trade betwixt

twixt Christ and Believers, and the things are *wine, Milk, Honey, &c.* 2. Ye have the Covenant not only opening the things for which the traffique is about, but ye have the price of them in the Covenant, ye have a treaty about the price of the Commodities, *Isalah 55. ye that have no money, come, and buy without money, and without price;* this seems to be a contradiction, to buy without money, and without price; How can that be? the truth is, our buying is a kind of giving on the merchants part, I confesse it's a considerable Objection, that some move, How can it be said, that these commodities are sold without money, doth not the wise merchant sell all, and goes and buyes the field where the Pearl is, can he be said to buy without money, and without price, that sells all and gives for the field? But the truth is, our all is not money, but *drosse and dung,* and when we have done all, we are but unprofitable servants; and when we have sold all, and bought the field, we have neither given money nor gold for it. 3. There is in this traffique on this formality, under which the Covenant is taken up, there is this clause I say, in the Articles of Traffique, that the whole Stock, on which we Trade, is Christs, and we come to Traffique with another mans goods; It's remarkable, there are some he sends out and gives them but one Talent to Traffique with, others he sends out and gives them two, to another he gives three, to another he gives four, but whether they be one, two, three, or four Talents, they are all his, all the things on which the the Believer Traffiques, according to the Tenor of the Gospel-covenant, they are all his, the glory and grace of it; no wonder they should especially redound to him; so that when we have done any thing, or when we have gone & Traffiqued at a Communion, and Traded in Prayer; or when we have gone to a Sacrament, or a Promise, whatever the Traffique be, it's always Christs Stock on which we Trade, the Talents are his, and not ours, the parts, the gifts, the graces, the liberty in Prayer, the enlargement of Heart in performing Duties, they were all Christs, the Talents were his, and we were only Traffiquers with another mans goods: so when we have most liberty, and make the best Mercat we can, the gain and glory should especially and principally redound to him.

him. 4. In a Covenant of Commerce and Traffique, there uses to be gain designed, and if it be not attained, the Merchant thinks all that he hath done lost labour; this is indeed in the Covenant of Grace, as it's a Covenant of Traffique, the person that has skill to follow the Trade, is designing gain; it's true there are many bunglers and hypocrites, that has no skill to follow the Trade, but he that has skill to Trade, his two Talents becomes four, and his five comes to be ten; it's necessary for them that are under this Covenant of Traffique, to be every year observing how their Stock grows, whether it be Increasing, or going backward, whether thou be more heavenly, more Spiritual, more Tender, or whether thou hast more Communion with God; for the Covenant is a Covenant of Merchandise: for if we be standing still, we are going back, if we be at a stand with it, and has no more this year than the last year, thou has the same measure of Duties, the same measure of Grace, the same measure of Knowledge and of Words, thou has no skill of the Trade, if thou be not thriving and gaining at it; so ye see it's first a Covenant of Peace and War, next it's a Covenant of Traffique; labour to make use of the Covenant; not only for Peace, but for Friendship with him; in the Contrivement and drawing of the Covenant, he designed a Traffique and Trade betwixt him and thee, and designed gain in it, examine therefore how it thrives with you.

Thirdly, this Covenant as it's a Covenant that uses to pass betwixt Princes and Subjects, betwixt Masters and Servants, it's called a *Despotick* Covenant, under this formality it's necessary to be taken up also, as a Covenant betwixt Superiour and Inferiour; now that it is such a Covenant, it's evident, in regard frequently it's called a Command, as Psal, 111. 9. *he has commanded his covenant for ever.* That ye may take it up under this formality, I would have you notice three or four things, that occurs in this Covenant, all of which ye will find meeting in the Covenant of Grace. 1. Ordinarily, the Master and the Superiour Indentures with the Servant for severall things, the servant according to the nature of his station is to perform his part of his Service; every one that comes under a Covenant, are not called to the same service, the

the Master will have one to wait on his own person, another to hold the plough, a third to call the plough, yet all come under a *Despotick* Covenant with the Master; thus it is in the Covenant of Grace, the great Lord and Mediator has Treated the Covenant so, as every Christian that enters in Covenant, though he be not bound to all the Work of other Servants, yet he becomes particularly bound to all the work of the Station, and of the calling, to which by the Covenant he is called; readily he is not bound to the work of an Officer, but to the work of a more Privat station; but all the Duties of his station, the Covenant binds him to them; whatever be the station thou art in, whether thou be a Merchant, or a Master, or a Servant, or a Friend, whatever be the station or relation, God in the Covenant has bound thee to, all the Duties of that station, both in reference to thy Master, and all thy fellow-servants; so that when we wrong our neighbour, let it be in his Name, or in his Possession, we fall under a breach of one Article of the Covenant, so though the Covenant bind first and principally the Master to the Servant, coming under the *Despotick* covenant, and the Servant he is especially bound to the Master, yet when he is under that *Despotick* covenant, the Master will not allow the Servant to strike his fellow-Servants, but he is bound in his carriage to be at Peace with Others; so in this *Despotick* covenant, it binds first, *to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and also to love our neighbour as our selves;* so the injuries done to our Neighbour, are a breach of the Covenant with God. 2. In a *Despotick* covenant, we have not only service Required, but it's ordinar for Masters to tell the Servants the manner of the service, he will have him to do it humbly and obediently, and readily; now in the Covenant of Grace, as the Father has enjoined all the Duties of the station of the Servant, he takes in Covenant, so he has told the manner how it must be performed, he tells it must be performed sincerely, and in faith, and with an eye to Christ, and from a Principle of Love to God, and to the Glory of his Master; or else he tells us in the Covenant, he will regard it no more, *than the cutting off a dogs neck;* or as if he had killed a man; so when we do the duties of

our station, if we do them not with the qualifications required in the Covenant, we break the Covenant. O how many breaches are we guilty of, when we are so little at our Duty; when we engaged in the service, we engaged to do it sincerely and spiritually, that it's not done in Love, Faith; and in the right Gospel Motive, we break the Covenant; no wonder many Believers go with their hands on their loyns, for breach of his Laws, when both the Duties of the station are neglected; or if they be done, they are not done according to the qualifications required. 3ly. In doing this service there is a Reward promised on the Masters part to the Servant, the Lord of that Servant when he cometh, verily I say unto you, the Master shall make him Lord over all that he hath; nay more, the Lord of that Servant shall gird himself, and stand and serve him; so that in effect in this Covenant, as the Covenant binds to the Duties of the station, and that they should be done in such and such a manner; so there is a great Reward promised to them that do them. Lastly, Sometimes liberal Masters in making Covenants with Servants, will give them some Arles, something in hand; so we read in Scripture of the Earnest of the Spirit, that is, in our beginnings, the Arles of the Spirit, the beginnings of Love, of Life, of Liberty, of Peace with God, of Delight in God, they are like a Master, that he may encourage the Servant to do the Work he hath commanded him; not only he promises to give him a Reward, but to give him all that he hath, and will give him an Earnest of that; It's remarkable, Princes that intend to be liberal in their Offers, which they make, as Herod did to Herodias, they have said, *Ask of me, and I will give it thee, to the half of my kingdom*: never one offered to give them all that he had, and to make them Ruler over all that he had; so ye see the Tenor of the Covenant, under all these three Formalties, but all these three hold not out the nature of it so fully, as the fourth, it's a Marriage-covenant, it's a Covenant Transacted, not only betwixt Princes and Subjects, betwixt two Nations Trafficking together, &c. but it is a Marriage-covenant, and that best expresses the nature of it.

S E R

S E R M O N VI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

AMong many differences betwixt the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, this is one; there is no Promise in the Covenant of Works, but there are four Commands for it, but there is no Command in the Covenant of Grace, but it hath two Promises, there is a promise of strength to obey, and a promise of Reward when it is obeyed; Therefore no wonder it be called a Covenant of Promises: I told you that there were four sorts of Covenants among men, and the Covenant of Grace was a Complex of all the four, it has something of the nature of a Covenant of Peace and War, it has something of the nature of a Covenant of Traffique and Commerce, it's a Despotick Covenant, such as betwixt Master and Servant, and Prince and Subjects; but the truth is, all these three do not fully express the nature of it; therefore the fourth which remains a little to be spoken to, will open it more fully, it's a Marriage-covenant, therefore ye find very frequently in Scripture, mention of Espousals, 2 Cor. 11. 2. *I have espoused you, saith Paul, as a chaste virgin to one husband, even to Jesus Christ. I will remember thee of the kindness of thy youth, even of thy espousals*; herein it differs from the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Works was *sedus amicitiae*, God and Adam were friends; but this is *sedus conjugale*, a Marriage-covenant.

That I may the better open this formality of the Covenant,

nant, as a Marriage-covenant, I will offer these two things to be considered. 1. I will shew you, that this Covenant establisheth a Marriage betwixt Christ and Believers, it's in effect the Contract, and contains all the Articles of the Marriage. 2ly. I will shew you on what grounds it comes to pass, that this excellent Covenant establisheth this Marriage.

First, That this Covenant drives at a Marriage, it's not a Covenant of Peace and War only, or a Covenant of Traffique, such as betwixt King and Subject, but it's a Marriage-covenant; The clearing of this will appear, if ye notice two things that use to Constitute a Marriage, and the Covenant establishes them both with Christ. 1. There is an Union, a Marriage Union. 2. There is a Communion that flows from that Marriage Union, these are the two things that essentially constitute a Marriage, and by the Covenant both the two come to be established, betwixt Christ and Believers.

First, There is an Union, I mean not an Union of Friendship, or that is founded in the relation betwixt King and Subject, or Master and Servant, but it's a Marriage Union; there are two properties accompanying a Marriage Union; *First*, It's the nearest Union. *Secondly*, It's the strongest Union. 1. The Union betwixt Christ and Believers, is the nearest Union, it's remarkable, it's compared in Scripture to the Union betwixt the Root and the Branches, the Head and the Body, the Husband and the Wife, they are so Unite, that of all Unions it's the nearest; Christ speaking of these that were unite to him, hath a strange word, Mark 3. and last verses, *For who ever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.* How can these consist together, to be his brother, his sister, and mother? But the meaning is, they have the nearest ties to him, the nearest Union, he is as near to me, as if he were my brother, my sister, and mother. 2. As it's the nearest Union, so it's the strongest; the Marriage Union is of all Unions the strongest; but this Union with Jesus Christ, established by the Covenant, it has something stronger than the ordinary Marriage Union: For. 1. An ordinary Marriage Union may

may be loosed by Adultery; It's not so in this Covenant, *Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return to me, backsliding children, for I am married to you.* 2ly. An ordinary Marriage Union may be dissolved by death, Rom. 7. 2. *The woman which hath an husband, is bound by the Law to her husband, as long as he liveth, but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the Law of her husband;* but neither Adultery, nor Death, can loose this Marriage Union; so the Covenant establishes an Union with Jesus, not merely of Friendship, Traffique and Commerce; but it establishes a Conjugal and Marriage Union.

2ly. This Covenant as it establishes a Marriage Union, so it establishes a marriage Fellowship; the Fellowship and Communion grounded on this Union, makes it a Marriage Fellowship: Take a view of three or four things holden out in the Covenant, in reference to the Fellowship, and ye will find, as there is the nearest Union, and the strongest, and so a Marriage Union, so there is a Marriage Fellowship. 1. Take a view of the Converse that passes betwixt Christ and Believers, 2 Cor. 6. 16. *Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Rev. 3. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me;* Lay these expressions together, *I will be their God, I will dwell in them, I will walk with them, and sup with them;* they look very like a Marriage Converse. 2. Not only doth that converse prove this Marriage Fellowship, but the Covenant holds out betwixt Christ and Believers a mutual Communication of Secrets; not only will he walk in them, dwell in them, sup with them, but he tells them all his Secrets, Joh. 15. 15. *Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* On the other hand, they put him on all their secrets, *All my complaint is before him, and my groaning is not hid from him,* said David; It's remarkable, there are many things we groan for, that we dare hardly tell any body what is at the

root of it; *All my complaint is before thee.* It was a notable word *Hannah* had to *Eli*, when she was mourning in the Temple, and he supposed her to be drunk, *Put away from thee thy wine*, says he; *My lord*, saith she, *I am not drunk with wine, but am a woman of a sorrowful spirit, & I have poured out my complaint before the Lord.* It's a Metaphor taken from a Bottle, that a man is pouring out, untill it be all poured from the bottom; and this is like a Marriage Fellowship indeed, He is their God, and they are his, he walks in them, and dwells in them, and sups with them, and he tells them all that he has heard of his Father, and they pour out their complaint, and their very groaning is not hid from him.

But 3^{ly}. If ye take notice how the Covenant holds out, their standing and falling together like married persons, as the Woman marries the Man for good and ill, the alteration of the Husbands lot, from being strong to be sickly, from being rich, to become poor, from being honourable, to become despised, it looses not the Marriage Union, the Union is still bound. The fellowship betwixt Christ and Believers, is of this nature, it's like the Marriage of Married persons, that if ever they be tender, it's when they are Married, then their affection boils most; it's so with Christ, like a kindly Husband, he is most tender of his married Wife: It's remarkable, when *Stephen* was stoned, he looked up, and saw *Jesus* standing at the Fathers right hand, the Father said to him, *Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* And *Heb. 1. 6.* And when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels worship him; but when any of them that he has Married is suffering, he lets them see *Jesus* standing at his right hand, and all the Angels of God stand and worship him.

Lastly, If ye take a view of the delight they have of one another, O the pleasure he has of converse with his people! *Prov. 8. 30.* Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight. On the other hand, what delight have they in him, when they sit down under the shadow of the Apple-tree, and goes with him into the Garden, and into the Banqueting-house, and finds his fruit sweet to their taste,

taste. So lay all these together, and ye will see the Covenant, as it holds out a Treaty of Peace and War, as it opens a Traffique, as it's a Transaction betwixt Lord and Servant, so betwixt Husband and Wife; so it's a Marriage Covenant, and it establishes an Union and Communion.

Quest. Before I leave this, there is one question to be cleared, one may ask, How is it possible, that there should be a Marriage Union betwixt Christ and his followers in this Covenant, there may be a Treaty of Peace and War, there may be a Traffique betwixt Kings and Subjects, there may be a Covenant, as betwixt Lord and Master, but how can there be a Covenant, as betwixt Husband and Wife? The great reason of this difficulty is, the inequality betwixt the parties, He is the Potter, and we are the Clay, and the Potter to Marry the Clay, there is not only a physical difference, but a Moral, He is infinitely holy, and we are exceedingly sinful, and how then can it be a Marriage Covenant?

Ans. For clearing of this, I desire ye may take notice of three or four things; 1. Our blood is honoured and made noble, by the assuming of our Nature into a Personal Union with the God-head, this has in effect preferred our Nature to the Nature of Angels, Man is now exalted above the Angels, and they think it no disgrace to them, they were our elder Brethren by Creation, and they were more noble Creatures, and we were made a little lower than the Angels, but now they think it no disgrace to worship One that is Man, and to follow Him where ever He goes: How low soever we be by Creation, yet our Blood is Nobilitat, in that it's unite to the Person of the God-head, in the Person of the Mediator. 2. Take notice of this, That Christ has a way of purifying these that He marries, the case is as it was with *Abasuerus* and *Esther*, she is pitched on to marry *Abasuerus*, but there must be thirty days, wherein her Maids were to perfume her, before she was married, this was Typical, and shews, that though there be an inequality betwixt parties, yet Christ has a way of purifying, and making them that have an ill smell'd breath, to give a sweet smell, He has perfumes that can make them sweet and odorous.

ferous. 3. Though there be a great Inequality betwixt the parties, yet the Covenant may drive this Marriage, In regard, how low soever we be by Creation, we are the Fathers Gift in Election to the Son, the Father gave Believers to the Son in Election, *All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me.* Now how Inconsiderable soever we be by Creation, and how despicable a Gift, yet He respects the Gift for the Givers sake. Lastly, Christ is exceeding condescending, for as great, and as noble, and as eminent as Christ is, yet He is of all the most condescending, He took well with that, not to have a hole to lay his head in, and to be crucified betwixt two thieves; and no wonder he take well with it, to marry a black Bride, especially since she was the Fathers Gift, and He knows how to perfume her, and nobilitate her blood, by uniting it to the God-head: So that ye see the Marriage is very forcible, on all these four accounts; Now if ye would rightly take up this Covenant of Grace, and understand what ye are doing, when ye make a Covenant with Christ, ye must take up the Covenant in all these four respects; It's a Covenant of Peace and War, that Christ and ye shall have common Friends, and common Enemies; It's a Covenant of Traffique, where ye may buy and sell, ye may buy fine Linnen, Gold, Eye-salve, without money, and without price; It's a Covenant betwixt Lord and Master, and Subjects and Servants, that ye shall serve Him, and in the manner prescribed in the Covenant; and He shall give the greatest Reward at the Term, and an Arles until it come; and withal, It's a Marriage Covenant; take you to the Covenant under all these formalities, and ye will take it up right.

And that ye may be put to it, to take up the Covenant as a Marriage Covenant; I will but give you these three Qualifications, that are necessary in ones carrying on a Marriage Covenant.

First, I exhort you to hearken to Christ's wooing motions, all the Sermons, and Scriptures that are the grounds of this Marriage, they are indeed Christs wooing motions, He would not only be at peace with them, and have a Traffique with them, but He would have a Marriage; It's true, there are many

many of you, ye may say, as *Abigail* said, she was married to *Nabal*, and *David* sent to take her to him to wife, I am not worthy to wash the Feet of the servants of my Lord, yet she arose and went to meet the Messengers to go with him; indeed we are not worthy to go to His Marriage-bed, and to be priviledged with the priviledges of the Covenant, yet entertain His wooing motions.

Secondly, I would desire you to consider, what the priviledge of such a Marriage is, O such a joynture as He prepares, though he get no Tocher, as a wonderful joynture He gives; It's remarkable, *Abasuerus* had married *Esther*, a poor maid, *Mordecai's* Niece, yet he loves her, so that he says to her at the Feast of the Banquet of Wine, what is thy petition Queen *Esther*, and it shall be granted to thee, even to the half of my Kingdom: But these are not the Terms that he makes to his Bride, they are strange offers in the Covenant, concerning my Sons and my Daughters, command ye me; *Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my Name, he shall give it thee; Delight thy self in the Lord, and he shall give thee according to the desire of thy soul.*

Thirdly, That ye may enter this Marriage Covenant, remember the Terms on which ye must enter, as a Woman in Marriage does when she marries a Husband, she marries him for good and ill, readily ye may see your Husbands interests very low, but let not that dissolve the Marriage; as guiltiness will not dissolve the Marriage on his part, so the Cross attending him should not loose it on our part. Now they that understand the Covenant rightly, and know what they are doing, when they are personally Covenanting with Him, they do all the four, they accept of Him as a Friend, to be at peace with Him; and to have common Friends, and common Enemies; and they accept of a Covenant of Traffique, that they will buy gold and fine linnen; and they accept Him as a Lord; but especially they take Him for a Husband, the Covenant is a Marriage Covenant. These four will sum up the great Heads of the Covenant. But to go further.

The Third thing I would open is, how this Covenant is made up on all these four Heads; I will not hear speak of the Mediators part, I pitched on that else, and shewed you what

what the Mediator did, in reference to the Covenant. But for the making up of all these four sorts of Covenants, there are two things necessary to make it up. 1. There must be consent to all the Articles by both parties. And 2. There must be Obligations to secure the consent for the future, or otherways variable Creatures like us, if there were not a penalty, and a curse put into the Covenant, what would our consent signifie? Now both the two are necessary, in Transacting of all these four sorts of Covenants, in all the Heads and Articles of it. *First*, There must be consent of parties, to make up the Covenant. *Secondly*, An Obligation from the hazard or curse, in case that consent be past from; and here I will speak a little of the Consent, that is necessary to make up this Covenant, I need not speak of the Consent on Gods part; I will evidence to you, the most hearty consent that ever was given to a Contract on His part, by these three things.

First, He committed the drawing of the Covenant to the Mediator; It's true the Prophets were the Pen-men and Secretaries, but the Mediator was the Inspirer of all the Articles, now it was an evidence of His hearty consent, that He committed the drawing of the Covenant to the Mediator, and His Glory is a thousand times more advanced by the Covenant of Grace, than it was by the Covenant of Works, all the payment He would have gotten from Adam, was nothing to the payment he hath gotten from His Son; If all the Angels, if all the Sons of Adam had met together to do Him service, they would not all make up such a piece of service, as he got from His Son, the Man that was His Fellow. 2. His consent it's all along declared in the Scripture, why has He penned this Bible, and appointed His Ministers to Preach and press it on people, if He were not serious in His designs? Why makes He such protestations, *As I live, I delight not in the death of sinners*. Why weeps He when His offers are refused, as He did over Jerusalem, if He had not given His consent in the Covenant? 3. The Mediator that drew the Covenant, and seal'd it by a Testament with His Blood; of all the persons that ever were received into Glory, He received Him in the greatest Triumph, when He wel-

welcomed His first-born Son to Glory, He set Him down on His right hand, and bade *all the angels worship him*; If He had not done Him the greatest Service, would He have used Him so? And would He had so great pleasure to have them *singing, worthy, worthy is the Lamb*? But all the matter in making up the Covenant, is about our consent to the Covenant; now a Christian gives his consent to the Covenant, and thereby in all the four Heads, makes it to be a sure and fast Bargain.

First, We give our consent to the Covenant in the second Adam; as we gave an Implicite consent to the Covenant of Works in the first Adam, so we gave a consent to the Covenant of Grace in the second Adam: Here ye would take notice, that though the Covenant of Grace be made with all Believers, and every particular Believer may make use of it, as if it were only intended for him; yet the principal Parties Treating the Covenant are, the Father, and the Mediator; the Covenant of Grace is especially made with the Mediator; now when the Messiah giveth His consent, and accepts of the Covenant, as a Publick Person standing in the room, and supplying the place of all the Elect, we gave our consent in Him; and the truth is, there is never a Christian that comes to be backward to embrace the Covenant, or that after they have embraced the Covenant, breaks it, but in a manner, they say, that Christ consented to more than they will stand to; for as the Father in Baptism binds the Son to the Covenant, so the Mediator as a Publick Person, standing in the room of all the Elect, the Father had given His consent, and the Mediator had given His consent to the Covenant in all our Names, and has engag'd to get our consent; as a Husband may consent for the Wife, or the Parent may consent for the Child that is a Minor; so doth Christ as a publick Person consent in our Name, and who ever break the Covenant, they as it were, flee away from our consent of the Covenant, Transacted betwixt the Father and the Mediator.

Secondly, We give our consent to all the Articles of the Covenant in our Baptism: A Christian before He can be engaged to other Lovers, the Lord keeps him as it were from the

the Womb, He will give him his Name, the Seal of the Covenant; It's true the Parent binds for the Children, as men may make Bonds binding their Heirs, so they have a warrant to bind for their Children to God: There are two consents we give, and both of them are implicite, our Parents bind us to be Christs Friends in Baptism, to buy of him gold, fine linen, and to accept of Him for our Lord, to marry Him, and to have the nearest Union with Him, and the sweetest Communion that can be enjoyed: But there is a twofold explicite consent, that we give to the Covenant; First, It's an explicite consent, when we accept of the external Priviledges of the Church, the Word and Sacraments; when we accept of these, and stile our selves Members of the Church, the very accepting of the Priviledges, is a consent to all the Articles of the Covenant; a person that is not resolved to be serious in taking the Covenant on all these four Heads, had done better not to have accepted the Priviledge of the Church, the very accepting of the priviledge, to go to the Church, to get your Children Baptized, to come to the Table of the Lord, is as much as to say, I will stand to what the Mediator Treated, & what my Parents did engage to, when I was Baptized. 2. We give this explicite consent, either in the Sacrament of the Supper, or at any time that a Christian comes under a personal Vow, both of these are expresse consents; so that, though it may be, as ye will hear, the consent be not cordial; for there are many kinds of consents to the Covenant; though I say the consent be not cordial, yet it's enough to bring thee under the Curses of the Covenant, though it bring thee not under the Blessings of the Covenant, thou has neither a Covenant of Friendship, nor a Covenant of Traffique; the Mediator gave His consent, and thy Parents gave their consent, and in thy accepting of the Priviledges of the Church, and the Sacrament of the Supper, thou gave thine; and though they bring thee not to be married to the Mediator, yet they may bring thee under the Curse of the Covenant; for when it may be thou replies, thou did not give thy consent to the Covenant, but thy consent was given, in thy accepting of the priviledges of the Church; or when

when thou came to the Sacrament of the Supper, or came under a personal Vow, and in this consent, either we accept and cordially imbrace the Covenant, or by our consent we expose ourselves to all the Curses of it; the very consent engages us to all the Curses of it, therefore will He say unto thee, *Out of thy mouth I condemn thee*: So the Father is cordial in his consent, and the Mediator can bear Him witness of it; and all in the visible Church, they visibly profess they stand to the Covenant, as He drew it, they approve of the consent He gave, and that their Parents gave in Baptism, and by their accepting of the outward priviledges of the Church, and when they take the Sacrament of the Supper, they give their own consent, and when they have given their own consent, they are either under all the curses of the Covenant, or all the Blessings of it.

Quest. I will only clear one case of Conscience, that may be very obvious against this Doctrine, and so shall close this Sermon; some may say, I am afraid to give an expresse consent, or else I would go home from this Sermon, and go to a corner and tell Him, I owne what the Mediator did, when he consented to the Covenant in my Name; I owne what my Parents did in Baptism, and I give my own consent, and gives my hand, and as it were strikes hand with the Father; I will go and do all these things, but I am afraid to give my consent, on a twofold account. 1. I am afraid that my consent be not sincere. And 2^d, I am afraid that it be not abiding. I confess this is a great Objection, for the Covenant cannot be really Treated, but by Consenters who are upright, and who will persevere.

For Answer to the Question, I will offer you two or three things. 1. I would have you notice, that several times, the first motive of the Souls consenting to Covenant with God, it's often fear, I confess indeed, fear is a changeable thing, and we may do with our fears, as the same goes of the man, that when he was upon Sea, he Vowed to the Virgin Mary, that if he came safely to Land, he would offer her a pound of Candle, but when he came to Shore, he said a plack Candle might serve her; our resolution alters with our Fears, yet many times fear of Hell, and desire of Heaven, drives on the

the beginning. Ye must not think the work will not be sincere, because fear of Hell may be at the bottom of thy consenting to the Covenant, no, like a Woman that is marrying a Man, the first motive of the Marriage is, he is a great man, and has a great Estate, and I will have an easie life with him, but yet afterward she comes to love him for himself; the beginning of the work, and thy giving thy hearts consent to owne the Mediator, in what he did, it may be fear of Hell, and love of Heaven, and thou may love the man that is offered to be thy Husband, because thou wilt get great things with him, yet afterward thou wilt love him for himself, therefore stand not at it on this account, but come forward.

Secondly. Take notice, that sometimes there may be a very hearty consent, when yet it is but ill exprest, there may be much in the heart, and little in the expression; the truth is, the case is in our consenting to the Covenant, as with two men, the one is an honest man, and drow not endure cheating, but for his hand-writ, he can draw nothing but his mark; the other man is a Clerk, and can draw excellent Letters, and Gild them all with Gold, but he has a cheating Hand, and a false heart: In thy consent to the Covenant, though thou can but take up more of thy ill, and knows not what thy comfort is, yet there may be much love, thou art like the man that is writing only his mark, and the fear of Hell, and love of Heaven, makes thee give thy consent, and when thou hast given thy consent, thou cannot write thy own name; but thy mark, yet come forward and write thy mark.

Thirdly, I exhort thee that makes this doubt, to consider, that the strength to persevere in the Covenant, when thou hast consented, it must come from the Covenant; the case is with us, as with some poor men that comes to a Writer, and bids him write the Bond of such a Sum, and after it is written, he bids him pay for the writing of it, and he saith, I have nothing to pay for it, until the Bond be payed to me; in the point of perseverance it's so with us, we are not to go and torment our selves with, I will fall away, I will not persevere, we are not bound to pay for the Bond,

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until that the Bond be payed to us; therefore it is the ground-lesst thing in the world to stand at, I will not give my consent to the Covenant, for I will not be sincere, I will not get bidden at it, but I will give my consent, when the Bond is payed to me, and then I will pay for the writing of it, and I will get strength to perform, and to persevere; thou has no furniture, neither for being cordial, nor for perseverance, until once the Bond be begun to be payed.

Lastly, Christian know, thou that stands at consenting on these Grounds, know this for certainty, that there has a great many entred in Covenant with Christ, and consented to it, they have gone and made a personal Covenant, and holden up their hand, and Vowed it in a Covenant with God, that were as weak at the beginning as thou, and by their hanging on the Promises of the Covenant, have been kept constant; if in thy consent to the Covenant, and endeavouring to keep it, if thou honestly endeavour to keep it, every breach of it will not make Him cast thee out of it: I confesse some Covenants men will make, they have this clause in it, If the one fail, the other is loose, the Master and Servant are free at the Term; it's not so in the Covenant of Grace, the Covenant of Grace binds God to His own Faithfulness, and His Son, *If we believe not, he abides faithful, he cannot deny himself*; the scope of this is, to put you, to owne your Mediators consent, and your Parents consent, and go home and strike hands with Him, and accept of the Covenant of Peace, and a Covenant of Traffique, that ye will be more in going to the Mercat, where gold, eye-salve, fine linen, are to be sold, without money, and without price, and that ye will accept Him for a Lord; and readily when the Bond is beginning to be payed, ye will find enough for steadfastness and sincerity. There is God's part, and our part in the Covenant, and we will never do any thing at our part, until He begin to do at His part, all the furniture for our part must come from Him; therefore we can never be the first Pay-master, and can never be the party in Covenant, that will begin first to pay the Articles of the Covenant; no, in the day we Covenant with Him, we make this

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an express Article in the Covenant, Lord, till thou fulfil Thy part, I can never fulfil my part.

SERMON. VII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

I Divided this Verse in five Branches, the first Branch was the Nature of the Security, that David had from God for his encouragement, He calls it a Covenant; I have dwelt on this at length, though Divines that write of the Covenant, insist on several things that I have not mentioned, yet I need dwell no longer in opening the nature of the Covenant, than I have done; there is no man nor society of men, can loose the Obligation of a Covenant, It always binds, either to the Duties, or to the Curse and Penalty of the Covenant, and If we cast off the Obligation to the Duty, we ly under the Obligation to the Penalty.

But before I yet leave this Branch, there is one thing I proposed in the Point, when I named it, that I will dwell on in the work of this day, which is, to evidence and prove, that this Covenant is a Covenant of Grace, for so I told you in the proposing of the Point, that the great ground of encouragement at Death is, *the Covenant of Grace*: I confess, I remember not where in all the Scripture it's expressly called by this Name; It's called, *a Covenant of Peace*, and a *Covenant of Promises*, Ephes. 2. 12. And it's called, *a Covenant consisting of mercies*, Ilai. 55. *I will make an everlasting cove-*

covenant with them, even the sure mercies of David: The root and end of it is said to be Grace, *To the praise and glory of his grace*, and to the *exalting of his grace*: There are multitude of Names given it in the Bible, equivalent to this Name, *a Covenant of Grace*; Therefore it may very rationally have this Name, *a Covenant of Grace*. But the thing I intend to follow in the work of the day is, to do these four things, and If the Lord be with us, and bless us, they may be for our edification and advantage. 1. I will prove and make appear to you, that this everlasting Covenant, this ordered and sure Covenant, is a Covenant absolutely of Grace. 2. I will shew you some reasons, why God in Transacting this Covenant, would have it to be intirely a Covenant of Grace. 3. I shall clear an Objection or two. And lastly, shall help you how to improve it, in reference to some particular cases.

First, For proving that it's a Covenant absolutely of Grace, I must first clear what is meant by the word *Grace*; it's true, sometimes it's put for inherent Grace, which Papists call *Gratia gratum faciens*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. But grew in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ: most ordinarily it's put for Gods free favour and good will, so we find Rom. 11. *If it be of grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace would not be grace*: And when we call it a Covenant of Grace, the meaning is, it's a Covenant consisting of meer Favour and Good-will; and this is the thing I am to make out this day, that this Covenant is absolutely and intirely a Covenant of Grace: I confess this is a generally supposed Principle among Christians, yet it's not well understood. First, That Covenant which is founded neither in the merit of the Creature, nor in any alluring Motive from the Creature, must be a Covenant of Grace with the Creature; there are ordinarily two things that influence Transactions and Covenants, the merit of the Creature, or if there be no merit, some alluring motive; Abimelech entered in a Covenant with Isaac, because he saw God was with him; Shechem is content to enter in a Covenant with Jacob's Children, for all their cattle, *said he, will be ours*: many will enter in Covenants with others, either on the account of merit, or

Master will Covenant with his Servant to pay him his Fee, and that because he hath wrought well; or if there be no merit, they go on some alluring motive; a man will enter in a Marriage-covenant sometimes, on the account of beauty, and sometimes on the account of riches; but God in entering in a Covenant with us, saw neither merit, nor any alluring motive; as for our beauty, *Ezekiel 16. 6. When I passed by thee, thou wast cast out in the high-way, lying in thy blood, to the shame of thy nakedness, and no eye pitied thee, I passed by thee, and cast my skirt over thee, and the time was a time of love:* And for our goodness and riches, *Psal. 50. 12. If he were hungry he needed not tell us, for the cattle upon a thousand hills belong to him;* and *Psal. 16. 2. our goodness extends not to thee:* He had been no less glorious nor happy, if He had never created Man, it had diminished nothing from His infinite perfection. Now a Covenant founded and transacted betwixt Him and us, where there is neither merit, nor any alluring motive, must absolutely be a Covenant of free Will, and Intire Grace.

But *Secondly*, to evince this yet further, that it is a Covenant absolutely of Grace, compare it with the Covenant of Works, the Covenant made with *Adam*; for in the Covenant made with *Adam*, there was indeed Grace in it, yet not so much Grace as appeared in this Covenant; the Covenant made with *Adam*, was made with a person, that did not merit a Covenant, yet it was made with an innocent man, however he had not provoked God, yet he did not merit, that God should Covenant with him; the Covenant made with *Adam*, was made with an undeserving man indeed, but He makes the Covenant of Grace with His enemy, *For when we were yet enemies, Christ died for us, Rom. 5.* And He gave Himself for the ungodly, and not for the innocent; any of us may know by our own temper, if we shall make that the measure, whereby to consider Acts of Grace, if a man had never wronged us, nor injured us, in word or in deed, how ready are we to make peace with him; but if he had done his utmost out of malice and contempt of heart, it's not easie to fall under a Covenant with him; The Covenant made with the first *Adam*, was made with

with an innocent man, that had done nothing to disoblige Him; but when He made the Covenant of Grace, He made it with fallen Man, the ungodly man, that was His enemy; now what a great deal of Grace was there in this; If we had bound up Covenants of Friendship, and fellowship with a man, and if he had betrayed, and gone contrary to his engagements, and turned implacable and vindictive, would we bind up a Covenant with that man again? And the case was so, when He treated a Covenant of Grace, He not only saw no merit, nor alluring motive, but He saw us in a state of enmity; yet that kindred Him not to make a Covenant with us.

Thirdly, To shew the Grace of this Covenant, consider the great Blessings that He is content to promise, and engage for in the Covenant, far greater Blessings than in the Covenant of Works; nothing contributes more to evidence it to be a Covenant of Grace, than the consideration of the Blessings promised in the Covenant. I suppose a man should take a Beggar, or a Prince should take a Rebel, and promise him his Life, and make him his kitchen boy, and give him liberty to scour the Vessel, and turn the Rost, it were much; but if he indenture with him, that he shall feed him with Wine, and Milk, and Honey, and Spices, and give him Gold in his Purse, and Eye-salve, nay more, if he indenture with him to give him his Son in marriage, nay to give him himself, considering there is neither merit, nor alluring motive for this, the person is a Rebel, a base and unworthy man; in the Covenant of Grace, the Lord hath taken this way to evidence the Grace of it, to speak with reverence, it's impossible for Him to promise greater things, He is at the utmost of what He can do, and Men and Angels admire of what He can do; however He be infinite in Power, yet it's impossible, to speak with reverence, for the Eternal God, to promise greater things than Himself, and His Son, for all Eternity, and that in such a way, as the Creature can be capable to enjoy; so that considering the great Blessings of the Covenant, not to speak of Pardon, Peace, and Communion, and Joy, but to promise Himself, and His Son; In the Covenant He promises to give His Son

to suffer, to be a curse, and subject Him to the lowest things, except Sin, that He could be capable of. It is a great Controversie betwixt us and Papists, if He descended locally into Hell: we deny it, but we maintain that He had the equivalent of the Pains of Hell on His Spirit; and that Article of our Belief, is to be understood of horroir of Spirit; now to advance us to the greatest priviledges we can be capable of, which are, the enjoyment of Himself, and His Son, for all Eternity, in the perfectest measure we can be capable of, what a deal of Grace is in it?

Fourthly, To evidence that it's thus a Covenant of Grace, consider on what Terms in the Covenant these great things are; and indeed here especially lyes the grace of the Covenant, any would think the Terms behoved to be very high, considering the Glory of the Merchant, and the greatness of the Marriage; here is the matchless Grace of the Covenant, the Terms on which all these are offered, makes it indeed of Grace; and in reference to the Terms, I will offer these five remarkable Considerations, that evidence it a Covenant of Grace. 1. He that offers these Commodities, offers them with a free Discharge of all bygone Debt, if for the future the Covenant will be Imbraced, this is a remarkable Article, to evidence the freedom of the Terms; there is no blasphemous person like *Paul*, none that hath had seven Devils like *Mary Magdalen*, there is no persecutor like *Manasseh*, it's supposed he was one of the most terrible persecutors, of whom the Apostle, *Heb. 11.* speaks, *Offsawing asunder*, he sawed *Isaiab* asunder with a Saw; no Publican like *Matthew*, no denier of Christ like *Peter*, no murderer and adulterer like *David*; no person of whatsoever guilt, except one Sin, He hath excepted the Sin against His Spirit, but He is content in the Covenant, if any Imbrace and take hold of the offers, He will pass all by-gones, if there be accurat walking for the time to come. 2ly, It's remarkable in the Terms, that He requires no other condition, but allanerly Faith, and its Concomitants, this is in effect as much as a free Discharge, and ye shall not pay for it, only humbly and thankfully accept of it; Faith is altogether consistent with Grace; suppose there were a great

great man, would offer a Beggar a Talent, Is it not an Alms, and an Act of Grace, If there be no more required of the Beggar, but to take the Alms? The Covenant of Grace runs in this Channel, only Believe, accept of the Offer of my Self, and of my Son, for all eternity, and this is all that is required. 3ly, The least degree of this acceptance, providing it be sincere and not counterfeit, the Covenant accepts of it; if your Faith be as the Grain of Mustard-seed, suppose it be never so small, if it be not counterfeit, the Covenant accepts of it. And *lastly*, the Covenant accepts of it; though it be mixed with much corruption, that poor man in the Gospel that came crylog to Christ, hath a kindly answer, *Help me, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.* *Mark 9. 23.* My Faith hath a great deal of dross among it, it is as large Unbelief, as Faith, but, *Lord, help my unbelief:* Now the Covenant that runs on these Terms, is not this a Covenant absolutely of Grace?

But *lastly*, to add no more, it's evident to be a Covenant of Grace, if ye consider the way how this Covenant is followed; it's not only without merit, and alluring motives; it's not only made with fallen Man, and not only with an innocent Man, not only holds it out the greatest things God can give, and on the freest Terms: But *lastly*, it's evident to be a Covenant of Grace, if we consider how He follows it, I will name but three or four things how He follows it, and they will evidence it yet further to be a Covenant of Grace. 1. He is the first seeker and offerer of a Covenant; any body would think, that we should begin the motion, for we were the men that had the room band, and He had the full; but yet He is the beginner, and He may say of any when they are effectually Called, and brought under the bond of the Covenant, *I am found of them that sought me not, and sought them that asked not for me.* 2ly, It's remarkable in the way of following it, that the persons whom He follows, they are not only in all things equal with others, but several times they are worse than others, if ye take a view of them in their natural priviledges, was not *Esau Jacobs* brother, and the elder brother, and had the birth-right, yet *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated:* Ordinarily these that

he follows to bring under the Covenant, are alike in all things, two lying in one Womb, two grinding at the mill, two on the house top, yet He makes a Covenant with the one, and passes by the other: but often they are worse than others, often-times ye will find them simpler than others, they are the foolishest things, *things that are not*; yea sometimes they are very ignorant, and that in the great things of the Gospel, the subtiles of Philosophy are almost ridiculous to them; yea many times they are the worst and greatest of sinners, that He brings under the bond of the Covenant, the like of Paul, of Peter, of Manasseh: Now that He should follow the Covenant thus, that He should follow them that have the same things naturally, they are pieces of Clay out of the same Pir, they are Stones out of the same Quarree, and that He should make chosse of one like a shrub, and the things He leaves like tall cedars, What a deal of Grace is there in it, that He should take the shrub, and pitch upon it, bring it under the Covenant, and leave them that are wise for Wit and Learning? *g/y*, If ye take a view of this, the Grace of the Covenant will appear, that after He hath sought them, and found them, and selected them, and bound them with the Cords of the Covenant, the Grace of it appears in this, that once bound, and ay bound, it's everlasting, there is no getting out under it again, it contributes to evidence the Grace of the Covenant, that He will bide so many refusals, that He will stand, and knock at the door, until his head be wet with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, and then put in His Hand at the hole of the lock, if He can get but an hole in the door, though He cannot get an open door, He will put in His Finger at the hole of the door, and drop in Mirrhe upon the handles of the lock: may not all these things evidence the Grace of the Covenant; but nothing evidences it more than this, that no unbelief, no guiltiness will cast without the Covenant again, If once in Covenant with Him, once in, and ay in it: Thus He Covenanted with David. If his children offend, He will correct them with the rods of men, *He will visit their iniquity with rods, and their transgressions with stripes*; He will send them to prisons, and to scaffolds, but his pre-
sence

since nor his loving kindness will he not take from them. Now lay all these together, and I hope I have evinced to you, that this Covenant is absolutely and intirely a Covenant of Grace.

Quest. I would clear one Objection before I give you the Reasons of it, May not some say, are there not conditions in the Covenant, and are they not difficult, if not impossible to be performed? Can that be a Covenant of Grace, that calls for self-denial, for taking up of the cross, for repentance, for faith, for being holy as God is holy? Nay more, it calls for all the duties of the Covenant of Works, and more; for the Covenant of Works bound Adam neither to repentance, nor faith; but this Covenant binds to obedience to the whole Law, and to repentance, and believing, which the Covenant of Works did not; and can this be a Covenant of Grace, that runs in this channel?

For Answer to this Question, *Antinomians* indeed say, there are no conditions, and therefore they deny it to be a proper Covenant; they say, it's rather a Promise than a Covenant; we maintain there are conditions in it, and all these things are true, it binds to obedience to the whole Law; but there are three things in the conditions, that in effect make them nothing contrair to this, that it's a Covenant of Grace. 1. There is no condition in it to be performed in our own strength, a man goes quite from the Covenant of Grace, that would wring repentance out of his own heart, or that would pray, or preach, or hear, in his own strength; indeed this suited well with the Covenant of Works; and when we go like Sampson in our own strength, we go directly from the Covenant of Grace; the Father in the Covenant, hath appointed a Nurse to bear us up, He hath appointed a Tutor to govern and guide us, a Purse-master to bear our flock, *sa that of our selves, as of our selves, we can do nothing*, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Grace, we are to do nothing, whether to suffer, to pray, to preach, to hear; the Covenant is so contrived, that all these things called for, are not called for in our own strength; we break the Covenant, if we wring them out of our own strength; the main thing is to lay our flock in Christ's hand,

whether to do, or to suffer, it's according to the Tenor of the Covenant, that we should be supplied by His Grace, that we should have wisdom, sanctification, and all from Him, which is a necessary thing for Believers to observe, that take them to the Covenant of Grace; they are sometimes exceedingly prejudged, by not eyeing this Covenant, when they pray, or go to hear, they think the surety they have from Grace, or the habitual Grace they have, will carry them through the duty, no, ye break the Covenant, if ye eye not Him in all things the Covenant calls for. 2/y, Although there be many conditions in the Covenant, yet nothing is a condition on our part, but it's a promise on Gods part; there cannot be that Duty instanced in all the Covenant, for which there is not a Promise, so is the business contrived, as if ye saw a Merchant that lays out a piece of cloth to a man to buy, and the man hath no money to buy it with, but he engageth to give him money, but before he buy it, the Merchant promiseth to give him money to buy it with: So there is no Duty, let it be named, Mortification, or Vivification, there is no Grace required, or Duty to be performed, but there is a Promise in reference to that Grace, and that Duty. Now since there is no condition on our part, or duty to be performed on our part, but there is a Promise on Gods part; the condition makes nothing against the Covenant. 3/y, There is no condition in the Covenant, the want whereof will cast us out of the Covenant, it's remarkable, the Covenant betwixt God and us, the Covenant of Grace, is not made as a bargain betwixt two men, wherein they engage, I vow and promise to do this to you, providing ye do this to me, I will give you such a sum of money, if ye give me against such a day such a piece of cloth, and if he bring it not against such a day, the other is loosed from the condition of the money: where there is a conditional bargain, he that falls on the one part of the condition, he looses the other, it's not a binding obligation: It's not so in this Covenant, though there be conditions in the Covenant, our not fulfilling of the condition, looses not God from His part of it; if there were any thing that would loose Him, Faith being the great condition of the Cove-

Covenant, it would be the want of Faith, if we believe not, yet he abides faithful, he cannot deny himself. There are conditions in the Covenant, but there is no condition required so, that if once we be in the Covenant, will loose God from the condition on His part of it: the reason of it is, the Cautiomer in the Covenant becomes bound for our falling in the Covenant, and what is wanting in our Sanctification and Obedience, the Lord gets satisfaction for it in Christ's Righteousness. So there are conditions and great things required; yet they make nothing against it's being a Covenant of Grace. I hope from all this, I have in this Sermon abundantly evinced, that this everlasting Covenant, is properly a Covenant of Grace, though it hath conditions in it.

SERMON VIII.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

IT's an Act of Grace that God did ever condescend to any kind of Covenant with man, so great a God, but to make such a Covenant, a Covenant of Promises, and of so great and precious Promises, we may indeed do as the builders that builded the second Temple, cry, Grace, grace unto him. I was proving in the forenoon, that this Covenant was a Covenant of Grace, notwithstanding of all the conditions in it: Before I proceed in the following of it, I would have you notice, that when the Covenant is called a Covenant of Grace; ye are to suppose, that the Grace

Grace of the Covenant hath these three properties. 1. It's a Covenant of pure and unmixed Grace, there is nothing but Grace in it, there is neither merit, nor motive, and therefore the whole contrivement of it is Grace, and only Grace. 2/y, While we call it a Covenant of Grace, it is not only to be understood of pure and unmixed Grace, but of perfect Grace; the Grace in the Covenant is advanced to so great a height, as the definition of perfection agrees to it. Morallists say, that that is perfect in which nothing is wanting, and to which nothing can be added; now the Grace of the Covenant is of this nature. 3/y. When we call it a Covenant of Grace, it's to be understood of persevering Grace, Grace which cannot be changed: Some things may be pure and perfect, but they are variable; the most part of the kindnes of Creatures are of this nature; let them run like a burn in a spalt, yet a Summer comes, and they dry, it's not so with the Fountain: They say, the original of all Springs is the Ocean, and that the Water grows fresh running through the bowels of the Earth, and they must drain the Ocean, ere they drain the Spring; no wonder then it be persevering Grace; so that when we call it a Covenant of Grace, the meaning is, it's a Covenant of pure unmixed Grace, perfect and full Grace, and of persevering and continuing Grace. But before I improve this, the calling it a Covenant of Grace, because it will have a great influence on all the Sermons following, I would clear two or three questions that may come in, as Objections against the Covenants being a Covenant of Grace.

Quest. 1. It may be objected, what reasons or motives, since there was neither meriting, nor moving consideration, what else could this Covenant have, to be a Covenant of pure, perfect, and persevering Grace? These that write of this Head, bring a number of reasons, they say, that God intended to humble man, and to make him inexcusable, for when He shall judge him at the great day, he will have nothing that will be a clock of excuse, according to that word, *Joh. 15. 22.* If I had not come unto them, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no clock for their sin. To refuse a Covenant of Grace, takes off all clock of excuse;

I deny not, but there may be many reasons why He made it a Covenant of so pure, perfect, and persevering Grace: but I conceive, the special reasons why it's so made, may be reduced to these two. 1. He made it thus of Grace, that it might be sure, *Rom. 4. 16.* Therefore it is of faith and by grace, that the promise might be sure to the seed: Mark, there it's by Grace, that the Promise might be sure; had God entered with us in a Covenant on any terms in the world, but Grace, it would never have been sure, suppose we had been as perfect as Adam; and had had as great a stock of grace within us, yet He would never make a bargain with the like of us, who were so changeable things, if the bottom of the bargain had not been Grace; therefore it's through Faith, and by Grace, that the Promise might be sure to the seed; He knew what we were, when we were at our best, when we were new come off the stocks, and were new come from His Hands by Creation; probably Adam stood not above five hours, and what would a Covenant with the like of us signify, if it stood not on Grace? 2/y. He made it thus of Grace, that He might exalt Christ: the securing of us, and the exalting of His Son, both contribute exceedingly to His own Glory; afterward I will make it out to you, if the Lord will, that the Father is infinitely more Glorified in the Covenant of Grace, than if the Covenant of Works had stood: but the great design He had in making a Covenant of Grace, was to secure us, and exalt His Son; the Covenant runs in these Terms, that in all Duties, in all our sufferings, we must ay go to Christ for strength. But if any would ask our right to the Crown, what ground we have to think, that He will not cast us in Hell? how we will pray, how we will suffer, and believe, and how we think to be freed from Hell? The Answer of all these Questions is in one word, in Christ; the Covenant is so contrived, as when we have to do for Wisdom, Sanctification, Righteousness, Redemption, the truth is, in the Covenant, Christ is made all things. He is the way, the truth, and the life, the door, the bread, the drink, and the apparel; the Apostle sums them up in one word, He is all in all. Now the exalting of His Son, never was there so submissive

a Son to the Father, He was His Equal, and was content to be trampled on, and in a manner bruised, therefore the exalting of His Son, is the great contrivement of the Covenant; so that in effect, it is of Grace, both that the Promise might be sure to the seed, and that Christ might be exalted; in both which, the Glory of the Father is more advanced, than in all the Works of Creation and Providence; and that clears the first difficulty, why God resolved to make it a Covenant of Grace?

Quest. 2. The second difficulty against this, that it's thus a Covenant of pure, perfect, and persevering Grace, How can this stand with the Justice of God, and with His Holiness? God is naturally just, and infinitely just, and He necessarily punishes sin, as the fire burns, or as a weighty thing moves downward? It's remarkable, the Scripture tells, *He cannot behold iniquity, nor suffer it to go unpunished*; now to make with Rebels, and swear a Covenant, to accept of men perfect holiness, to accept of the Will for the Deed, to pardon iniquity, to cast their sins in the bottom of the sea; to tell them in the Covenant, *the iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for, and not be found*; How stands this with Justice? Doth not Grace prevail over Justice?

Ans. For Answer to this, know, that this Covenant of Grace, is made on all these Terms that I spoke of in the forenoon, without the least violation of Justice, and two things will evidence the truth of this. 1. Christ the Mediator of the Covenant, before He could accomplish and order a Covenant of Grace, He treated a Covenant of Redemption; I think indeed, that is a proper Covenant, though generally forraign and domestick Divines have not adverted to it; yet many of late, have seen all the essentials of a Covenant in it; the Son (before the Covenant of Grace was, in all the particulars of it Transacted) He Transacted a Covenant of Redemption with the Father, wherein He undertook to satisfy Justice, and the Covenant of Grace runs in so free a current and channel, on the account of the Mediator's indenturing the Covenant of Redemption. 2ly. It's no wrong to Justice, to accept of a Cautioner, there was Mercy in the midst of it; there was Grace in the Fathers

accepting a satisfaction from the Son: The School-men speak of the Fathers uniting the God-head with the Manhood, and so glorifying the Humane Nature, and the accepting of a Satisfaction from the Humane Nature, was an Act of Grace, yet such an Act of Grace as Justice was satisfied fully by a person that had not committed the deed: *Zalencus* emitted a Law, that whosoever committed Adultery in his Kingdom, both their eyes should be put out, and when the Heir of his own Kingdom committed Adultery, he appointed one of his eyes to be put out, and one of his own, because he thought that the person that sinned should suffer; but this was neither perfect suffering, nor perfect satisfaction and Justice; but here Justice is abundantly satisfied, though the person sinning, was not the person sufferer; to be brief, the Covenant of Grace being a result of the Covenant of Redemption, wherein the Mediator undertook the paying of the sinners Debt, it's abundantly satisfying to Justice, and *Mercy and Justice kiss one another*; for Mercy has gotten full scope, and Justice has gotten full satisfaction.

Quest. 3. The third question I will move against this Truth, that it's a Covenant of Grace; some may say, there might have been more Grace in it than there is, there might have been Promises of perfect holiness; now in all the Bible we have no Promise of perfect Sanctification: and which makes this the more difficult, we are commanded to endeavour perfection, and yet we have no promise of perfection in all the Scripture; we cannot go to God in Faith and Pray, to make us perfect in this life, for we can Pray for nothing in Faith, whereof we want a Promise; so that it would seem, it's not of such perfect Grace, as I have been saying, for there is not in all the Bible a promise of perfection.

Ans. For the clearing of this, I will offer you these three things. 1. It's the nature of sincerity to aim at perfection; it stands as it were on its Tip-toes, and stretches its arms to it; it's true they are but childrens arms, and are but weak, and cannot reach far off, yet there is never sincerity, but there is an aim at perfection; therefore ye shall

shall find the truly godly, the most part of their exercises run not on the want of Grace, but on the weakness, insufficiency, and the Imperfection of Grace; The great reason is, sincerity will be constantly complaining, until it be perfect, until it reach *the resurrection of the dead*; therefore there comes in the heart that is upright ay some complaints, alas I cannot get gress proportioned to sin, I cannot get love to God, alas, I cannot grieve enough for sin; It's called perfection in Scripture, because it aims at perfection, and will ay be complaining until it be perfect. 2ly. Know this, that though in all the Covenant there is not a promise of perfection, nor perfect Sanctification, no, not one, until we come to Glory, and until the *woman clothed with the Sun, have the Moon under her feet*, there the Crown will be set on, and love and delight will be perfected; the great reason is, because perfection here would neither suit our duty, nor our case, no, were there perfection of holiness here, it would overturn the whole frame of the Covenant, which is, that we shall go to Christ for pardon, for healing, for making up of wants: Perfection would be inconsistent with all these, beside to be perfect here, would neither suit with time nor place; take the finest Gold, or the best Jewels, and lay them in a relikie house, readily they would get the smell of the relik: It's remarkable, even Paul was in danger to be puffed up with abundance of Revelations, therefore it's no wonder, for as great as the Promises are, that perfection be not promised, for the Jewel would be in a relikie house, and we would be puffed up with abundance of Revelations; so it's no way inconsistent with the Covenant its being a Covenant of Grace, that the roving Patient hath not from the Physician, all that he crys for, the Physician gives what is suitable and agreeable to the nature of his case, so the Covenant is of perfect Grace, because it contains promises of perfection, and so much Grace as was necessary for our case.

Quest. 4. The fourth Difficulty I would move against this, the Covenant its being a Covenant of Grace, Doth it not contain the Cross, and are there not a multitude of clauses in it, bearing afflictions and crosses? And indeed, some have

have observed, the threatening part of Afflictions in the Covenant, it often holds as true as the promising part of Peace; and Pardon, which may be a very great scruple sometimes in one, that has taken them to the Covenant, and has resolved not to follow the gulse of the world, they will credit the Promises, and take them to the Covenant, and in the mean time, the only part of the Covenant that is most verified is, that part which contains the Cross; the Promises of *supping with him, and bringing them into the banqueting house*, they know little of that: But as for that part of the Covenant, they know He hath been a *true and faithful witness*, and true to His word; now the question is, looks this like the Covenant of Grace?

Ans. For answer to this, I desire ye may take notice of three things, first, Take notice what the Covenant removes, in reference to the Cross, and we may go to God and peremptorily press Him, for removing these, may readily He is faithful and true in removing of them. 1. Several times He will remove the curse and sting of the Cross, all the Elect meet with that; The Covenant has promised, and rather threatens the Cross, but withal it's added, it shall come like a Bee, it may come bumbling and making a noise, but it wants the sting, and one needs not be afraid of a Bee that wants a sting; the Covenant has promised, that in reference to the Cross, the curse and sting are both removed. 2ly. The Covenant has promised, the proportioning of the Cross to our shoulders, it's indeed a special promise to that purpose, *He will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear*; He knows that which would be balast to one Vessel, would drown another; therefore He calls a Christian to suffer accordingly as they have gotten Grace, every one is not for the service that others are for, readily if He give Effectual Calling, Pardon, Communion with Himself, and Peace, one to ten thousand, If that person go to the grave without some signal Cross; so the Covenant secures these two, it secures against the Curse and Sting of the Cross, and against a disproportioned Cross to our strength. 3ly. The Covenant secures of help under the Cross, it bears them up, it's a wonder to see how that part of the Covenant

has

has been accomplished, when I come to the ordering of the Covenant, I will have occasion to speak of it; these that have sometime in their life been sinking under fears, so that the least noise of leaves on the Trees in the night time, and even their own shadow on the wall, would have scared them, in the time of Persecution, have cheerfully suffered themselves to be cast to the lions, and in the fire; The great reason is, the Covenant engaged for strength under the Cross; and the Lord has promised, If He call David to go against a Goliath, He shall deal with him as Saul did with David, he shall get on the King's Armour to fight with. 4ly. He has secured this by the Covenant, that the Cross shall be the way to the Crown; I deny not but there may be some in Glory, but certainly they will be rare, who have not come through Afflictions and Tribulations; and if they be in Glory, they shall be amongst the least of the Kingdom of God; the Captain came through Afflictions, and why not the Soldiers? The Scripture speaks generally, *These are they that have come through great tribulation*, it's the Testimony given to the generality of them, in some period of their life or other, they have had some signal Tribulation, and the Scripture tells us, *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him*: So the Covenant secures against all these, against the Curse and Sting of the Cross, against a disproportioned Cross to our strength, and strength under it, and the way to the Crown.

Secondly, Consider that sometimes the Cross is as necessary as a manifestation may be, however indeed we would be ay at carving out our own cordials, and like children, would have our hand full, and our sense and our eye filled; yet the Cross may be as necessary as the great priviledges of the Covenant; therefore ye find sometimes the Cross made a Promise, as *Hosea 2. 6. I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths: And ver. 7. And she shall follow after her lovers, and shall not overtake them: and she shall seek them, and shall not find them; and the result is, then shall she say, I will go and return to my first Husband, for then it was better with me than now. Many a time David sung this Song in the Psalms, especially*
Psalm

Psalm 119. It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes: Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word: Therefore it is not inconsistent with the Grace of the Covenant, that there be imperfect Sanctification, and the Cross to it.

Quest. 5. The last Difficulty that I would remove is, that it's a Covenant of pure and perfect Grace, Might it not remove our fears, though it keep us under imperfect holiness and the Cross? However the Covenant had not carried us up above affliction, would it not have been a Covenant of perfect Grace, if it had done this alms deed, to secure the Elect against their fears, especially since they are not only fears of sin, but fears of hell, and servile, and despondent fears?

Ans. For answer to this, I will offer you these three things. 1. The Covenant hath done as much against fears, as was necessary to it, for the Covenant hath declared servile fear to be sin, and hath expressly forbidden them; it's spoken of the reprobate, *they shall be in fear where no fear is*: The Covenant often quarrels for them, *why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* So the Covenant condemns these servile fears, and quarrels for them, as a plague inflicted on the reprobate. 2. Take notice, that a multitude of these fears, they ordinarily come on Believers, when they are furthest out of sight of the Covenant, they forget the Covenant: the great ground of these fears is, from their reading the Covenant of Works, when they should read the Covenant of Grace; it's not from the Covenant of Grace that they have these fears, for the answer of these fears is from the Covenant; the great ground why Believers are swallowed up with these fears, is because they understand not the Doctrine of the Covenant, or if they understand it, they forget it. 3ly. To say no more, ye shall know that the Covenant holds out Promises, even against these fears; thou may possibly have a plaster lying beside thee for a sore, and if ye lay it not on, it cannot cure: There may be fears on thee, and there lies in the Bible, in the room thou lies in, a plaster of the Covenant, that would remedy and cure these fears, but thou lays it not so, therefore the pain continues; several times
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It's the not applying the Covenant, and not the want of the Covenant, that makes the pain continue. Our Country-man Mr. *Dickson*, hath written a Book *Therapeutica*, the Title of it is, *The curing of all diseases*, by the application of the Covenant.

Use, For use of the Doctrine, the consideration of the Covenant, as a Covenant of Grace, I confess it's the greatest encouragement, if we were going to ly down in the Grave, that I could imagine, therefore hearken a little to the improving of it, and I would direct the improving of the Covenant of Grace to three sorts of persons. 1. There are some Beginners, that have never to this day known, what a personal Covenant with God was; and readily they may be at this, O! I hear of so great things in the Covenant, there is *wine, milk, honey, eye salve, gold, fine linen, spices*, and I have heard, that God cannot make greater Promises; and to speak with reverence, It's impossible for Him to make greater; and shall the like of me, a poor ignorant polluted thing, make a Covenant with Him? I confess thou had reasoned well, if thou had been under a Covenant of Works, but since thou art under a Covenant of Grace, I will say but these three things to thee. 1. If thou wilt go home this night, and give Him thy hand, and Indenture with Him, to be true and faithful to Him, though thou hast no money, all these things shall be given thee, *without money and without price*. 2ly. I will say more to thee, though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me. Nay 3ly, I will say yet more to thee, whatever thy guiltiness hath been, & though thou has been a transgressor from the womb, yet if thou wilt yet go, and seriously Indenture with Him, and enter in a personal Covenant for the time to come, all former bygones shall be bygones, and thy want of money, and want of price to give for all these things, shall be no hinderance to thee; and the great reason I give for this, It is a Covenant of Grace, therefore go and indenture with Him, and take the tide of it, it may be the Master rise and close the doot on you, and if ye be found without, and go down to the Grave one of these dayes, ye may meet with, *Depart from me, I know you not*: therefore take the tide so long

long as the Mercat lasts, and go and engage in this Covenant of Grace.

A second sort it speaks to, If it be a Covenant of Grace, It speaks a word of reproof to you, that do not notice and take it up as a Covenant of Grace; and there are three sorts that take it not up so. 1. There are some that would take up the Covenant of Grace for a Covenant of Liberty and Licentiousness; indeed it's a Covenant of Grace, but not of Liberty, and thou that wilt go and neglect Prayer, and be a stranger to all the acts of fellowship with God, and of Grace, and will go follow thy Lusts, and will talk of a Covenant of Grace, thou calls it a Covenant of Liberty, and of all Creatures He will be angry with, and be avenged of, it will be thou. 2ly, It reproves these that will never deal with God by way of a Covenant of Grace, but by way of a Covenant of Works, ay when they come to Him, they would ay have money in their hand, to give for the *wine, milk, and honey*; proud man cannot endure to hold of free Grace: of all the Doctrines of the World, it hath been most opposed in the Church, *Papists, Socinians, Arminians, Lutherians*, they become generally enemies to it. 3ly, It reproves these, that though they acknowledge it to be a Covenant of Grace, and without merit, and alluring motive, yet they would have it a Covenant of a mixed nature, they would have some mixtures of some things of their own, in with the Grace of God: therefore they go constantly trembling, alas, I have such a heart, and such a way, I have no love to God, nor delight in Him, therefore they will cast away hope, as if the Covenant were a Covenant, partly of Grace, and partly of Works; no, It's a Covenant of pure and unmixed Grace, It's a Covenant of perfect and full Grace, It's a Covenant of persevering and continuing Grace; now go not to turn it into a Covenant of another nature: But since the Father hath resolved to exalt Christ and His Grace, subscribe to the Tenor of the Covenant.

Thirdly, It serves to press Believers to make use of it, as a Covenant of Grace; I will tell you three or four things, wherein I will especially press you to make use of it as a Covenant of Grace. 1. If ye have any great thing to seek from

God, may be some have a Temporal thing to seek from Him, they have a strait to come thorow; may be some have a Spiritual thing to seek, they have committed a sin, and would have pardon for it, and they can scarcely expect that God will hear them; take up this Covenant as a Covenant of Grace, it is the nature of this Covenant, to give Pardon freely, *without money, and without price*; and if ye go to Him and say, Lord, bring me out of such a strait, Lord, forgive me such a sin, and ye think ye will not be heard, why? I have no money to give for it; but let the Papists give their Pardons, it's not so in this Covenant. 2ly, Make use of it in answering all Challenges, I will have occasion when I come to that, *Although my house be not so with God*, To let you see, how the Covenant answers Challenges, I believe it's the thing that makes many Christians spend the most part of their Religion in Complaints, they are either ignorant, or forgetful of the Covenant. 3ly, Improve it in all external Difficulties; In a word, there is no case, no incident case, no challenge, no difficulty, no petition, we carry to God, but the consideration of the Covenant, and of all the Promises of it, as an Act of free favour and Grace, may be eminently useful to them. Learn all of you to take it up as a Covenant of Grace; and take heed, when God hath given you a Covenant of Grace, and the Mediator hath purchased it, that ye deal not ordinarily with your self, as if ye were under a Covenant of Works.

SER,

SERMON. IX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

I Proposed in this Verse five particulars to be handled; First, The nature of David's security, it's a Covenant, I have spoken to this in some preceding Sermons, and I purpose to dwell no more on it; Therefore I come to the second Branch of the Words, The Parties amongst whom this Covenant is Transacted, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*: That I may the better reach what is comprehended in this Branch of the Verse, I desire ye may take notice of four particulars in it. 1. Ye have the Author and efficient cause of this Covenant, *The Lord hath made*, He doth not say, I have made with the Lord, but *the Lord hath made with me a Covenant*. 2ly, Ye have the Parties concerned in this Covenant, the Lord and me. 3ly, I shall take notice of the particulars, and personal way of Covenanting, or expressing these Parties; he says not, the Lord, and Christ, and the Lord and all the Elect, have made a Covenant, but *the Lord hath made with me personally*. Lastly, I shall take notice of the Assurance, which his confident asserting of it imports, he can affirm it with a deal of confidence, as a thing he is perswaded of, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*: These four ly all in the Text.

The first particular holds out the Author of the Covenant, the Lord is the Maker of it, as He is the maker of Heaven and of Earth, so it is He that made the Covenant; the

the word is Emphatick in the Hebrew, it's true, it's not the proper word that signifies to Create; yet some Criticks think, it's sometimes used for Creation, *The Lord hath created with me a Covenant*, yet I take it as it's rendered in our Translation, and in this Sermon I will speak a little to this Doctrine, Though the benefit of the Covenant redound to us, yet we were not the makers of it, but God made it; it has the smell of His Hand in it, and the making of it is frequently in Scripture ascribed to Him, *Isai. 55. 3. Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Jer. 31. 31. It shall come to pass in these days, saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their Fathers, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; but this shall be the covenant, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Constantly throughout the Scripture, the making of the Covenant, He takes it to Himself as the Author of it, and the Efficient Cause of it; this Branch of the Verse is considerable, for the truth is, we had no hand in the making of the Covenant of Grace, it was allanerly Himself, the Lord made it with me.

That I may clear this Branch a little to you, I will dwell on these three things. *First*, I shall enquire into what respects the Covenant may be said to be made by the Lord. *2ly*, I shall give you some Grounds to evince, that in all these respects, that it was made, and only could be made by Him. And *3ly*, shall apply it.

Quest. First, In what respects the Covenant may be said to be made by the Lord, I shall desire that ye may notice these four or five particulars here.

Ans. 1. The contrivement of the Covenant in all the Heads, Clauses and Articles of it, was allanerly from Him, it was He that contrived it in all the Clauses, and Articles of it; the truth is, it contains a design very suitable to His Wisdom, if ye will take a view of three mysteries into it, ye will find it proceed from the depth of infinite Wisdom.

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1. If ye will take a view of the Truths in it, O! such strange Truths, one Person to be both God and Man, How difficult was that to reconcile? He was *Maries* Son, yet *Maries* Maker, that He was *David's* Son, yet *David's* Lord; What a strange Mystery is that in the Covenant, that Christ should be altogether free of sin, and yet justly suffer for sin? The great Mysteries in the Covenant, in reference to the Truths holden out in it, evidence that the contrivement of it, could only proceed from God. *2ly*, If ye will take a view, not of the Truths only, but of the Duties required in the Covenant; What a number of strange Duties are contained in it, that would never have entred into the heart of Man. *Numa Pompilius*, that gave Laws to the *Romans*, *Lycargus* that gave Laws to the *Lacedemonians*, *Solon* that gave Laws to the *Athenians*, their Laws never dreamed of Believing, and being saved by anothers Righteousness; such Duties, as taking up of the Cross, denying of our selves, walking by anothers strength, and doing all that we do, by a Spirit of Promise, Would ever Natures Light have reached these Duties of the Covenant? So take a view of these, and ye will find that the contrivement of it could only come from God. *3ly*, Take a view of the Persons admitted to the Covenant, if we had a secret to communicat, readily we would chuse, not the simple, or the foolish, or babes, to communicat it to, we would pitch on the Learned, on the wise, on the prudent; but the Covenant is so contrived, that the Truths of it are the greatest Mysteries; one Person to be both God and Man, and that Person to be both the Son and the Maker of His Mother; that the Duties of it are strange, one to Live by anothers Righteousness; and that all these things should be revealed to babes, and things that are not, and that the learned, and wise, and prudent, should be passed by; such a contrivement, had it proceeded from any man or angel, it had justly been accounted the most ridiculous and strange fancy in the World; as a famous Antient said of Christianity, that if he were not perswaded, it immediately proceeded from God, it would be the Religion of any that ever he heard, that he would be furthest from Believing; therefore the Covenant is from God, for the con-

contrivement of it, in all the mystical Truths of it, in all the Duties it requires, and the persons to whom these Duties and Truths are communicated, evidences it to be from God.

Secondly, As the contrivement of the Covenant is from God, so the Terms of the Covenant are made by Him, He not only hath made His own, but our Terms, before we were, the Covenant was, and in some respect, it was from Eternity, from Everlasting, and before ever we were capable to give our consent, He ordered both His own Terms and ours.

Quest. Readily ye will say, Was not this an injury to us, that He should make the Covenant so, as to make our Terms, as well as His own?

Answ. For Answering this, ye may remember some Sabbath ago, I opened to you, That it was a Despotick Covenant, such as is made betwixt Prince and Subject, Master and Servant, Landlord and Tenants, that He is absolute Lord, and hath power to give Laws. 2^d, Take notice, that Christ the Mediator hath represented us in the Covenant, and so we had Him like a Commissioner in a Shire, having a Commission to go to Parliament, and giving his Vote for the shire, he represents that Shire from whom he hath the Commission; So we had a representative, in the person of a Mediator in the Covenant. 3^d, The Terms are made so, as it was impossible to imagine them to be more to our advantage, could there be an easier Clause put in, than that we should accept? This is all that is required on our part, that we shall consent; now since the contrivement of the Covenant, and the Terms on which it runs, proceed both from God, it may justly be said, that He hath made the Covenant.

Thirdly, He is said to have made the Covenant, in regard the furniture for doing our part of the Covenant, proceeds also from Him, whatever is necessary on His part, or our part, and the truth is, He stands on both sides of the Covenant, engaged to furnish what is necessary for the Elect; the Father is as much engaged, for performing their part of the Covenant, as His own; they are bound by the Covenant to

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repent, to believe, to walk humbly and holily; all the things that are Terms on their part, He is engaged to furnish them; they could contribute no more to it, than as ye saw a Potter that takes a piece of Clay, and divides it in two, and the one part of it he casts it by, and casts it in the gutter, and treads on it, and the other part he takes it home, he provides gold, and gilds it, and makes it fit to be set on a Princes Table; all the gilding was from the Potter, it was the Potter that made the difference betwixt that piece and the other bit lying in the gutter; therefore ye find Him so earnest pressing our consent to the Covenant in the Gospel, if that prevails not, He yokes to His Spirit, and never leaves them until He bring them to purposes and resolutions, and to subscribe their names to the Covenant, and then He leads their hand, and helps their purposes and resolutions. So He stands on His own side, for the great and precious things promised; and He stands on the Elects side for performing their Duties. So it may be justly said of Him, He is the Maker of the Covenant.

Fourthly, He may be said to have made the Covenant, in regard the publication and revealing of the Covenant, it altogether is from Him, for this end hath He appointed the Scriptures to be written, and hath ordained Ministers to Explain them, that He may reveal the Covenant; nay all the Philosophers, and all the Learning in the world, would never have carried a man to dream of such a Covenant, without immediate Revelation from God; the Light of Nature, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, though they lead us to God as Creator, yet they do not lead us to the opening the meaning of the Covenant, the revealing of that is altogether from Him; so the Contrivement, the Terms, the Furniture, and the revealing of the Covenant, is from Him.

And *Lastly*, The fixed perpetuity of the Covenant is also from Him, ordinarily according to the nature of persons, so are their Covenants, careless persons, their particular interest will easily make them break their Covenants, variable and changeable persons; but an Eternal God, and an Eternal Covenant, the perpetuity of it is from Him, He hath secured it so, as though we break to Him, yet the Covenant

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remaineth firm, *Jer. 3. Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers yet return unto me for I am married to you:* Harlotry Divorces by the Law of God, which provides that in case of Adultery, the man and the wife should be Divorced, and the marriage bond comes to be loosed by Adultery. All these five evidence, that the Covenant is made by Him, and really, it adds a relish to it, that the smell of His Hand is in it; it adds a sweetness to it, that He contrived it, and that He drew the Terms, both on His own and our side, that the Furniture, the Revelation of it, and the Stability of it is from Him.

Now in reference to the Covenant, that all these are made by Him, will appear by these two remarkable Grounds, 1. This Covenant could neither have been made by Men, nor Angels, therefore it was made allannerly by God. 1. It could not have been made by Men, for we are but of yesterday, and the Covenant is everlasting; when this Covenant was made, Man was lapsed and fallen, it could not have entered in his heart to think, that God should give His only Son for him, and make a Covenant of Grace with him on that score; it was undoubtedly a surprisal to Adam, and many Divines think, he understood not at first what that meant, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent:* It was revealed to him in a dark mysterious Type, and a promise of the Messiah; all the course that he took when he was fallen, was to run away from God, and hide himself, and to go and sew Fig-tree Leaves together to cover his nakedness, he was far from dreaming of making an everlasting Covenant with him. Neither 2ly, Could this Covenant have been contrived by Angels, they are brought in, *1 Pet. 1. 12.* And doing it to this day, looking into this Mystery, *which things the angels desire to look into,* they are excellent creatures indeed, and perfect in Wisdom, and Righteousness and Holiness, but their Knowledge is not able to fathom the height, the length, the breadth, and depth of the Covenant, no, had the Angels been the Arbiters (for as excellent creatures as they are) of our distance, after the fall, it was beyond the reach of their capacity, to dream of such a Covenant, therefore when they heard of it, and when

when it was revealed to them, they pry into it, and looked into it, and were astonished at such contrivement of a Covenant of Grace, so it was above the reach of Angels; and poor Man could not do it, for he could do nothing when he fell, but run away and hide himself, and scarce knew what the first promise of the Covenant was, *the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.*

Secondly, That this Covenant was made by God, (and I like the notion well) will appear from this, that there are three designs, that wise and good men have, in the driving their business in the world, and the wisdom that is given to them, makes them drive these three designs, and ye will find, the Father driving all the three, in making the Covenant, which evidences, that it's an act issuing His Infinite Wisdom, and that there is but some resemblance among men of this Wisdom. 1. Several times men design the exalting of their Children. 2ly, The magnifying of themselves. 3ly, If they be good, the advantage of others. And there runs a design in the Covenant, suiting Infinite Wisdom, in reference to all these three. 1. Like a wise Father, the design of the Covenant is, the exalting of His Son, He intends indeed to have His Son great, From whom could the Covenant come, that tends so much to exalt Christ, but from Christ's Father? It looks like the design of a Father, the scope of the Covenant, the accomplishment of it, tends so much to the exalting of His Son; all the Blood that runs in the Veins of the Covenant, seems all to drive at the exalting of Him, He is the Mediator of the Covenant, the Surety of it, all the Promises of it, are the accomplishment of His three Offices; any that will observe the scope of the Covenant, the exalting of the Son, may well conclude, it was the Father of the Son that made it. 2ly, The Father in His Infinite Wisdom, designed the exalting of Himself; I deny not, but He might have been exalted in His Justice, and have taken other methods, and ways, and measures, than by making a Covenant of Grace, as He might have been exalted in His Power, Wisdom, and Justice, if He had taken Noah to Heaven, when He drowned the old World, and then made another World; but the great thing where-

wherein men are most exalted is, Goodness and Grace; we read of some that have Ruled Tyrannically, and when they were dying, they have been like a Candle put out, that leaves an ill smell behind it; there is nothing better than to be exalted in Goodness, and Grace, and there is no better way to do it, than that man should fall, and that He should give His Son to die for him, and to make a Covenant with him, that He shall give him Peace with Himself, and an Heaven for all Eternity: So it looks like a Covenant made by Him. 2/y, God being a Communicative Good, Good in Himself, it's impossible for Him not to communicate Good to others, as impossible as it's for the Sun, which is Light in Itself, not to communicate Light; therefore when God made the World, He behoved to make Man, that He might communicate the good of the World to him, He being a Communicative Good, His Nature carries Him to do good to others, and the Covenant is so ordered, that there is no good that man can be capable of, but it's promised in the Covenant. Now all these three declare that it was He that made the Covenant; because it tends so much to the exalting of His Son, His Goodness and Grace, and His being a Communicative Good; I will not dwell more on this.

Use. I will only say some few things by way of use, that I may come to speak of the Parties, *The Lord hath made with me*, ye see the Nature of it, there are many practical Improvements of it, that I cannot now dwell on; Only here, 1. How humble ought men to be, the greatest ground of boasting we have in the World, is the Covenant, but alas, we had no hand in it, nor yet the Angels, they could not have contrived it, and we are very far from it: O! but Christians, whose greatest Charter in all their Chest is, this *everlasting Covenant*, we ought to be walking very humbly on this account, for we contribute not so much as a desire unto it, not only did we not merit, or was there any alluring motive, but there was not so much as a Prayer for it, or did we spend a Tear for it, or had a sigh or a groan for it? But *the Lord hath made with me*, He contrived it, and drew all the Articles of it, therefore go humbly, and walk

as one, that in the thing wherein thou has the greatest ground of joy that ever thou had, yet had no hand in the contrivement of the Covenant. 2/y, It puts you to admire the unsearchable riches of this grace; will ye but sometimes take a view of your case, when Adam fell, and run away amongst the Thickets to hide himself, and he and all his posterity were forfeited; Take a view of what ye have deserved by that fall, if the things that ye can tell of your selves were written on your Foreheads, ye would be forced to go to some corner, like an Owl, to flee to the desert and hide your selves: But O! the breadth, the length, the depth, and the height of this Grace, that God will contrive the Covenant, and draw the Terms of it, and stand on both sides of the Covenant, both on our part of the Covenant, and His part, and Redeem us; go home and fall down before Him, and exalt Him, that ever He condescended to make the Covenant; What would have been our lot, or whither would we have turned our selves, or whither would we have fled, or left our Glory, if we had not this Covenant to run to? Therefore go, and admire and praise Him; it's a notable frame of Spirit, when things revealed in publick, carries persons to a corner, with some suitable thoughts of what they have heard; and indeed we should carry in our Duties in privat, suitable to our Duties in publick: Praise Him, who in such a desperate case, was content to make an Everlasting Covenant with thee. 3/y, Here is great ground of encouragement, to you that are not yet brought under the bond of the Covenant, He that made the Covenant, and brought persons under it, He chused whom He will, He chused a Jacob and not an Esau, a Peter and not a Judas, Judas he had not done so much ill as Paul had done before his conversion, Judas was preaching Christ, and was casting out Devils, and was in Christ's company, yet Judas was left to betray Him; Paul was persecuting and blaspheming Christ, and making havock of the Church, and yet an Elect Vessel, to lift up His Name amongst the Gentiles; therefore all of you that are without the Covenant, since He made it with a Paul, and not with a Judas, with a Jacob, and not with an Esau, and yet Esau was the elder brother, on this

account keep up your hope, and go to Him, and press Him to bring you under the bond of the Covenant, for what brought in *Jacob*, a *Paul*, a *Peter*, into the Covenant, but His own Grace? *Lastly*, Was it He that was the Author and Maker of the Covenant? Then behold, amongst all the things that ever He did, since He Created the World, it's the thing that contributes most to exalt Him, it was a great Work for Him to say, *Let there be light* and it was light, and for Him to stretch out the Heavens and the Earth, and to make an Earth, as it were to hang on no foundation, and the circumference of Heaven about it; all these were great Declarations of the Greatness and Power of God; but all of these may stoop to this, that He has made a Covenant of Grace, who in one Person is both God and Man, and on the foundation of this Mystery, hath founded so many Duties, and great Privileges, that if Himself had not revealed them, they would appear the greatest fancies in the World, and they that do not believe what He hath revealed, counts them all Phanaticks that credits them; but here is the greatest demonstration of Grace that ever He gave, that He hath ordered a Covenant, and contrived it, and made it so secure, that no breach on our part shall break the Covenant, and He is bound for our part of the Covenant, as well as His own, and He is engaged for our consent, and when we come to subscribe the Covenant, He will lead our hand; Can any imagine such a Declaration of Grace? O! be ye astonished, O ye Heavens, at the length, and breadth, and depth of this Grace, and Power, and Love.

But I will close all, with saying three things about His making the Covenant. 1. If there had any advantage redounded to Him by making the Covenant, it had not been so strange, I confess there is a Declarative Glory; like a man that comes to such a spring of Water, and then he commends it, but he infuses no new quality into the Well; all that we can do, adds nothing to His Essential Glory; now, it's strange that He should make such a Covenant, and that all the advantage should redound to us, and not to Him, except what is Declarative. 2/y, The damned Angels they had many grounds to have pleaded a Covenant with Him, rather

ther than we, they were more noble Creatures, and whatever was their sin, it is generally thought to be pride, though it be difficult for us to determine, for they aspired to be as God, so we are guilty of the same sin, the Serpent tempted Eve to eat the Apple, and be like God, and so we were guilty of the same sin, the Angels were guilty of. Now, that He should make a Covenant with thee, and not with them, is strange. 3/y, The foundation of this Covenant, (and there was no other possibility of making it, in the strait it runs on,) it was to be laid in the Blood of His Son; O! how many ways would man have taken, to have shifted the bargain, if the bargain could have stood no other way, but on the Blood of their Children; yea though the advantage was all to be ours, and we were as ill deserving as the Devils, and that he saw there could not be such a bargain driven, for our pardon, our peace, and our Heaven, but it behoved to be laid on the Blood of His Son; yet He drew the Covenant, contrived it, as it is this day. O! ye should pray, that ye may be able to comprehend the height, the length, the breadth, and depth of such a Covenant.

S E R M O N X.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

WE were neither the contrivers, nor the treaters of the Covenant of Grace, the Lord made it, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant;* I shall say no more of His making of it, since

It is so evident, that neither Men, nor Angels had no hand in it; and since it savours of Infinite Wisdom, we may very rationally ascribe it to the Lord: The word *Jehovah* is one of the greatest Names He hath, which fitly comes in here, when *David* is to speak of the Covenant; *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant*. To say no more then of His being the Author, Contriver, and Orderer of the Covenant. I come to speak of the Parties that enter in this Covenant, *The Lord hath made with me*; In the handling of this, I shall consider the persons, first something more generally, and then I shall consider them more particularly and personally, readily I will dwell some Sermons on this branch of the Verse.

First, The general consideration of this, I will not dwell on it, I have spoken several things when I entered on the Verse, of the Lords condescendency to make a Covenant with the Elect, only I would have you notice four things about it. 1. The Name *Lord*, It is here not to be taken Personally, but Essentially, as including all the three Persons of the Trinity, so that in effect, in making the everlasting Covenant, all the Persons in the Trinity became our Covenanted Parties, each of them have their distinct Work in fulfilling the Covenant; the Father hath His work, the Son hath His, and the Spirit hath His work; and the truth is, when we Covenant with God, so far as we can reach, there ought to be a distinct eye had to each Person of the Trinity, who though they be One in Essence, yet they are three distinct Persons. Mr. Durham in his Treatise on the Revelation, makes a question, which I will not determine, Whether in Prayer, a Christian be obliged to eye distinctly every Person of the Trinity? But sure I am, in Covenanting with God, since we find distinct actions ascribed to the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the Covenant there is great need, to eye the several Blessed Persons of the Blessed Trinity; the Name *Jehovah* is common to them all, so that in effect, *David's* party with whom he Covenanted, when this everlasting Covenant was made, it was not the Father, or the Son Personally considered, but all the Persons of the Blessed Trinity, each of them in the Covenant; as they have Their

distinct works and operations, in bringing the Elect to Glory; so they all become Debtors to their own Faithfulness, for accomplishing the things of the Covenant, which they made with *David*. 2ly, Take notice, that his taking up of God essentially, the Lord, or *Jehovah*, there is implied, as ordinarily the Name is used by the word *Jah*, as *Psal. 68. 4. Extol him that rides on the Heavens by his name Jah*, which is a Compend of the name *Jehovah*, and is retained in our English Translation, the taking Him up under this name *Jehovah*, holds Him out, as not only Faithful and True to His Promise in the Covenant, but as abundantly able to accomplish His Promise in the Covenant: It's very pleasant to consider the Parties that made the Covenant, all the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, holden out under the Name *Jehovah*, thou that hangs by the Promise in the Covenant, why goest thou with thy hands on thy loyns, constantly moving discouraging Questions, and saying, *One day or another I shall fall by the hand of Saul*, Is not the Party Covenanting *Jehovah*? Is He not known to thee by the name *Jehovah*? He was not so known by the Tribes of *Israel*: It's remarkable in the beginning of the Bible, the first Article of it, *I believe in God the Father Almighty*; He is not like a Father, *If his child ask bread of him, he will give him a stone*; for He is a Father that will not beguile you; but many Fathers are not willing, or able though they be willing, but He is both able and willing to help, He is Almighty; It's a remarkable beginning of the Commands, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage*; *I am the Lord God, I am Jehovah*, the taking Him up thus as *Jehovah*, is a necessary consideration; *David* made many Covenants with Princes that were about Him, and He made many Covenants with His Subjects, but He never made one like this, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant*. But 2ly, The taking of Him up under this name, the Lord, and considering this Covenant in the general, it is indeed astonishing, that He should have made a Covenant with men; take but a view of these three or four things, and ye will find, that

the Lord and me, to come under a Covenant together, is exceeding strange.

First, Consider that He is the God that gave Man, (who was lately nothing) a Being, O! they are words of wonder, that He comforts His Church in a sad case with, by the Prophet *Isaiab*, *Thy Maker is thy Husband*: Ye heard, it was a mystery in the Covenant, *Maries Son, yet Maries Maker*: It is no less a mystery, a Husband, and yet our Maker, to make us, and then to marry us, Is it not wonderful? And that is imported in, *The Lord hath made with me*, 2ly, If ye consider, that by vertue of His Creating, He had a Right of Dominion; He needed no more but Command, and Threaten, for He being our Maker, and Preserver, He needed no more, He had a right to Command and Threaten; He needed say no more, but *do not eat of the tree, for in the day thou eats thou shalt die*, as He did with the first Adam; but that He should lay by His Dominion, and come as we were equals, and treat a Covenant, nay, when it was treated, the Person that represented us, was His equal, He was the Man that was His Fellow, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, *Philip. 2*. Now that He should treat a Covenant with us, as Abraham did with Abimelech, how strange was this, since the Parties were not equal? 3ly, Had it been a Covenant of Works He had treated, it had suited some way to a Command and Threatning; but to treat such a Covenant, the Lord *Jehovah* with us, is wonderful; Who of us would take a Dog, or a Worm, and Indenture with it, to give it our own Bed, and in a manner prefer it to our own Children? The truth is, He seemed to do this, when, *that we might be healed, he laid the stripes on him, he was made a curse, that we might be made righteous; he was made sin, that we might be holy*. But Lastly, This Covenant was made with lapsed Man; He could not promise to Himself from us, the thing He could promise from Adam; for however Adam was under a possibility of falling, yet that was all, it seemed very improbable, that so light a Temptation would make him break the Covenant that he had made with God, but the imaginations of our hearts are evil continually; It is since He made that Covenant, frequently

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the complaint is, *I am pressed under with their iniquities, as a cart is pressed under with sheaves*. And, *I am broken with their whorish heart*; So consider his being our Master, and consider the Dominion He had on that account; and consider that the Covenant is made with lapsed Man, and that it is a Covenant of Grace; it is in effect one of the greatest wonders in the Bible, *The Lord hath made with me*, &c. O! learn to admire the condescendency of Grace, it is a wonder that we are not oftener telling it to others, and that we spend not more time when we meet, in discoursing of it; but this general I will not insist upon.

I will consider this transaction of the Covenant personally, more particularly it's remarkable, *David* doth not say, he made with the Elect, whereof I am one; or he made with the Church, whereof I am a member, but the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant; he takes it and applies it personally to himself. I had long time a design to speak to this Head of personal Covenanting with God; I judge it one of the great duties of the Gospel, and that which will contribute as much to lay a restraint on sin, and to excite to duties, as any mean that a Christian can follow; therefore I intend to dwell some Sermons on it, I shall make some entry on it now, and shall take this Proposition to be handled.

Doctrine 1. That though the Covenant of Grace be generally made with the Mediator, and with the Elect, yet every believer should make it personally; they should be at, *the Lord hath made with me*: It's remarkable, when God first entered in this everlasting Covenant, he indeed published it generally to all the seed of the Woman, that is, to all the Elect, who were comprehended under the Mediator, who was the seed of the Woman, and not of the Man, yet afterward ye find it is personally made with Abraham, *Psal. 105*. It's sworn to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac with an oath, and afterward it's particularly confirmed to Jacob; and here it's renewed to David, it's indeed a general Covenant made with the Mediator, for all his Members, yet often ye find God treating it with Abraham; and again, it is not enough it be made with Abraham, but he must treat it with Isaac, and

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confirm it with an Oath, and over again, he must treat it with *Jacob*, importing, he must not only make it with the Fathers, but with their Children: there are many that he hath made a Covenant with their Father and Mother, but they are not in it themselves; they can say, the Lord hath made an everlasting Covenant, but they cannot say, the Lord hath made it *with me*, therefore the Lord will manage this Covenant, first with *Abraham*, and afterward he will treat it personally with *Isaac*, and confirm it with an Oath, and renew it again with *Jacob*.

But to follow this Head of Personal Covenanting with God, I would have you notice this Caution in the beginning of it,

Caution, *That the Covenant of Grace is but one Covenant, the same Covenant for substance, that God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*: We must not think there are as many distinct Covenants, as there are distinct persons, that enters in that Covenant; there is but one Sun, and every one may have enough of light from that one Sun, and a Ray of that Sun comes in at his own Window, if he cast open a Broad of his Window, though it be the common Sun, that serves all the Kingdoms of the earth: So, it's the same general Covenant made with the Mediator, every particular person is to open his Window-broad, and let in a suitable Ray of that Covenant to his case, and particularly and personally apply it to himself. We are not to think, as *Arminians* say, that God hath made a general Covenant with all the Elect; but for particular persons, he hath left a blank to be filled up, when they believe and repent; they say this same of Redemption, they make general Acts of Grace to be conditionally accomplished; especially, if they believe the Lord, when he indented the everlasting Covenant, he set down not only *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob's* name, but thy name, if thou wilt consent; Nay, what do I say, if thou consent, he filled up thy name being an Elect, and engaged to effectuate thy consent; so we are not to think, that there are as many Covenants as there are distinct persons; it's one general Covenant, like as it is one Sun that affords light to all the World, yet every Believer and Elect, is personally to Indent for himself, and to apply the Covenant, and to ap-

apply the promises on the Fathers part, but he hath bound himself to the duties of the Covenant on his part.

And in the general, this personal Covenanting takes in three things; I confess, the third of them is not a proper act of Covenanting, yet it is necessary to the making of it up. (1) A person in making this Covenant, is either saying or subscribing, as *Isaiab's* word is, *One shall say, and another subscribe himself to be the Lords*; whatever be the way of it, sometime one will do it with saying, sometime one will do it by subscribing, or sometime one will do it with lifting up their hand to God, that the solemnity may be the greater; in their indenturing in this personal Covenant with God, the tenor of what they do is, I accept this Christ on these terms, he offers me Wine, Milk, Honey, without money, and without price; he offers me fine Gold, I accept of the offer, and I give my consent, I will either write it down; or give it under my hand, I will say it, or I will do it, by lifting up of my hand to the Lord. (2ly.) The person that thus personally Covenants, or that is about to draw the general Covenant of Grace, to his case, subscribes to the duties of the Covenant, particularly to give himself to the Lord, *One shall say, and another subscribe with his hand, I am the Lords*: It's remarkable, since God in the Covenant gives himself to us, he will accept of nothing from us but our selves again; when we subscribe to give our selves to the Lord, we subscribe to this, Lord, dispose of me as thou wilt, cross me or humble me as thou wilt, for I give it under my hand, that I am at thy disposing; it's true, we bind to all the duties of the Covenant, likewise I deny not, but a person may find their temptations miscarry them, in reference to some sins; some are led away with ill company, and made to swear, some are tempted to drunkenness; I deny not, but they may either Covenant with God, or particularly bind against that, wherein their greatest temptations and weaknesses lyes; if persons find themselves negligent in Prayer, or that the least wag of their neighbour coming, will call them from their duty to God, though they are in the Covenant, to bind to all the duties of the Covenant, yet we are particularly to bind, where our temptations are greatest,

greatest, and where our weakness is greatest: Personal Covenanting with God, ought to run most on that Head, which may prove an excellent restraint to the soul, and an excellent hinderance to the corruption, which the heart is drawn to, with any light temptation; so this personal Covenanting with God, when we can say, *the Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, though the Lord hath made the Covenant in general with Christ, and all the Elect, and though he hath visibly appeared to *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, and afterward, though he hath not so visibly appeared to *David*, yet he hath his own way of communication, and we enter in a personal Covenant with him, when we go, and either with our voice, or with our hand subscribe it on Paper, or with lifting up the hand solemnly, when we are in a spiritual frame in Prayer, and we do this, when we accept of the offer of the Covenant, and of the Mediator, on the terms of the Covenant; and binds our selves to the duties of the Covenant, especially such as we are most negligent of, and soonest led away from: There lyes the way of personal covenanting with God, especially, if ye add, as a Capstone. (37.) When the soul engages to these two, that it cast an eye to the Treasurer, unto whom the Father hath committed the bearing of the Purse: The truth is, our covenanting with him, is like *Delilah's* blinding *Sampson* with cords, so long as she cuts not his locks, his strength remains, but when his locks are cut, he is weak. When we cast an eye to the Treasurer in our covenanting, we are strong; but when we eye him not, we are weak: It's supposed, *Adam* when he was perfect, stood not above five hours, and what can lapsed man do? Therefore the Covenant takes in the accepting of the offer, and binding to the duties, but both to be done through the Mediator, and if this be neglected, it is not right covenanting; And I believe it lyes at the root of much of our covenanting, and many have challenges in their covenanting with God, that they have not eyed the Mediator, and gone to the Fountain and Treasurer, out of which their strength both for accepting and binding must come.

Quest. But ye will say, I have opened in this Covenant personal

personal and particular covenanting, but what if God make not a Covenant with me, or if I make a Covenant with him, how shall I know if he makes a Covenant with me?

Ans. For Answer to this, I shall only say these two things, (1.) God in making personal Covenants with men, had very different ways of communication of himself; when he made the Covenant with *Abraham*, he spake with him face to face, he did so to *Isaac* and *Jacob*, but he did not so to *David*, but he sends a Prophet to him; it were unreasonable he should do so to every body; there were many Worthies under the Old Testament, that could say, *the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*; and God did not come down and speak face to face with them, and confer with them, and say, this is my promise; it were I say unreasonable he should do so to us, for though the Covenant be not so sensible as it was to *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, it may come to thee, as it did to *David*: So that we are not to expect he will take the same way with every one, that he brings under the bond of the Covenant.

I will close this Sermon, with exhorting you to study this personal covenanting with God, I indeed take it up, for the great duty of the Gospel; I confess, it's the great neglect of the generation that we live in, the generation coming may be more in the practice of it, that Masters of Families will not take their Wives, Children and Servants, and enter in a Family-Covenant with them, and when they are in corners, would enter in a personal Covenant with him. I will only close this discourse of it, with naming three or four things, that I judge to be great hinderances in the way of Christians personal covenanting with God. (1.) It is a great hinderance, our mistaking the end of the Law, the Law is a School-master to lead to Christ; and there are many, if they come under a Law-work, they presently think they should dwell on it, they cannot be perswaded, that this drives at personal covenanting with him; ye will hear afterward, if ever there be a time of entering in a personal Covenant with God, of accepting the Covenant on the terms offered, it's when we are under a work of the Law; now many Christians mistake quite the end of the Law, they think

think their tears and humiliations, and Law-works, they are to dwell on them, and they know not that the Law is a School-master to lead them to Christ; the end of these fears is, to terrifie you to seek a shelter in the everlasting Covenant. (2ly,) It hinders many to enter in this Covenant personally; they are exceedingly afraid, that their guilt be greater, if they break; I confess it's justly to be feared, but that same Argument should hinder thee from being Baptized, and from going to the Sacrament of the Supper, wherein thou renew's a Covenant with him; the same Argument that hinders thee from covenanting with God, hinders thee from these two; but would ye think it a good arguing, if a man were like to drown in a Well, and one let down a Rope to him, and bid him take hold of the Rope, and it will bring him up; if he should argue, I dare not take hold of the Rope, for fear when I am near up the rope break, and my fall be the greater? But I say, unless thou enter in a personal Covenant with God, and accept of the Covenant of Grace, and apply it to thy case, thou art arguing, as the man in the Well, that will not take hold of the Rope, for fear when I am near up I get the worse fall. 3ly, It hinders some from covenanting with God, they would have some Arles in their hand, before they trust him; saith one, I would Covenant with him personally, if he would give me a fill of Sense, and would take me to the Banqueting-house, and cast his Banner over me, and give me that soul-delight that he gives to some; but they do not remember, it's a reflection on him, not to trust him, without something in hand. Take heed to this Covenant, and hang upon his promise, and if thou should never be able to sing, the Lord hath filled my hand with sense all my life, thou has a nobler song to sing, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant.* (4ly,) It hinders some from making a personal Covenant, they are afraid it lay bonds and ties on them, and take away their mirth: O! It were a mercy if some of our profane young ones, that are filling the Town with profanity, and their Parents taking no notice of them, the most part of them begging the one half of the day, and profaning the Name of God the other,

other, if they could be brought thus to Covenant with God: But many think that a great tie and a burden, that they should be more in speaking of Christ when they were in company, and may be thou can be in many Companies, and never a word of him; or thou can mock at Prayer and Godliness, and may be it not challenge thee, but thou art afraid that personal covenanting bring a burden on thee. I will Answer all these, when I go thorow the point; I will say this of it, thou must either accept personally of the Covenant, on the terms that it's offered, and engage personally to the terms on which it's made, or then thou shalt never have any benefite by it. O! what a mercy were it, if when we come under some strait, some sickness, or when we get any loosing of heart at a Communion; nay, when we come under desertion, the renewing of a Covenant may be the way to an out-gate. It's remarkable, when Christ was hanging on the Cross, and the great cloud of his Fathers wrath hanging over his head, in a manner, he renew's the Covenant with him, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* If thou fall in any gross sin, go and renew the Covenant; if he command some signal stroak to attend thee, renew the Covenant: The great Objection is, it's a sore matter to be ay binding, and ay breaking, and this is thy case readily. I confess it's a dreadful case, to be ay binding, and ay breaking; yet notwithstanding of all thy breaches, if thou wilt yet go and say, and subscribe with thy hand, to be the Lords, and to be more to his praise; if thou be a neglecter of Christian fellowship, that thou shalt speir it out, speir where thou shalt get some to pray with, and put in that in the personal Covenant; if thou be negligent in Prayer, to lift up thy hand to be so no more: all former breaks will be all past, if thou can say with full purpose of heart, *the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant:*

SER.

SERMON XI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

HAVING spoken of the nature of David's security, I came the last Sabbath to speak of the Parties transacting in this Covenant, *The Lord and me*, I proposed four things to be noticed; *First*, the Author of the Covenant. *Secondly*, The Parties with whom the Covenant is made, and told you that the word *Jehovah*, is to be taken essentially, as including all the Persons of the Trinity, who are all Parties in the Covenant, and each of them has their particular work, in the accomplishing of the Covenant. But passing what was spoken, I come to that which I proposed to dwell on this day, the particular Application of the Covenant, individually and personally to David: It's no, the Lord hath made with *Abraham*, nor with the *Elect*, but, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*.

That which I shall dwell on this day, shall be this Proposition, which natively arises from this Scripture.

Doctrine, That however the Covenant externally and visibly be made with the whole visible Church, and really with the Mediator, and through him with all the *Elect*, yet every Believer ought personally, and particularly to indenture in this Covenant, and apply it.

It is true, the Covenant is offered to be Transacted with all the Members of the visible Church, and really with all the *Elect*; yet every Believer, who would secure his interest in

in the contents and clauses of the Covenant, is to indenture personally, and particularly apply the Covenant to himself, as if it were made with them. This Truth hath a great deal of opposition in the world, *Arminians*, and *Antinomians*, who though they unite not in many things, they unite in opposition of this Truth, they deny personal and particular Covenanting with God; the generality of *Atheists*, and profane mockers, look on it as a fancy, personally to Covenant with God; and the most part of hypocrites in the visible Church, satisfy themselves with their Transactions in Baptism, and some external kind of Transacting at the Sacrament of the Supper; but personally and really to indenture with God, on the Terms of the Covenant, they utterly neglect; therefore, to follow this Truth, since it comes so directly in my way, I will insist on these three things in following this head. 1. I shall labour to prove by some reasons, that it is not only a warrantable, but a most necessary Duty, for Christians to make personal and particular Covenants with God. 2^d, I shall open wherein this personal and particular Covenanting with Him doth consist. And 3^d, shall apply it.

First, That it is not only warrantable but necessary, personally and particularly to Covenant with God; for confirming of this, I will offer these five or six rational Considerations.

First, We have not only Scriptural practices of it, particularly of David, of whom this Text speaks; whom we have frequently practising it, *Psal. 16. 2. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my God.* So we find *Asaph, Psal. 73. 25. It is good for me to draw near to God: And then, whom have I in heaven but thee, and on the earth that I desire besides thee?* It was in effect a Covenant of this nature that Thomas entered into, when he said to Christ, *thou art my Lord and my God.* We have not only practices of it, but Prophecies of it, amongst many Prophecies about it, for clearing and confirming it, I will read two, one of them ye have, *Isai. 44. 5. One shall say, I am the Lords, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord, and surname himself by the name*

name of Israel. Mark here, ye have one, and one, and another; Individually & indefinitely indenturing with God, and ye have the different way of their doing of it, one shall say, and another shall subscribe with his hand; ye have the same over again Prophesied, *Isai. 45. 24. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, even to him shall men come*; here ye have these two Scriptural Prophecies, relating to the times of the Gospel, wherein there should be, a saying, and subscribing with the hand, and it's no the Church in general, but *one shall say, and another shall subscribe*, it's a particular and personal indenturing with God; I know not what a multitude of Scriptures I might multiply for the confirmation of this, that it's not only warrantable, but absolutely necessary, it is the accomplishment of Prophecies, and an imitation of the cloud of witnesses, who have gone before us in it.

Secondly, The Light of Nature teaches; that in mutual Transactions, that pass betwixt parties, about business of concernment, the Transaction should be managed particularly and personally; Nature's Light teaches, that *doctus versatur in generalibus*, frequently this holds in this case, where there passes no indenturing betwixt God and the Soul, but merely generals; readily the assurance of an interest in any Transaction by the Light of Nature, it's the surer and clearer the more particular mention be of the parties concerned in it; hardly is there a very small business a man will Transact with his neighbour, but he will be as distinct and particular as he can, especially if he know it be a thing will be subject to much debate in Law; is it not strange, that Nature should teach men to be so distinct, and particular in their smallest concernments, and yet they rest on generals, contrair to the Light of Nature, in their greatest concernments? No, that same Light that leads men to be personal and particular, and distinct in managing all their other affairs, in order to their clearing and assurance, leads them up in the business of their greatest concernment, far more to be personal and distinct.

Third-

Thirdly, All the fundamental Priviledges, are all particular and personal, and why ought not the Covenant to be particularly and personally entered into? Election is not indefinite and universal, as *Arminians* and *Pepists* teach: no, it's neither universal nor conditional, it's absolute and particular; there is a certain number given by the Father to the Son in Redemption, so it's no universal, nor indefinite, nor conditional Election; Adoption, Union with Christ, and all the rest of the fundamental Priviledges, they run in this stream, to be particular and distinct, Why ought not the Covenant, which is as it were the Charter, by which we come to be secured of these fundamental Priviledges, to be also personal and distinct? Why should our Election, Redemption, Adoption, and Effectual Calling, each of them be particular, and personal; and the Covenant, which is the Charter, and great ground of our security, not be particular and distinct also?

Fourthly, On Gods part, whether we respect the absolute Promises, or the conditional, they all point at particular persons; *I will take away the heart of stone, I will put my fear in their heart, and I will give them pardon of sin*; whatever promise be made, whether absolute or conditional, they are not terminat, nor have their accomplishment together, in the visible Church, but like Water that is to be poured in every particular Bottle; now since on the Fathers part He became debtor to every individual or personal Member, taken within the Covenant, Is it not only warrantable, but absolutely necessary, that there should be a particular application, and personal taking hold of the Covenant, in all these clauses whether absolute or conditional?

Fifthly, The duties of the Covenant are particularly and personally to be performed, there is none here can go a warfare for another, none can pay anothers debt in the Covenant, every man must give an account for himself in this Covenant, the Parent cannot do for the Child, nor the Husband for the Wife, but every man must do for himself; now since every Duty must be performed particularly and personally, Is there not then an absolute necessity, that there

there should be an engaging and personal indenturing with God?

Lastly, The nature of justifying Faith, which is the great condition of the Covenant, consists in a particular and personal application of the Covenant; an Historical Faith will carry the Devils to believe, that Christ loved the Elect, and gave Himself for them; but justifying Faith carries a *Paul* to, *He loved me, and gave himself for me*; herein lyes the nature of justifying Faith, it's a particular application of Christ and of the Covenant, in all the articles and clauses of it; and there can be no right application by Faith, of the privileges of the Covenant, without becoming subject to the duties of it, otherways, as in marriage, we would separate what God hath joyned, we would separate the promising and commanding part of the Covenant. Now lay all these six together, and I conceive, I have laid before you, most rational grounds, why the duty of personal Covenanting with God, is not only warrantable, but of absolute necessity.

The second thing proposed, shall be to open, wherein this Act of personal Covenanting with God consists; some have dilated on it at a great length, and have dwelt on the preparatory Acts to it, and the things formally required in the Act itself, and there, have spoken of the Properties and Consequences of it; but I will not dwell on it at this length, yet that I may be helpful to you, in your personal Covenanting, in regard one of the great grounds of our withering and dryness, results from the neglect of this Duty, I shall therefore insist, in opening the nature of it, only in speaking to these two things, which I conceive will briefly sum up, wherein this act of personal Covenanting consists. I will not go to speak any thing of Gods part, either when we make or renew the Covenant with Him; But all I shall say now, shall be something of our part, when we personally Covenant with Him. I will reduce them to these two Heads.

First, Our personal Covenanting with God, consists in our accepting of the offers of the Covenant, as they are made by God. *2ly*, In our engaging to the Terms of the Cove-

Covenant, required by God; for the Terms must be the Terms that He hath made in the Covenant; we must not make new Terms, neither must we reject any of the Terms already made: I deny not, as ye shall hear, when I come at it, but on the account of a particular failing, a Christian may be more in engaging, with respect to one thing, than another, especially where he hath failed most, and Conscience doth challenge him most; but we are neither to make new Terms, nor reject the Terms already made, in our personal Covenanting with God, we must keep to the Terms already made and proposed in the Covenant, in all the Articles and Clauses of it.

First then, It consists in the accepting of the offer of the Father, made in the Covenant: I confess, I like well to read the excellent Soliloquies, many have had with their own Souls, in the accepting of this offer, and entering in this Covenant; ye have patterns of them set down, Mr. *Allan* in his *Vindictive Pietatis*, Mr. *Baxter* in his *Saints Rest*; It's like these holy mens souls, when they have been Transacting this personal Covenant with God, they have been in a very elevated frame, they speak part of the Language of *Canaan*; What Apostrophies, and what turnings to their own soul, and what excitements and encouragements they offer to the soul? and then closes with either, *I accept this Covenant, or this contrivement of the salvation of sinners, as it is offered: or else readily, I swear and subscribe it with my hand, or else I lift up my hand.* Mr. *Allan* approves for some length of the lifting up of the hand, that the solemnity may be the more binding, in the accepting of the Covenant, and of the Terms offered in the Covenant.

But here I will offer you two things about this accepting of the Covenant, which is the first thing wherein this formal act of personal Covenanting consists.

First, Take notice, that this acceptation, if it be done cordially, seriously, deliberately, and according to the Gospel; it's a most difficult thing, it's not an easie thing to bring the heart to it; I will not say this for the discouragement of any, but there are three things that makes it most difficult. 1, There is no Seed of Believing naturally in

in man; *Naturalists* have observed, that it is a most difficult thing, to bring Creatures to act about a thing whereof they have no principle within them; How difficult is it, to Teach Philosophie or Reason to Brutes? And the great ground of it is, they have no seed or principle of it within them, and this makes the accepting of the offer of the Covenant, to be a thing most difficult. 2/y, In the accepting of this Covenant, not only have they no seed of Believing in them, but all the principles in man are contrair to it; It's a wonder to see how proud man replies, to accept of an imputed Righteousness; ye will find in the Church, *Papists*, *Socinians*, *Arminians*; and I know not what a multitude of them, crying down Justification by Faith alone, and mocking at the Term of an Imputed Righteousness; and O! that there were not too many amongst our selves, running headlong to these principles. 3/y, The difficulty of it will appear, if ye consider the opposition that it meets with in the World, in accepting this imputed Righteousness, How many oppositions did Christ Himself meet with, when He was among men? It was constantly His work, to be pressing this, yet when He came to His own, even amongst the *Jews*, they required a sign, before they accepted it; and when He was Preaching to the *Gentiles*, they required Arguments and Demonstrations, ere they accepted it; in effect, man having no principle within him, for accepting this Righteousness, and all the principles within him being contrair to it, and Christ Himself having met with so much opposition when He preached it, ye may conclude from these, that it's not an easie thing to perswade a sinner to accept of this Righteousness of the Covenant. But I will add another thing, that this Act of accepting, it's one special part of that, wherein personal Covenanting consists; and for clearing of this, I would have you to notice three things. 1. Ye shall take notice, that God in the Covenant of Grace, He hath as it were, past from the Terms of the Covenant of Works, no but He requires the same Duties in the Covenant of Grace: I have already evinced it to you, that the whole Law, we become bound to obedience to it in the Covenant of Grace; yea, there are some Duties re-

quired

quired in the Covenant of Grace, that are not required in the Covenant of Works; yea, He hath bound us to the whole Law, in our accepting of this Righteousness; I say, though He hath bound us to the Law, it's not the Law that is the great condition of the Covenant of Grace; it's not our obedience that is the great condition, it's our believing and accepting of the offered Righteousness; so that though obedience to the Law was the great condition of the Covenant of Works; the tenor and nature of the two Covenants are exceeding different, and now the great condition, though the Law be required, the Law is not the condition, it's the accepting and embracing the offered Righteousness, which is necessary to be observed, in regard there are many precious to God, they deal with themselves ordinarily, as if the Covenant of Grace run in the same channel, that the Covenant of Works run in, and if they have not the same perfection of obedience, and if our Sanctification have not such and such qualifications, and such degrees, they utterly sentence themselves as cast-aways; no, obedience is required in the Covenant of Grace, but the accepting of the offered Righteousness, is the great condition of the Covenant of Grace. 2/y, Take notice, that this accepting of the offer, it's really and formally the very act of Believing; In personal Covenanting, it may be convenient, that one should say, and another subscribe with his hand; but the very act of accepting is, the act of Believing; so the Soul transacts with God in this part of the personal Covenant, when it puts out an act of recumbency and relying on Jesus Christ, as He is holden out in the Covenant; so, this is the great condition of the Covenant, and this accepting is the very formal and proper act of Believing. I add 3/y, This accepting is the special thing in personal Covenanting: I deny not, but the Terms, as ye shall hear, on which the offer is made, are necessary to be eyed, and readily we make but a very superficial bargain, that will make a fashion of accepting the offer, and slight the Terms on which it's made; but the principal act in Covenanting is, to credit deliberately, seriously, and effectually, the Grace that makes the offer of Christ in the Gospel, and to

rely and cast our selves absolutely over on Him. I deny not but we are to give our selves to the Lord, and resign our selves to be disposed of by Him, and to be engaged to Duties, according to our station ; but this is not the principal part, the principal part is, to go to Him, and say, This day, Lord, I accept of Christ, I accept of this Righteousness, that He hath purchased ; I will rely on it, and cast my soul and my hope of salvation on it. But I will not insist, in teaching you a form of words, that may be used in accepting of the offer ; but as this accepting is a difficult thing, there being no principle in man for it ; but all against it, so the great condition in personal Covenanting is, this act of accepting.

The other thing required in making up this personal Covenant with God, it's engaging to the Terms on which the offer is made ; we cannot go personally to Covenant with God, but first we must accept of the offer, and then indenture to the Terms ; There are two or three things here, I thought to have spoken a little unto. 1. To hold out to you, that ye may be the better directed in it, something of the Terms, on which the offer is made, of their reasonableness and their excellency. 2ly, That though it be not the principal act in personal Covenanting, it's indispensably necessary, and in effect there can be no personal Covenant, except we indenture to the Terms, and accept of the offer on these Terms.

S E R-

SERMON XII.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

HOW excellent soever the Covenant of Grace be, and excellent it is, yet the Lord hath left a liberty in the visible Church, for every man to come and put in his name into it, *Ho, every one, and whosoever will, let him come, and take the waters of life freely.* Without a curious inquiry, into the many things pre-required, or subsequent unto it ; I resolved the Answer in two Heads : First, The accepting of the offer of the Covenant. 2ly, The indenturing to the Terms of the Covenant, the accepting of the offer, is the first and principal part, though the Covenant require other Duties, yet they are not the proper conditions of the Covenant, and far less the first and principal condition ; I shall say no more of that Branch of the act of Covenanting, the accepting of the offer.

The other thing wherein it consists is, the submitting and indenturing for the Terms, on which the offer is made ; and here there are two things that I would do. 1. I shall inquire a little, in helping to this act of personal Covenanting with God, into what the Terms are. 2ly, What encouragement the Soul hath to indenture for these Terms, notwithstanding of their number and greatness.

First, What these Terms are, *Antinomians* will not admit of any conditions in the Covenant ; I will not deny, but

If ye examine that word *Condition* properly, but they may have something to say, but that there are Terms on which the offer is made, and which in the Souls Covenanting with God, must be indentured for, is beyond all controversy; what these Terms are, is then worthy of inquiry; to run through them at large, would take a large time; I will only mention two things. 1. In personal Covenanting with God, there is something we must give. 2ly, There is something we must do, and we must indenture for both what we are to give, and what we are to do.

First, There are somethings we must give, and what is this, what have we to give? Had we the cattle on a thousand mountains, and gave we them, what would they signify to Him? *Shall we give the fruit of our body, for the fruit of our soul?* no, we are to give Him our self; indeed the indenturing on our part, is mainly lying in this, to make an absolute resignation of our selves to Him, as the *Macedonians*, *Paul* bare them this testimony, and he thought it not strange, that they were charitable, for they had *given themselves to the Lord*; the Lord in the Covenant, He gives Himself, and it's the least we can do, to give our selves back again; it's a marriage Covenant, and it is not enough for the bride, that she give suit and presence, but that she give her self to her husband: It's reported in the life of *Socrates*, That one day when he was at *Athens*, several of his Scholars brought presents to him, some rich presents, some smaller; there was one poor Scholar that had nothing to give, but, said he, *I will give him myself*, and *Socrates* esteemed of that Gift, more than of all that had been offered to him. It's not only our duty, but our privilege; sometime a Believer may go with that argument in his mouth, when he hath any compt to make to God, *I am thine, save thou me*; so when we make a personal Covenant with Him, as we accept of the offer of Himself, of His Son, His Peace, His Pardon, the Land of Canaan, so we engage to resign our selves to Him, and to give our selves to Him, which imports two things into it. 1. We give our selves to be disposed of as to our work. 2ly, We give our selves to be disposed of as to our station, in performing that work.

First,

First, We give our selves to be disposed of as to our work, though it be a marriage Covenant, yet it partakes of a Covenant betwixt King and Subjects, Master and Servant, it's a Despotick Covenant, every Servant is not called to the same work; some of His Commands, as some observe well, they both please Him and us, they will please our flesh, He bids us *eat and drink, and clothe our selves*, they are Commands of the Covenant, and they please both Him and us; but there are many other Commands, they please Him, as *to take up the cross, to deny our selves*, they please Him, but they are often unpleasant to us; He may call one to preach, and another to suffer; In the personal Covenant with Him, we resign and give over our selves, to be disposed of as to our work. 2ly, We give over our selves to be disposed of, as to our station, every vessel in the house is not of gold, there are some of silver, and some of clay, and he that indentures in this personal Covenant, providing he be a vessel for the masters use, it's all one whether he be gold, silver, or clay, the personal Covenant makes a gift of our selves to the Lord, with an absolute resignation of our lot, of our station, and service in the wilderness, if they be not a glazen window in the house, they are content, providing they be a nail in the wall; if they be not an eye, they are content, providing they be a toe, if it be for the good of the body. It's true, we are no great gift, when we have made a gift of our selves, yet it's that He calls for; and in personal Covenanting with Him, that we indenture for, like the *Macedonians*, we give our selves to the Lord, to be disposed by the Lord; if He think prosperity or adversity for us, we are content; if He think a suffering lot, or a peaceable lot for us, we are content; or whether we be in a high place, or a low place, it's all one, for it's a clause in the indenture, we are to be at His disposing.

Secondly, In the Covenant, we not only look to what we are to give, but what we are to do; It's true, all the Duties of the Covenant, ought to be done; in our Covenanting with Him, we are not to make exception of any of them, a Believer may personally Covenant with God, that does not

distinctly take up all the Terms, on which the Covenant runs, yet they do not make exception of any of the Terms, but esteems all his Commands, concerning every thing to be right; some of them are greater, some of them are smaller; even in our indenturing in the Covenant of Grace, we are not to walk by the principles that others walk by; O say they, the Truths relating to external Worship and Church Government, they are but small things; the great duty is to accept of the Righteousness offered in the Covenant; they will personally Covenant with God, for these absolutely indispensable and necessary things; but they think they need not take in these lesser things into the Covenant; But like a man clipping gold, he will stoop down and lift the least clipping, Why? it's gold; so in our indenturing, we are not to make exception of any of the Terms, Why? the Terms are His, and there are two reasons for this. 1. In the great Duty of the Covenant, the Father's design is, the exaltation of His Son, it was one of the proofs I brought, to prove Him the Maker of the Covenant, It looked like the design of It, that He designed to cry up His Son; therefore the great violation of the Covenant lyes in unbelief, and in not accepting of the Son; which would be noticed by all, who will go mourning for other things, and will be cherishing their unbelief: There cannot be a greater affront put upon God, than what is put upon Him in His Son, In regard He is at the outmost of His offers, to speak with reverence, He cannot make a greater offer, than of His Son, now an eye ought to be had to this great Duty especially. But 2ly, These things wherein our infirmity is greatest, or that we are soonest worsted by Temptation, in Covenanting to Terms, in our Covenanting with God, a special respect ought to be had to these; as Sampson had something wherein his great strength lay, in other things he was like another man; so every one of us hath something wherein our weakness lies; now in our Covenanting with God, if one be a neglecter of Family Duty, or if one be easily drawn away from God, after evil company, if one be in a passion, and provoked to prophane and blaspheme the holy and precious Name of God, if one be superficial in secret

Pray.

Prayer; observe wherein the infirmity lies, and where the temptation does most easily worst them, to have an eye in the personal Covenant with God, to these things; It's observed by some, when they write of the Covenant, when the Spirit is about to challenge, for neglect of these things, there will nothing sooner come in ones heart, than the Covenant they made, like a knock of an hammer, it will drive in the Challenge, and roove the Nail to the head; therefore, a special eye ought to be had for these infirmities incident to us, wherein temptation uses to assault us most. So I hope, laying these things together, I have proved, wherein personal Covenanting with God lies, It lyes in accepting the Son, the Father hath offered Him, and all that he hath, and when the Soul accepts of this offer, and relies with an act of recumbency on the faithfulness of Him that made It, and subscribes to the Terms, both to give themselves to the Lord back again and to indenture to the Terms and Duties required, and particular indenturing against the infirmities we are easily beset with, and that Temptation easily worsts them in; herein lies, as I conceive, the act of personal Covenanting with God, especially if ye add to it In,

The 3d place, the manner how this acceptation, and this engagement is to be performed and gone about; and here I shall notice to you three or four things: (1.) Take notice, that in accepting this offer, and in indenturing to these terms, in a personal Covenant with God, the action ought to be very deliberate and advised; it ought not to be, as one says, as a man loving a woman, at the first view he sees her beautiful and comely, and presently it goes in his heart he will marry her, not considering that she may have much debt, and an evil humor, and many infirmities following her; so, many in their personal Covenanting with Christ, they presently fall in love with Glory, they fall in love with the Land of Canaan, and they see the Mediator beautiful and lovely, but they do not consider the crosses, the reproaches, the temptations, the difficulties, that will accompany Covenanting with him. It's remarkable in Scripture, it's called the deed of the wise Merchant, that goes and sells all that he may buy the Field where the Pearl is; this is not the

the act of a fool, it's not an hasty act, no, he goes and considers the Field, and finds it's the Field where the Pearl is, and he goes and sells all that he may buy it; so, the soul that Indentures with God on this score, must consider, it's a business may cost him all that he hath, he must consider, whether the Pearl will compensate the selling of all that he hath; There are many, it may be truly said of them, they are pound fools and penny wise, all the little wit they have in the Wilderness, is only like Children, it's how to build Houses, and to run after Flies, and busk Babies, but their deliberation runs not about this. It's strange to see many rational in many things, and so far from reason in their Religion, the most thing wherein they play the fool is, there, but this Act of personal Covenanting, is a deliberat Act, it's an Act of the wise Merchant, who considers whether the Field and Pearl will pay the cost. (2/y.) This Act is to be an Act of the whole Soul, the understanding, will and affections; the Lord will have the consent of all, in perfecting this work of personal Covenanting; the case is with them, as with some generous spirits, who in suit of Marriage, except they get the Womans heart and consent, all other things that they can offer, will be of no value, and will not induce them to Marry: Wisedoms demand is, my Son, give me thy heart, it's not, give me thy hand, or give me thy tongue, or ear, but my Son, give me thy heart; it's not, my Son, divide thy heart, give me a piece of it; but, my Son, give me thy heart, it's the whole heart that must be given given him, in personal Covenanting with him, and when he hath gotten the whole heart, he hath not gotten a thing of much worth, unless he take a way when he hath gotten it, to clothe it with the righteousness of his Son, and to perfume it, and yet for as feckless as it is, he will have it in personal Covenanting with him, to concur. (3/y.) It may be very necessary and useful, sometimes to express outwardly our accepting of his offer, and Indenturing to these terms on which the offer is made; It's true, the special obligation, and that which is especially required, is, the firm purpose of heart, the consent of the heart, and he will not take words; if he marry, except he know well he get the
Brides

Brides heart; there may be externals subservient to the great end of personal Covenanting with him, as sometimes to go and say to God, Lord, I accept of this Christ, and Indenture on these terms, I will give my self to thee, and will watch especially against the things I have been neglective in, and guilty of; sometime we may do it, by lifting up of the hand, our hearts are such cheats, as we cannot lay too many eyes on them; sometimes believers have done it, by subscribing to the Lord, they have drawn up the special things of It on Gods part, and the special duties they have engaged unto on their own part, and they have written them down, and spread them before the Lord, and then subscribed them; which if they find of any use, when they have examined their way, they have run to the engagement they made to the Lord, and they find, if performing such duties, yielding to such temptations, be agreeable to the Covenant they made with God; therefore from the fear of the wrath of the Covenant, they have been made to mourn for Covenant-breaking with him. Now when things are thus performed, when with consent of the whole man, they are content either to say, or to subscribe, or to swear to God, that they take his offer, they hold him at his offer, they take hold of the offer, as It's offered, and will not alter the terms, but accepts of it on the very terms that It is made, this is the Act of personal Covenanting with God, as I conceive.

But before I proceed to the Application, there is one great difficulty necessary to be cleared, ye would remember both the grounds I brought in the forenoon, to prove the necessity, and the Explication of that, wherein the formal act of personal Covenanting consists.

Quest. The Question necessary to be cleared is, whether is this personal Covenanting with God, the duty of all within the visible Church? Is there not a mixed multitude of elect and reprobate, and is not the Church like a Drag-net, wherein good and bad Fishes are, and can this personal Covenanting and accepting the offer, and Indenturing to the terms, be the duty of the reprobate and bad Fishes in the Net? This is the tossing of a great *Arminian* Question, if I should

should dilate in the Latitude, it would carry me before such a popular Auditory.

Ans. For Answer to the Question, I will only say this, this Act of personal Covenanting, is the duty of all within the visible Church, and none is to go and exempt himself from it, but indeed especially it is the duty of the Elect.

There are Two Parts of this Answer, that I would labour to confirm to you, from some Reasons, 1. That it is the duty of all within the visible Church, thus Personally to Covenant with God, shall appear from these things, 1. All to whom the offer of the Covenant is made, are bound to the accepting of the Offer; now whatever be in the purpose of God, the Promulgation and Proclamation of the Covenant, and the offer of it, is made to all within the visible Church, and who shall question, where there is an offer made, that it is presumption to accept of it? Many stand at it, as if it were presumption; I suppose one were coming by a house, and if the Master of the house should look out at a window, and see him, and intreat him to come and dine with him, and eat and drink with him, would ye think it presumption, especially if he should add Allurements, and Promises, and tell you that he hath killed his Fatlings, and mingled his Wine, and if he should not prevail with all these, if he should look out at the window, and cry, if ye will not come in, I swear I will come down and kill you; the Father hath done so in this Covenant, he hath given Intreaties, and Allurements, and Promises, and sworn, if ye accept not of his offer, he will damn you eternally in hell. 2ly. All whom the command of Believing reaches, and who are concerned in it, are bound Personally to Covenant with God but all in the visible Church are commanded to believe, and the great Root of the Sentence that will pass against them will be, even the Reprobation, their not believing. 3ly. If all were not bound thus Personally to Covenant with God, what can be the meaning of the many Reprates and Lamentations in the Gospel, for many Reprobates, for their not indenturing with him, to sit down over Jerusalem and weep, to upbraid Chorazin, and Bethsaida, if they had not been bound thus Personally to Covenant with Him: So it's the duty of all within the visible

visible Church, all of them ly under an Obligation; to make a Covenant with Him by Sacrifice, on no less hazard than what they are worth for ever and ever: But this is the duty of all, but especially the Elect; the reasons why it is the Elects Duty, I will not dwell on them at this time, but will shew you, that though it be constantly the duty of the Elect, to be making and keeping Covenant with God, yet there are some special Times, wherein especially they are called to it, and all I shall say in this Sermon, shall be to shew you Four or Five remarkable Junctures of Cases, wherein the Lord calls His Elect, to enter in, or to renew a Covenant. *First*, At their first effectual calling, when He hath made a law work, to make way for a Gospel Work, when He hath sent His Spirit to convince of Sin, and of Judgment, the Spirit hath a Commission also, to convince of Righteousness, then especially they are called to Personal Covenanting with God. And the truth is, the work of Effectual Calling, the Term of it, that which persytes it, and makes it Effectual Calling, it's not Challenges and Convictions of Sin, it's the closing with Christ, and entering in a Personal Covenant with Him; for suppose we should be able to tell, of never so many Challenges for Sin, and fears of Hell, they have had, they are not able to instruct from all these, their Effectual Calling, if they have not come under a Personal Covenant with Christ; so any of you that are under the pangs of the New-Birth, as there are some travailling among you, under fears, and griefs, and guiltiness, and fears of Hell, the way of coming to a delivery, and an outgate from all these is, to enter in this Personal Covenant, to accept of the Offer, and the Terms on which the Offer is made. 2ly. It's a very suitable time to enter in this Personal Covenanting with God, when there comes to be any special impression of the Spirit, made on the Soul, we ought to take the stir of our hearts, readily it may be long before ye get that occasion again, it's not your each days dinner, when ye get any Elevation of Spirit, any delight, or any peace or joy in believing, any striking of the Irons in Prayer, that the heart will affect the eye, when ye go to God, that is a special time of Personal Covenanting with Him; in this case, we are to do as

Psal.

*Psal. 27. 8. Thou saidst, seek ye my face, that is; the Spirit working within him, it was even like a command, and my heart answered, Thy face, Lord, I will seek; hide not thy face from me; So at your first Effectual Calling, it may be in some corner, ye may have some liberty to vent your heart to God, and ye may have some gale on your Spirit, ye cannot improve that time better, as a cord to knit to the duty better, than to say, I accept of the Offer, and I accept of the Terms on which it's Offered, and I shall watch against the failings wherein I have been weakest. 3/y. It's a suitable time to enter in a Personal Covenant with God, after we have fallen in some great Sin against God, after we have been left to some sin against God, that hath made a breach on the former Personal Covenant's, that we have made with Him: It may be some wide breach then, that comes to be a call to thee from God, to go and renew a Covenant with Him: It's remarkable in *Thomas's* case, when Christ came in among the Disciples, when *Thomas* was absent; and they told him that Christ was risen, and that they had seen him, O saith he, I will not believe, except I put my hand in his side, and in the print of the nails; Christ comes and convinces him of this Sin, and challenges him for it, and bids him not be unbelieving, but faithful; and when he had seen him, and heard him, and had been convinced, thou art my Lord, and my God, sayes he, it's as much as if he had said, I will Indenture of new with Christ, and renew a Personal Covenant with Him, thou art my Lord, and my God; so that when there comes to be any breach betwixt God and us, that readily hath made a great slap in our former vowes, then ye are not to go and run away, and give over hope, but even after *Thomas* would not believe, that Christ was risen from the dead, and was living, yet when he is thoroughly convinced of all, he saith, thou art my Lord, and my God. 4/y. It's a fit time in entering in a Personal Covenant with God, when a Christian comes under desertion, and when there is a great Cloud betwixt him and God; It's remarkable, upon the case, Christ complains more of Desertion, than of the nails that was thrust in Him; it was no wonder, if He had taken ill with the Cross, for He was dally with the Father, as one brought up with Him, and He was dally his delight, before the*

the Mountains were brought forth; and a Desertion was heavy to Him, and what is His way he takes for outgate? He takes him to the Covenant, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* In this casting a copy to us, that there is no such promising way under Desertion, as the renewing of a Covenant with Him. Lastly. It's a fit time to enter in a personal Covenant with Him, at a Sealing Ordinance; the Sacrament of the Supper, it's a Seal of the New Testament in His Blood, and it may lay a great Obligation, on a loose careless heart, that if it get leave, will be thy death, as a poor man complained, *Alas! my heart will be my death*, thou that hast such a heart, thou art to enter in a personal Covenant with Him, and take this Bread and this Wine, and say, I accept of this Redeemer, as the Father offers Him; I Indenture to the Terms of the Gospel, without exception of any of them; but especially to the great things wherein I have been most negligent; there is a fit time to enter this personal Covenant, when there is a Seal of the New Testament passing as it were, out of his hand, into thine; and that is a great part of the Souls Communion with Him, in that Sacrament.

use, I will only exhort to two things, and with them close this Sermon. 1. Christian, wilt thou go and take a view of this Covenant, that thou may be encouraged, to engage in it; many are ignorant of the Covenant, I complain of your ignorance of the Scriptures, and of your unacquaintedness with them, and for all the sweetness of the Promises, that ye know nothing of them, that ye cannot say, as an Ancient was wont to say, this is my Promise, a Believer ought to have several Promises in the Covenant, these which they have gotten most reviving, quickning, and consolation from; what an excellent thing is it, if one were going through the Bible, and through the Covenant, and doing as Apothecaries use to do, they go to a Garden, and they get a Flower here and there, and puts them up in Boxes, that when sick folk comes, they may go rightly to the Box; so ought we to do with the Promises, we ought to gather the Promises in classes, so that when we have to do with any Promise, we may go to them, and take out a Promise suitable to our case.

27. I exhort you to take a view of the Duties, and Terms of the Covenant; ye need not be discouraged at them, there is a kind of Heaven in Holiness, and the scope of them all is, to make us holy; it's true, the generality but breaks the shell, and gets not the kernel, there is nothing more sweet and satisfying, than the kernel, it's like Honey, all that taste of it, cry, more, more, but of all the werstest things in the world, is the shell.

SERMON XIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

I Proposed in the Second Branch of this *verse* three things to be considered, *First*, Who is the Author of the Covenant? Of this I have spoken. *Secondly*, The parties considered personally and particularly, and the special thing I insisted on the last day was, That every particular Believer, ought personally and particularly, to find himself concerned in the Covenant; and named five or six grounds, to prove the warrantableness and necessity of personal Covenanting with God: And then opened that Question, wherein personal Covenanting consisted: I also inquired in this Question, Who were bound in this duty of personal Covenanting? I told you, that it was the duty of all the Members of the visible Church, but especially the Elect. I shall now, that I may the more fully open the duty of our personal and particular Covenanting, or entering in a Covenant of Grace with God; open some Properties of this Act, of personal Indenturing and Covenanting with God, and I shall name these five or six of them, and from them ye will better understand the nature of it:

First,

First, This Act of personal Covenanting with God, it's an absolutely necessary Act, it's indispensibly necessary, that we should accept his offer in the Covenant, and bind our selves to the Terms of the Covenant; and that is the first Character and Property of it; it's Observed by Divines, there are some things God hath forbidden, there are some things God hath left indifferent, and hath neither commanded nor forbidden them; there are some things God has commanded, and they are necessary *necessitate precepti*, they are to be obeyed *hic & nunc*, as the Sacrament of the New Testament is; and there are some things necessary *necessitate medii*, as Schoolmen speaks, we cannot be saved without them; Now this Act of personal Covenanting with God, is of this nature, it's of absolute and indispensible Necessity, which will appear from the consideration of these Three or Four Things, 1. Unless we particularly, and personally, and expressly accept of the Covenant of Grace, and Indenture with God, on the Terms of the Covenant, we cannot be stated in a Covenant Relation with God; the Covenant made in Baptism by our Parents, wherein we have but a Virtual Consent, doth not state us in a real Covenant with God, untill we really Indenture, and with consent Covenant with Him in the Covenant; so untill we consent, we must be under the Curse and Covenant of Works, in all the Clauses and Heads of it, and cannot claim unto the Covenant of Grace, in all the Clauses and Articles of it; for there cannot be a Covenant Relation with God, untill we expressly, particularly, and personally Indenture in a personal Covenant with Him. 27. Untill we thus particularly and personally Covenant, we cannot have any benefit by Christ's Death; whatever he hath purchased, (and he hath purchased great things) yet, untill we accept and take hold of the Covenant, and particularly, and personally Indenture in it, we can have no benefit by his Death: The Covenant is as it were the Contract, and there is no woman that has a right to the Contract, but she that marries the Man; untill we be united to Christ, we can have no benefit by the Covenant, and untill we enter in the Covenant, we cannot be united to him. *Ephes. 2. 12. At that time ye were aliens from the common wealth of*

of Israel, and Strangers from the covenant of promise; mark how these two go together, without Christ, and Strangers to the covenant of promise; even so, that untill we come to Indenture personally, and particularly in the Covenant, we are without Christ, and without a right to the benefits of His Death. 37. Untill we come personally, and particularly to Indenture with God, and accept of the Covenant of Grace, we can have no comfortable views of Providence, especially if they be dark, and humbling Providences; the Covenant is as it were a Key, that opens all Providences: It's a remarkable word, *Psal. 25. 10. All his ways are mercy and truth, to such as keep his covenant*: mark here, *all his ways are mercy and truth*. And how come they to be known to be Mercy and Truth? They come to be known, by our interest in the covenant, and by the Covenant it self: Let Him do to us what he will; let Him correct, and let him do it never so sharply, yet by the Covenant, and our Interest in it, we see them to be Mercy and Truth. 47. Untill we thus personally Indenture and Covenant with God, we neither owe our Baptism, nor can we rightly Communicate; there is a Covenant indeed made with God, by our Parents. In Baptism, in whom we virtually consent to the Covenant, in all the Clauses and Articles of it, but this is not enough; as a Man suiting a Woman, he judges it not enough, that he have her Parents consent, it's her self he must Marry, and he must have her own express consent, before they Marry: So in Baptism, our Parents gave their Consent, that we shall accept Christ on the terms of the Covenant, but we never owe our Baptism, untill we personally Covenant with God; neither go we rightly about the Sacrament of the Supper, which is a Seal of the Covenant, untill we personally Indenture and Covenant with Him. Lastly. Untill we personally Covenant and Indenture with God, there can be no comfortable viewing of the Great Day, the thoughts of Judgment and Eternity are terrible to them, that have not an Interest in the Covenant; it's a remarkable word, *Psal. 50. The beginning whereof, the current of Interpreters refer to the Judgment of the Great day, in the 5. and 6. verses. Gather my Saints to me, those that have made a covenant with me*

by sacrifice, the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself; mark here, that Day will be a comfortable Day to the Saints, and who are they that are to be gathered to him that day; it's those that have made a Covenant by Sacrifice with Him, and God himself is Judge; now lay all these five together, and ye will find that this particular Indenturing with Him, is of absolute necessity.

But I come to a second Property of this Covenant, this Act of Covenanting Personally with God, and accepting of the Covenant of Grace, Personally and particularly, as it is an Act of absolute necessity, it ought to be a Deliberate, well pondered Act; no Act ought more to be pondered, many go about this rashly, they are like that Scribe, that came to Christ in *Matth. 8. 20. The Scribe saith, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*. Christ tells him, *the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*; but we read no more of that Scribe, it's as much, as thou art not deliberate. thou offers to follow me whithersoever I go, it's a rash offer, thou knows not what thou sayest. This Act ought to be a very deliberate Act on these grounds, 1. Man is a Rational Agent, Reason is the great Specifick Difference, distinguishing him from a Brute, if in any thing his Reason is to be exercised, it's in his Religion; for however, God hath called us to believe several things, which our Reason cannot comprehend, as that there should be three Persons in one Essence, two Natures in one Person, our Reason cannot fathom, nor dive into the deep of these Mysteries; yet there is nothing in our Religion contrary to Reason, and however we have such dusty Spectacles, that we will take the thing for Reason the day, which we will count Folly to morrow, however our Reason, since the Fall, hath gotten a Wound, that makes us like *Jacob* go halting, when he is touched on the hollow of his Thigh, and yet so much of the exercise of Reason is left to us, as that in our Religion, there is special exercise for it; God calls not Man in this Act of Personal Covenanting, to deny his Reason, but rather to exercise it, and when a Christian goes in his walk with God, on well founded Reasons, Scriptural Reasons, and the Authority of God in the Scriptures,

tures; readily that Christian is not frothle, driven like chaf before every wind of Temptation, but is solid in his walk. 2ly. This Act of Personal Covenanting with God, ought to be deliberat, in regard of the great importance of it; Nature will teach us, that things of great importance, ought to be done with great deliberation; and hardly is there a thing of more importance, than our accepting of the Covenant of Grace, and indenturing with the Father, on the Terms of the Covenant: Many ponder not the Importance of it, but it's of so great Importance, as for all Eternity, so long as God will be God. It's of Importance for us, it ought to be very Deliberat, unless we will be pound fools and penny wise, who will be deliberat in Trifles, like Children busking their Babies, and rickling up their Houses. 3ly. It ought to be deliberat, in regard undeliberat Actions to God-ward, makes them soon vanish; there are some, If they come under afflictions, or if they fall in Sickness, or a Fever, and God shake Death over their head; or if they be at some solemn Ordinance, they will be at Resolving and Purposing, and readily bringing vows on themselves, of personal Covenanting with God, but as they are easily gotten, so they easily vanish. Psal. 78. 34. *When he slew them, then they sought after him, and returned and enquired early after God; several times, our affections are like a Gutter, when there is a great Showre, we will be running over, with purposes after God, Nevertheless they flattered him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongue, for their heart was not right with God, nor were they stedfast in his covenant, and yet when he slew them, they sought after him, and they early enquired after him: So that undeliberat Actions and Covenantings with God, as they are hastily begotten, they no less suddenly vanish, the Action ought then to be deliberat, when we indenture with the Cautioner, and obliges our self to more watchfulness, and more tenderness, or else it will soon vanish.*

Quest. But here I will clear a Question, whereabout are we to deliberat, what is a Person to deliberat about, when he thus indentures with God? The Answer is obvious, and I will reduce what I will say of it to two heads,

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We are to deliberat, to consider and ponder, what Offers God makes in the Covenant. 2ly. On what Terms these Offers are made, both these two being by a rational soul rationally pondered, may have great influence on a fixed work with God, and not prove a flash, like what is in an Hypocrite.

First, we are to consider, and deliberat on the Tenor of the Offer made by God, which we are to consider positively, and comparatively, 1. Positively, we are to consider his Offers; the multitude of them, the greatness of the things he offers; some have laboured to reduce them to heads, he not only makes offer of Peace, and Pardon, and happiness in the Covenant, but to speak with reverence of the Majesty of God, he is at the utmost of what he can Offer, to say it with reverence, it's impossible for him to make greater Offers, he cannot make greater Offers than of Himself, and of his Son, and both these he offers in the Covenant, for all Eternity; now when we enter in a personal Covenant with God, we are to ponder the Promises of the Covenant, that they are great and precious Promises, we are to consider the multitude of things offered in it, and the greatness of them, that in a manner, He is at his utmost in his offers, he cannot make a greater Offer. 2ly. We are to consider these Offers comparatively, the heart of Man hath many wooers suiting it, sometimes it hath something in the World suiting it, sometimes Lusts are suiting it, sometimes Satan is suiting it, sometimes one thing, sometimes another; but let them carry it that makes the best Offers, lay these Offers in the Ballance, with what the World offers, and the Honours and Advantages of it, lay them in the Ballance with what your Lusts offer, and with what Satan offers, and let them carry the Heart, who makes the greatest Offer; the consideration of these things, when one sits down like that man, that when he came to the exercise of his Reason, he began to consider, it's not long since I came to the World, and in a little, I will be no more in it, and wherefore came I to it, what is my business in it? There are many things suiting my heart, and who so makes the best, and the greatest, and the surest Offers, let them carry it. Such a Soliloque betwixt a

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Man and his Soul, Acting like a rational Agent, will readily put the Soul, to accept of the offer of the Covenant, and Indenture with God.

Secondly, We are likewise to consider the Terms, on which these offers are made, and upon which we are to Indenture with God; many make this bargain, as sometime a Drunkard will make a rash bargain in his Drink, that when he is fresh, he rues it, and would steal from it again: but we are to consider the Terms, on which we enter in this Covenant, and we can never rightly enter in this Covenant with God, (and without entering in this Covenant, we cannot be saved,) except we ponder the Terms, on which we Indenture, and there are three things necessary to be pondered about them. 1. The multitude of them, it's true the Covenant is a Covenant of Grace, and not a Covenant of Works; and as I said, believing in Jesus, and accepting of Him, is the only proper condition of the Condition of the Covenant of Grace; God in the Covenant of Grace, hath bound us to all the Duties, he hath commanded in the Covenant of Works, what a multitude of them there are, take a compend of them in that word, 2 Cor. 7. at the beginning, *Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;* mark here, we must cleanse our selves of the filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit; a famous Ancient said well, when he read that verse, this seems to me, sayes he, like the Message the King of Syria sent to the King of Israel, 2 Kings 5. 6. *I have sent my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosie;* what sayes he, *am I a God, to kill and make alive, that this man sendeth to me to cure him of his leprosie?* 2ly. We are to consider, the constancy we are bound to in these Terms, if we enter in Covenant with God, it's a Marriage Covenant, whatever fall out to a Man or Woman, except Adultery, the marriage ty remains firm; if one were never so sickly or tender, it does not break that ty, all the variety of cases his people can come under, cannot dissolve it; we are not to be Time-servers in these things, for in a little, they that serve Time, their Master will be taken from them, Rev. 10. 5. *And I saw an angel*

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stand upon the sea, and he lift up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer. But 3ly. We are to consider the difficulties that will accompany these Terms; the Terms are, *to cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness, in the fear of God;* what multitude of difficulties must these Terms be carried on with? will they make a man walk like an Owl among the rest of the Birds? what a deal of crosses and difficulties will attend him, that makes a Covenant with God? Now one that would Indenture in a personal Covenant with God, must consider and ponder all these. Now this is the second Property of personal Indenturing with God, it's an Act of absolute necessity, and we ought to be very deliberat and serious in it.

Thirdly, This Act of Personal Covenanting, as it ought to be deliberat, so it ought to be sincere, and an Act of the whole Soul. Psal. 16. 2. *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my God:* God will dispense with any Infirmary in this Act, sooner than Hypocrisie, He cannot endure to be mocked: For clearing this, that it ought to be done with the whole Soul, I would have you notice, First, This Act of Personal Covenanting, requires a very well ordered Soul, not only Morally well ordered, but Spiritually; Divines observe well, the Soul is well ordered in two Cases;

— First, When the Will comes to be led by the Understanding, several times the Will, like a Dominating Lady, it glories in it's Liberty, and Freedom, it will bind the Understanding, and draw it after it; we are easily brought to believe, what the Will inclines us to, and to find out Reasons, for justifying of the thing which it desires. Next, The Soul is well ordered, when Understanding, Will, and Affections follow the Conscience, and the Conscience is regulat by the Word of God; the Affections, often it holds true of them, that is said of Fire and Water, they are good Servants, but ill Masters; when the Affections comes to domineer, they are ill Masters, but when they are ruled by the Conscience, and the Conscience regulat by the Law of God, so that we can moderat our Anger and not sin, that we can desire nothing, but what we lawfully desire, and we fear nothing, but what

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we lawfully can fear; when grief keeps within its bounds, when the Affections are thus Regular, what a sweet calm is there in the Conscience, like an Instrument, that all the Strings of it are rightly placed, & when ye strike on them, every string gives the sound they ought to give; so the Understanding, Will, and Affections, when they are rightly Regular, they give the sound that is proper for them; when the Understanding is thus Regular, that the Will follows the Understanding, and the Soul is regular by the Conscience, and the Conscience by the Word of God. 27. This Soul Covenanting, it imports a rightly ordered Frame of the Soul, for it's an affectionate and sincere act, it's not to be wrung out of us; Bellarmine calumniates Protestants, when he says, we maintain in the Act of effectual Calling, that *Deus torquet voluntatem*, no, he doth not thraw the Will; no, in this Act of personal Covenanting, it uses to be done, when it's done with the Soul, not with the affections only, but with the benefit of the affections; it's as it were the marriage day, and in that day, the Soul is clothed in its best Apparel, and the Understanding, Will, and Affections, are at the height of their Vigor and Fervency, it's necessary it should be so; for the Lord, when He entered in Covenant with us, O! so sincerely and affectionately as He enters, and when he hath found the lost Groat, and stragling Sheep, He calls His neighbours and friends to rejoyce with Him, *Luk. 15. I likewise say, there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, &c.* When He doth it so Affectionately, and is so much taken, when a person doth personally Covenant with Him, ought we not to Covenant sincerely with the benefit of the Affections.

S E R

S E R M O N XIV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

AMong many excellent Truths in this verse, this is one, not of the meanest, that David speaks of the everlasting Covenant, as a thing personally and particularly made with him, he doth not say, the Lord hath made with the Church, but with me, an everlasting Covenant. I entered on the Properties of this personal Covenant, and spoke to three of them, there are some yet remaining, and therefore I shall proceed, as this personal Covenanting with God, is of absolute necessity, and is a very deliberate Act, and a sincere Act, so there is a

Fourth Property of it, it's an Act that ought to be immediately, speedily, and early done without delay; some of our Divines in their Casuistical disputes with Papists, they rationally alledge, that the Doctrine of the Popish Casuists in some principles, tends to hough all the Practices of Religion; for among other things, they maintain, that if a sinner fall in sin, he is obliged to repent, when he comes under some Cross, or at some solemn Ordinance, or at the hour of Death; We maintain against them, that a sinner is obliged to repent, immediately, on the back of the commission of the Sin; the same we say of personal Covenanting with God, it's to be done without delay, *To day if ye will hear his voice, barden not your hearts, as in the provocation. Heb. 3: 7.* Cited out of *Psal. 95. 7.* It's not said, to morrow if ye will hear his voice, but to day; it's true, there are some times

times and cases, when it's sweeter going about this work, then at other times, there are some approaches in Spirit to us, which we should exactly observe, as Counters that have their *Nobilissima Jandi tempora*, they get some fit opportunities, of putting up their Petitions to Princes. 1. It's an excellent time in going about this work, of Indenturing, vowing and resolving with Christ, when the Spirit is making his approaches, yet we are not to delay till these times, for the command of God lyes on us at all times; It's a great delusion of *Quakers*, that think they will not pray, or hear, but when the Spirit comes; the Obligation to Duty, is the Command, and the Command lyes on us, whether we be in Frame or out of Frame. 2/7. It's true, the Lord will sometimes deny his People assisting Grace, that he may make way for accepting Grace, He will leave them to royl, and wrestle with duties, and then He will take the straitned duty off their hand; several times He will do with them, as He did with the poor Widow, to whom He gave but two mites to cast in the Treasury, and He accepts of them; He will leave one to royl, and wrestle with Duty, as one under Irons, and then kindly accept of the Duty; so, whether we be in Frame or not, as we should Pray, Read and Meditate, so it's not in these times only, that we should make a personal Covenant with God, but we are to do it without delay, and that upon these Reasons. 1. Hardly is there a greater mercy bestowed on a person, than when they give their youth to God, and begin early to seek Him; It's remarkable, Solomon shuts up that Book of the *Ecclesiastes*, with *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth*; the time that others give to vanity, the time that is most difficult to be regulated by Reason and Religion, we are to give that time to God, and to begin to enter in a personal Covenant with Him. 2/7. It ought to be done without delay, in regard of the uncertainty of time, and of the Gospel Offers; we are all of us Tenants at will, we know not what to morrow will bring forth, it's a wonder to see, what a number of doors can easily be opened, to let us in to the Grave, and many have died very speedily; That young Divine that died in *Holland*, when he was yet a young man, he wrote a Book, where-

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In he sayes, some have died of an hair in Milk, some have fallen back from of the Stool that they sat on and died; now, since both the time, and the offers of the Gospel, are so uncertain, this accepting of the Offer, and Indenturing on the Terms of the Covenant, ought to be done with all speed, and without delay. 3/7. It ought to be done tymously, and speedily, in regard, ay the longer one continues in sin, and in a natural estate, they are constantly the more hardened, the Conscience, like a foot that is used to go bare, it gathers a scruff; what a rare thing is Conversion in old age, how seldom falls it out? So that this Work of personal Covenanting, ought to be done without delay, for ay the longer it's delayed, the heart grows the more averse, and the more hardened, and the custom of sinning takes away the Conscience of it. 4/7. It ought to be done speedily, in regard, many time delays puts the Work wholly by, It is never done when it is delayed; there are severals, as a man reported of himself, when he was dying, that took this gate of it, If I were once come to thirty years, I would be holy, and when he comes to thirty, he puts it off till he came to forty, and when he came to forty, he died, lamenting, that he had delayed, and put off so long. It was so with *Felix*, when he heard *Paul* preach of Righteousness and Judgment to come, I will hear thee, sayes he, at a more convenient time, and that convenient time never came; yet, ordinarily delays evanishes in nothing. And Lastly. It ought to be done without delay, in regard as we tell *Papists* in Casuistical Disputes, that Death-bed Repentance is very suspicious; it's true, we read of one, and but one, in all the Bible, the good Thief on the Cross, who got Repentance at Death, there is one to shew its possible, and but one, to shew that it's not very probable. The Scripture calls it an *houling on the bed*, readily the Lord will say to them then, *Because I called, and ye did not hear, ye shall call, and I will not hear; I have stretched out my hand all the day long to a rebellious people*; It's remarkable in the vineyard, some are called at the seventh hour, some at the eight, some at the ninth, some at the eleventh; but why are there not some called at the twelfth? They say, that the twelfth hour is the time

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time of dismissing Servants, and not of putting them to their work. All these pressies, that this Act of accepting the Covenant, and Indenturing through the Mediator, ought to be done early, and without delay. This is the fourth Property.

Fifthly, As it should be done deliberately, sincerely, and timously; so it should be done confidently, and boldly, *Heb. 4. 16. Let us come with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need; Let us come boldly, μετὰ παρρησίας*, some render the word, *παρρησία* quasi πᾶν φημι let us confidently speak out all that is in our heart.

But ye will ask, why may we not do it tremblingly, fearingly and doubtingly? I will tell you some Grounds, on which Faith may build confidence in this Act, of Indenturing with God. 1- We have the Command of God to Indenture with Him, and accept of this Covenant; it's the great Command He has given, if we slight Him in this Command, He values not what we do in other things. *John 3. 23. This is his command, that ye believe on his Son: that is a ground of Confidence*, not only hath He commanded it, but He hath threatened, if we slight Him in this; remember the similitude, I illustrate to you the other day, suppose ye were coming by a house, and the Master of the house should cry down to you, come in and eat and drink with me, were it presumption for you to come in, especially if he should swear, if ye come not in, I will come out and kill you? So the Lord in His Indenturing in the Covenant, Hath not only commanded, but he hath sworn by himself, he will cast you in hell, if ye do not accept of Him. 2ly. Desperate necessity is a ground of confidence, I confess in all the Books that I have read, or all the Sermons that I have heard, I know not a possible way how to escape hell, but by taking hold of this Covenant, desperate necessity helps to boldness; ye remember the *Lepers* at the Gates of *Samarina*, who were to hazard on the Camp of the *Syrians*, all the men of War durst hardly hazard on them, but their motive was good, if we stay here, we shall die, and they hazarded on the Camp of the *Syrians*: If thou be without this Covenant, thou art eternally

eternally ruined: Now to go and accept of the Covenant, take hold of it, and personally to Indenture with God in it, may be a great help and motive, to confidence; thou may reason with thy self, I am eternally ruined without it, there is no other way to escape the fire, that burns in the bottom of Hell, but by taking hold of it. 3ly. This may be a ground of confidence in going about it, in that there is nothing promised in it, but Christ hath purchased it; it's true, all this is of free Grace; in regard the giving of the purchaser was an act of free grace; if we confess our sins, he is just to forgive; any would think, it would suit better to say, He is mercifull and gracious to forgive, but He is just to forgive; to speak it with reverence, it were inconsistent with Justice, not to pardon Sin, and ransom the Elect, for whom He hath received a Price, the Price is payed, and we may say, how sweet soever the pardon of Sin be, and peace of Conscience, and communion with God, yet there is something given for it, beyond the value of them, for they are all purchased by the Blood of God. 4ly. We should do it confidently, in regard, when we go to Indenture with God, the want of confidence fills us with doubting, which is very near of kin to un-bellef: often, if we be to Indenture with God, the smell of Corruptions, and Temptations, and a discouraged Spirit striking in with it, makes it like the Meteors, that ascend upward, they may go to and fro, but at length they resolve in Clouds, and fall down upon the earth again: So, when we go to personal Covenanting with God, doubtings and fears, the smell of guiltiness, and a multitude of Temptations, produces a wavering in the Spirit, which is the next door to un-bellef; now to be free of this, we should Covenant with confidence and boldness: There are many that Indenture with Him in a personal Covenant, and the next day, a very small Temptation makes them doubt, that it was a personal Covenant, Why? They had so much fear, and so many doubtings in the management of it; therefore, we are to loup over all our difficulties, and cut them all with the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, and this is the right way of manning a personal Covenant with God.

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The sixth Property of it, as this Act should be confidently, so it should be done with full purpose of heart, as *Barnabas, Acts 11.23* exhorts them all at *Antioch*, to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart; this act of personal Covenanting on our part, the first beginning of it lyes meerly in purposes and resolutions, on which we cast on the knot of a vow, in personal Covenanting with God; therefore I will speak a little to these purposes and resolutions, that in the first act of the souls personal Covenanting with God, are that in a manner, wherein the act of Covenanting with him consists, and two things I will speak to it. (1.) I shall shew, what weight is to be laid on these purposes and resolutions of the heart, when its about to Covenant with God. (2ly,) I shall shew you what are the reasons, why many of these purposes and resolutions prove to evanish.

First, What weight is to be laid on these purposes and resolutions of heart; I desire ye may take notice, that when we come with full purpose of heart, to enter in a personal Covenant with God, there is a considerable weight to be laid on these purposes, if ye notice these things, (1.) The rational way of the Spirits working is, first to convince the Understanding, and then to determine the Will, to purpose and choose: I confess, Philosophers call the purposes of the will Velleities, they deny it to be that ellect Act of the Will, which they call *Velle*, but yet they suppose a complacency of the Object: And ye will find these three or four things about them in Scripture. First, When there is no more but a purpose, the Lord will commend it, even when one is but purposing and resolving. It's a remarkable word, *2 Sam. 7*. The Lord sends the Prophet *Nathan* to *David*, to tell him, *Because it was in thy heart to build me a house, I will build thee a sure house*; he says nor, *because thou hast builded me a house*, *David* had no more but a purpose of building a house, he could not endure to dwell in houses of Cedar, and the Ark of God in Curtains: Any would have thought, that the Lord would have stayed, until *David* had builded him an house, but he had no more but a purpose, because it was in thine heart to build me an house, I will build thee

a sure house. And it's remarkable, that the Prodigal, *Luke 15*. When he was in a far Countrey, he came only to resolutions, he is only saying, *I will arise, and go to my father, and say, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and when he was yet far off, his father saw him, and ran and kissed him, and embraced him.* (2ly,) These purposes several times they contribute to determine the Will; the Will is an unstayed thing in us, it's like running water, ye will not find it one hour where it was another, it goes like a Wheel, the Spaike that is up now, is presently down, and we are willing the things to day, that we are loathing the morn; it's much to get the Will determined, and if any thing do it, it will be a purpose with the cord of a vow, and the cord of God fastning it. (3ly,) These purposes have something good in them, they are like the flourish of an Apple Tree, though it may be it be not compleatly an Apple, yea many of them falls off, and is never an Apple, yet they have something of the Apple in them, there is something of God in these purposes: It's true, it's a great aggravation of ones guiltiness, if God hath convinced them, and brought them to purposes and resolutions, if they fall away from them, it's hard to renew them again by repentance; the Lord by his Spirit is doing with them, as a man taking a Key to open a Lock, if he throw about the Key and open not the Door, he readily spills the Lock: where there are purposes and resolutions, and falling away from them, it's one to ten thousand, but the Lock is spilt, and readily will never be opened by that Key: yet there is good in these purposes, they are like a smoking flax, that hath something of fire in it, but it can do no more but smoak, and he that will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed, will not readily set his foot on these purposes: So, when we come to Indenture with God, and with full purpose of heart Covenant, that we will keep by the terms of the Covenant, and accept of the offers of it, it's a character of personal Covenanting with God.

Quest. And here I will clear this case, what is the reason that there are so many purposes and resolutions to God that evanish, we make a Covenant with him to day, and Indenture against these sins that our temptations carries us most easily

easily away, as there are some things wherein every one is weakest, what is the reason that these purposes do so often vanish?

Ans. I will name two or three things that influences this, (1.) Several times we purpose in our own strength, we purpose and we go in our own strength: It's a remarkable thing in *Esther*, she saw the danger that the Church of God and her people were in, and she sends to *Mordecai*, and tells him, *I will go to the King, if I perish, I perish*, though it be against the Law; but says she, *Conveen thy people, and fast three days, and I and my maids will do likewise*; there is a thing difficult to be done, she goes not in her own strength, but she carries it on by prayer: when we go out against any corruption within us, we are like *David* going out against *Goliath*, with a sling and with a stone, and what would that signifie? unless he had that to tell, *I come to thee in the Name of the Lord, whom thou hast blasphemed*; the sling and the stone, and the Name of the Lord, was strong enough against a *Goliath*; but when we go against any corruption in our own strength, we go like *David*, with a sling, and with a stone, and not in the Name of the Lord. The reason why our purposes vanish when we are sick, or at a Sacrament, or when we are at a low ebb, we do not as *Esther*, carry them on by Prayer; nor as *David*, in the Name of the God of Israel. (2ly,) Several times there comes purposes and resolutions in the soul, or convictions of the Spirit, and these purposes vanish, because they have not been sincere, deliberate and serious enough, readily they have been extorted by fears, and readily we do as *Erasmus* reports of the man, that when he was at Sea, vowed he would offer a pound of Candle to the Virgin *Mary*, when he came to Shore, but when he came to Shore, he said a Plack Candle might serve her: Readily we do as that man, when we are under a strait, we come under vows, and when the strait is over, like one come to Land, we forget all; this is the reason why many their purposes vanish, the Lord will lift off the Cross, and the Spirit abates their challenges, and the humillity that will sometimes be in them, will be but like the Dogs returning to his vomit again. *Josephus* tells us, that

that after the Flood, the Inhabitants of the World, that were the posterity of *Noah*, for fear of a new Deluge, built their Houses on the tops of Hills, but when they see there is no new Deluge like to come, ye find them in the Plains of *Shinar*, bullding a *Babel*, whose top reaches to Heaven; this is a great cause why our purposes vanish, under a strait we would take the Covenant and the righteousness of it, but when our fears and challenges are away, like a man in a rainy day, that will take an old Cloak about him, but when the showre is past, he lays by the old Cloak. But (3ly,) These purposes and resolutions vanish, by the company of the ungodly, there is nothing will sooner cool these purposes, than the company of the wicked; It's a remarkable resolution of *Dauids*, *Psal. 6. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, why? I have resolved to keep his Commands*, and I know I will not follow this resolution, If ye do not depart from me: often times there is nothing makes purposes sooner vanish, than the company of wicked men, therefore the young man whom *Solomon* would have kept from the whorish woman, among many directions he gives this, *My son, go not near her door, nor only commit no uncleanness with her, but go not near her door*.

Seventhly, The last property of this act of personal Covenanting, as it hath all these six that I have mentioned, so it hath this character, as it is often broken, so it should be often renewed; we are frequently breaking our Covenant; how many times will we bind against a lust, or to the performing of duty, and readily, If a man should bind himself, as for instance, to secret Prayer, to reading the Scriptures, the Lord will tryt him with some tryal, with some diversion, with something that will appear vertue to him, or that will appear to be his interest, to try If this will make him break, and If on this account we break, we should be as oft renewing again; and two things will evdence, that when we come to break our engagements of personal Covenanting, we are not to say, *there is no help for my soul in God*: (1.) Take notice, that on Gods part with the Elect, If once he have Indentured and Covenanted with them, the Covenant remains constantly firm: Think ye the Covenant everlasting,

everlasting, because we everlastingly keep it? It's everlasting, because he is everlasting, and everlastingly keeps it. So he calls often to us to renew this Covenant, *Jer. 3, Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers*; any would have thought, the next word would be, thou shalt never be owned by me again; yet the next word is, yet *return unto me, backsliding children, for I am married to you, and I will take you one of a tribe, and two of a family, and bring you to Zion.* (2/y,) This evidences that the Covenant should be renewed, because the Sacrament of the Supper is renewed, he hath commanded the Sacrament of the Supper to be often taken, and what is that, but to renew a personal Covenant with him? (3/y,) The renewing of the Covenant is our only safety, there is no other way of doing for us in safety, and eschewing the wrath of God, but by renewing the Covenant.

use. I will only close this day with a word or two, of practical improvement of all that hath been said of these seven characters of personal Covenanting with God. (1.) I exhort you who are minding this, as the great design ye have, to put you to accept the offer of this Gospel, and Indenture with God, on the terms that are made; labour from all that is said, to take up the nature and properties of this personal Covenanting with God, many never knew what it meant, and therefore they never practised it. But consider for giving you light in this matter, what ye heard the last day, of the nature of the Covenant; and of the acts it consisted of, and these properties that ye have heard of it, that it is an act of absolute necessity, 'there is no safety through all eternity, but in the doing of it; consider that it's an act that is deliberat, that is sincere, that is done with confidence, and should have a full purpose of heart, in the beginning of Indenturing with God, and when it's broken, should be renewed; take it up thus, and it may give you a great deal of light. (2/y,) I would have you for your encouragement, be taking good notice what God doth in his part of the Covenant to you; readily when ye are about to Covenant with him, if he give warmth of heart; if he give a full purpose of heart, if he give any act of confidence, if he

he give deliberately to cast over the cord of a vow, for our after-walking, or if he give full purposes and resolutions of heart, ye may take these things from him as an earnest that he will do more; if ye find these things, ye may do as *Naomi* to *Ruth*, she goes to *Boaz's* Field, and he bids the Reapers let some Heads fall to her; the next day she comes, and he lays on a burden of Corn on her back; *Naomi* finds him taking this course with her, sit down my Daughter, says *Naomi*, for the man will not be at rest, until thou be Lady of the whole Field: If he be beginning the accomplishment of the promises, let it be but a Head falling this day, and a Head another day, this is a sure Earnest that ye will come to enjoy all that the Covenant contains, and will be Ruler over all that he hath. (3/y,) I would have thee that art thus Indenturing, and resolving from all these Sermons, to give thy self to him, and to give him thy service in thy while of this Wilderness, do not only purpose, but endeavour to perform: It's lamentable to hear how much we talk of the Covenant of promises, and what great encouragements there are from it, and yet what a careless walk, and how unanswerable to the great things offered; therefore, if thou be Indenturing with him, delay it not, but accept it, and resolve, that thou be for him, and not for another; but remember, that the *Sundays* Covenanting with him be not broken on the *Munday*. It was a notable answer that one gave to a temptation, when it offered to draw him away from God, it's not lawful, saith he, for a man to tempt another mans wife, I am married, and another wifes husband, and it is not lawful for me to tempt another mans wife. Therefore let thy walk in reference to the temptation, and the thing thy heart inclineth thee to, let them look like thy personal engagement and Covenant with God, otherwise the thing that is thy great help, shall be the greatest witness against thee, and thy Judge shall tell thee before all the sons of *Adam*, thou art a person condemned out of thy own mouth.

SERMON. XV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

THE last day I fell on the properties of this duty, of personal Covenanting with God; I spoke to six or seven, which I will not now resume; but because it is so necessary a Theme, and that which the practice of it affords to many that are now in glory a great deal of sweetness, I will yet add three or four properties of this personal Covenanting with God, before I apply it. *First*, this personal Covenanting, the bringing the Covenant particularly home, as made with me, as it ought to have these six or seven things ye heard of the last day, so in the eighth place, it ought to be very express, distinct and formal, it ought not to be a general entering in Covenant with God, nor a conclusion drawn out of a general, but it ought to be an express, formal, explicate Covenanting with Him. There are two remarkable words ye find David have, *Psal. 16. 2. O my soul, thou hast said to the Lord, thou art my God* compared with *Psal. 35. 3. Say to my soul, I am thy salvation*; lay the two together, David in personal Covenanting with God, he can give an express account what his soul said to God, and what God said to his soul; it ought not to be a meer general, or a conclusion drawn out of a general, but it should be very explicate and express; and here I will clear two things, (1.) Wherein ought a Christian, in his personal Covenanting with God to be express? And (2.) I shall give you some grounds why we ought to be so express in our personal Covenanting with God. *First*

First, Wherein ought we to be express in our Covenanting? Among many things I will name these three, (1.) We ought to be very express in this, that it's a Covenant we make with God; it's not a purpose, nor a resolution that we take up, but it's an express Covenant we make; ye have often heard, that of all ties, the tie of a Covenant is most binding, no man can loose himself, nor no society of men can loose themselves from the tie and obligation of a Covenant with God; Therefore it's remarkable, when the Lord makes over to Believers, the things purchased in and by his Sons death, firmly and surely, he hath amongst all other ways, eligible for that end, pitched on making them over by way of Covenant; he knew well, that of all things that made up a Security, a secure right in a Covenant was the most firm; so when we come to make a Covenant with God, that we may not shake our head loose, as often we do in purposes, we ought to be very express in it; this that I do, and that which I transact, it's a formal Covenant, which contains the strongest tie; it's not a purpose, nor a resolution only, but it's a formal and express Covenant, which is necessary to be adverted unto, because many at Sacraments, and when they come under the Spirits convictions, they come under purposes, and possibly some kind of vows, and they slip as hastily from them again; whereas, if they were express in this, that it is a formal Covenant the soul enters into with God, the obligation would readily appear more binding. (2.) As we are to be express in this, that it's a Covenant we transact with God, that afterward we may remember, such a day I not only purposed, resolved, and vowed, but I Covenanted with God. In the second place, we are to be express in the terms on which we Covenant: and here ye would notice two things, (1.) We are to be express in the things we bind our selves to do. (2.) We are to be very express in the condition, on which we bind our selves to do these things. *First*, We are to be express in the things we are to do, it's true we are not to make new duties, nor to put in terms that are not in the Covenant already; yet there are three particulars, wherein a person Covenanting with God ought to study to be very express. *First*, There are

the great things in the Covenant that we should believe, mourn for sin, and pray; these things are indispensably required in the Covenant: therefore when we enter in a personal Covenant with God, and would be explicit and express about it, we are expressly to mention the great Articles of the Covenant on our part, whatever we bind ourselves to do, If we bind ourselves in the Covenant, to build the Church, and give our goods to the poor, and our bodies to the fire, except these great Articles of the Covenant be performed, it's not a Gospel-Covenant: therefore we ought to be express, in binding ourselves to these great things, indispensably required by God in the Covenant. (2/y.) In a time of tryal, a Christian should be express, in binding himself in a personal Covenant, to the owning of these truths and interests, that come to be a case of confession; it's an easie thing to owne uncontroverted truths, but these things, that in our generation come to be a case of confession, these interests, and people that are most born down, we are particularly to Indenture in a personal Covenant with God, especially for the owning of these interests; though we are to have respect to all his commands, yet especially to these that make against the errors of the time: It's remarkable, ye find the most part of the Prophets writings, running against Idolatry, and the most part of Christs Sermons running against hypocrisie, the great reason of this is, in *Isaiab's* and *Jeremiah's* time, *Israel* was prone to Idolatry, and in Christs time, they were overwhelmed with Hypocrisie. (3/y.) A Christian ought especially to bind himself to these duties, at which his careless heart is most sloathful, and against these corruptions he is most prone to; every man is weakest at something, as *Sampson* had his particular wherein his strength lay, so every man hath something wherein his weakness lyes; and when we personally Covenant with God, we ought to be express in it; If one be negligent in Prayer, a wanderer in hearing, if one be gadding, light heart in conversing with God, they are not only to purpose and resolve, but to cast over the cord of a Covenant, on that levity of spirit; so when we Covenant personally and particularly with God, in these three above all o-

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ther things, the soul ought to be express & particular into it. But secondly, we ought to be express and particular in the conditions on which we bind to these things, otherways after our Covenanting with God, which affords a great deal of peace and sweetness to the soul, and many of late have gone sweetly down to the grave, when they have brought out their old personal Covenanting with God, and renewed them, and we ought to be express in the conditions, especially in these three. (1.) It's a promise of the Covenant, that God shall give strength for performing our part of the Covenant, he hath often promised this, *The feeble among you shall be as David, and David as the Angel of God, they shall renew their strength, and mount up as an Eagle, they shall walk and not be weary, run and not faint*; now when we bind to the great duties of the Covenant, to the owning the truths and interests of the Gospel, we are to put in that condition, wherein it's promised that he will do these duties, viz. that all our strength must flow from him as a River, and that on these terms and conditions we bind, providing he give strength; this is the way to make our part of the Covenant, both pleasant and easie, when we can go to Christ as our Treasurer, to bring our strength from him, to do what we have Covenanted. (2/y.) We are to put in this condition expressly, that he will accept of the will and endeavour, in place of perfection; If we were to make a Covenant of Works, as *Adam* did, we were obliged to bind, that we should be perfect in love, and perfect in faith; but in the Covenant of Grace, we are to bind, according to the terming of the Covenant of Grace, the grace of the Covenant hath made the proposals of it run in this Channel, he it is alone that works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and he will accept of the will in place of perfection. (3/y.) We are to Indenture in this Covenant on these terms, that all our failings shall be covered with the righteousness of a Cautioner; when we have any challenge for guiltiness, being in Covenant with him, our only recourse, like *Manoah's* Wife, the second time that the Angel came to her, she was not accustomed to speak to Angels, stay till I call my Husband; the Covenant holds him out as the only fit person

to deal with Serpents, whose head he bruised : So we are to be express in our Covenanting, that our failings shall be covered with the righteousness of a Cautioner ; so ye see, this personal Covenanting with God is not so dreadful and scarring a thing, as many take it up to be, but it is easie and pleasant, if it be gone about according to the method of the Gospel.

The second property of this Covenanting with God, shall be this, that as it ought to be gone about expressly, explicitly, and distinctly, so it ought to be gone about according to the method of the Gospel, no person goes about it rightly, that doth not keep in it the method of the Gospel.

Quest. Ye will readily ask, What is it to keep a Gospel-method, in Covenanting with Christ?

Ans. For clearing of this, I desire you may take notice of these three things, that make up this Gospel-method, in a souls personal Covenanting with God. (1.) The Gospel-method is kept, when the Law makes way for the Gospel ; I do not deny, but one may enter in a personal Covenant with God, that hath not had the Law-work to such a height as others have had ; we read of some in the Gospel, that were cut to the heart, before they were brought to believe ; so here are some of them we read of, there is no more but the Lord opened their heart, as the Lord opened the heart of *Lydia*, there is no such account of their Law-work, as of others ; yet this ordinary Gospel-method, of the Law making way for the Gospel, was typified by the stinging of the fiery Serpents, before they could look for healing on the brazen Serpent ; and readily they will never make a sincere personal Covenant with God, that have not had the challenges and threatenings of the Law, like an Ax laid to the root of the Tree : It's ordinar for any, when they take up a profession, and readily sewes a new profession to an old heart, like a new Cloath sewed to an old Garment, they will presently enter in a Covenant with God, but it uses not to be sicker and lasting, unless the Law hath made way for the Gospel : O but they will come sweetly and accept his righteousness, and bind with him upon any terms, that have

been

been sitting in prison, and hath had the sentence of death in themselves, and that hath lyen in the Irons, and as it were been hanging over the Pit ; it will be but a frothy kind of work the soul will perform, when there hath been no Law-work, nor Legal humiliation before. (27.) In this personal Covenanting, this method is to be kept ; that the absolute promises are to be eyed, in order to our performing the conditional promises ; when we personally Covenant with God, we have to do with a Covenant of promises, but the promises takes in duties, and in order to the performing the condition, we must keep the Gospel method in the Covenant ; Lord, I bind my self in this Covenant, to accept of thy Son, and to believe in him, and to take him for my Husband, but in order to this, ye must look on the absolute promises ; there is a Spirit of Faith promised, there is one holden out to be the Author and Finisher of Faith, and we never Covenant in a Gospel method, when we eye not the absolute promises, in order to the performing of the condition of the conditional promises ; as for example, a person binds himself deliberately, I am negligent in Prayer, I bind my self against negligence, to be more diligent, I am a person wandering in hearing, I bind my self in this Covenant against it ; they have still an eye to some absolute promise where these things are promised in the conditional promise. (37.) Ye shall take notice, that every man before he enter in a personal Covenant with God, he is in Covenant with death and hell. Remarkable is that word, *Isai. 28.* comparing the 15 and 18 verses, *Because ye have said, we have made a Covenant with death, and with hell are we at an agreement. Vers. 18. And your Covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand, and the overflowing scourge shall overtake you.* Every natural man is under a Covenant with death and hell ; now, when ever we come under a personal Covenant with God, that Covenant must be broken : The Covenant is like a Marriage-Covenant betwixt *Hosea* and the Woman of Fornications, he is commanded to marry a Wife, an Adulteress, saith he to her, thou shalt no more play the Harlot, thou shalt be for me, and not for another, so will I also be for thee ; then we keep

keep a Gospel method in a personal Covenant with God, when the work of the Law drives the Soul to the Gospel, and when we eye the absolute promises, in order to the performing the condition of the conditional promises, and when we break the Covenant with death and hell, like a Woman that is Married, she gives up with all the rest of her Woovers, because she is married to another; so in this personal Covenanting with God, there must be a bidding *Adieu* to all the rest of the Suiters, and we must break Covenant with death, and hell, and lusts, for we are now married, and become another Mans Wife, and readily, the thing that was but Fornication before, will be Adultery now.

Thirdly, And lastly, This personal Covenanting with God, ought to be compleat, it ought not to have limitations and reservations, but it ought to be compleat and entire.

Quest. Readily ye will ask, How is this personal Covenant with God compleat, and in what respects it is so?

Ans. I might instance many reservations, that any would make, when they come to indenture in a personal Covenant with God, but I shall rather chuse to shew you three things, wherein this act of personal Covenanting with God, becomes intire and compleat. 1. When we give our selves wholly to Christ, when we give and Covenant our All to Him. 2ly, When we are content in a Covenant, to take Christ for All. And 3ly, When we are content in the Covenant, to take all Christ, as He is offered to us; these three makes a compleat Covenanting with Him, and in a personal Covenant, when the Soul proceeds not dissemblingly, but sincerely, it's content to make it compleat in all the three. First, when we are content to Covenant, to give our selves all wholly to Him, our life, our liberty, we are content to be disposed of, as ye were hearing, as to our lot in the world, yea, as to our service; some He calls to one pcelce of service, some to another; some He calls to do, others He calls to suffer, and when the Soul is content, wholly to give itself, and its concernment up to Him, that He may take their life if He please, their liberty if He please, and whether He call for doing, or suffering, according as He calls, we Covenant to obey Him. Many Covenant with Him, and they have reservations of some one thing or another;

ther; but when we indeed Covenant as Christians, we are to give up our selves wholly to Him. 2ly, We are to take Him for all, *Psal. 73. 25.* He that hath made this personal Covenant, sings it over to Him, *whom have I in heaven but thee, and on the earth whom I desire besides thee?* He hath taken Him for his all, He is satisfaction to all his desires; If there were nothing left Him but God, as the man said, *there is nothing left me but God,* and then he chided himself, *and but God, and what would I have more?* When we are content to take Christ for all, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and satisfaction to all desires, then the Covenant is compleat. 3ly, When we are content to take all Christ, as He is offered, not only the merit of His death, but the authority of His laws, as a King, we are content to be subject to the workings of the Spirit, to the influences, for consolation, to convictions, to lay our selves open, to receive these influences, and impressions of the Spirit; the Covenant is compleat when all the three are performed. Thus I have run through the Doctrinal part of this Head, of personal Covenanting, and have laboured to open it up, as fully as I could, in the nature of it, and grounds and properties of it. I will only break in on the practical part at this time, and make way for following it in the afternoon.

Use 1. First, Is it a Duty personally to Covenant with God, and particularly to be able to say, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant?* Then first, it serves for Information, and it informs of five or six particulars. 1. Is it a Duty thus personally to Covenant with God? then certainly it must be a great sin to neglect it, the neglecting of this personal Covenanting, and indenturing with God, must be a very great guiltiness; by the Law of contraries, if the one be a duty, the neglect of it must be a sin; many has never laid the guilt of not entering in a personal, particular, exprels Covenant with God to heart; readily there are some, who have come under some general confused resolutions, and possibly under some vows to God, but to go and firmly state a Covenant, wherein they indenture to accept of the offer of Christ in the Gospel, and to bind to the terms, on which the offer is made, without altering of any of the terms;

terms; how few take up this for a guilt, yet certainly there is a great deal of guilt in it, if ye shall take a view of the five or six Grounds, that I brought this day fourtnight, to prove the necessity of personal Covenanting with God. Therefore without resuming any of them, I do exhort all the multitude, that are hearing this Sermon, that they would be convinced, that the neglect of this is a very provocking guiltiness against God; yea it's a mother sin, and it's a nurse to other sins, if thou knew what it were personally to Covenant with God, readily there would not be so much neglect of morning Prayer, and Family Worship, and there would not be so much liberty taken in your walk, the bond of the Covenant would restrain thee; nay, it's not only a mother sin, and a nurse to other sins, but it's the highest affront that can be given to God, who offers His Son in the Gospel, and thou has never given a particular and personal acceptance of Him.

SERMON XVI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

AN Historical Faith; such as the Devils have, who believe and tremble, will assent to this truth, That God hath made a Covenant; but it requires a saving and justifying Faith, to put to these two words with it, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant.* I have handled the Doctrinal part of this great Duty, of personal Covenanting; and now I come to the practical part; I began in the Forenoon with an use of Information of five

or

or six Branches. 1. Is it a Duty personally to Covenant with God? then the neglect of it must be a sin, every contrariety to a Duty is a Sin, it's indeed a sin of the highest degree, however many that are challenged by a natural Conscience for other sins, do not ponder it, it's a mother sin, and an affronting of the Father in His Son. But 2^{ly}, If this personal Covenanting be a Duty, then it's no presumption personally to Covenant with God; it is well Observed by some practical Divines, there are many things, that it were presumption in us to require them of God, but it's no presumption to do them, when they are commanded of God; indeed for us to have dreamed of such a thing, as that the Son should marry us, that the Spirit should dwell in us, and that we should have such a Covenant of Promises, it had been presumption in us to require them; but being made Duties, it cannot be made presumption in us to obey them; there are many stand at personal Covenanting with God, what, so great a God, so great offers as Himself, and His Son, and to be made ruler over all that He hath: but since His liberal Heart, hath not only offered them, but hath commanded us, under the pain of His displeasure, it can be no presumption to obey, though I confess, it had been presumption to require them. 3^{ly}, Is it a Duty personally and particularly to Covenant with Him? then it necessarily follows, that our duty is our honour; a very great privilege, what, God to be our God, and to be in Covenant with Him, to be able to take up the Bible, and read that part of the verse, which is agreeing to our case, *My Beloved is mine, and I am His*, what greater priviledgethan this? Saul made an offer of his Daughter in marriage to David, he was lately following his Fathers sheep, *Seemeth it a small thing to you*, sayes he, *to be Son in law to a King?* But the offer made it Davia's duty to imbrace the offer, and the King's Command, and his duty became his Priviledge:

And here ye would notice Two Things by the way. 1. That it is remarkable, that the great duties of the Gospel, are not meer Service, but a Christians greatest honour; Believing, delighting in God, walking with Him, rejoycing in Him, are not meer Service, but a Priviledge, which is necessary

cessary, to be observed by some, who think, if they win at their duties, they are advanced to great honour, and they take up the want of them, as their Affliction; these are thy Duty, and the want of them is thy Sin. But there are others, that take up the duties of the Gospel, as their duty, but they go about them Toyling and wrestling, but they take them not up as their Privilege, and yet they are both woven through other, and our Duty is our greatest Privilege. 4ly If this personal Covenanting with God be a Duty, then we are not to Disput, whether we should enter in this Covenant or not; commanded Duties should not be Disput, he is not a Servant, that thinks he understands himself so well, that if his Master command him to go, or to come, that will stand and debate with himself, whether it is most convenient for me to go, or to come? the Masters will is to determine him in this; it's ordinary for us, we are more in disputing our Duty, than in doing our Duty, we are constantly debating this Question, and that Question, and our converse together, is more in disputing, than in helping one another to do; but that which is duty, should not be disput; readily the adversary, (if one be about this Duty of personal Covenanting with God,) will bring in this, and that, and a third thing, but not to lay by the duty, yet to delay it, but this is duty, and it's a notable evidence of a faithful Servant to his Lord, and Master, that will not disput his Duty, but will make all the Inquiry how he should do it. 5ly, If it be a Duty thus personally to Covenant with God, then we are not to stand on Events, about our duty, for where ever there is duty, we are not to consider Events, the great reason that Scholars give of this, say they, when God commanded the duty he foresaw the Events, and it's a reflection upon his Wildom, to think He would engage His People in Duty, and not care for them in the Event; some need not be careful about the Event, why? We are clear about our Duty. Now if this personal Covenanting be, as it's proven to be, a Duty, for us to sit down, and calculate, as with Counters, this will cost me so much doing, and that will cost me so much suffering, no, in the matter of Duty, we are not to debate the Event, He that commanded the Duty,

ty, foresaw the Event before He commanded it, and we are to leave the ordering of the Event to Him, O! sayes one; If I Covenant with Him, I will look for a harsh life of it; sayes another, I will never be able to wade through the things I see, If I Ingadge in a personal Covenant with Him; all these things should be referred to Him, who commanded the Duty. Lastly, If this be a Duty personally to Covenant; it informs us, that certainly these who Indenture with Him, will get strength to perform, for they are about a duty, however it may be, the failings that adhere to our corrupted nature, may accompany us in the Duty, yet if they be not wilfull failings, but that they be in sincerity, minding their duty, the case will be, as if a Father call to a Child, to give him a Glass of Wine, and the Child takes the Glass, and throws it in a passion on the Ground, and breaks it, no question, the Father will be angry at him, and scourge him; but if the Child take the Glass, and fill the Wine, but his shaking arm lets the Glass fall, readily the Father will pity him, because it is an Infirmity accompanying his Arm. There are in our performing Duties, many Infirmities accompanying our Arm, we will not get it perfectly done, but the Arm will shake; and let the Glass fall, yet if we set sincerely about the Duty, we will get strength to perform; *They that wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength.* All these Uses of Information, follows from this natively, that this personal Covenanting with God, is a duty, it's no Phana-ticism, it's a Commanded Duty, it's the great Duty of the Gospel, it is on the matter all one with Believing; it's no presumption to Covenant with Him. But I insist not on this, there are some most special and practical Improvements of it, than this general; Therefore I proceed,

Use 2. To a Second Use of Information, Is this personal Covenanting with God a duty, and so great a duty, as is proven, then be exhorted to Covenant with him; I have pressed you before, to go home and do it, and not delay it, and to make it as express and distinct, as to the Terms, as ye can; and either with writing, or saying it over to God, as that place ye heard cited, *Isaiah 44. One shall say, and another subscribe with his hand, I am the Lords.* But this Use

Use of Exhortation, that I may the more distinctly handle it, I shall follow it, with Reference to two sorts of Persons in the visible Church and in this place, who have need of Exhortation. 1. There is a multitude of carnal careless Professors, that readily are at the pains, to walk on Ordinances; and the External of Religion, are punctually observed; but for personal Covenanting with God for ever, having done any thing of this kind, they are great strangers to it. That I may at least, leave a conviction on these, I will speak a word to two things. 1. What are the things that hinders the generality from this, of personal Covenanting with God? 2ly. What is their misery.

Quest. First, What is it that hinders the generality, from this personal Covenanting with God?

Answer, Among many things, I will name these Four.

First, A great many understand not the nature of the Covenant, they are in the estate of nature, they are under the Covenant of Works; It's a truth beyond all controversy, all natural men, however they may be visibly under the Covenant of Grace, they are really under the Covenant of Works; they are in the first Adam, and therefore they are under his Covenant, untill they be really unite and married to Christ: the Covenant is the Contract, and untill we marry the Man, we have no right to the Contract; now the generality understand not the misery and danger of this Covenant, they consider not, that it's a Covenant, that requires, perfect and personal obedience, they are under a Covenant, if they fail in the least, they must be damned for it; however they cry to Christ, and die hoping in Christ, yet their Covenant admits not of a Christ, nor of a Cautioner; nay, the Covenant they are under, admits not of Repentance: It's remarkable, the Covenant made with Adam was on these terms, *in the day thou eats, thou shalt die*; it's not said, *in the day thou eats, if thou repent, thou mayest be spared*; no, it admits of no Repentance, if Esau should seek the blessing with tears, he cannot have it, he rews that he had sold his Birth-right, but he could not obtain the blessing, though he sought it with tears: even Adam in the state of Innocency, could not keep this Covenant, the generality

rality consider not the misery of it, but were it pondered as becomes men, that in a little will meet in the Valley of Decision, and reckon before the Tribunal of God, for ye are under a Covenant, that admits not of a Christ, nor Cautioner, nor of Repentance, but it requires personal, and perfect obedience; If it were seriously pondered, O! what pains there would be, to get a Covenant made with God through the Son. 2ly. The generality do neglect this personal Covenanting with God, because other things take up their time, It is very remarkable, *Isaiah 55. 2. 3. and 4. Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David*; but what goes before? *why spend ye your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not*? There is the Impediment, that hinders many from entering in this personal Covenant, they are so taken up, spending their money for that which is not Bread, and their labour for that which satisfies not, that their ear is not inclined to hearken unto this everlasting Covenant with Christ; readily the thing hinders you, from personal Covenanting, that hindered Martha from hearing Christ, she was busie taken up in the house; Martha, saith Christ, *thou art troubled about many things*: and very lawful things, may be sinful hinderances, in the way of this Covenanting. It's remarkable, the persons that send the Answer to the Master of the wedding, when he sent out his servants to invite them, the one of them sayes not, I have a Whore, I cannot come; another sayes not, I have a drunken lawing to count, I cannot come; but one of them sayes, I have a Farm, another, I have a yoke of oxen; another, I have a Marriage, I cannot come; all the Three were lawful things, but they became sinful hinderances, in the way of coming to the Wedding. No, the truth is, earthly-mindedness lyes in the way of many, in this place of personal Covenanting with Christ, *They spend their money, for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not*. 3ly. A Third impediment in the way of the generality, in making this personal Covenanting with God, it's this, they are like a Woman that is already married, marrying another Husband, *They have*

have made a Covenant with death, and with hell are they at an agreement, as ye heard cited from *Isaiah 28*. It's true, That is making lies their refuge, as it's called in that same place; yet they cannot break that Covenant, they cannot break the Covenant they have made with their Lusts, sometimes they are inclining to break it, they are oftentimes like a sleepy Servant in a house, the Master calls him, he will cry, coming, and immediately falls a sleep again: several times, they will break that Covenant with their Lusts, but that is but like the morning Dew, or an early Cloud, like *Ephraim's* goodness, it soon goes away, they cry, coming, and then falls a sleep: Now, the great Impediment of the generality, that hinders them from personal Covenanting, there is a Covenant driven, and roved, and subscribed, and Sealed with Death, and Hell, and Lusts; and they cannot break this Covenant, they cannot shake it off. Lastly, It impedes the greatest part, the generality their entering in this personal Covenant with Christ; fear of difficulties, if they shall Indenture with Him, they must resolve with the Cross, they know indeed, there is much good gotten with Him, but there is evil also; there are Reproaches, and Crosses, as some of the Heathen professed to the Primitive Christians, that they could Imbrace the Gospel, but they could not burn for it; but, as we have said, where there is a Question about the duty, we are to leave the events to Him, that hath commanded the Duty; for He hath commanded no duty, but He foresaw the Events, and will regulate them, and yet ordinarily, we cannot trust Him with Events: These things makes among many, that may be brought, that the generality of natural men, and the generality of them that are living in the visible Church, they rest on the Covenant of Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord, but to take them to consider their misery they are under, by continuing in their natural estate; and what Intanglements from the World, lyes in their way, and what a difficulty it is, to break the Covenant with Death and Hell, and that they should leave Events to the Lord: they cannot look through them, therefore they go on in the house of their pilgrimage, from twenty years old to thirty, and from thirty to Sixty, and like sheep they

they are laid in the Grave, and Death hath dominion over them: these are the Impediments that the generality have lying in the way, of personal Covenanting with God.

In the second place, There are some that go an higher length, beyond these that I have spoken to; it may be they come under some Implickt Covenant with God, that dare never venture on an express, formal, Stated Covenant with Him, either to subscribe with the hand, or to lift it up, as some that make personal Covenants will do, or to open the mouth, by some solemn Engagement to Him, they dare not come this length, and there are Three or Four things, use toly in their way, and I would gladly cast up the Gates, and remove the stumbling blocks, that ly in their way. 1. Sometimes before we can trust God, we would have surer pledges from Him than His Word; It's a difficult thing to live the life of Faith, and very often His People would have some sense and experience, before they can personally Covenant with God; like *Thomas*, he would not believe, untill he saw the print of the nails; and yet he came at length to do it, *Thou art my God, and my Lord*, sayes he; this was a great injury done to Him, but he had to do with one, that could soon forgive Injuries; it was a great wrong, not to believe the Resurrection of Christ, he had been often told of it before, and yet I will not believe untill I see the print of the nails, and put my hand in the holes of His side; and readily many of his People, before they Indenture and Covenant with Him, they would have some sensible Prooves and Experience of His Covenant, I will not believe, while I see the print of the nails, before I can say, *my Lord, and my God*; this was a great Injury, but he hath magnified his Word above all his Name, and yet oftentimes, when we think of personal Covenanting, we cannot credit the Word of Him who cannot lie: This several times keeps back His People from personal Covenanting, they can tell, O! such a Covenant, such a sure one, and such Promises as are in it, and made by a God that cannot lie, O say they, I see not the print of the nails, the hole in the side, and therefore they refuse personally to Covenant, untill they get such a measure of Sense. It's just that they go mourning over the want of it.

2/y. Sometimes His People refuse thus to Covenant personally with Him, because they mistake the Work of the Law, and the Convictions of the Spirit, accompanying the Law, frequently if the Law, like a Sword put in the Spirits hand, begin to wound, they presently think, there is no more for them, but to dwell on sorrow; or like *Jacob*, if they should live to gray hairs, they should go down to the Grave with sorrow, for ordinarily the Spirit and the Law wound together, and it's strange, to see the thing, that Christ intends to drive to personal Covenanting with Him, should be the thing, that should hinder us from it: The great end why the Spirit takes the Law, and convinces and challenges, it's no to drive us from the Covenant, the great end of the Law is, to be a School-master to lead us to Christ, it was evil Logick in *Peter* to say, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*; It was far more suitable to have said, come to me, for I am a sinful man; this readily hinders many from coming to Christ, and personally to Covenant with Him, they think it suits best with them, to cherish the Challenges of the Spirit, and Convictions of the Law, and to dwell on them, If it were to go to the Grave, with no other Religion, than what that hath produced, altogether mistaking the design of the Spirit, which is in all these Convictions, and Work of the Law, to drive us to a personal Covenant with Him. But 3/y, A third impediment, that lyes in the way of this personal Covenanting, it's this, many times these who would go about it, they account the things in the Covenant so far above them, that they cannot offer to claime at them; what, say they, God to be their God, and Glory to be theirs, Himself to be theirs, and to be made Ruler over all that He hath; oftentimes this keeps many of his People, from personal Covenanting with Him; they are like some weak eye, that is dalled with looking upon the Sun, the Sun is so bright; the things offered in the Covenant are so great, that in a manner, they put out their eyes; As I hinted at already, indeed it had been presumption in us, to have required them, but it is none to obey them, when they are commanded; it had been great presumption in *Peter*, to have come to Christ, and said, Lord, wash

my feet, but it was a great sin in *Peter*, when Christ girded Himself with a Towel, and came to wash his feet, for him to say, thou shalt never wash my feet, Christ takes him sharply up for it, *If I wash thee not, sayes he, thou hast neither part nor portion in me.* Frequently we look on the things of the Covenant, as so great, and so far above us, that we cannot personally Covenant with Him, whereas it's above thy Fathers House, and all thy Kin, to require them, but since thou art commanded, and threatned with Hell, except thou personally Covenant, there cannot be any presumption in it. 4/y, A great many, who would incline to this personal Covenant, are hindered by this great Impediment, discouraging Temptations, many of which I could name, but I will only say this now, since it is this use of Exhortation that I am on, I would exhort you, to go about this work of personal Covenanting, all ye that are in nature, and are hindered with this, that ye would heve more from Christ nor his bare Word, or the Covenant, or ye that are mistaken with the Law, or any of you, that think the Covenant above you, or that are hindered with discouraging temptations, I exhort you to go home, and make this personal Covenant, and I shall only say these Three or Four Words more. 1. I would exhort thee, to take some time, to meditate and conferring with thy self, I delight to read the Word of some, that write of personal Covenanting, to read their Soliloquies, to sit down and consider, it's not long since I came into the World, and it will not be long before I be out of it, and wherefore came I into the World? Are these Scriptures the Word of God? If they be, I must either hearken unto them, or else be damned; if I be in a Covenant of works, I am under a Covenant, that admits of no Cautioner, no Repentance, and if there be the least fail, it will bring me to Hell; but here I see another Covenant of Grace, but if I enter in this Covenant, I must be holy, or then I will be eternally damned, and there is a Spirit of Faith, and Prayer, and Repentance, will be given me: Now will ye take time, and confer these things with your own heart, 2/y. I exhort you, in order to the putting of this in practice, Christian, to carry it on by prayer, when ye go a-

bout it, ye may warrantably say to God, Lord, I am pressed from yonder Pulpit, to make this Ingagement and Indenture, and I am told the method that I must keep, must be, to wait on thy strength, to wait on the absolute Promises; therefore go to Him, and pray for strength, and the accomplishment of the Promise, and it will be a sweet evidence, that thou wilt get it, if thou get liberty to seek it by prayer, *Psal. 10. 17. He hath prepared my heart to seek him, and he hath caused his ear to hear*; the case is with thee, as with a Man that hath a Petition, to give to a Prince, If the Man sit down to write it, and the Prince bid him put in this, and that in it, it is an evidence that he will grant it. 34. I exhort thee even to use some solemnity in entering this Covenant, either by writing it down, or subscribing it with the hand, or lifting up the hand, or some solemn uttering the words, that the next day, when any thing bids thee break thy Covenant that is dear to thee, as nothing could be dearer to thee, than *Jephthah's Daughter* was to him, say as he said, *O my daughter, thou art a trouble unto me, what is the matter, I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and how can I go back.*

SERMON XVII.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

THE last day I spoke to an Use of Information, and proved, that this personal and particular Covenant was a duty, and the neglect of it was a sin, and that our duty was our privilege, and that it was no presumption

sumption to enter in this Covenant; without further recapitulation, I shall proceed to the second Use.

Use 2. If personal Covenanting with God be a duty, as is proven and cleared, then it serves for Exhortation, to stir up all of you thus personally to Covenant with God; it's not only a duty, but as I have proven it, it's the great duty of the Gospel, all other duties without this, are unacceptable, we can neither lay claim to Christ, nor to the privileges of the Covenant, until we thus personally and particularly Indenture with him.

Before I press this Use, that I may in the Afternoon more persuasively follow it on you, that ye would thus personally and particularly Covenant with God; I will in this Sermon insist on two things. (1.) I will remove some Objections or Impediments, that ly in the way of the Souls personal Covenanting with God. (2.) I will open some advantages that will follow on the doing of it; the truth is, in so necessary a duty, we are to do as some that Write the Jewish Histories tell us, that the Magistrates throughout all the Land, they were obliged to have the high ways plain, and Bridges over the Waters, and the stones removed out of the high way that led to the City of Refuge, that he that fled from the avenger of blood, might have no stop in his way; I would do this in handling this duty of personal Covenanting; and among many, I shall pitch on four or five impediments that ly in the way, and prove obstructions, notwithstanding all the Sermons that ye have heard on it.

First, It may be said, Shall I thus personally and particularly Covenant, to accept of Christ, and Indenture and vow and swear to the terms of the Covenant, since I know not if I be an Elect? Election is a fundamental privilege, and if that be wanting, all that we do in this, is but like a house without a foundation; one might as well go and Sow another mans Land, and build a House on another mans Ground, that hath no Bond, nor Charter, nor Seasin, nor any other Right to it, as a Reprobat can go and plead the privileges of the Elect; and I know not if I be an Elect, and therefore shall I go make a personal and particular Covenant with God? This is indeed a very natural Objection; but I would de-

fire you to consider these three or four things, that will contribute to remove it. (1.) Know, that Election is not the ground, or the clearing about the ground of our believing and closing with Christ; in the Covenant we are not to proceed on this ground, I am an Elect, and I will close with Christ in the Covenant, and make a personal Covenant with him; but rather our closing with him is a *Medium* or Argument to prove our Election; we are not to proceed on this method, I will first be clear of my Charter, Election, and of the purpose of God, before I build on this ground, no, we are first to build on this foundation, and then to be clear of Election; for though Election be first in the order of Christs working, Calling is first in the order of our knowledge, and we must first know that we are called, before we know that we are Elected. (2.) Consider this, where will ye find in Scripture, that ever God secluded man from any promise in the Covenant, merely because they were not Elect? He hath indeed secluded many, because they were not Believers, and because they were scandalous, and hypocrites, but in all the Bible ye will never find him seclude any, merely because they were reprobates, why should we go to put in an exception, where he makes none? It's not our Election, or Reprobation, that is made an impediment in all the Bible, against our being bettered by Christ, our unbelief may be one, but our Election is none. (3.) Ye would notice this, that the debate about our Election and Reprobation is very impertinent, before our Effectual Calling, and closing with Christ in a personal Covenant. It's observed by School-men, that there are only three ways possible for a man to know his Election, there is the reading of the Book of Gods Decrees, the Revelation of the Spirit, and thirdly, the fruits of Election, appearing in the progress of Sanctification; now the first two are impossible for us; we cannot read the Book of Gods Decrees, we cannot tell who are Elect, or who are Reprobate, out of the Book of his Decrees, we cannot tell the Revelations of the Spirit, because our Effectual Calling, it may convince and challenge, but it cannot reveal, therefore it remains, that it must be the third, which cannot be, until we personally Covenant with Christ.

So

So, to dispute our Election before we Indenture with him, and to say, I will not Covenant with him, for I am not an Elect, thou must have understanding, to read the Book of Gods Decrees, and to have the Revelation of the Spirit. (4.) Consider, that our Election is not our duty, it's our privilege, but not our duty, we cannot elect our selves, a servant in an house is not bound to be most taken up about his masters secret thoughts, the thing he is most to be taken up about, is his masters command, and that what he hath bidden him do; we cannot elect our selves, God hath not commanded it. Now when we are personally Covenanting with Christ, it's not our duty to enquire about things that are not our duty; God hath commanded us to accept of his Son on the Terms offered, and for us to refuse, for a thing that he hath never commanded to be our duty; we cannot be sure of Election, until we personally and particularly Covenant with him, we may like a Husband-man know, that it is the Spring time, by the springing of the grass, he knows it not by the position of the Heaven, but by the springing of the Grass and Herbs, so we would be clear of Election: and I would warn Christians of this, when Satan hath a mind to bring a person under the neglect of some duty, he will readily puzzle them with Questions of Election, or Reprobation, as a Robber, that will ride with a man in a fair high way, and not wrong him, but will wait until he get him in some Wood, or some Den, and then he will assault him: Now the Question of Election and Reprobation is like a Wood, or a Den, and the Tempter hath a great advantage, when he assaults about these. Therefore since Election is not our duty, but our privilege, and since we cannot know it, before we personally Covenant; it ought to be no exception to thee, suppose thou be in the dark about thy Election, and not be able to tell thine own heart and thy neighbours, I know not if I be an Elect, and if I personally Covenant with him, I am but like a man that is going to build upon another mans ground, that hath neither Bond nor Charter; but thou follows not the Gospel-method, which is first to Covenant with him, and then to be clear about thy Election.

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A second Objection, that I suppose will ly in the way in hearkening to the Sermons that ye have heard; I am exceeding guilty, and shall I owne God to be my God? Doth not the 50 Psalm say, *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hates to be reformed?* Shall I take this Covenant in my mouth, when I have such a heart, and such a way? Readily all the aggravations of guilt, and all the threatenings against it, they come never to be more multiplied, than when we are called to some special duty; the challenges about guilt, will let us alone at one time, that will follow us at a Sacrament, or some solemn Ordinance, and when we should personally Covenant with him. For removing of this impediment, I would have thee first in the general Notice, that to stand at personal Covenanting with God, because thou art guilty, is very like *Peters Argument, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*; and *Peters Argument* is, like as a Patient should say to a Physician, *Depart from me, for I am sick*: Why said he to him who was called Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*?

But more particularly to this, thy guilt can be no rational impediment in the way of thy entering in this personal Covenant, on these considerations; (1.) Know, that never any entered in this Covenant, but guilty persons, *Adam* that was an innocent man, came came not under the Covenant of Grace until he became guilty, and it had been unsuitable for *Adam*, so long as he was innocent; never any came under this Covenant, but guilty persons, and sometime they that came under it, were among the most guilty, the like of *David*, of *Paul*, of *Manasseh*, of *Mary Magdalen*; so that thou mistakes the nature of this Covenant, that will stand at indenturing and subscribing to the Lord, because thou art guilty, for it's a Covenant made for the guilty, and it would not have agreed to *Adam* when innocent. (2ly.) Thou would notice, that the Covenant expressly mentions the pardon of all guilt except one, it's a large word, it's true it's a dreadful word, but it is exceeding comfortable. *All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost*; there is neither Adultery, Murder, Swear-

Swearing, lying, nor Drunkennels excepted, but only this sin against the Holy Ghost, why should thou put in exceptions, where God hath put none? If a Prince should come and suit a Maid in a Cottage, and she should tell him, I am black and poor; but if he can dispense with her blackness and poverty, why should she make an objection of it? (3ly.) I would have thee to ponder, that Christs righteousness it's a sufficient satisfaction for the sins of all the Elect, how great soever thy guilt be, it's not so great as the sins of all the Elect; grant thou be the greatest sinner among all the Elect, yet thy sin is not so great as the sins of all the Elect; Christs righteousness is as the Ocean, that if a man could lift a Mountain and cast it into the Sea, the waters could go over the top of it; now would any think, that the Water that covers a Mountain, would not cover a Peeble Stone? Admit thy sin be amongst the greatest of the Elects, *Paul* when he calls himself the chief of sinners, he says not, he is greater than all sinners; but take in the sins of all the Elect, Christs righteousness is sufficient for them all, and that which is sufficient for all, is it not sufficient for thee? So guilt can be no exception to refuse personally to Covenant with God.

A third Objection, say some, though it be neither my Election, nor my guilt, that can hinder me personally to Covenant with God, yet I cannot come under the Bond of the Covenant, for in one Chapter, *Heb. 11*. I find the faithful, and they that come under this Covenant, they meet with cruel mockings, and scornings, torturings, sawn asunder, quench the violence of fires, stop the mouths of Lions; and shall I come under a personal Covenant, when I bind myself to all these things? For Answer to this, it's true, in the Covenant he deals so faithfully, that hath made it, that he hath concealed none of these, but rather laid them out to the outmost; and many come under a personal Covenant with him, that comes not under the half of these things; but suppose thy personal Covenanting with him should bring thee under these, since it is a time, wherein Covenanting with him may bring people under the Cross, I would have thee consider four or five things. 1. Consider the Cross, as a testimony for Christ. It's remarkable *2 Cor. 3. 3*. that the

the Apostle calls the *Corinthians Christs Epistle*, his meaning is, they are Christs Testimonial, he is speaking before of Letters of Commendation, and *vers. 3. Ye are Christs Epistle*: What is the meaning of that? Ye are a commendation to Christ; when Christ calls out his servants to do or suffer, they bear testimony to the Gospel, they are like Letters of Commendation, testifying, that the Gospel is true, and Christ is glorious, and all the loss a man sustains for the Gospel, Christ makes it up. It's a wonder, that the most part of Christs followers have not renounced him before this day, they have had cruel mockings and scourgings, and the rest spoken in that *Heb. 11*: if they were not made up some other way, they would renounce him; the Martyrs have before all the World testified, that they that serve Christ, have something from him that makes up all their losses; he puts a great honour on us, when he puts us to suffer, many die Ministers, who do not die Martyrs; *Luther* the night before he died wept, that he was not a Martyr; Did we understand the honour that is put upon us by suffering, we would not do as *Moses*, when the Lord is sending him to *Egypt*, he is unwilling to go, says he to God, I am not eloquent, I cannot speak, send by whom thou wilt; and yet of all the honour that ever was put upon him, it was one of the greatest, and the thing that makes him famous this day, and eminent in glory, was the honour that was put upon him, in going down to *Egypt*. Therefore, we ought not to decline personal Covenanting, because of the Cross. 2^{ly}, Though it be true, that this Covenant provides the Cross, and they that enter in it, will meet with it, yet consider the Cross, as an evidence of our Adoption; not only as a testimony to the Gospel, but as an evidence of Adoption, *Heb. 12. 8. If ye be without correction, wherof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.* Mark here, the Evidence of a son, if ye come under correction; Divines say, the reason is, If we have the same spirit that Christ had, if we be patient, and submissive, as Christ was, then we may conclude, that we are sons also of Christ; Christ met with the Cross, and endured patiently, nay, the out-lettings of Fatherly love, never more, than under the Cross, he is never more

more tender, than under the Cross, the Spirit of Christ and glory rests on you, he says not the Spirit of grace, but glory: Many a time Christ doth with his out-lettings, as men do with Candles and Fire, frequently, his out-lettings are greatest under the Cross, and he lights his Candle ordinarily to his Elect, when in the dark, and kindles his Fire and comforts them under the Cross. Now since the Cross is such an evidence of Adoption, and such a Testimony of the Gospel, what wonder, it should be no impediment in our way of Covenanting with Christ? 3^{ly}, However, If ye personally Covenant with Christ, ye may forecast with Cross; Yet Thirdly consider, what an excellent help the Cross is, to mortifie corruption, *Isai. 27. 9. By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin*: Readily, nothing contributes so much to curb corruption, as the Cross; It's an Observation of a Divine, If ye heard Christians complaining one to another, I have an evil heart, I have Unbelief, I have Pride, I have Passion, and if ye heard them go to God in a corner, they will have so many complaints of themselves; and yet when God sends the Executioner, the Cross, to kill these Malefactors, they take ill with it; the Cross is sent for that end, to kill corruption, and to remove pride, and earthly mindedness, and sensuality; and yet when the Executioner comes, we take ill with it: What a deal of folly is it, to be mourning for the thing that we cannot endure to have killed? Such Children are we, and so far from understanding, that we will go to God and complain, and complain to our Christian Friends, and yet when the Executioner comes, we cannot endure to have it killed? But when we take up the Cross, as an Executioner come, to take away pride and earthly mindedness, and sensuality, readily we will make the Cross welcome. 4^{ly}, Consider the Cross, as that which may promote our Glory, the more of the Cross for Christ, the more eminent degree of Glory; the more of pleasure in time, the more of torment after time. I will cast up a word to you, that ye have written, *Revel. 18. 7. He is there speaking of Babylon, the mother of fornications, and in the 7th verse*

verse, saith, *How much she hath glorified her self, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.* It was so in Gods dealing with *Dives*, when he came to the place of the damned. By the Law of contraries, how much of suffering, how much of grief and affliction for Christ, readily so much the more glory; and therefore in this same Book of the *Revelation*, though all that are in Glory, walk with white; yet they that were beheaded for the cause of Christ, are termed by *John*, to walk in long white robes; now, did we take up the Cross of Christ, under these four considerations, it would never hinder us, personally to indenture with Christ: Did we take up the Cross, as a Testimony to the Gospel, as an Evidence of our Adoption, as an Executioner to kill the corruptions, we mourn over, and as a Presage, that we will wear the long white robe, when we come to Glory: readily we will never stand at this, I will not enter into a personal Covenant; for I see what is the result of it, it's the Cross; but since these things are so, it's a wonder rather, that we do not seek after it.

SERMON XVIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

THIS Duty of personal Covenanting with God, being so clear from this Text, that I need dwell no longer on it; I have brought the Point to exhort you to the practice of it, and removed three Objections that ly in the way of it; that I may remove all the stumbling blocks that ly in the way, I will briefly run through other three.

three. First, Some may say, I cannot thus personally Covenant with Christ, for fear of the want of perseverance, it's a dreadful thing, to be ay binding, and ay breaking, and it's a great aggravation of our guilt, when we walk contrary to our Vows and Engagements to God, better not bind, than break again. This Objection lyeth in the way of many; and for removing of it, I desire you may take notice of these four things. 1. When the question is about our duty, we are not to argue from events against our duty; it was excellently reasoned in *Queen Esther*, when she was convinced, it was her duty to go to the King, and plead for her people the *Jews*. She sends word to *Mordecai*, *I will go to the King, if I perish, I perish*; she will not bring an argument from the event, against her duty: If personal Covenanting with God be a duty, the argument taken from the event, is very improper, when it's brought against a duty. 2^{ly}, I would have you to notice, That in reference to perseverance, there are two kinds of Promises in the Covenant. 1. There are Promises made to perseverance. 2^{ly}, There are Promises made of perseverance; these two are diligently to be noticed: There are some Promises made to perseverance, *Heb. 3. 6. We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the Confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end*: There are some Promises made of Perseverance, *I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me*. Now when we Covenant with God, we are diligently to eye both these kinds of Promises: There are Promises made to Faith, and Promises made of Faith, and if ye be staggered at this Covenanting with God, for fear ye do not persevere, remember that the Covenant contains Promises of perseverance. 3^{ly}, I would have you to notice, That as God in our Election, decreed our effectual Calling, so he decreed the reviving and quickning of Grace in us, when it comes under decays, *Psal. 23. He restoreth my soul: Ye find him, Ezek. 34. Brought in, building up that which is broken, strengthening that which is weak*. He revives Grace, as well as quickens that which is dead: several times his people have fallen under decays, as a Tree in Winter, that hath neither leaves nor flourish; an evil time, and an

erroneous opinion, and a strong temptation, may bring his people under decays, that they have no might to persevere; but he must bind up that which is broken, and restore it: so, if they sit down and say, all those Sermons on personal Covenanting, will not influence me, to Covenant with him, for I will but bind and break, and play fast and loose with him, thou argues from events against a duty, thou should go to the King, even though thou should perish, and the Covenant thou binds now to, binds thee to perseverance, and though there be decays in thy spiritual lot, yet he will bind that which is broken, and strengthen that which is weak, and restore the soul, and make a David Pen the 51. Psalm, after he went in to Bathsheba.

The Fifth Objection against this way of personal Covenanting is this, some readily stand at personal Covenanting with God, there are so many Duties required in it, I must pray continually, I must rejoyce alwayes; I must deny my self, I must not love the World; these are all Terms in the Covenant, and my heart will never subscribe to these; if the Covenant run on these Terms, is it not better for me, not to bind at all, than to do the thing, my heart will not consent unto; if I contract with God on these Terms, I am like a man, marrying a woman that I do not love; for removing of this, I would have you to notice these Three or Four things. 1. As there are many duties required in the Covenant, so there is abundance of strength, for obeying them; we have little more to do, than ask and have, nay, sometimes there is more given than we can ask; the Lord deals with many that use to go to Him in prayer, as Naaman did with Gehazi, when he ran after him, and said, send my Master a talent, for he hath need of money, I pray thee, says he, be content, take two; so, the Father of the Prodigal did with his Son, when he returned, make me, says he, as one of thy hired servants, the Father says, bring forth the best robe, and kill the fatted calf, put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; There is more offered in the Covenant, than we have an appetit to desire, and what need have we to fear at duty, when we bake beside meal, and have offered us in Christ, more than is required! 2ly. Take notice, though there be many

many duties required in the Covenant, yet duty is our greatest honour; the blessed Angels account so of it, they are thrice in the Bible called Angels, where they are once called Spirits; Angel is a name of Office, but Spirit is a name of nature, and they glory more to have their names recorded from their duty, than from their nature; there is no greater honour than duty; now, to be skarr'd from personal Covenanting with God, when there is a talent more nor required in the Covenant, and when duty is our greatest honour, what an unreasonable exception were this, to stand at personal Covenanting! 3ly. Take notice, that the duties ye bind to, in this personal Covenanting with God, ay the longer ye perform them, they will be the more easie and pleasant; It's remarkable, David a man excelled with performing duties, *I had more joy in thy testimonies, than in all riches*; If some men had been commanded to compare Riches and the Testimonies, they would have been far from giving Davids Testimony, *but he would meditate on his laws day and night, he will rise at midnight and praise him, he will water his couch with tears, his sore will run in the night*; when others were sleeping, he was about the tract of his duty, and he came to this at length, *I had more joy in thee, than in all riches*. The greatest part of them that quarrel, and find no pleasure in duty, are they, that are not excised with performing duties; so we need not stand at personal Covenanting, on this score, that there are many duties required; for not only do we bake beside meal, and have strength for performing duties, but ay the longer we perform them, they are the sweeter and easier. 4ly. Though we bind to the terms and duties of the Covenant, yet he with whom we bind, will accept of uprightness in place of perfection; he will take the Will for the Deed, many a time he hath done so with his people; I have given you several Reasons, why he doth so, for he gets the full payment from Christ; if ye will accept Christ and his righteousness, he will do with you as with a man, coming to a Register to get up a Bond, he desires that the Bond may be given him, and that he may have it freely, in regard the Cautioner hath payed the full Sum; when we go to Covenant with

with him, we may plead he will accept of our Sincerity, in place of Perfection, the reason is, the Cautious hath payed the full Sum.

The Last and great Objection, against this personal Covenanting, is, readily some may say, I cannot Covenant nor Indenture with Him, for I suspect, if I do it, I shall do it Hypocritically, and I have been hearing, it must be a Cordial, serious work, and if I go, and make a personal Covenant Hypocritically with him, he will break out on me with his wrath; it were better leaving it undone, then to do it Hypocritically; do I not hear Sincerity indispensibly required to it, and he will pass by many things, before he pass by Hypocrisy; and if I go and make a formal, heartless, and not an upright Covenant with Him, it were better leaving it undone? I confess, what it is they give the Hypocrite in this, I have determined in an Argument before, that all within the visible Church are obliged personally to Covenant with Him, they being bound to believe and accept of the Gospel, as it is offered; yet in this case, it's difficult what to say, for since it is indispensibly required, and to go draw a personal Covenant, and subscribe it, and attest God, and lift up the hand, and yet do it Hypocritically, is it not better to leave it undone? Therefore I shall answer this in doing these three things. 1. By shewing you, that there are some, who will very boldly and confidently Covenant with God, and in effect they are doing nothing, but playing the Hypocrite in it, and dissembling, they may bring many things to prove, that they are not Hypocrites in it, and I would encounter two or three of them. 1. Say some, I am no Hypocrite, for I abhor Hypocrisy, I cannot endure it in another, and can I be guilty of the thing that I abhor? *Juda* was very severe against *Tamar* his Daughter in Law, when he heard she was with Child, *bring her forth*, sayes he, *and burn her*; *David* was very severe, against the man that took his neighbour's Lamb, when he had an hundred sheep of his own, *verily he shall die*, yet both of them were guilty of the Sin, that they condemned; Divines Observe, there may be several motives, that may make many condemn Sin in others, that they approve in themselves. In the 2d. place, some will say, I am bold

bold in affliction; *The sinners in Zion are afraid, and fear takes bold of the Hypocrite*, but I am not so, I am bold in affliction; this will not prove it either, for there is a Roman courage, a natural courage, that may be far from the Truth of Grace, ye have evidence of several in Scripture and History, who hath been so; but sayes some, I am much in secret duty, I pray, I read the Scriptures; but Hypocrisy is like the *Egyptian Frogs* and *Caterpillars*, it will even be in our Bed-chambers; he that studies to pacifie his Conscience, and keep it quiet, will be much in secret duty; on that principle, thou may say, I love not Drunkenness, nor Swearing, nor whoring, I love not the Scandals my heart is inclined to, and therefore I am not an Hypocrite; but our Lusts are like the Sea, they ebb and flow, the Sea loses not it's power of flowing, when it's ebbing; there may be something restraining lust, that yet hath not killed it, thou may taste of the powers of the life to come, and yet be an Hypocrite; so some may Covenant with God Hypocritically, and on shallow grounds conclude themselves no Hypocrite.

Secondly, Some stand at Covenanting with Him, for fear of Hypocrisy, they are too lightly brought to conclude themselves Hypocrites, and there are Two or Three things, makes Believers to do so. 1. Sayes some, if God saw me not to be an Hypocrite, He would not rattle me and continue the Rod so long, nor hide himself from me under the Rod, as he doth; this was the Argument that *Job's* Friends brought, to prove him an Hypocrite, that God had continued the Rod with him; but this is no ground to prove thee an Hypocrite at all, thou could easily answer this, in the case of another, and by the way, it's remarkable to see, how one Christian will easily loue another Christians Doubts, that that when the same Doubts occurs in their own case, they will be overwhelmed with them: thou knows affliction and Sincerity may go together, and though affliction ly long on, and thou ly long in the Furnace, it may say, that thou has much Dross, but thou art no Hypocrite. The Lord will do sometimes with His People in Afflictions, as Physicians do with their Patients, He will sometimes give them Purges,

and sometimes give them Cordials; when thou art under the Cross, it's the time of thy Purging, but afterward comes thy Cordial. Others say, they are Hypocrites, for they say, they are under decays, Grace grows, and decays again, and must they not be Hypocrites, that are so? But every decay of Grace will not prove thee a Hypocrite; an Apple-tree may continue to be a Tree, though it have neither Apple nor Leaf on it; the best of Christians have their Summer and Winter, Decays and Growings: So there may be great mistakes, about Hypocrisie and Sincerity; some have Observed it well, ordinarily Satan, who is a liar and a deceiver, tempts ordinarily, to things contrary to Truth, he will perswad the Hypocrite, that he is sincere, and on the contrair, he will perswad the sincere Christian, that he is a Hypocrite; therefore, if thou stand at personal Covenanting with God on that Score, that thou art a Hypocrite, and cannot Covenant with Him, know that there is nothing more ordinary, than mistakes about Hypocrisie and Sincerity, many concluding themselves Sincere, that God will send to Hell, and many concluding themselves Hypocrites, that are Sincere.

But Secondly, to make this matter clear and plain, it concerns thee to try in thy Covenanting with God, whether thou be Sincere and Upright, and I will offer thee three Marks, whereby to try it. 1. Sincerity where it is, it aims at perfection, it may be known by it's aims; the same Word in the Hebrew that signifies perfect, signifies Sincere, and ye will find them often convertible in Scripture, not only, because God accepts of Sincerity for Perfection, but Sincerity can never be satisfied, untill it be perfect; therefore, ye find the most part of the exercises of the upright run on this, they cannot get Love enough, Faith enough, Repentance enough; for Sincerity will ay be complaining, untill it be perfect: It's resembled by a Divine to a young Heir, that is never content, though he have meat and cloth in the house, untill he get the whole Inheritance; for the Mark of Sincerity is, that it's ay complaining, and humbled, because it's not perfect. 2. Sincerity is discerned, by something in the nature of it, it takes in the Gospel qualifications, it

hath

hath love to Christ, as the principle; it hath the glory of Christ, as it's Motive and End; Sincere, it's *sine cera*, without wax, it has love to Christ, as the principal Motive, and the glory of Christ, as the End of it, that it drives at; and where these two concur in our Covenanting with God, we may rationally conclude, that it's not Hypocritically done; if we find the love of Christ, and the glory of Christ, as the two Butts set up, the one from which the Arrow comes, the other to which the Arrow drives, and if there be an aiming at perfection, that though we cannot say, we perfectly love Christ, and believe in Him; yet Sincerity will ay be complaining, untill it come to Perfection; if thou find these two Characters of Sincerity, thou may conclude, thy Covenanting is not Formal and Hypocritical, but that it's done in Uprightness and Sincerity. 3. I will say this, for removing this Doubt, suppose after all that is said, thou art unclear, about Covenanting with Him, for fear thou do it Hypocritically; yet that ought not to hinder thee, from personal Covenanting; and there are two Reasons for confirming this. For 1. All that live under the Gospel, they are bound to accept of the Covenant, and that on the Terms offered; now, suppose thou find not Sincerity in thy Covenanting, yet it takes not off the Obligation of the Command, the Command binds thee, if thou be under the offer of the Gospel, personally to Covenant, under the hazard of the eternal wrath of God, whether thou be a Hypocrite or Sincere; therefore, thou art not to dispute thy case so much, as to understand the Command. 2. Take notice, that there is in many their Indenturing with Christ, that at the first have many Selfish and Hypocritical-like ends, that after they have Covenanted with him, have become Sincere; the case is, as with a woman, that at the first marries a man, because he is rich, but afterward she would not be divorced from him, if he were begging; several times it comes to pass, that at our first Indenturing with him, it will be some selfish end, that the Soul may drive at; but afterward, the Soul would not quit him and renounce him, and give him over, though they had nothing but his Cross, so ye would not stand at that, I am not upright & sincere, as becomes one that would

Covenant with God, thou may have some selfish ends at the first, but like the woman that marries the man, because he is rich, thou wouldst not now be divorced from him; but loves him for himself.

The second thing I proposed, in following this exhortation, was, to show you some Advantages, that the Soul will have by this personal Covenanting with him: I have hinted at some before, and before I give you the Marks of right personal Covenanting, I will tell you the Advantages, that are in personal Covenanting with him, and I will say these three or four particulars to you. 1. All the good we are to expect from God must come in to us through Jesus Christ, without Him we could expect nothing from Him, but wrath and hell; for we have broken the Covenant of Works, and he is infinitely Just, he punishes Sin by a necessity of nature; But and to this, 2ly. That all the things that we can expect from Jesus Christ, they must come in to us by the Covenant; what is the ground, that one has no benefit by Christ, he is to them a *stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, and they will be broken on him*? And another, they will get peace and pardon by him? It comes in by the Covenant, they are concerned in the Covenant of Redemption, they are concerned in the Covenant of Grace, so that as we can have no benefit by the Father, but by the Son, so we can have no benefit by the Son, except we be concerned in the Covenant. 3ly. We can expect no good from the Covenant, except we be particularly, and personally concerned in the Covenant; what would it signify for David to say, *The Lord hath made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, a Covenant*, if he be not able to say, *the Lord hath made with me a Covenant*? So laying these three together, First, Being particularly concerned in the Covenant, all that is in God, and all that is in Christ, and all that is in the Covenant, becomes ours; O what a cooling is there in these three, I like the Observation that one has on that Word, that David often uses, by virtue of this Covenant, *O my God. thou art my God*, says he, this Word, *my God*, takes in more, than all the Philosophers in the World could draw out of it; if he had not explained it himself; *I am the God of Abraham,*
Isaac

Isaac, and Jacob, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; Christ brings it in to prove the Resurrection, for, says he, *I am not the God of the dead, but of the living*; but there is some thing in that Word, *my God*, that no Logick can reach, all the Philosophers on earth, could not have proven the Resurrection out of that, if he had not done it; it's a strange consequence, *Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob will rise, therefore the dead will rise*; now he that is particularly applying the Covenant, hath no less made over to him, than *I will be thy God*. 2ly. A second advantage is, that a Believer may go, and plead the Promises of the Covenant; the mercy of God indeed is a sweet argument, but the Promises are a Debt to him; we may go, and as it were, lay his hand with before him, as some Ancients, that went to pray in a particular place, they would lay the Bible before them, and point out such a Promise, and tell him what he had bound himself to; in how many cases is it advantageous, to have the Promise to plead, when they have Covenanted with him? 1. Suppose thou go to God, and plead for Bread, thou has a Family, and thou has Children, and all the toll and shift thou can make, cannot serve to get them Bread; the Promise is, *He remembered his Covenant, and gave them Bread*; suppose in another case, thou go to him for Pardon, thou art exceeding guilty, it's a strange way, that they that have made a Covenant with him, will take, in pleading for Pardon, *Psal. 25. Pardon mine iniquity, for it is very great*; the Covenant will admit of the pardon of Iniquity, they that have accepted the Covenant, and Indentured with him sincerely, on the Terms of the Covenant, may go and seek pardon, for their Iniquities are very great, for it's like the Covenant. 3ly. A Third advantage, in time of desertion, suppose he be hiding himself, and thou cannot tell where he is, nor whether he is gone, the Covenant will influence his return; *She that was termed forsaken, shall be so no more, I have forsaken thee for a little moment, but with everlasting mercy will I gather thee, is not Zion married to him, are not his walls continually before him? and the mother may forget her sucking child, but he cannot forget him*; what case is there, that we can go to him in prayer,

but constantly the Argument is taken from the Covenant; and thou that has sincerely Indentured with him, thou may go as warrantably, and plead the Promise, as he can command thee to thy duty, though he be a Sovereign Lord, and thou a bit of clay, yet, since the Covenant hath made thee a Debtor to thy Duty, the same Covenant hath made him a Debtor to his Promise; for as thou art bound to the one, he is graciously bound to the other, no that thou art to suspend thy duty, untill he perform the Promise, but thou may press the Promise, as much on him, as he may press thy duty. 3/7. Thou may lay the Covenant for an excellent ground, to cast in the Anchor of Hope; without the Covenant, we might renounce our Hope; I know not what ground of hope we have, abstracting from the Covenant, we need not, nor hope never gets a surer Anchor, than the Covenant; and what an excellent too-look hath hope, when one hath accepted the Covenant, to have all that God hath to give, and all the purchase of Christ, and all that is contained in the Covenant; may not thou take up thy hope to top of mount Pisgab, & let it see the promised Land, that flows with milk and honey? and let it see the City with the twelve Ports, and twelve Foundations, and say, all these are mine! what an excellent help is it, in all straits of the time, when the time is, that many will think that Popery will rise, and thou may be put to deny Christ, or then to suffer for him; to be brief, this personal Covenanting with God, hath so many advantages in it, that it's difficult to tell them all; but take these three, God makes over himself, & all that he hath, his Son, and all; thou has the Covenant to plead with him, as he hath the Law to plead with thee; if he charge thee with the Law, and command, what thou in the Covenant has Indentured to obey, then turn back the Promise on him, where he hath engaged, to fulfil what thou hast Covenanted; and if thou hast sincerely Indentured with him in the Covenant, thou may take a view of the twelve Ports, and the City with the twelve Foundations, and say, my Father, and my Fathers House, and all is mine. If any ask, what is the ground of this? ye have taken hold of the Covenant, and Imbraced Christ; he hath made over himself in his Fulness, and

and the Righteousness of his Son to thee, if thou wilt take hold of his Covenant. Therefore go home, if thou hast the work of sincere Covenanting with him, thou may go home, and take up for time and eternity, all things of absolute necessity, and at length may, sing all is mine; and if any ask, what is thy Charter and Right? There it is, I have accepted him, and entered in a Covenant with him, and who can question my Right to these?

SERMON. XIX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

AFTER I had removed many Objections, against this personal Covenanting, I came to press it, with the advantages that would follow, on entering in a personal Covenant with God: I will now follow this a little, for it is very conduciab and useful; in the pressing of it, the gain will be great, all ye that love gain, follow this way of personal Covenanting with God; all ye that would be Rich and Great, and secure in both, enter in this personal Covenant with God; that I may the better press this, I would open to you some few advantages, that the Soul hath, that hath made a personal Covenant with God. First, I shall give you two generals, then four or five special and particular advantages, that ye will have by it.

First, The two Generals shall be these. 1: By being in Covenant personally and particularly with God, all that is in God will be yours; Micah said of his Idol, *Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* If ye have God, what would

would ye have more? it's very remarkable, *I will be thy God*, Gen. 17. was the sum of the whole Covenant; So 1 Cor. 6. 16. *I will dwell among them, and walk among them, and I will be their God*. This is the thing that these that enter in Covenant with him have, they have God, and all that is in God to be theirs; but because this General will not sufficiently open this Privilege, I would have you to notice these three or four things, that are in God, that if ye be particularly in Covenant with him, will be yours. First, All his Attributes will be yours, his Power, his Mercy, nay his Holiness, and Justice, will be yours; he will be just to forgive, as *John* calls him; his Omnipotency, his Goodness, his Truth, and all his Attributes will be yours; and they will be yours in the same way, that they are Christ's; it's remarkable, when he sent the Commission to his Disciples by *Mary*, he sent on these Terms, *Go, tell my Disciples, I go to my Father and your Father to my God and your God*; he is yours in all his Attributes, when ye have to do with his Power, his Holiness, his Goodness, if ye have made a personal Covenant with him, all his Attributes are yours. 2ly. All the Relations in which he is holden forth in the Covenant, are yours; He is your *Husband*, your *Father*, your *Hope*, your *Glory*; It's remarkable, there are a number of Relations, cannot agree to the Angels; It's true, he may be called there Creator and Maker, but he cannot be called their Husband, nor their Father, with a reference to the work of Redemption. So, if ye be in Covenant with him, as God is your God, so all his Attributes mentioned in the Covenant are yours, ye may call him your *Power*, your *Rock*, your *Husband*, your *Strength*, your *Strong tower*. 3ly. If he be yours, all his Dispensations are yours; Rom. 8. 18. *All things work together for good to them that love God*; all Providence, every thing, nay death itself, 1 Cor. 3. 22. *All things are yours, life or death, things present, or to come, all are yours, and Christ is God*; even death itself is yours, when ever death comes, if ye be in Covenant with him, it comes like a Servant to attend you, and carry you home to the place of your rest; if he be yours, all his Attributes, and Relations, and Providences also are yours. Lastly, If he be yours, there is

is something that ye have, in having him, that no Minister nor Angel can tell, nor explain to you; the truth is, if he be yours, the case is with you, as if a country-man should find a Jewel, and he should go through all the country, and let this man and that man see it, and ask what it is worth, and there is none that can tell the value of it, except one that is a Jeweler; Indeed Christ only can explain it, *Matth. 22. I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*; he only can prove the resurrection from the dead, from that which no Minister nor Angel could do; there is no Minister nor Angel can tell, what is imported in this, *to have God to be our God*: for all the excellencies of the Creatures are imported in it, *Psal. 84. 11. The Lord is a Sun and shield*: He is a Sun for prosperity, and a Shield for adversity, he is both for Prosperity and Adversity; the man can never fall wrong, that is in Covenant with God, under no Cross will he be broken, under no Prosperity will he be blown up; so ye that enter in a personal Covenant with him, ye will have God to be your God, and if he be your God, all his Attributes, all his Relations are yours, all his Providences will make for you, and when ye have counted on all the three, ye have somewhat in this, *my God*, that no Minister nor Angel can explain, and that is the first Advantage I offer, by personal Covenanting with him, God will be yours.

Secondly, By personal Covenanting and Indenturing with him, all Christ's purchase will be yours; great things hath he purchased, and readily he hath purchased no more, than he hath payed for; he hath abundantly payed for all that he hath gotten; nay, to say the truth, he hath payed above the value, to give his Blood for the like of us; and for the Glory that he hath now in Heaven, he had as much before, though not properly as Mediator, yet as God Essential, and Con-substantial with the Father; now, all that he hath purchased is yours. For clearing this, I will offer you two things to be considered. 1. The Covenant of Grace on Christ's part is no more, but the execution of his three Offices, as he is King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church; all the Promises of the Covenant may be reduced to these three: all the promises of Pardon, are the execution of his Priestly Office,

Office; all the promises of guiding and Ruling, are the execution of his Kingly Office; all the promises of teaching, are the execution of his Prophetical Office; the truth is, the whole Covenant is nothing, but the Execution of his Three Offices, for he is left only Executor in the new Testament; He was both the Testator, and he is Executor, and must fulfil the Legacies left in the Covenant. Now he that hath made a personal Covenant with him, he hath a right and title to all his Offices, and consequently to all that he hath purchased; they may not only count on God as their God, but on the Mediators purchase, as their purchase. 2/y, Another thing will evidence the truth of this, in regard all things that Christ hath purchased, they are all Secured and Ratified by the Covenant; ye have often heard, that God cannot give a greater Security to men, than the Security he makes by way of Covenant; now they that have made a personal Covenant with God, they have Security in the Covenant, for all Christs purchase; now these are advantages abundantly sufficient, to bind you to this personal Covenanting. But to follow this more particularly, I would have you to take up the Covenant, under a Four-fold Formality, and the taking it up under this Fourfold Formality; will let you see more of the advantage of personal Covenanting with God; *First*, Consider the Covenant as the Conduit, I say not the Fountain, but as the Conduit and Channel, of all Sanctifying Grace, through which runs from the Fountain of Grace, all Sanctifying Grace. 2/y. Consider the Covenant, as it's an Answer to all Challenges and Objections. 3/y. Consider the Covenant, as it's a Charter and Security, for the Church of God in general. *Lastly*, Consider the Covenant, as the Charter of our Inheritance, for all eternity; and under these Four Formalities, ye may see the advantages, that a person hath, who enters in a personal Covenant, and takes this everlasting Covenant, and applies it to himself.

First, Consider the Covenant, as the Conduit, through which all Graces run to us from Christ, all Graces runs through the Channel of a Covenant; it's true, Christ is the Fountain of Grace, and of his fullness we receive, and Grace for Grace; but all the Graces that comes from Christ, comes to us

us from the Promise; it's remarkable, there is no Grace, whether it be the first Grace, *I will take away the heart of stone, and will put my fear in their heart*; or whether it be the Grace, that is built on these first Graces, they are holden out to us in the Covenant; the Grace of effectual calling, the Grace of Sanctification, Adoption, and pardoning Grace; the Conduit that convoyes them all, is the Covenant; the truth is, we can lippen for nothing, for as excellent as Christ is, (and O! but he be excellent and good) we can lippen for nothing, but Covenanted things from him; Faith can go no higher than the Covenant, there is indeed some that have written, that he will be better at the great day than his word; *I will not go to contradict them*, I know no Scripture that will contradict them, but I know no ground, for Faith to expect any thing from him, but according to his word; we can lippen for no more, nor Faith can warrantably expect, for no more than what he hath promised. So all Grace, the Conduit and Channel through which it runs to us, is the Covenant; so he that hath made a personal Covenant with God, hath in effect laid the pipe to the mouth, through which the water that comes out of the Fountain, is convoyed; all the Graces of the Spirit are promised, I know no Grace, but it is promised in the Covenant by God; he that hath made a Covenant with God, however Christ be the Fountain of Grace, the Covenant is the Conduit and Spout, through which they all run to thee, and thou that makes a personal Covenant with God, layes thy mouth to the pipe, and waits, until the Fountain of Grace, spring Grace to thee; thou art in a fair way to get a new heart, and the pardon of the Sins of thy youth, to get love to God, and patience, and delight in God, for thou art entered in a Covenant, that carries all these things from God the Fountain of Grace.

Secondly, By the Covenant, we come to Answer all Challenges and Objections; there are Three great Things, that keeps Believers humble, and makes them go mourning, so long as they are out of Heaven, Temptations, Afflictions, and Desertions, added to their Corruptions, that makes the wilderness to them to be full of Briers and Thorns; and he that enters

ters in a personal Covenant with God, beside that he hath his mouth laid to the Conduit of Grace, he hath in the Covenant an Answer to all these Three Objections; and I would fain know, what any of you, that have not entered in a personal Covenant with God, doth, with your Temptations, Crosses, and Desertions; it's very evident, all these Three are Answered in the Covenant; If the Believer meet with Temptation, the Covenant will tell him, *The God of peace shall tread Satan under thy feet shortly; and though thy iniquities were like scarlet, he shall make them white as wool;* If we meet with Affliction, the Covenant will tell thee, *Whom I love, I chasten and rebuke; and I know, that in faithfulness, I have afflicted thee;* If we meet with desertion, the Covenant will tell thee, *For a little moment I have forsaken thee, but with everlasting kindness will I gather thee; and she that hath been forsaken, shall be as if she had not been forsaken.* I cannot tell how refreshing it is, to hear some Christians, answering all their Objections with Scripture; they that take them to the Covenant, and answer their Challenges in the Covenant, and bear off their Temptations, Afflictions, and Desertions, with something in the Covenant, they take the Gospel Balm, and it's like their wounds will be healed, when others will apply something, that will gangren and canker them, and make them turn to Error. The Covenant is the only solid Answer to all Challenges, whether they come from Temptations, or from the Cross, or some Desertion from God; there is no kindly Plaster can be applied to any of these wounds, but allenerly the Covenant; now he that enters in a personal Covenant with God, as he hath laid his mouth to the Pipe, through which the golden oyl runs out of the Fountain, so he hath a very cordial Gospel Balm, for all discouragements, whether they come from Temptations, Crosses, or Desertions. *Thirdly, Take the Covenant as a Charter for the Church of God, and in reference to this, I would have you notice Three or Four Things.* 1. In the Covenant, we find not only the particular cases of Believers, their pardon, their taking away the heart of stone, but there are greater things promised to the Church, that are not yet accomplished; the *Millenaries*, an ancient sect,

as ancient as the Apostles time, when they read through these prophecies, they thought that Christ would come, and receive them personally on earth a thousand years; and the fifth Monarchy men, have run in many fancies about them; but there are great things prophesied, concerning the Church, that are not yet accomplished, *That all the earth shall be full of the glory of the Lord, and Jerusalem shall again be inhabited, and holiness shall be written on horses bells;* the meaning of the place is, that the people shall be mottily taken up about holiness, and denyed to their vanities; the generation is coming, that will see these dayes, these great things that are in the Covenant, and the truth is, these things are far greater, than our particular; our pardon, and our peace, is nothing to the case of the Church of God. 2ly. I would have you notice, that he that enters in a personal Covenant with God, as I have often told you, he is to take in the case of the Church of God, as well as his own particular, he is to take in, that he will mind the case of the Church, and say, Lord, I will believe all the promises concerning the Church, I will accept these promises, and I will rely on the faithfulness of him that made them; and though I be laid in the Grave, I expect that there is a generation coming, that will see all these things; I deny not, but we should look to our Mother Church, whereof we are Members, but withall, we ought to take in the case of the whole church, in our personal Covenanting with God, since the Covenant runs so much on the case of the Church; it's a strange Covenant that he will make, that will seclud the case of the Church of God, and since he hath made so much mention of it in the *Everlasting Covenant*, what kind of Covenant is that thou wilt make, that will seclud the case of the Church of God? So we are to take in this, Lord, I will be an enemy to the Error and Profanity of the time, I will neither be led away with the gliddiness, nor the drunkenness, nor profanity of the time; the Covenant is for Truth and Godliness, and therefore thou can Covenant against delusion and profanity; and here a great advantage he hath, that enters in a personal Covenant with God, in backsliding times, when the wicked are counted happy, and

and they that work righteousness, are set up; and when there is such a current of profaniry, and as *Zacharias* says, *The best are as briars and thorns*; when there are few young ones brought in to Christ, and when they who are brought in, we know not what they may turn to, for many turns a way to Error; he that hath entered in a personal Covenant with God, he is secure; for though he see not these dayes, yet as *Abraham* saw Christ's dayes a far off, ye may see them afar off. O! but it's comfortable to remember, that there will a generation come, when thou art laid in thy Grave, that will have holiness written on the horses bells, and that all will be taught of God, from the meanest to the greatest, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd; and the vail will be taken down betwixt them. 3ly. He that enters in a personal Covenant with God, he hath this encouragement, the Covenant takes in the healing of Divisions among his People; it's remarkable, it's often promised, it's true, it's long in fulfilling, *I will give them one way, and one heart, and they shall be as one stick in my hand*; the time of the fulfilling of the Promises is not yet come, no, almost as many heads, as many opinions; in a time of liberty, it would be difficult for a beginner, how to fix, there are such varieties of Opinions, no wonder the profane multitude, skinner at all profession; but he that hath made a personal Covenant with God, he knows, the Covenant carries this in the bosom of it, *They shall be as one stick in my hand*; these days are coming, though we wait on; now, in the personal Covenant, he that hath Indurured with God, and given him the hand, however ye may see, that there are learee three parts of nynteen parts of the World, Christians, and among these three parts, but few Protestants, yet he that enters in a personal Covenant with God, hath this, that he may go and sing, *All the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God*; and when these dayes are come, they will be like one stick in his hand, and they will have one heart, one mind, and one way; and we may rejoyce as *Abraham* did, to see Christ's day afar off; now he that enters in a personal Covenant with God, considers the Covenant, as the Conduite of all Grace, and the immediat answer to all Challenges, and a Charter for the Church of God, when

when the earth will be full of the knowledge of God, and when they will be like one stick in his hand, and when they will have one heart, and one way, and will not be saying, here is Christ, and there is Christ; for that is now accomplished in our time, there is one saying, here is Christ, and there is Christ, and one knows not where to set down their steps, there is such varlety of Opinions, and a multitude of Divisions. Lastly, Take up the Covenant, as the Charter of the Inheritance, and ye will see what advantage he hath, that hath made a particular Covenant with God; all the glory to come is his; O! but the Covenant speaks excellently of the Inheritance, take the twenty one and twenty two Chapters of the Book of the Revelation, and read them over, what a stately City is there? what stately Foundations? what Porches? and what Trees, that bears twelve manner of Fruits, every moneth, and the Leaves of them are for the healing of the Nations? He that hath entered seriously in Covenant with God, according to the qualifications I spoke of before, the Covenant carries him with a Legal Right to all that City, let it have never such Foundations and Porches, all the Porches, Trees, and Foundations in it, are all his; Nay, the Tree that is in the midst of Paradise, that bears the twelve manner of Fruit, is his. Now, see what a priviledge it is, to enter in a personal Covenant with God. Now take up these Advantages, and I have laid this before you, if not to perswade you, yet to make you inexcusable, and to help to bring your Blood upon your own head, if ye enter not in a personal Covenant; But

Thirdly, After I have removed the Impediments, and shewed the Advantages, there is a third thing, in following this Use of Exhortation; it shall be in exhorting you, to enter this personal Covenant; consider a little the persons, that are admitted to personal Covenanting with God; and generally practise Divines do it, that write of the Covenant; the persons that are admitted, may be a great motive, to press this Use of Exhortation, if he had stood at Kings, Princes, the great Ones of the Earth, the Wise, the Learned, the Holy, and Righteous, and these that are exact, according to the Covenant of Works; but ye would notice

four or five things, in the persons that are called, personally to Covenant with God; and I take up this as the great incitement, to press this personal Covenanting in you. 1. That no former guiltiness, may hinder you from entering in this personal Covenant, nay I say more, the sin against the Holy Ghost cannot hinder; for if a person could consent to accept of Christ, it would not be that sin against the holy Ghost; therefore it's remarkable, they have entered in a personal Covenant, with him, that have been the greatest of Sinners, they have had seven Devils, like *Mary Magdalen*, there have been some blasphemers, like *Paul*; some that have killed the Prophets, and stoned them; some that were Persecutors like *Manasseh*, as those that are mentioned in the *Hebrews*, that were sawn asunder, of whom it was reported, that he did saw *Isaiah* asunder, with a timber Saw, yet when he was in Bonds in *Babylon*, he repented, and found mercy. That is one thing in regard of the persons. 2ly. In entering in this personal Covenant, he stands not at how mean a birth and parentage persons be; it's remarkable, *Abraham* with whom he first made a Covenant, a *Syrian* to thy Father, and thy Mother an *Amorite*; *Moses*, he had his Name *Moses*, that is drawn out, because he was drawn out among the Flags, he was in a manner a Foundling, he is found lying among the Flags by *Pharaoh's* Daughter, no, he stands not at that, but can enter in a Covenant with a *Moses*, though he be drawn out. 3ly, He stands not at the weakness of Parts, let one be never so simple, he stands not at that, the twelve Apostles are called off the *Idiotai*, our Translation, for respect to them, hath it unlearned Men, when they perceived them to be unlearned men, in the Original, they were but poor fisher men, but that stood not in the way of it. 4ly, He stands not at the weakness of Faith, if he come to make a personal Covenant, he neither stands at former guiltiness, nor the meanness of birth, if thou were even a *Lazarus*, laid full of Boils at *Dives* gate; nor at the meanness of Parts, nay, nor at the weakness of Faith. And Lastly, He stands not at the mixture of Faith with Corruption, though thou can say, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*; he is like a man, that if one should ask him? Is it day, he cannot

cannot tell, whether it be day or night, he cannot tell whether his Faith be Faith or Unbelief. Now in entering in a personal Covenant with God, God will stand at none of these. Lay all these together, and I hope, I may close this Use of Exhortation, exhorting you all, to take this gate of it, enter in a personal Covenant with God, and lay, and subscribe it with your hand; if ye have not done it, go and do it; ye should be exhorting your own Soul to it, and your neighbours, ye that have Children, should be pressing them to do it; Husbands should be saying to their Wives, come let us return to the Lord, come and let us enter in a personal Covenant with him; they that hath sitten all these Sermons, and have not advanced one step, I am afraid, they be the Tree, of which it is said, *Never fruit grow on thee henceforth*. Ye are daily dying, and going off this Stage, therefore be exhorted, to take you to this personal Covenant.

SERMON XX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

I Have spoken to Two uses of this Doctrine, of personal Covenanting with God, one of Instruction, which consisted of five or six Branches; another of Exhortation, which hath been prest in several Sermons; by removing the impediments, and considering the Advantages, of personal Covenanting. The third Use might be of Tryal, whether we have personally Covenanted with God, or not; but since this will come in, in the Third Doctrine of this Branch

Branch of the *verse*, *David's* asserting, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*, I will refer the marks of personal Covenanting, untill I handle that Branch of the *verse*. I purpose this Afternoon, to close this Head of personal Covenanting, though it will occur often in handling this *verse* afterwards. I will shut it up, with an Use of Direction.

Use 3. For the right management of this Work, of personal Covenanting with God. I have proven the necessity of it, opened the Nature and Properties of it, and have cleared many Questions about it: Now the Key and Kinsel of Direction follows, to be handled; and that I may do it the more distinctly and clearly, I will follow it to four sorts of Persons, which will readily take up the substance of this afternoons Sermon.

First, Is it a Duty, thus personally, and particularly to Covenant with God, then it speaks a word to these, who have hitherto neglected, or it may be, are still averse from this Duty, they can count on many things that have occurred in the wilderness to them, but never of a personal Covenanting with God. I have spoken somewhat to this sort of People before, and may be the shorter now, I shall only name these four things to them. 1. It is already proven, to be a Duty of absolute necessity, the Saints of old have practised it, if we believe particular Election, and particular Redemption, and that we stand bound personally to the Duties of the Covenant, that we personally, and particularly claim the privileges of the Covenant, we stand obliged, of absolute necessity, personally and particularly to Covenant to them. I think I have, on solid Gospel Principles proved, that there can be no benefit by Christ, without particular Covenanting with him; thou owns not thy Baptism, thou goes not rashly about the Sacrament of the Supper, if thou do not particularly and personally Indenture with God. I exhort thee to consider these grounds, who has never dreamed of this Duty; all that is in Christ, all that is in the Covenant, all that is in the Father, they signify nothing to thee, without a personal and particular Covenanting with him. 2. I would exhort thee, that has never done it, to consider the wretchedness

and

and misery of the Covenant that thou art under, untill thou particularly Covenant with Christ, according to the tenor of the Covenant of Grace; thou art under the Covenant of Works, Dost thou hear? This is a Covenant that admits not of a Cautiouser, nor of Repentance, that will not dispense with the smallest transgression, nor admits not of Sincerity, however thou talk of Christ and of Repentance, if thou has not made a particular Covenant with God, according to the terms of the Covenant of Grace, thou art under the Covenant, that admits not of a Christ, Repentance, and Sincerity. 3. I, Thou that has not made this personal Covenant, and particularly Indentured, either by Word, or subscribing, or lifting up the hand to God, I would have thee considering, that there is in thy Lot, somewhat that is worse, than the case of Heathens; they have no Revelation of a Covenant of Grace, they will not be comparable, for the thing that was never revealed, *Tyrus, and Sidon, Sodom, and Gomorrah, the men of Nineve, will rise in judgment against thee, for at the preaching of Jonah, they repented*: but thou that lives under the drop of the Gospel, and hears of a particular and personal Indenturing with God, thou shalt have them coming, from the East and the West, at the great day, & they shall all be Witnesses against thee, for at the preaching of *Jonah, Nineve* repented, and thou hast this Covenant pressed on thee by the Gospel, yet thou dost not repent, nor make this personal Covenant. 4. I would have thee to consider, that if thou be not in a particular personal Covenant with God, thou can lay no claim to the Covenant at all, *Thou art an alien to the common wealth of Israel, and a stranger to the Covenants of Promise*; we must either be particularly interested in it, or not at all; it must have our several consents, or we have no claim to it; thou that has never made this personal Covenant with him, and yet art living under the drop of the Gospel, thou art neglecting a Duty of absolute necessity, thou owns not thy Baptism, thou can plead no benefit by the Covenant; if all these things will not move thee, I know not what will do it; if thou sit them out, thou art like to be the Tree, on which fruit never will grow, thou may be fuel for burning, but not for bearing;

and I am afraid, there are many so, that are standing in the vineyard, and are Trees for burning, but not for bearing.

Secondly, this way of Personal Covenanting, speaks a word to a second sort of Persons, and that is to those, who come some length, but they stick in the Birth, and never come up the full length, in this act of particular and personal Covenanting with God: There are a great many that do so, we have a number of sober Civillians; some Divines that write of Personal Covenanting, they say, It's the lot of many persons of Quality, they go some length in Covenanting, but they go not the full length, readily they forsake the pollutions of the World, but comes not the length of giving themselves over to him according to the Covenant of Grace, in their lot, and service, and condition in the World. I would have such considering, for there are many, that sit down betwixt Towns, betwixt Heaven and Hell: I would have them considering three or four things. (1.) Thou art in danger to lose two Worlds; If thou take this present World, for thy happiness, why fills not thou thy lusts in it? If thou take the World to come for thy Portion, why walks thou not suitable to thy Hope? It's a lamentable thing, many they will find, they lose both Heaven and Earth, they have been denied to the pleasures of the Flesh, and yet for not going a greater length, they have lost Heaven also, often Hypocrites do so, and the generality of sober Civillians, that comes not up the length the Gospel calls for, but comes some length, they are like to lose both this World, and that which is to come. (2ly.) I would have thee considering, thou that comes some length, that there are many, who have been almost Christians, that have all their life stuck at that *Almost*, and eternally perished in it; the famous *Agrippa*, a friend of *Augustus*, could tell *Paul*, thou almost persuads me to be a Christian, would to God, says he, not only almost but altogether, thou were such as I am except these bonds. I will recommend thee to a Book on that text, *The almost Christian*, many of you have need of that, what does it signify to be almost, and not altogether one? Thou had as good renounce it altogether, as to be almost, and not altogether

gether a Christian. (3ly.) Consider thou that comes some length, in this personal Covenanting, what a foolish bargain hast thou made with Christ, to agree with him in many Articles, and to be content to pay many things, and to break off the bargain for a penny; it's a business of a Heaven and of a Hell, and thou that would make a Covenant with him, I shall not be a Drunkard, I shall not be a Swearer, I shall walk on the Ordinances, I shall pray in Secret and in my Family; but for the inward Lusts of my heart, and secret walk with God, I dare not Covenant for that; there thou has offered fair for Heaven, and art like to lose it for a little, he that is the Author of the Practice of Piety, he brings in many, that are in Hell, saying, O but I was near Heaven, and did many things, and suffered many things for him, and yet I am here; that aggregates their Torment and their Misery. Readily, thou may have gone a great length, yet it may be, it encourage thy Blasphemy against him, in the place of the damned, that thou has done many things, and suffered many things, and yet one thing is lacking. 4ly. I would have thee Consider, that thou that art sitten down in an *Almost*, on this Motive, that thou readily thinks, at Death, or some period of Time, or another, thou will come to do it *Altogether*; Thou would know, if thou sit such a Sermon on it, as this, it shall be denied to thee at death, if thou sit this afternoon, and do not resolve, to take Him on the terms he offers Himself; If thou wilfully harden thy self against all these things, thou shalt have enough to do, to wrestle with the Fever, when it comes, thou may be roving, and lose the Composure of thy Spirit, and the thing thou will not do now, shall be denied thee then; Therefore, thou that art come up almost to do it, I have removed the Objections out of thy way, know, if thou hope to do it afterward, and will not do it now, in the day of thy distress, or at death, it shall be denied to thee, and thou shall die, either Roving, or Sleeping, or Stupid, and shall be laid in the Grave like a Sheep: Therefore, whoever has come up almost to Covenant, but not altogether, but hopes, there will come a better day afterward, Remember, If thou refuse it this Night, and go not home thus to indenture with him, on the terms you have heard, be like

like Roving, Stupidity, or Presumption, will deprive thee of it, when thou art lying on the Bed of languishing.

Thirdly, Is it thus a Duty personally to Covenant with God, then it speaks a word to them, who have done it, and broken again; They find they have a heart so slippery, that it will bind the day, and break the morrow; unto these I would say three or four things, 1. Thou that hast Indentured and Broken, I would inform thee, that ay when we break, God does not break, it would never be called an Everlasting Covenant, if it had only a reference to us; it might be called an Hourly Covenant, a Daily Covenant, a Diurnal kind of a Covenant, but not an Everlasting Covenant; The thing that makes it be called an Everlasting Covenant is, the everlasting Faithfulness of God, it is so contrived, as tho we break, if we believe not, yet he abides Faithful; now, when he enters in a Marriage Covenant, the Contract is not like the Clauses of the Marriage, betwixt a Man and a Woman, if one of the Parties commit Adultery, the Law provides a Divorce, *thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return to me, for I am married to thee.* 2ly, I would have thee, that has Covenanted with God and broken, to mnde, that in the Covenant there are promises of Reviving, Renewing, Restoring, and of binding up that which is broken, and strengthening that which is weak; it would never have been Everlasting, if there were not such Articles in it; So that if thou has broken, thou art not to run from the Covenant, but thou art to take thee to such Promises of it, as concern thy Case; all the Promises relating to Reviving, Restoring, Renewing, healing that which is broken, & strengthening that which is weak; It's a great failing in many precious to God, when they find they have made a Covenant, and broken it, they resolve to make no mo, but altogether give it over; In that case they are to go, and seek out such Promises, as relate to Restoring, Reviving, Renewing, binding up that which is broken, & strengthening that which is weak, otherways the Covenant could never be an Everlasting Covenant. 3ly, I exhort thee, who has broken, to go mournfully, and plead the Promises; if thou do it presumptuously, it's like thou has no Claim to these Promises; there are many when they fall, they presently talk of

note

of Christ, and of the Covenant, and before ever the Plaster be applyed, the Sore is heal; the Plaster of Reviving Grace, nothing makes it stick better to nor Tears. If thou shalt go and take the Plaster, and apply it to the breach of Covenant, and not mingle in Tears with it, the Plaster will not stick, there is nothing that makes it stick so well, as tears flowing from a contrite heart; Therefore, thou that has broken Covenant with Him, and art guilty of this Sin, which many of the generation are guilty of, thou hast Indentured with Him, & dealt deceitfully in his Covenant; go, and apply these Promises of the Covenant of Reviving, Restoring, Renewing, and binding up; but know, that nothing will make the plaster stick so well to, as Tears; if you do it presumptuously, thou may apply the Plaster, but in a moment it will fall off. 4ly, Thou that has broken Covenant with Him, and Indentured, and art afraid to hazard again, know this, that burnt Bairns fire dreads, the thing that occasioned the breach of Covenant, eschew that; I will offer you two or three things, that uses ordinarily to bring Persons, that uses to Covenant with God, under a breach of Covenant. 1. Ordinarily overly and careless performance of secret Duties; thou goes to God, and it's words without Life or Spirit, that thou vents to God in prayer, thou will soon break all thy Vows, if there grow a dryness betwixt the Root and the Branches, the Branches will soon wither; It's remarkable, that which *Elihu* said to *Job*, he was mistaken in *Job*, but the Word he spake was true, had it not been applyed to *Job*'s case, he thought *Job* spoke unreverently of God, and he took him for an Hypocrite, and he thought all his Arguments reflected on God, and when he had heard him out, surely says he, *thou restrainest Prayer, and castest off Fear*, his meaning is, therefore thou may say any thing thou thinks, overly performing of prayer, will soon bring one to break all their Vows. 2ly, It's given by some Divines, as one of the Reasons of breaking Covenant with God, unprofitable Converse among Christians every Christian meeting with another, should be like a man going to light a Candle in another House, where he knows there is fire, when we use to converse together, there is no

thing of God in it; nothing of Christs Death and Sufferings; readily we may grow careless of our Covenants with God; It's a great fault among many, I know not whether it be Ignorance, or the want of matter within, that occasions it; If one should begin a spiritual Subject, they will give it no kind of Intertainment, but silence, they will sit graver possibly at that time, than at another, and hear, but they give it no kind of Answer; thou art refusing to light thy Candle, at thy Neighbours fire, and readily thou wilt break thy Covenant with God; to be brief, I exhort thee who hast broken thy Covenant, to take the Promises of Reviving, Renewing, Restoring, and of healing that which is broken, strengthening that which is Weak, and lay them to the sore, with the tear in thy Eye, for nothing will make the Plaster stick so well, as Tears mingled with a contrite heart.

The last sort of Persons, to whom I will speak, and therewith close with this Theam, and it is to those, that has Covenanted with Him, they have made a Covenant with him by sacrifice; and would gladly know some Advice how to keep it, that they be not guilty of the sins abounding in their time, of being breakers of Covenant with Him, That I may not let thee go, without some word of Advice, who art serious, how thou shalt get it kept, I shall for present give thee these two words of Advice, First, If thou would keep this Covenant with God; look well to thy Conscience. 2/y, look well to thy Conversation.

First, If thou would keep this Covenant with God, look well to thy Conscience, It's God's Deputie within thee, and the immediat Judge of all thy Actions; and here I would shew you, that a Man looks well to his Conscience, when he looks to these three things in it; 1. When he looks to have his Conscience well informed, the Conscience is a blind Guide, It's the candle of the Word that must regulate it, therefore ye will find a conscientious Christian, he is always waiting on the Word, waiting on Sermons, and proposing Doubts; and the great Reason of all is, to get the Conscience well informed; therefore If the Conscience be blind, and decline to Errour, as often it will do, it will sometimes call the thing a Duty, that God calls Sin, and that

that Sin, which God calls Duty; therefore, If thou would keep Covenant with God, look well to thy Conscience, that it be well informed, and regulate by the word of truth, that thou make not a Duty, when there is none. In this time I am afraid, many are taken away from their Obligations to Him, through an ill informed Conscience; Conscience may err on the right hand, there are many make more Duties than God has made, it may make that Duty which God has never made one; It may Err in the left hand, by presuming on Duty, and prostituting Duties to Lusts, and If thou have not a well informed Conscience, all thy running through the Wilderness, is to no purpose. I believe all Papists, Turks and Quakers out-strip us, there are no persons takes less pains to come to Heaven, than Protestants; therefore, if thou would keep thy Covenant with God, in such a time, when there are some saying, here is Christ, and there is Christ, and many falling into Errors, both on the right hand, and on the left hand, labour to have thy Conscience well informed. 2/y, Look to thy Conscience in this, that it be kept tender, all the light in thy Conscience, will not keep thy Vows and Covenants to God, If it be not kept tender; It's a singular Character of *Josiah's* sincerity, that he wept, when he heard the Book of the Law read; *Huldah* the Prophetess sent him word, *because thy heart was tender*, If thou would look well to thy Conscience, look well that it be well informed, and then that it be tender: there are some ye may drive Carts and Wains over their Consciences, they will not crack, and of all Plagues this is the greatest. 3/y, Harken to the voice of thy Conscience, do not sit it out, when Conscience presses on thee. *Amesius* in his cases of Conscience, says, *He that resists his Conscience, or what he takes to be the mind of God in the Conscience, he resists God, because it is the mind of God, for he takes it up as the mind of God, in such a time*; No Man ought to follow another mans Light, but to follow the Dictates of his own Conscience; many are like the old Prophet, and the young, the young Prophet comes to *Bethel*, and denounces Woes against it; the Lord said, *See thou turn not aside to the right hand or to the left hand, to eat or drink*; The Old Prophet comes

comes to him, and says, *turn in with me, and eat Bread*, he follows the old Prophets Light, and goes with him; and there comes out a Lion and tears him: So labour, first to have the Conscience well informed, and then that it be tender, that ye may not drive Carts and Wains over it; and 3^d, Harken to the voice of the Conscience, for it's Gods Deputy: a Man will never keep a personal Covenant with God, that looks not to these three.

Secondly, as ye would look to your Conscience, so look to your Conversation; there are many things, that are necessary to be spoken to here, our secret Walk, our family Walk, our publick walk comparing them with the Rules of the Gospel; It would take a long time to go through them, I will close all with these two words, and shall say no more. 1. I have long longed to handle this Head of personal Covenanting, ye have now heard fourteen Sermons on it, the Stones of these Walls, and the Timber of this House, God himself and his holy Angels shall be witnesses against you, if ye do not personally Covenant with him, for in so far as I know the mind of God has been delivered truly to you, and all of you yourselves shall be witnesses against other, if ye fall not on this Work of personal Covenanting with God; I know nothing would contribute more, to make you serious Christians, than the practice of it, and if ye have not done it, go and do it, subscribe your Name, lift up your hand to God, if ye delay it, and expects some better time, remember a Fever, a Flux, or a Scrubie, will stop the flux of your glass; and if ye delay until death, either Roving, or Stupidity shall carry you to the Grave; Therefore, let one go and say, I am the Lords, and another subscribe, and call himself by the name of Israel. 2^d, If ye will go and do it, all by-gones shall be by-gones, and all former Transgressions shall be past; nay, if ye were never so poor, never so simple, never so Ignorant, if ye were of never so mean a Birth, of never such mean Parts, if ye had never so weak a Faith, if ye had never such a mixture of Corruption with it, if ye will but say, I am the Lords, and from this time forth, will Covenant to take him, as he is offered in the Gospel, and do the Duties

ties that the Covenant requires, the Bargane is made, and it's subscribing, it's an everlasting Covenant, and as ye have made an everlasting Covenant, ye shall have an everlasting Name, so long as God is God; and this Covenant shall bring you to the place, where ye shall be made a Pillar in the Temple of God, and ye know, a Pillar lasts as long as the house stands.

SERMON XXI.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

THe third particular in this part of the verse remains, which is the assurance that David had, that he was personally Covenanted with God, he can affirm it, and let it down in the Bible, and make it a part of the Canon of the Scripture. *The Lord has made with me an everlasting Covenant*, so that this being the third thing, I shall take this third Note, and therewith close this second Branch of the verse, and the Note is this.

Doctrine. That not only does God take Believers in a personal Covenant with Him, but they may be clear, assured, and able to affirm it, that God has made a Covenant with them. This assurance David hath here, and the Spirit of God doth so agree with his assertion, that it's made a part of the Canon, a part of the Bible, that God made with him an everlasting Covenant. So this is the Truth, that I will handle this day, that one may be assured, and very clear, they may be able confidently to assert, that God has made a Covenant with

with them, This being a thing of great Importance, I will follow it in this Method. 1. I will open to you, that Assurance of a personal Interest to the Covenant, is very necessary. 2ly. I will shew you, that this Assurance is not only attainable, but it's not so difficult, as ordinarily it's apprehended to be. 3ly. I will open to you some of the Ways and Methods, that the Spirit keeps, in bringing Believers to be Assured, that God hath made a Covenant with them. And Lastly, I shall apply it.

For the First, That this Assurance, that we particularly are in Covenant with God, is of great necessity; that we may be able to say, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*. For clearing a little the necessity of it, I will premise two Distinctions, First, Take notice, that there is a Three-fold Assurance, that the Scripture mentions, First, There is an Assurance of knowledge, Colos. 2. 2. *That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches, the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.* 2ly. There is an Assurance of Faith, Heb. 10. 22. *Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* 3ly. There is an Assurance of hope, Heb. 11. *And we desire, that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope, unto the end.* v. 12. *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience, inherit the promises;* There ye have a Three-fold Assurance, there is an Assurance of Knowledge, that the first proposition of the practical Syllogisme, by it I come to be assured of the Mystery of Godliness, that it's a Truth. There is an Assurance of Faith, whereby I am assured of my Interest in that Mystery; there is an Assurance of Hope, whereby I am assured, that God will make out all that is contained in that Mystery; now we take in all the Three, when we speak of Assurance in the Covenant, there may be first, Assurance of Knowledge, that God hath made a Covenant, and on what Terms he hath made it. 2ly. There is Assurance of Faith, that I am in that Covenant. 3ly. There is Assurance of Hope, that all the Contents of that Covenant

shall in due time be accomplished; when I say that it's necessary a Believer be assured, I take in all the Three.

But 2ly, Take notice, that there is a twofold necessity, when we say this assurance is necessary, that God hath made a Covenant with us; First, There is something necessary for the being of a Christian. 2ly, There is somewhat necessary for the well-being of a Christian; now, we say nor, assurance that we are in the Covenant, is necessary for the being of a Christian, no, one may be in Covenant with God, and far from being assured of it; several times Questions about their Interest, may be more necessary than Assurance for them; several times, the Thief Scandalous, and Presumptuous Sins, will take away their Assurance, and sometimes the moth slothfulness will take it away; it were a hard Doctrine and dreadful to say, Assurance is necessary for the being of a Christian; only this Assurance we say is necessary, for the welbeing of a Christian; they cannot live so comfortably in Christ, if they were not assured, that the Covenant is made with them: so ye may understand what is meant by this, when we say, Assurance is necessary for the welbeing of a Christian to be assured that he is in the Covenant.

To confirm this, I will offer you five or six things, that will let you see the Advantages, that the clearness of an Interest in the Covenant, draws after it. 1. When our Interest in the Covenant is clear, our personal Interest, it's easie to believe all the Promises of the Covenant; it's Observed by some pratique Divines, there are two things that makes us doubt of the Promises, sometimes we doubt of Gods power, and sometimes we doubt of his willingness, it's indeed a rare thing to see a Christians faith stick at Gods power, a Philistine may acknowledge, these are the great Gods that divided the Red-sea; now when we are clear of an Interest in the Covenant, we can no more doubt of his willingness, more than a man will doubt, that his neighbour will give him an Apple, who hath given him the Apple-tree, or that God is willing to give the World light, since he hath given them a Sun, and a Moon; no, he is able to believe all the Promises of Pardon, of perseverance, of through-bearing in affliction,

tion, they are all easily credited, when we believe, he hath made a Covenant with us, since faith sticks not at his power. It hath no ground to stick at his willingness, when the whole Covenant is made with us. 2/y, Another Advantage, by being cleared of our interest in the Covenant, that readily by it we are stirred up to love Christ, our love to Christ takes fire at Christ's love to us, we can never love him, except he love us, our love to him, is but like a plack candle kindled at a Torch, our love comes to be cleared by his love to us: now there is nothing clears up his love more to us, than to be cleared about our interest in the Covenant: an interest in the Everlasting Covenant, contributes very much, for the clearing of his love to us: it reveals his love to us, and thereby it kindles our love to him; so that beside, that he easily believes the promises, of our interest in the Covenant be cleared, we are helped to love Christ, and to have our plack candle kindled at the Torch of his love to us, revealed in the Covenant. 3/y, The clearing an interest in the Covenant, is a great remedy against servile fears, there is a kind of Hell in these fears, there is not only a guiltiness in them, but a torment accompanying them; ye that know, what it is to be kept in bondage under fears, know, that there is no fever, no prison, no disquieting dispensation outwardly, that can come near, the letting in the waters to the Soul, as a flood of servile fears will do; now to be cleared about an interest in the Covenant, that God hath made it with me, contributes exceedingly, to scatter all these servile fears; there lyes the remedy of these fears, the application of the Covenant, like a plaister laid to a sore; sometimes Believers will take other wayes to cure their fears, but they bring their water out of gutters, and there is no right balm, that can be applyed to them, but the Covenant. So if we come to plead an interest in the Covenant, not only kindles it our love to Christ, and scatters our fears. But 4/y. These that have an interest in the Covenant cleared, are excellently furnished for all duties, of active Obedience; whatever God calls a person to do, they still go to a Promise, if they be to Repent, if they be to pray, if to believe, if to sing, or meditate, whatever the duty be, an interest

interest to the Covenant, is an excellent support; a person that will go in his own strength in performing duties, goes to bring forth the thing that is not there ben, it's impossible to wring it out of thy own heart; So the way to be helped in all duties, is to know an interest in the Covenant. 5/y. Know, there is nothing contributes so much to patient suffering, as to be cleared of an interest in the Covenant; it's remarkable, Rom. 5. When the Apostle is giving the reason, why Christians they joy in Tribulation, and are not ashamed, they are justified by Faith, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*; Mark there, an interest in the Covenant, contributes to their patient suffering; it were almost impossible for a Christian to bear, what we find them put to, Hebr. 11. throughout, if it were not on the account of the Covenant, they hazard on the Faithfulness of God, and the credit of his Promises, therefore they rejoyce in Tribulation, and wash their hands in the Flames; and the great thing hath made them do it, is their being cleared, that God hath made a Covenant with them. Lastly, An interest, and to be clear about it, that God hath made the Covenant with us, is necessary, in regard the neglecting of Assurance, is a kind of contempt of the Covenant; the person that neglects Assurance about it, is a despiser of it; there are some things we undervalue, as if a man let a prin fall out of his sleeve, he is not anxious that ever he get it again, but if he let a Jewel, or a precious Stone fall, he values that, how careful and restless is he, to be cleared, and to get it again? If we be careless of our Assurance, we undervalue the Covenant, we look on it, as a man having a Prin fallen out of his sleeve; so that ye see the grounds of a necessity of an interest in the Covenant, thereby we get love to Christ, the faith of all the Promises, it contributes to stop and scatter servile fears, it's an excellent help to Obedience, and it influences cheerfulness under the Cross; and the neglect of it evidences, that we contemn the Covenant. From all these grounds ye see, that a Believer should be assured, that the Lord hath made a Covenant with him.

The second thing I proposed, That this Assurance is attainable, here we have the *Papists* and *Arminians*, great adversaries

versaries to us, they call us all *Enthusiasts*, and they say, we pretend to a possibility of Assurance of an Interest in the Covenant; they do not deny, but the Apostles and Pen-men of the Scriptures, had this Assurance, but they say, because *David* and *Paul* had it, will it therefore follow, that every Christian should have it; no, every Christian ought to have it, and is obliged to study it, and that it is attainable, I will make it appear, on these Four or Five remarkable grounds. 1. If God hath made it a duty, to endeavour Assurance of an Interest in the Covenant, then it may be attainable, no body will deny this, and that God hath made it a duty, ye will find it, *Heb. 6. 11.* And we desire, that every one of you, do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that ye be not slothfull, but followers of them, who through faith and patience, inherit the promises; Mark here Three things. 1. What the Apostle exhorts to, he exhorts to Assurance, and the full Assurance of Hope. 2ly. Whom he exhorts, it's not the Schoolers only, or the eminent Christians, but every one of you. 3ly. It's remarkable, the means he prescribes, *That ye be not slothful*, Importing, that slothfulness will hough their Assurance, and that Diligence is the way to attain it; here is a place that evidences, that a Believer may come, not only to Assurance, but full Assurance, and every one that is diligent, may come to it. 2ly. It's evident, that this Assurance is attainable; in regard there are some duties called for, that were impracticable, without Assurance; as for example, Christ calls a man to this, dost thou believe, if the man could have no Assurance, nor Knowledge of the Faith, the Question were impertinent, he might Answer, It's impossible for one to be Assured, of any Interest in Christ; he would never have asked the Question, if he could not be assured; and Christ hath bidden us, *Rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God, and rejoyce that your names are written in the Book of life*, and can we rejoyce in the hope of Glory, or that our names are written in the Book of Life, if we could not be assured of it. 3ly. That this Assurance is attainable, is evident from this, that there is a necessary Connexion, betwixt the golden links of that golden Chain of Grace, *whom he did predestinat, them he called,*

led, and whom he called, them he justifies, and whom he justifies, them he also glorifies; It's not denyed, but we may be assured of our effectual calling; they say, a man may have Grace, but he knows not if he will persevere; they say he may be in Covenant with God the day, and with the Devil to morrow; no, there is an inseperable connexion, *whom he did predestinat, them he also called, and whom he called, them he justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified*; So grant, that we may know our effectual calling, and that we are in a state of Grace, we may be assured we shall be glorified, and our Interest in the Covenant being once cleared, it can never be disput again. 4ly. That this Assurance is attainable, it's evident from this, there are many recorded in Scripture, had it, and laid down in the Grave with that, *Psal. 16. 9.* My flesh also shall rest in hope, v. 10. Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one, to see corruption. v. 11. Thou wilt shew me the path of life. Paul had it, *Rom. 8. 38.* I am perswaded, that neither death nor life, &c. shall be able to separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus. But say they, will ye compare with them? They had immediat Revelations, and Inspirations, why are ye not also Pen-men of the Scriptures? Why writ ye not a new Bible? We answer, If the grounds of this Assurance had been extraordinary Revelations, we should never have pleaded Assurance, because they had it; but the ground of our Assurance is, the love of God in Christ, and the love of God in Christ is common to all Believers, as well as to Paul, it's like the fountain opened in the house of David, that's opened for all the House as well as for David himself; so if they had Assurance upon grounds common to all the Elect, all the Elect they may attain this Assurance. These things being laid together, will clear this Truth, that as this Assurance, of a personal Interest in the Covenant is necessary, so it's attainable.

Before I proceed to shew the Method and way, how the Spirit brings up to this Assurance, here ye would mark two things. 1. Take notice, That this Assurance of a personal Interest in the Covenant, is not like the Interest it self, but it differs in two things from it. 1. The Interest it self,

It's not acquired by us, It is that which is conferred on us in effectual calling, when we are merely Patients; the greatest Interest in the Covenant, is so made up, that in effect, we are meer Patients, when we are interested in it. It's not so in the assurance of an Interest: I deny not, but the Spirit sometimes will give a glance of Light, when one will be very sloathful, but it's rare; we are to come by our Assurance, by Diligence, readily sometimes the Spirit will give extraordinary things, that Mystery that Mr. Sibb reports of a Woman in England, when she was going to die, all the Ministers that came to her, as they had often discoursed with her, they could bring her to no clearing of her Interest, or that she would come to Heaven, she having a Glass in her hand, she says to them, I can no more be saved, than that Glass can be preserved, by throwing it against a Wall, and she threw it against the Wall, and it did rebound safe from the Wall; the case of these extraordinary things, is like a man coming to a deep water in a dark night, where there are Steps, and providentially one should hold out a Candle to him, and let him see over the Steps: If another should come at such a time of the night, he must not think, that a Candle will be holden out to him, this is not the ordinary way, we must not expect extraordinary things, our assurance of an Interest, comes in by diligence, *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure*; So this clearing of an Interest, comes in by diligence, and is not like the Interest it self, which readily at the beginning is made up, when we are merely passive, and in a state of nature. 2ly. Ye would notice another difference, that of all things that ever God made, a Believers Interest in the Covenant is most enduring; It shall be as lasting, as the Union betwixt the humane nature and the divine, as long as Christ is God-man in one person, as long shall the Members make up a Mystical Body; if the Interest in the Covenant be once secured, it's as sure, as the personal Union, betwixt the humane and divine nature; yet there is nothing more unsure, than the Assurance of that interest, readily it will be had one day, and doubted the next day.

And here, before I open the way, how the Spirit brings
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up one to assurance, that the Lord hath made with me a Covenant, I would open somewhat, that hath influence on the changeableness of this assurance, that we can assert at one time, over the belly of all temptations, and at another time, the least thing will make us doubt. 1. Several times a Christian comes to this assurance two wayes, these two wayes that Christ speaks of, when he is exhorting his Disciples, *To lay up treasures in heaven, where the moth and thief will not come*; ye know there are many utensils, and things that folk lay up, that are taken away, sometimes by the moth, and sometimes by the thief; Divines understand by the thief, scandalous sins, if a Christian fall in sins against his Conscience, he will be sure to have his assurance clouded, he will not be able to say, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, why, the Thief hath taken it away; sometimes it's not the Thief, but the Moth that takes it away, that is to say, slothfulness, it breakes not in so strongly, as the Thief doth, but slothfulness is like the Moth, that piece and piece frets, and eats away the piece, as the Moth eats the Garment; so one may be in Christ, and in the Covenant, and it's clear that God hath made a Covenant with them, one day, and another day, the Thief and the Moth, may have taken it away. But 2ly. This Assurance comes to be so changeable, that like the Moon it will have many different Forms, the assurance and clearing of an Interest, will have many different Forms in one moneth; God orders it so for several ends, there are some persons, the want of an Interest in the Covenant, will damn them, but the want of Assurance, will not damn them, & yet it may keep them fearing and doubting; It's very necessary, that God take some to Glory in a leaking Vessel, though it drown them not, yet it may wet them, and they may be all their dayes, under fears and bondage; and this may be necessary for them. Having thus opened these two things, that this assurance is necessary, on all the six grounds that I have given, that a Christian can never be a comfortable, nor cheerful Christian, except he be able to say, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*; and next that it is attainable, the Lord would never have bidden us rejoyce, if our Names were not written

in the Book of Life, he would never have bidden us rejoice in the hope of Glory, if it were not attainable. So though this assurance be variable, and often the Thief and Moth will take it from us; yet it's real, and solid, and is attainable.

SERMON XXII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

IT is a Doctrine, very dishonourable to God, and very prejudicial to the Saints comfort, to deny, that Believers may be assured, that God hath made a Covenant with them; our Divines, in disputing with *Papists* and *Arminians*, on the Heads of the certainty of Salvation, they call that Doctrine, a Doctrine of Devils; they teach the thing indeed, that the Devil hath ordinarily taught, for he is often pressing doubting, and hindering a Christian from saying, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant.* Before I speak of the way, how the Spirit brings the Elect to be assured; I would yet premise some things about it. 1. We do not assert an assurance *a priori*, as they speak, the *Papists* say, that we speak and preach to People, as if we had read the Book of Gods Decrees, and that we there saw, who were Elect, or Reprobated, no, that is not the way we take, we tell them, that the good tree is known by the good fruit, and the corrupt tree is known, by the corrupt fruit; it's not by searching into the root, but by searching into the fruit, that we tell Christians, they may be assured of their Interest in the Covenant. Next, We say not, that this assurance comes

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in by *Enthusiasms* and Revelation, they say, we are *Enthusiasticks*, no, we are far from that, we look on their way as deluding; we deny not the Spirit a liberty, of giving extraordinary things, and the Candle may be holden over the Window, when he is walking amongst the steps in a dark night. 3ly. When we bid folk be assured, by effects and fruits, we do not assert an assurance by effects, that hath these three defects in it. 1. We do not assert marks, as procuring causes of an Interest in the Covenant, we do not preach, be diligent, and clear an Interest in the Covenant; only we say, be diligent, and clear an Interest procured by Jesus; Marks are not the stones of which the Wall is built, but they are excellent Mortar, to make the stones stick together; the Wall grows little by the mortar, but the stones stick together by it; the clearing of an Interest, and of what Christ hath done with our case agree well, when suitable Marks are brought. 2ly. We do not assert Marks from Sanctification and Diligence, to wrong the Spirits concurring; the *Antinomians* follow us, they say, Marks are prejudicial to the Spirits working; we confess, our Marks are all written in small Print, and we have but dark eyes, and if the Sun be not up, it's ill to read them; we deny not, but many Christians are in the dark about their Interest, and cannot affirm, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, under desertion; the person that would read his Marks under a cloud, is like a man that would read his Charter, when he hath neither Day-Light, nor Candle-light. But not to insist on the Doctrine of Assurance, against *Papists* and *Arminians*, I would come to the thing, that I left at in the forenoon; I was proving, that the Assurance that *David* asserts, that *the Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, is a thing attainable; and I gave you several grounds of it, and I would add this, that it's not so difficult to be attained, as many apprehend, I confess it is difficult, but not so difficult.

I would offer you for clearing this, that even an Assurance, that would exclude several Fears and Jealousies, is not so difficult to be attained, by offering these three or four things to be considered. 1. There is nothing in our former Life, that can prove or evince, that God hath not made a Covenant with us; many a time Believers stick at this, I

was a persecutor, and a blasphemer, says Paul, but I obtained mercy, that in me he might shew a pattern to them that should come after me, 1 Tim. 1. 13. 16. Thy former Life will not prove, that God hath not made a Covenant with thee, he made a Covenant with Paul, and he had as much to say against him, as against thee. 2ly. The present mixture of Corruption with thy Grace will not prove, that God hath not made a Covenant with thee; yea, it may be thou hast made a Covenant with him, and doubts that he made it with thee, Why? Since thou made the Covenant with him, thou went to him and wrot it down, and spread it before him, thou lift up thy hands, and hast broken it; that will not prove, that he hath not made a Covenant with thee; David had begun very early, the man that wrot this verse in the Bible, when he went out against Goliath, he went out in the Name of the Lord his God, his elder Brother was angry with him, and Saul called him a Scourling, his Father Jesse had employed him, to follow the ewes, the Lord takes him from following the ewes, and makes a Covenant with him, and when he is a dying, he hath it to say with assurance, *The Lord hath made a Covenant with me, an everlasting Covenant*: So that will not prove, that he hath not made a Covenant with thee, that since thou made it with him, thou hast failed. These two belog laid aside, they make the assurance the less difficult. 3ly. Very ordinarily, this clearing of our assurance in the Covenant comes, when there is diligence; ordinarily when we are diligent, the Spirit comes and lights his Candle, and lets us see our assurance; there are a number that complain, they are not assured, and cleared of their Interest, and all their Religion lyes in doubting; ye may justly suspect them, that they are sloathful and sluggards, they are not diligent, they go not often to duty; were they diligent, they would not want the Spirit's concurrence: readily if we want assurance, we have quenched the Spirit's motions, or grieved the Spirit; were we but more diligent, we would have more Light; all the marks in the world will never clear an Hypocrite, nor give him assurance, nor will all the condescending marks that God hath made, clear the sluggard. So, if we were but a little more

more diligent, we would be more assured; and we would be the better able to say, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*; for the Spirit uses not to be wanting with Illumination to them, for whom he gives Assistance for practical duties. 4ly. That it is not so difficult, will appear from this Truth; that often the people of God ly in the way of their own assurance, they hinder their own clearing, that God hath made a Covenant with them.

I will offer you four wayes, how frequently, when clearing an assurance, about our Interest in the Covenant, might be had, that we use to hinder it. 1. Several times we hinder it, by disputing the Question at a wrong time, we are never so ready to disput our Interest, as under desertion, there are some times when our Spirits will be carried, as a Ship under sail, and all the design of the Soul will then be to do, but at another time all the design of the Soul will be, to doubt and disput our interest; and we are never more ready to do this, than under desertion; now, what a foolish thing is it, to go and debate with a man, that is roving under a Fever, and we are never deserted, but we are roving, assisting Influences are so necessary then, to go and disput, to take the time when one is in the dark, and their Candle put out, and then coming to read their Evidence, as I said before, our marks are written in small print, and we have but little Light, and if the Candle be put out, then to go, and disput our case, whether God hath made a Covenant with us, in the wrong time; yet readily, we are never more ready to do it, than at that time. 2ly. Sometime, Believers hinder their own assurance, that God hath made a Covenant with them, not only by chusing the wrong time, but when they take wrong marks, they take not the right Rule; several times we go exceedingly wrong in our marks, the generality of prophane and natural men, they take the marks that the Pharisee did, *I thank God, I am not like this man, I am not a drunkard, nor an extortioner*; and these are their marks; many a time Believers, they take the contrair way, they take too high marks, O! say they, some could say, *God hath made a Covenant with me, I can delight in him, I can meditate on him, I can be satisfied with him as with Marrow and with Fatness*; But they have the

complaint, that the elder Brother of the Prodigal had, *thou never gave me a kid to make merry with*; I can never count on the day, wherein the Calf was killed to me, and that I was cloathed with the best Rob, and shoes put on my feet, and a Ring on my finger; therefore they conclude, he hath not made an everlasting Covenant with them, by taking too high marks; thou mayst impede thy assurance, I believe it indeed, which the greatest Divines affirm the reason, why so many at death have peace, that readily want it all their lifetime, as ye will find few of the godly, but they will go to the Grave in peace; one reason is, at that pass and strait, they are driven to take the lowest marks, they can say, *All my desire is before him, and my groaning is not hid from him*; they will take at that pass the lowest marks, for there they must either do or die, they are content to do, as *Benhadad's* servants did with *Ahab*, *is he alive, he is my brother*, they got that word, *my brother*, they take hold of the least word that makes for them; at that pass we are driven to take in our light at a score, though it come not in at the window, therefore they have more peace at death, than they had in their life time, now when we go to take too high marks, it's a great impediment in the way of assurance. But I add 3^{ly}, to let you see, that many a time Believers ly in the way of their own assurance, and hinder it, several times there is an Inclination in the Soul, rather to intertain the challenges of the Spirit, than the comforts of the Spirit, especially after our effectual calling; the common comforts of the Spirit, will be intertain'd in a natural state, far more easily than the challenges of the Spirit. If ye ask what is the reason of this; that after effectual calling, guiltiness hath another smell, then before effectual calling? The reason is, a Believer finds the scent of his guiltiness so strong, after effectual calling, that the challenges of the Spirit are far more promptly intertain'd, than the comforts of the Spirit; the Spirit will sometime knock at the door, *Open to me, my dove, my undefiled*; but if he come with a knock, and say, *thou hast procured all these things, thou hast destroyed thyself, look back to thy way in the valley*, how will that easily be intertain'd, after effectual calling? Now on these

these accounts, the taking too high marks, and reading marks under a cloud, and being so prone, rather to intertain the challenges of the Spirit, than the comforts of the Spirit, makes, that a Believer lyes in the way of his own assurance, and cannot come up to say, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant*; not because thou wants allowance and ground to do it, but because thou disputes in the dark, and takes too high marks. To close all, I will clear one question, which readily many of you will ask, and it's the third thing I propos'd, in the Doctrinal part of this Doctrine.

Quest: What is the way and method, by which Christians come up, and can be able to say, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant*, how brings the Spirit them to this?

Ans. That I may make way to the practical part of this Doctrine, I will offer four steps, by which the Spirit uses to bring the Elect, to affirm it as confidently, as *David* sets it down a part of the Bible, and when he was a dying; it was no time then to dissemble, *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*: How doth the Spirit bring the Elect to this ground of assurance, to be able to affirm, that God hath made the Covenant with them? I confess, it's a great privilege, and they have a great Charter, that can say, it's their Privilege, *they have the promises of this life; and that which is to come*, they have no less in one Article, in one line of the Bible, *He shall make them ruler over all that he hath*; a little time will try this, to be no fancy, but it's surer than the Covenant with the Sun and the Moon, how brings the Spirit them up to this assurance? 1. Ordinarily before he brings them up to be assured, that the Lord hath made with me a Covenant, he takes down the natural assurance, like one that hath to build upon an old Foundation, and he finds it rotten, and thinks it best to take it down to the bottom, before he build a new Foundation; so that readily, in the beginning of the Spirit's working, a person can give no account of the Spirit's working, neither what he hath done to the old Foundation, nor the new; ask you your case, you can readily give no account, ye dare not build on the old Foundation, and ye dare

dare not say, ye have a new Work; this is very frequently, in the way of the Spirit bringing the Soul to, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*; they dare neither build on the old ground, nor dare they say, they have a new ground, this hath ordinarily a tendency to the clearing of an Interest, wherever ye find a person like *Rebecca*, having Twins struggling within her, they know not what to say, they are so confused, the Spirit hath taken away the old ground, and for any thing that is known, the Spirit hath not laid the new Foundation; That case looks like to be the beginning, to come to that day in the week, that thou wilt say, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*; That is the first Part, whereby the Spirit leads, to the clearing an Interest in a personal Covenant. 2ly. Where the Spirit is leading, to the clearing an Interest in a personal Covenant with God, ordinarily the Spirit prompts to Duty, and assists all diligence; we are not to expect it with raptures of Joy, and Consolation, and delight in God, many a time like the *Syrian leper*, that was sent to the King of Israel, *I thought he would have come out, and called on his God, and laid his hand on the place*. We think, except we get such elevation of peace & joy in prayer, we can never have peace; no, we must not limit the Lord, if he take that way, it's well; but the ordinary way is, he will help at prayer, and excite to delight in him; at another time he withdraws himself, and makes the Deserion thy burden; the complaint of his absence, may be as sweet a mark as his presence; the heart that will complain of his Absence, may prove an Interest, as well as his Presence. Now when he hath pull'd down the old rotten Wall, and not possibly brought the new above ground, but he assists in Prayer, in believing, in Repentance, in Mortification of lusts, then he is about to bring thee to say, the Lord hath made with me a Covenant. It's near the break of the day, it's not far from the dawning; he that hath helped thee to Diligence, is not far from bringing thy Consolation; even tho it seem to be the darkest time of the night; yet if the Spirit be helping at Duty, and taking a list of thy Case, the day is near the breaking with thee. But Thirdly, the Spirit guides to this assurance, by giving true Marks, that

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God hath made a Covenant with him. And here I shall inquire, what are the sure Marks, by which one may try, if God hath made the Covenant particular with them; I have made the Covenant with him, and have Vowed and Promised, and Subscribed with my hand, and have lifted up my hand, but how shall I know, if he hath made a Covenant with me? The business is not so difficult to know, if thou be diligent, and be not an Hypocrite, and playing the Cheat in thy Religion, but conforming thy heart to this Gospel, and wrestling with all the Non-conformities of thy heart; I have searched the judgment of many, how to come to reciprocal Marks, how to know if he hath made a Covenant with us: *Antinomians* have disput the Question so exactly, and Objected so strongly, about our wanting these Marks, that they put Divines to so many Restrictions and Limitations, that it's difficult, to give a reciprocal Mark, on which a Christian may rest, if he hath made a Covenant with him. I will offer you three things, on which I lay the greatest weight my self. 1. That Mark that Mr. Baxter hath often come over, a habitual preferring of Christ's Interests to the interests of the Flesh, that is indeed a great Mark, that God hath made a Covenant with thee, when Christ's Interests are habitually preferred to all the Interests of the flesh.

To clear this Mark, ye would notice three things, 1. When God enters in a Covenant with a person, they take up Sin as an Enemy, they hate it as an Enemy, they have entered in a League with the contrary Party, they take up Sin, especially presumptuous sin as an Enemy, and accordingly they deal with it; they hate it, they eschew the company that may bring Temptations to it, for they have entered in a League with it's greatest Enemy, even with Christ, shortly after Paul is a Convert, he is at, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of Death?* he was angry at the very Being of sin, and could not suffer the smell of it; what ever the Sin be, not only presumptuous and gross Sins, and neglects of Duty, if thou has entered in a Covenant with God, thou has broken the Covenant with death and hell, and if thou has no wisdom look-

looking to that Alas, thou has great ground to say, the Lord has made a Covenant with me, they take up sin as an Enemy, and deal with it so. 2ly, In reference to this, the Soul goes unitedly against it as an Enemy, the understanding is at, I should leave such a Sin, the Conscience is at, I will leave such a sin, the will and affections are at, Depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity, for I have kept the Commandments of my God; they turn it out of doors, if there be a taking it up as an Enemy, and dealing with it so, and the Understanding, Will, Conscience, and Affections uniting against it as an Enemy, thou may be sure to say, the Lord hath made with me a Covenant; the Bargaine must be driven by both Parties; but if thou be grown secure, and neglects Duty, and goes out against sin as a friend, and has not taken it up as a Enemy, and dealt with it so, thou may say, I have made a Covenant with the Lord, but thou cannot say, the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant.

Secondly, These that have made a personal Covenant with him, and he with them, they have a second Mark, they follow the design of the Covenant, which is Holiness, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of the Lord.* Now, he that hath entered in Covenant with God, and would have a sure Mark from his Holiness, should look to these two, 1. He is to look to the holiness of his Heart and Conversation; if he say, I am holy in my Desires, and holy in my Delights, I have a holy Joy, and a holy Peace, and has not a holy Walk, and looks not like a savorie Christian in his Conversation, that Person cannot readily say, the Lord hath made with me a Covenant: he may have made a Covenant with God, but he cannot say, God hath made a Covenant with me. Besides 2ly, Not only must Holiness be in the Conversation and in the Heart, but he is careful to prefer the Design of the Covenant, to all other things; if the Lord should give thee the Offer that he gave to Solomon at Gibeon, *Ask of me,* sayes he, *Riches, or Honour,* and many things he named, and I will give it to thee, he preferred Wisdom to them all

all: So he that is in Covenant with God, would prefer Holiness to any thing that God could offer. It's remarkable, Psal. 119. 3. *Thy testimonies have I chosen, as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart.* Mark how he came by that, *I have chosen,* what choosed he? *I have chosen thy Testimonies,* that is a general word, It's no, I have chosen thy promises, but I have chosen thy Testimonies, taking in the Commands. Mark, 3ly, For what he choosed them, *I have chosen thy Testimonies for my heritage;* Mark, 4ly. The reason why he choosed them, *I have chosen thy Testimonies, for they are the rejoycing of my heart,* importing, what ever I meet with, I get no true joy from it, therefore *I have chosen thy testimonies, for my heritage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart;* I can get nothing that rejoyces my heart, but altogetherly thy Testimonies, therefore I have chosen them; that is the second Mark, whereby ye may try, if God hath made the Covenant with you, if ye have come to take up sin as an Enemy, and deal with it so, and if ye have taken Holiness, not only in Heart and Conversation, but ye have chosen it as your Heritage, because it rejoyces the heart.

Thirdly, ye may know if he hath made this Covenant with you, by his accomplishment of the Covenant to you; if He hath begun to fulfil the Covenant, he hath certainly made the Covenant with you; Experience is a notable ratification of the Promise; O but it is a sweet proof of the truth of the Promise, he that believeth hath a witness within him, that Christ is the Son of God; he hath the Spirit within him, and none can send the Spirit, but the Son of God: Take a View of the Promises, and sort them, that ye may go to such a Promise, when ye are under Challenges, under Deadness and Desertion, and mark them; it's a dreadful thing when all the Bible is alike to us, and when we have not some passages of the Bible, that we may say of them, these are my Scriptures. Now if he hath been pleased to accomplish the Promise, thou may say, he hath made with me a Covenant. It will fall in afterward, when I speak of the several passages in this Verse, by what Rules we shall try, if the things that we meet with in our Spirit, be the accomplishment of the promise; Observe your case, and compare it with the promise, many have no skill

to do this, they take the promises in Groſſe, they obſerve not abſolute and conditional Promiſes, they compare not their Caſe with the Promiſe, therefore none is ſo confident to ſay, God hath made with me a Covenant. I ſay to you, go home, and ſay to your hearts, the word that *Ahab* ſaid to *Micajah*, *How often ſhall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but the truth*: Go and charge your Heart and Conſcience with, ſee thou tell me nothing but the Truth; If theſe Marks do not agree to thee, whatever thou ſay of making a Covenant with God, thou may go home after all theſe Sermons, and ſay, I have made a Covenant with God, but I deſy thee to ſay, God hath made a Covenant with me.

SERMON. XXIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

When firſt I entered on this verſe, I propoſed four things to be conſidered, Firſt, the Nature of *David's* ſecurity, it's a Covenant. 2ly, The Partes Tranſacting in this Covenant, the Lord and me, of theſe two, I have ſpoken all the things that I judge neceſſary to be ſpoken, in a multitude of Sermons: The other two Branches of the verſe, which are the moſt natural, remain to be handled; the Firſt whereof are, the Properties of this Covenant, there are Three of them mentioned in the verſe, it's everlaſting, it's ordered in all things, and ſure. Where, by the way in the general, ye would notice two things, Firſt, That theſe Three Properties are marks of diſtinction

ſtinction, betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; It was neither Everlaſting, nor ordered in all things, in any way ſuitable to mans Salvation, nor was it ſure; ſo that from theſe Three Properties, we can prove that the Covenant God made with *David*, it was a covenant of Grace, and not the old Covenant of Works. 2ly. Ye would notice, that ſuch as would have peace from the Covenant, they muſt ſtudy and be acquaint with the Properties of it, it's no ſufficient ground for *David* at death to ſay, *the Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, unleſs it be an everlaſting Covenant, and well ordered, and ſure; theſe who are ignorant of the Properties of the Covenant, can never have the Sweetneſs and Conſolation, that the Covenant affords. Therefore without further, I will begin and handle this day, the firſt Property that is here mentioned; of this Covenant, it's an everlaſting Covenant; it's true, the main thing I deſign is, to handle the order of the bleſſings of the Covenant, and here, before I can come at that, I am to handle, there are two textual doubts, neceſſary to be cleared. 1. How is the Covenant ſaid to be Everlaſting? 2ly. Whether this be a peculiar Property of the Covenant of Grace, not belonging to the Covenant of Works?

Queſt. Firſt, In what ſenſe the Covenant of Grace is ſaid to be Everlaſting?

Anſw. For opening this, take notice, that a thing is ſaid to be everlaſting in a Two-fold Senſe. 1. That is ſaid to be everlaſting, that is never to end, though it had a beginning; So ye find it, *Pſal. 24. Lift up your heads, ye everlaſting doors*, that is meant of the Heart and Soul of man, which though it had a beginning, yet it's to endure for ever; ſo everlaſting, and a proper Eternity, are not one thing, it will take two Everlaſtings, to make one Eternity, from everlaſting to everlaſting thou art God, mark there an Eternity takes two Everlaſtings. 2ly. A thing is ſaid to be Everlaſting, when it hath a proper Eternity; So *Iſaiab 9. 6. Chriſt is called wonderful, counſeller, the mighty God, the everlaſting father, the prince of peace*; now, Everlaſting is to be taken in the ſecond ſenſe, it's an eternal Covenant, not only is it never to end, and is everlaſting, but it's from everlaſting; how.

however It was transacted in time with man, yet it was Transacted with Christ from all Eternity, and it's as ancient as the Covenant of Redemption; so ye see in what sense, it's called an Everlasting Covenant, that is an eternal Covenant, from Eternity to Eternity.

Quest. 2. Whether is this a peculiar privilege of the Covenant of Grace, that it's everlasting? The reason of this difficulty is. 1. The Covenant of Works is older in Time, for It was made with man in a state of Integrity. 2ly. The Covenant of Works, is first in the order of nature, for the Covenant of Grace being made with lapsed man, it supposes the Covenant of Works to be broken. 3ly. It's supposed by many great Schollars, that if Adam had not broken the Covenant of Works, he had been everlastingly in Paradise, and would have continued in pleasure without death, so the Covenant of Works in the nature of It, was an Everlasting Covenant, and consequently, this is no peculiar privilege of the Covenant of Grace.

Ans. For Answer to the Question, however the Covenant of Works, was treated with Man in time, and though It be in the order of nature, prior to the Covenant of Grace, yet in the Counsel of God, the Covenant of Grace is before the Covenant of Works; the reason of it is, that which famous Doctor Twisse layes, as a Principle; that a Rational Agent intends first the end, and then the middles; as a man going to War, intends first the end, and then the middles; the Covenant of Grace being the great end, in making the Covenant of Works, that by It he might make way for the end, the Covenant of Grace; the Covenant of Grace is first in his purpose, in regard it's the great end of the Covenant of Works, and he intended the end before the middles. 2ly. Whatever the Covenant of Works should have been, is a Question of which the Scripture is silent, yet the Covenant of Works, if Adam had not broken It, would have been everlasting, but being broken, it's laid aside; so that It's far from being everlasting, in regard of duration, that It's supposed, that man stood but few hours, and It was broken, and he was lyable to the Penalty; so the Covenant of Grace is not only everlasting, but the only Everlasting Covenant. So

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having cleared, that this Covenant is Everlasting, I will take only this Note, and handle it this day.

Doctrine, That the Covenant with Believers is an everlasting Covenant; so ye find It frequently called in Scripture, *Isaiah 55. 3.* Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. So *Ezekiel 16. 60.* Nevertheless, I will remember my Covenant with thee, in the dayes of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting Covenant. It is frequently called an Everlasting Covenant in Scripture; I shall not need to insist to prove, so well a known Truth, but to make way to the Doctrinal Part, I would Doctrinally inquire into two things.

First, In what respects the Covenant of Grace is an everlasting Covenant. 2ly. I would inquire into the Grounds, why the Lord in his making a Covenant, would not have It a Tack, for a lease of Years, but an absolute Gift, and an everlasting one.

Quest. First, In what respects it is an everlasting Covenant?

Answer, For clearing of this, I desire ye may notice these two generals. 1. It's an Everlasting Covenant in regard of Duration, it's from Eternity to Eternity; it's remarkable, *Psal. 103. 17.* The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him; It is as ancient as God, and will endure as long as God, for all his decrees, and purposes are everlasting, and eternal, and an eternity hath no beginning nor end; this Covenant was treated with the Mediator from all eternity, and will endure with him to all eternity. But 2ly. take notice of this in the general, that when God transacted the Covenant with man, he intended not to set him a Tack or Lease, with reserves, but he intended to make an absolute Irrevocable Gift; therefore it's exprest in the new Testament, not by way of Tack, having a number of Clauses in It, but by way of Testament it's the gift of a Testator, ratified by his death, and none can revoke his will, no, he cannot revoke it himself; So that in effect, It's not a Tack or a Lease made of Pardon, or peace, or a heaven, in the Covenant, with many reserves, but it's

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an absolute Gift, like the Gift in the Testament, that cannot be revoked by any, no by him that made it.

Which will appear, if ye notice three things. 1. Take notice, that when God transacted the Covenant himself, and his Son, he in a manner, bound up his own hands, from ever revoking the Gifts, contained in the Covenant; if once he give them, then he cannot revoke them, *Psal. 89. If his children forsake my Law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail, my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips; Mark there, he binds up his own hands, he hath made the Gift so absolute, that though he be provoked, he will not break; It's no like a Tack, made betwixt a Lands-lord, and a Tennant, that if the Lands-lord be forefaulted, the Tack will fall; he hath past from all these Articles and Clauses, and bound up his own hands, that if my children offend, I will correct them with the rod of men, but my Covenant I will not break. 2ly. I deny not, but there are conditions in the Covenant, but the man that gets the Gift, cannot fall in the condition, the Covenant cannot fall on that score, why? as the conditions required, so it is also promised; God hath not left it to the freedom of mans will; to repent or not to repent, to believe or not to believe, but he hath secured it in the Covenant, as a Master setting a Tack to a Tennant, should bind him to such a farm, and in the mean time, obliged himself to give him as much as to pay him; If there be a fall there, it must be on God's part, and not on theirs. 3ly. For securing the condition, take notice, that there are in the Covenant Clauses of Pardon, nay, not only so, but on supposition, that a Believer should fall in the condition, his falling makes not the Covenant to be altered, the Covenant remains firm; no change in the Elect, can alter the Covenant; indeed, a change in God would do it, which were impossible, but though we believe not, yet he abides faithful; and here comes the Covenant to be secured, to be everlasting, that there are pro-*

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misses of the condition, and there is more, there is pardon of failings in the condition; the case is, as in a marriage Covenant, every falling louses not the marriage, it may have an influence on an Interruption, on the marriage fellowship, but not on the marriage knot; the case is so in this Covenant, it's almost impossible for a believer, to fall in the condition, except God fall in his promise, which is altogether impossible; and though there were a fall in the condition, yet it breaks not the Covenant, it stands firm, notwithstanding of their unbelief, this is no Antinomian Doctrine, but it's solid and well grounded on protestant principles against Papists and Arminians.

Having premised these two Generals, I will offer four things, that will evidence the Covenant, to be everlasting.

First, It's everlasting, in regard of the Foundation, and ground on which it stands, there are three principle grounds, on which the Covenant stands. 1. It's founded on the decree of God's Election, his eternal purpose of glorifying the Elect, whom he hath chosen; so that it is collateral with the election, and there can never be a change in that, except he alter his decree first, and then the Covenant; if once he take a person in Covenant, before he cast him out of the Covenant again, he must of an Elect make him a Reprobat. 2ly. The Covenant is founded on his love, *with an everlasting love have I loved thee, therefore with loving kindness will I draw thee.* 3ly. The Covenant of Grace is founded upon the Covenant of Redemption, the Father hath transacted with the Son from all eternity, and that cannot be altered then, and far less now, after the Son hath performed all his part of the Transaction, what he had engaged to in the Covenant of Redemption, it could never be altered, and far less now after the death and Passion of Christ, and consequently, the Covenant of Grace and Redemption, must stand and fall together; so it cannot chuse but be an everlasting Covenant. 4ly. It's an everlasting Covenant, in regard it's one and the same, without the least change in all ages, from the beginning to the end, there is not one Article of it at all altered, since the day it was published, in Paradise to Adam, nor will be altered, till the last man that will be born in the World; there

there is nothing more reeling, than the case of a Believer; sometimes they are left under Challenges for guiltiness, sometimes they are abhorring themselves in dust and ashes, sometimes they have peace, and sometimes they have terror; there is nothing more reeling, than Providences are; God is sometimes smiling, sometimes correcting, but in the midst of all these reelings, the Covenant remains the same; there is not the least jot or syllable of it, that comes to be altered; as it was published in *Adams* days, when he published it in the *Garden*, it's continued untill now, and will continue untill the last man that shall be born upon the Earth; and whatever reelings be in Providence, the Covenant is always the same; even as it is with the Sun, since the day it was made, it is still the same, there hath been many Winter and Summer days, many shoures and blinks, yet the Sun hath not losed one hour of its Course, in its rising and setting, that it did at the beginning; nor is it an hair breadth diminished of its light, for all the light he hath given, nor is he weary with running his course, but he comes forth in the morning as a Bridegroom, and as a strong man that rejoices to run a race: So the Covenant, amidst all the Providences, and diversities of changes, it's still the same, and will be so, untill the last man that shall be born upon the earth. 3ly. It's called everlasting, in regard all the fundamental privileges of the Covenant, are everlasting; effectual calling, being once gotten, it remains; the gifts and calling of God are without repentance; there is the pardon of sin in the Covenant, and that once being had, can never again be called in question, *Jer. 31. 34. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more; I will blot out their iniquities for my names sake; Mark there, I will blot out their iniquities, and if once they be blotted out, I will remember them no more; if I once pardon debt, I will not again remember it; therefore he is said, to cast our iniquities in the bottom of the sea, and I will cast them behind my back, and I will bury their sins; Importing as much, as if once one get pardon of sin, it's everlasting, and it's that which he will never revoke, nor keep up a quarrel for the sin he hath pardoned. Nay more, the Covenant becomes everlasting,*

that it remains even in death, the Covenant remains with our dust in the Grave; it's very remarkable, when Christ tells his Disciples of *Lazarus* death, he tells them, *our friend Lazarus sleeps*, he says not, he that was our friend, but he that is our friend; the Covenant remains with our dust in the Grave; all the ties among men, they are loosed by death, the woman is freed from the Law of her husband, and they remain no longer Husband and Wife, the Relation betwixt Husband and Wife, betwixt Parents and Children, and kinsmen, they are all made for time, and time lays them in the Grave; it is not so in this everlasting Covenant, it remains even in death, and never parts with us, untill it possess us in an everlasting Crown. So all the fundamental privileges are everlasting, it's everlasting union, it's everlasting pardon, and everlasting peace, and the Covenant is never fulfilled, untill it possess us in a Crown. 4ly. It's everlasting, in regard the parties Covenanting are everlasting, not only hath this holden true, considering the principal Parties, the Father and Christ, but even Believers and their Seed, they are both everlasting, and every particular member that is taken in Covenant, is an everlasting party in this Covenant; it may be, some of them, thirty years, or thirty two years, will open their Grave, and they must ly down in it, but even there, they cease not to be parties in the Covenant: it's remarkable, *Matth. 22. I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; from which he proves the Resurrection, the meaning of that place is, *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* are living, or else the Covenant could not be everlasting, *Abraham* is living in regard of his Soul, his Body is living in regard of the Resurrection at the great day, for the Covenant is made with his Dust; however it were hard to find his Dust, yet he is considered as a living Party in the Covenant, yea, even his Flesh is an everlasting Party in the Covenant, although it be dispersed into dust, and the fowls and wild beasts carry it away, yet says *Job, with these eyes, and no other for me, shall I see God*. This proves the Party to be everlasting, every Believer is an everlasting Party in the Covenant; so that taking either the Grounds, on which the Covenant stands,

the Decree of Election, and Love, and the Covenant of Redemption; or considering the constantness of the Covenant, amidst all the changes of Providence, and the case of Believers, like the Sun, that is the same Winter and Summer, or considering the fundamental Privileges of the Covenant, all of which are everlasting, it's everlasting Election on which it's founded, and everlasting Calling, everlasting Pardon, and an everlasting Heaven; but the Parties are also everlasting, not only in regard of their Head, but *Abraham* is a Party in the Covenant, and God is his God, which is the Sum of the Covenant after *Abraham's* dust can scarce be found in the Grave.

I will speak a word to the second thing that I proposed, the grounds why the Lord would have this Covenant, to be an everlasting Covenant. (1.) In the contrivement and drawing up of the Covenant of Grace, the Lord designs the exaltation of his Grace, and that was to the praise of the glory of his grace, as the Apostle words it in the *Ephesians*; now if there be never so great things promised, he hath promised, *I will take away the heart of stone, and give you an heart of flesh*; but had the case been the next day, that he had said, *I will take away the heart of flesh, and give you an heart of stone*, what would that have signified for the exalting of his grace? had he been one day giving an heart of flesh, and another day taken it away, wherein would his grace have been exalted by sinners, unless it had been by, *I will give you an heart of flesh, and I will never take away your effectual calling*? Had there been no more to debase grace, but the changeableness of it, it had been enough; therefore God would have his Covenant everlasting, and herein he would have a distinction betwixt the Covenant that was made of Grace, and that which stood on the free will of man; the principal ground on which the Covenant of Works stood, was Free Will, and in that state he had Free Grace, yet it depended on his Will, but herein is Grace exalted, in that he cannot alter his Covenant, no, therein lyes the exaltation of Grace, and the difference betwixt the Covenant standing on the free Will of man, though perfect, and the Covenant founded on Grace and Christ, that

that the one is everlasting, and the other endured but for a few hours; so that it is to the praise and glory of his grace, and the exalting it above all his other Attributes, that he hath made this Covenant an everlasting Covenant; it's not that he is payed for it on these terms, it's not from merit, nor purchase, that he hath fulfilled this Covenant, but merely to the praise of the glory of his grace in Christ Jesus, that the Covenant is made so everlasting, that though God (to speak with reverence) and man incline to alter it, they cannot alter it. (2ly.) The Lord made it thus everlasting, that believers might have strong consolation; it's remarkable, the allowance of joy in the Covenant, it's full joy, *These things have I spoken unto you, that your joy may be full*; they are bidden *rejoyce evermore, and rejoyce always*, and no wonder we be bidden rejoyce, when there is full joy allowed in the Covenant; nay, there is not only consolation, but strong consolation, *Heb. 6. 18. God hath confirmed it by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, that they might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to the hope set before us*; and the truth is, it's a principle of *Armianians*, they tell, a Believer may have grace to day, and they may have the Devil to morrow, they may be effectually called to day, and a Child of the Devil to morrow; it houghs all consolation, if they were in never so sweet a temper to day, they cannot tell but they may be a Child of the Devil to morrow, and what peace and comfort would there be, if the Covenant were not everlasting? So when we have searched all the grounds, why God would have this Covenant everlasting, they are summed up in this, in exalting the Grace of his Son, and affording strong consolation to them that have taken themselves to the Covenant: So ye see the Covenant is everlasting, not by way of Tack, for so many years, but it is an absolute Gift, and the Father hath not only, not put in reserves into it, but he hath absolutely bound up his hand, and confirmed it by two immutable things; wherein it is impossible for him to alter, which is his Oath, and the blood of his Son; so that now, it stands on such terms, as (to speak with reverence of the Majesty of God) it's impossible for him to alter it.

SERMON XXIV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

IT is a sweet Observation, that some have made on that Word, *Everlasting*, as it's applyed to the Covenant, taking everlasting for a proper Eternity; it's a peculiar Attribute of God, agreeable neither to Angels nor Men, and yet God hath given this Attribute to the Covenant, it's an eternal Covenant; God puts in a Letter of his own Name in *Abraham's* Name, He puts in the Letter *Jehovah*, he was first called *Abram*, and then puts in this Letter, and calls him *Abraham*, He puts in a Letter of his own Name *Elohi*, in *Jacob's* name, he was first called *Jacob*, and then he calls him *Israel*; but in the Covenant, He puts in one of his own essential Attributes, and that is *Eternal*; and this could neither be said of Angels, nor of *Abraham*, nor *Jacob*, it could be said of none of them, that they were *Eternal*, but the Covenant is an eternal Covenant, it's from everlasting to everlasting, and this hath a considerable weight into it. I followed in what respects, the Covenant was everlasting, and why God would have it everlasting, He intended to exalt his Grace, and give strong Consolation to his Elect. I will now follow the practical improvement of it, in two Uses, and in clearing of three Questions, which I conceive, will abridge the things necessary, in this property of the Covenant, that it is everlasting.

Use. 1, First, Is it an everlasting Covenant, it serves for instruction, in these six or seven particulars. 1. Then there

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Is a great Mystery in the Covenant, of all things that Divines and Philosophers write of, it's the most difficult thing, to take up Eternity, they write many things about Eternity, that they cannot explain, as when they write of the nature of it, they say, that it is *totum simul & perfecta possessio*, they say it's a duration, and *altogether a duration*, and we cannot conceive of that; they say, it's without beginning, and we cannot comprehend a thing, that is without beginning, let our Imaginations run back millions of millions, we cannot comprehend it; when one falls upon the thoughts of Eternity, he is like a man wading a deep water, he that is farthest in, is soonest over the head, and herein Scholars are drowned, the reason is, a finite thing cannot comprehend an Infinite, more nor a Cockle-shell can comprehend the Sea; so, that which is *Eternal*, is a mystery, and the Covenant is *Eternal*, and consequently is a mystery; it's an eternal Covenant, it began in Eternity, and will continue unto Eternity; so then it's a great deep, take not only the Truths of it, God and Man in one Person, a Virgin, and yet bearing a Son, and many such things; or take the practice of it: I many times have pickled Ranters, but I have not thought it strange, that they take the greatest Mysteries of the Covenant, for fancies; a Believer may try, where natural mens Diabolick Conjectures lyes, for the Covenant is a great Mystery, *God manifested in the flesh*, and no wonder, all natural men stand and demur, and at length rant, and resolve to hazard on the things that are seen, and cast at the Covenant, for it's a great Mystery. 2ly. If the Covenant be everlasting and eternal, it informs us, who was the Author and Contriver of it, and of whom we hold all the priviledges of it; it was very remarkable, when the Disciples asked Christ, If they should pay Tribute to *Cesar*? says Christ, *shew me a penny, whose image and superscription is this*, says he? They say, *Cesars*, give unto *Cesar* the things that be *Cesars*, and to *Christ* the things that be *Christ's*: So that Eternity is no part of our Image, any thing the property whereof is eternal, hath no part of our Image or superscription, for we are but of yesterday, and we know not what will be to morrow; and any thing that is eternal, we have no influence on it; and

and if the Covenant be properly Eternal, as evident it is, then all the Glory of contriving, and Ordering, and the pureness of it, we have no Influence on them, for we are but Thieves. If either we steal or reset any thing that is eternal, we came but yesterday out of our mothers womb, and to morrow we must return to the Dust, and be laid in the Grave. 3ly. It informs us, if the Covenant be Eternal and Everlasting, that as we were not the Authors of it, so we were not the procurers of it, for it was before we had a being, it was when we were nothing, and there is none of us will question, but in Eternity we were nothing, and when we were nothing, what could we contribute, or merit, or purchase from God? For all the tenor of the Covenant, if it be everlasting, speaks out love in God, and Grace in God, but it cannot speak out any thing in us, except we could procure something, when we were nothing; now we are to be informed of it, if it be everlasting, it's a Mystery, it hath not our Image and Superscription, we were not the Authors of it, and we did nothing to procure it, unless we should suppose, that we could merit, when we were nothing. 4ly. If the Covenant be everlasting, it informs of the great Obligation, that we have to the Mediator of the Covenant; the truth is, we might have had a quarrel with him, he acting in our room, though he had drawn it in never so excellent terms, if he had not made it sicker, we would have thought him like a Work-man, that set the nail in a right place, but did not roove it, and make it sicker, excellently is the Covenant drawn, but if he had forgotten to roove the nail, and make it sicker, that if we repent, we shall be pardoned; if we believe, we should be saved? These are easie terms, but if it were so drawn, that we were in a state of Grace the day, and out of it to morrow, we should be pardoned the day, and might be damned to morrow, we might have had some quarrel against him, that stood in our room, that the Covenant, though it were free and gracious, yet it were not sicker and rooved; but so excellently was it rooved and ordered, that among the rest of the properties of it, it's everlasting. There is a very great obligation to the Mediator, that when he had modelled, and ordered the

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Covenant, with the greatest freedom and fulness of Grace, he moved the nail, and made the Covenant, on these terms everlasting; when he had obtained of his Father, all the terms of the Covenant, he would have in that in it, that it's everlasting, and that these Terms should never be altered again. 5ly. It informs us, on what grounds the perseverance of the Saints stands; we say, it's not our skill to guide Grace, we say not that it's from the nature of Grace, but we build it especially upon the perpetuity of the Covenant, the Covenant is an everlasting Covenant, the Mediator hath so ordered this Covenant, that if once we be in Covenant, we can never be out of it; and he hath roved the nail so, that Satan can never draw it, with all his Hammers, and Instruments that he can bring, thereon stands the perseverance of the Saints; that is the thing that can never fall them, if once they be married, they are ever married, and if once they be in Covenant, they are alwayes in Covenant, for it's an everlasting Covenant; But add 6ly. If the Covenant be thus everlasting, see from it, the difference betwixt the mercies of the Covenant of Grace, and the mercies of the Covenant of nature; I confels there are some things in the Covenant of nature, that they may say of them, that there is such a Covenant properly, the Ordinances of the Sun and Moon, the rain falling on the just and the unjust, the shining of the Sun and Moon persevere; but these natural things, how changeable are they? we have health to day, and may be sick to morrow, there are few, but in a little ye will, scarcely know their faces to be what they were: there is a moth in their body, and a thief in their strength, many time our humours are like our beauties, we lose the things we love; we find our Relations dissolve, the friends we had are dead, the enemies we had, and the things of time, like a wheel, are constantly reeling and turning about; and there is nothing, but a few moneths produces another face, than it had: but it's not so with these mercies of David in the Covenant, they are everlasting, it's not so with our Election, our effectual calling, our union with Christ; it's not so with any fundamental priviledge of the Covenant; ye that are constantly complaining, and finding the reelings of the

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World, learn like a Child, that, is wean'd from the Pape, it's not that the Mother intends to hunger the Child, but that she would have it feeding on stronger meat, the reason why so many are complaining of the bitterness of the things of time, and the changes of them, their health, their strength, and their friends, are not what they were; It's not that ye should want them, but we would have you seek them in the Covenant, and the sure mercies of *David*; there is a considerable difference betwixt them, and the things of Time, for who ever builds on the things of Time, they are drawing their waters out of the Gutters, and not out of the Spring, but these are founded on an everlasting Covenant. 7/17. If the Covenant be everlasting, then it informs us of the Wildom and Skill of the guide of them, that make choice of the Covenant; there is hardly Wisdom in the choice of other things, they will not last, variable and changeable Humors,, and variable and changeable Things, that every day fade; they are no *Fanatics*, that take them to the Covenant, the mercies of the Covenant are great mercies; for though they were small, yet they are everlasting, and better long little, than soon nothing; and there is nothing in Time everlasting, but like a Waster; they soon spend and waste, thy heart, thy sense, thy flesh, will fall thee, thy Reason will turn to Melancholy; and thy young Ones will look on thee, as one that hath scarce the exercise of Reason; all these things will reel to and fro in the World, and we must expect, that it will be so, but this everlasting Covenant, is as the Sun, it will arise at its appointed hours, and go to at them, and there will be no stop of its Course, it's no *Fanaticism*, to go on the surest Grounds, that ever men followed, that take them to this Covenant, and resolve to hang both their ill and their good on it; that is the first use of the Point.

Use 2. The second Use of the Point, is this Covenant an everlasting Covenant, then, Christian, labour to improve it as an everlasting Covenant; make use of this Property of the Covenant, that it is everlasting. And here I will offer you five Cases, that truly take in the most part of the exercise of Believers, all of which come to have some Answer, in this Property of the Covenant, that it's everlasting. 1.

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It comes to be an ordinar Case, and the Improvement of the everlastingness of the Covenant, it is a good Answer to it, I say, It comes to be an ordinar Case, I am guilty, I cannot feed on the Covenant, for I know the thing of my self, that no other knows; this Property of the Covenant, takes away this challenge, if God had made this Covenant so, as he made the Covenant of Works, *in the day thou eats, thou shalt surely die*, this Covenant is broken, but the Mediator contrived it to be everlasting, which would never have been everlasting, if ay when we were guilty, the Covenant should be altered; no, under all the challenges that thou has, if ever thou was in Covenant, and hath the Marks that were given the last Sabbath Day, of God's making the Covenant with thee, there thou must continue in the Covenant, or thou must scrape out of the Covenant, everlasting Covenant; no, this Property of the Covenant, when I come to the last verse, and there shew you, how you shal answer your Challenges, ye will hear that guiltiness does not cast out of the Covenant, for if that were, it were not everlasting. 2/17. There is a second Case, wherein it is to be improved, and it is very frequent, I am a poor crossed body, and scarce have Bread, and either I am not in the Covenant, or he hath broken it. But I say also, that this is answered in this, that it's everlasting; I like a word of master *Dicksons*, he sayes, it's ordinar for persons that treat with God in the Covenant, they conform the Covenant to their Case, but they will not conform their Case to the Covenant; suppose there should be never so many Crosses in thy Case, yet thou art to rule thy case by the Covenant, and not to bring the Covenant to thy Case; it's ordinar for thee, to tell thy neighbour, either I am not in Covenant with him, or else it's broken betwixt God and me, but suppose thou should go to thy bed supperless, and the next morrow have a greater Cross, and knows not what to get to thy Breakfast, thou art to bring thy case to the Covenant, but bring not the Covenant to thy case. *Abraham* when he is to offer up *Isaac* on mount *Moriah*, in a burnt Sacrifice, no body that would have met him, but they would have said, God hath broken the Covenant with him, *In thy seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed;*

bleſſed; Abraham knew well, that out of the aſhes of *Iſaac*, God would fulfill his Promiſe, he reduces the aſhes of *Iſaac* to the Covenant, reduce ay thy caſe to the Covenant, but bring not the Covenant to thy Caſe. 3/y. There may be another great Improvement of it, and it's this, I am frequently challenged and deſerted, it's not poverty and ſickneſs that I complain of, but of challenges and deſertions, and I am undoubtedly out of Covenant, it is not everlaſting to me, for I am challenged and deſerted. The Husband may go from home, and bide long away, and come home angry, but that looſes not the marriage ty, the marriage union remains; neither does his abſence, nor his quarrels, prove the marriage to be looſed, the Covenant, the marriage Oath remains firm; it's a ſore matter, that when we come under any exerciſe, we can never underſtand where we are, untill our exerciſe comes to fundamental doubtings; it's a ſweet complaint, my Husband is long away, and he is come home, but without a challenge to me, but it's a ſore matter to come home wth, he hath declared himſelf not to be my Husband, and he hath put me out of Doors, and he will give me no allurements, but he calls me a whore. So that under all theſe variety of diſpenſations, this property of the everlaſtingneſs of the Covenant, may be well improved; I am guilty, if thou take that, as putting thee out of the Covenant, thou may put out that word, everlaſting Covenant out of the Bible; ſome are croſſed and deſerted, but the perpetuity and everlaſtingneſs of the Covenant, runs like the Sun, and keeps its courſe in a direct line, in Winter as well as in Summer. 4/y. Some are troubled with this, what ever my caſe be, I think I will not perſevere; but thou art miſtaken, thou knows not the tenor of the Covenant, it's everlaſting, all thy experiences, and all the elevations of Spirit thou haſt had, and all the things thou haſt had, that thou thinkeſt looks like blinks with Jeſus; there is no wadding, but thou may be an Adulterer, or an Idolater, but the Covenant ſecures all, it's true, the fundamental priviledges ſecures thee as to them, but it ſecures thee not from very groſs ſins, but that which ſecures all, is founded on the decrees of God, and the Covenant of Redemption, it's impoſſible for him to lie

lie, and to be unfaithful, and to deny himſelf, therefore the Covenant ſtands firm, if thou be at, I know not what to do, if Tryal or Popery come, I will deny him; but if thou be in Covenant, the Covenant is everlaſting, and not only the Devil and his Angels, cannot caſt thee out of Covenant, but to ſpeak it with reverence, God hath made it Everlaſting and unalterable for Himſelf. 5/y. There is a fifth Difficulty that many ly under, ſome may ſay, I am near Death, I find my ſelf hanging over the Grave, I find theſe Legs, and this Back, and this Head, things that will not long ſubſiſt, I muſt go to the place, where there is no mention of the Covenant, no ſpeaking of his loving kindneſs: But thou art miſtaken, it's not like the Covenant betwixt Husband and Wife, if the one of them die, they may take another; the caſe is not ſo, if the worms ſhould deſtroy this body, and the birds ſhould flie away with a bit of thy Body, that is left above the Ground, the Covenant is wth that bit, it's the Fathers pleaſure, that I ſhould loſe nothing, that I ſhould not loſe a nail of a Toe, for the Covenant remains wth thy duſt, for it is an Everlaſting Covenant; I think our ignorance of the Covenant, is the great ground of the moſt part of our trouble, if we underſtood it, and the properties of it, we might have a more hopeful, and cheerful life in our walking wth Jeſus, than we have; I would here clear two or three Queſtions, and but name them. 1. Readily, ſome may ſay, this day is very ſweet to hear, that Chriſt hath rooved the nail ſo, as it cannot be drawn again, if once we be in Covenant, we will never be out of it again, and the Father hath bound up his own hands at it were, that it's impoſſible for him to do otherwiſe, therefore ſome may object.

Queſtion 1. Can this Covenant be Everlaſting, for of all the changeable providences that ever we ſaw, perſons that are in Covenant meets wth, they are croſſed, challenged, deſerted, and rejoycing one day, and in the duſt the next day, ye will ſcarcely find them in one Frame?

Answer. I like the Obſervation well, that a certain Divine hath, on the eighty ninth *Pſalm*, *If his Children forſake my Law, then I will viſit their ſins with rods, but my loving-kindneſs*

kindness will I not utterly take from him, my Covenant will I not break; I have sworn that I will not lie unto David, his seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me, it shall be established as the Moon for ever; why are these two put in, the Sun and the Moon: ye shall never observe a change of the Sun, it's ay allke great, but the Moon Astronomers write of it, will have fourteen or fyfteen several Forms in one moneth, it hath every night almost a new Form, and they give names to every several Form; but the meaning is this, it's as much as the Covenant that I sware to David, shall be as unchangeable a thing as the Sun, and yet shall be as changeable as the Moon, that returns ay when it's full Moon. It shall be changeable and unchangeable; these that come in Covenant with him, may say, as to all Fundamental Priviledges, it is as the Sun, and as to the things built on these Foundations, it's as the Moon, as to the variety of Cases, it will be as the Moon, that will have twelve several Forms, in one Moneth, and yet be unchangeable as the Sun; and ye must not conclude, that ye are not in Covenant, and that it's no everlasting, your peace, joy, liberty in duties, and Covenant clearing, may be as the Moon, and your Covenant Case may be as the Sun. 2ly. All the changes that falls out in thy Lot in time, that are like the Moon, they at length terminat in these Fundamental Priviledges; it's remarkable, that for all the changes that the Moon hath, once in a Moneth it's full Moon, it's true, it will not bide long at that; they that are in Covenant, all their changes, they at length terminat in their Fundamental Priviledges, which is a remarkable thing, their peace, their joy, is not Fundamental, yet it shal be as the Moon, all the Alterations in the Covenant, they at length Terminat in the Foundation.

Question, Secondly, It may be Objected against this everlastingness of the Covenant, Is not this a Doctrine, tending to security and prophanity, to say, one is in Covenant, and never out of it, doth not this lay a Cod to Security, do we not sing folks a sleep, that readlly comes to produce old experiences, and are now taken and carried away with Scotlands backslidings, and to tell them; It's an everlasting Covenant, and it's impossible to alter, layes not this a Cod to Security?

Ans.

Answer, I will close all this comfortable Truth, by telling you these three things. 1. The Secure and Prophane, it's almost, and more nor suspiclous, they are not in Covenant; If one be Secure and Prophane, they may do as I have some times told you in preaching, like a man coming by an Apple-tree, and he claughts a Branch of the Apple-tree, and layes it up in his Coffer, and thinks that he will have Apples of it, but it wants the Root, and it will neither have Leaves nor Apples; some say, that they have gotten a Promise, I am afraid, that they have but a riven Branch from the Root; if ye be fallen Secure, Prophane, and negligent, and yet are telling your neighbours, I have gotten a Promise long since, ye have gotten a Branch, and that ye have claught off the Root, and it's without the Root, and will neither bear flourishes nor Apples. 2. This Doctrine tends not to security, nor prophanity, in regard all that are in this Everlasting Covenant, they receive influences, that keeps them from security and prophanity; I will not say, but they may have their Winters, David had it for a year, it was a year after he went into Bathsheba, and murdered Uriah, before the Prophet comes to him: The Spouse is made to sing, *The winter is over and past, the Summer is come, the time of the springing of herbs is come;* the Spring must come, if thou be in Covenant with him, therefore it opens no door for Security or Prophanity, for they that are in Covenant with him, it's impossible for them to continue in Security, *I will put my year in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.* 3ly. This Doctrine hath no tendency to Security, for ordinarily, these that are in Covenant, if they will not be awakened by the Word, the Lord will awaken them by the Rod; I have told you, that Christ hath three Posts, he sends after Believers, there is His Word, and His Rod, and if none of these two will prevall, He will send His Spirit, and that will prevail; they that are in Covenant, cannot get leave to live in Security and Prophanity, if the Word will not waken them, the Rod shall do it, and if neither of these two do it, the Spirit shall do it; so, if any shall say, I am secure, and am living in Security, thou may go and dash thy head

head against a stone, but this Covenant is Everlasting, and it cannot be altered, we shall be judged by it, in the day of our appearing.

SERMON XXV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

IN the right uptaking of the Covenant, we must not only search into the Nature of it, but into the Properties of it, three whereof are expressed in this verse, it's everlasting, it's ordered in all things, and it's sure. The first of these I spoke to the last day, that it was Everlasting, and have shewed you many things about it Doctrinally and Practically.

I come to the second Property, *Ordered in all things*, this though ye do not at first see through it, yet ye may see it afterward; having a great deal of Marrow into it, and it's a very Material Property of the Covenant; the Word in the Hebrew *Ve balma*, Montanus renders it, *dispositum in omnibus*. Junius renders it, *ordinatum in omnibus*; the Septuagint, or the seventy Interpreters, translate it by a Word, borrowed from a General Marshal in an Army, putting all his Forces in a military Order; it's well ordered, as a well marshelled Army, wherein every one is in their proper posture; and so is the Covenant ordered, the meaning is, every thing in the Covenant, is fitly disposed, or appointed, or ordered. And for clearing of it, ye must take notice, that the Intention of the Spirit of God, in speaking by David that it's fitly ordered, is not only to shew, that there is an excellent

cellent method, and sorting of all the Parts of the Covenant, but that it is excellently sorted and ordered, in order to the great end, for which the Covenant was made, to advance the Glory of God, and the salvation of the Elect, which are the two great ends, for which it's made, and herein it differs from the Covenant of Works, for though it's not denied, but it be well ordered, and fitted, yet it neither contributes so much, nor was it so conducive, to exalt God, and bring the Elect to Glory, as the Covenant of Grace is; which I might let you see in many particulars, it was well ordered in a way suitable to that dispensation, but not in all things, in a way tending to exalt God, and the salvation of the Elect, as the Covenant of Grace is; to be brief, this is a very special property of the Covenant of Grace, and a distinguishing one, from the Covenant of Works, that it's ordered in all things, not abstractly, but in order, and in reference to the end, which is to exalt God, and to promote the salvation of the Elect. So this property of the Covenant is considerable, as it's an everlasting Covenant, so it's Marshelled, and Ordered, and disposed as an Army, in an excellent posture for a Victory. This being the meaning of it, I will take two Observations, and follow them in several following Sermons; the first of them I will but name; but shall God willing dwell on the second.

The first is this, That such as would have Consolation from the Covenant, must observe the order & method, and disposal of the contents of the Covenant. 2^d. I will take this, that the Covenant is excellently and singularly ordered, in all things relating to the exalting of the Father, and the Mediator, and the salvation of the Elect.

Doctrine First, Such as would have peace, as David had at his death from the Covenant, are to consider the order of the Covenant; so doth David here, when he is rejoycing, among his last acts, from the Covenant that God had made with him; he considered it as a Covenant ordered in all things, these that take not up the right order of the Covenant, and the method of it, can never have sweetness, nor peace, nor consolation from the Covenant.

For confirming and clearing this to you, I desire ye may

take notice of these three things. 1. God who is the God of Order, and not of confusion, (for so the Scripture calls Him) he is very exact in observing of Order; Observe him in natural things, in the work of Creation, what an excellent Order he kept, first to make Light, then to make other things, and then bring in Man when all things were Ordered for him; there is an excellent Order in His providences, the ordinance of the Sun and Moon, and all the Stars have an Order, by a Decree appointed them; It's true, there will appear confusion in his Providences, but they are but like the black and white threads in a web, or like the discordant strings of an Instrument of Musick, they all move to make the Instrument play, or like the wheels of a clock, though some of them move against other, yet they all tend to make the clock tick, when the hour comes; so all his Providences tend to the end He hath decreed; he hath appointed Order in his Church, *Let all things be done decently, and in Order*; they that are for confusion, are not for God, for God is the God of Order, and not of Confusion; it's true, *Papists and Prelats* would build on this, a multitude of humane inventions; but Order is best kept in the Church when it's according to the Scriptures, God is the God of Order, and Party among Church Officers hath no tendency to Confusion; for Christ would never have established a Party among his Apostles, if he had thought it confusion: to be brief, God is the God of Order, and both in the government of the World, and of the Church, he hath appointed an Order, and hath said, *Mark them that walk disorderly*; and they who are overturners of Scriptural Order, they become enemies to the God of Order, who hath not appointed his Church, to be like a Babel, or a mass of confusion, but He hath appointed Order, and all things to be done decently in it. 2ly. Take notice of this, that especially he hath appointed an order in the Covenant; to make no Order in the Covenant, and observe none, is to make Christ the Minister of Sin; take for instance, there are some Promises in the Covenant, *I will blot out your iniquities, though they were as scarlet, I will make them white as wool, they shall be forgotten, and shall be no more remembered; and I will*

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cast them behind my back, and such like; now, if one should take these Promises, and not observe the order of the Covenant, they make Christ the Minister of Sin; there cannot be a greater affront put upon him, than to think that he hath done any thing to encourage Sin, no honest man will take it well, to say to him, thou art an encourager of the wicked; take some Promises of the Covenant, and let him go to them, and say, I have gotten a Promise, but they observe not the Order of the Covenant; *Shall we sin, that grace may abound, sayes Paul? God forbid.* Now he that will take a Promise of pardon, and feed on it, and rely on it, and not observe the Order of the Covenant, he makes Christ the Minister of Sin, and Grace the occasion and encourager of it. 3ly. There can be no true peace, except ye observe the Order of the Covenant, in regard the Spirit, who is the Author of peace, makes it according to the method of the Covenant, it's true, Satan and our own Hearts, will influence a kind of peace, but ordinarily they violate the order of the Covenant, their peace comes not in according to the method of the Covenant; when the Spirit gives peace, he is the Spirit of Promise; when he comes and comforts, *He shall take of mine, sayeth he, and shew it you*, that is, he shall take of my Peace, and my Righteousness, and give it to you; the Spirit in influencing Peace, keeps the order of the Covenant; where ever there is peace, and the order of the Covenant not kept, it is suspected to be either a Peace of our own making, or a peace that the strong man that keeps the house gives; for when the strong man keeps the house, all is at peace; therefore, there can be no true Peace from the Spirit, except we observe the Order of the Covenant, which the Spirit of Promise keeps. So this is an unquestionable Truth, Christ would be the Minister of Sin, and Grace would be the occasion of Sin, and there would be no true Peace, and God would not be the God of Order, but of confusion, except we observe the Order of the Covenant.

Use 1. I would apply this a little, for two Uses, and so go forward, The first Use is, To reprove them that lay claim to peace from the Covenant, but observe not the Or-

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der of the Covenant; I have gotten a Promise, that he will blot out my iniquity, and what needs me to fear; but that Peace is not from the Spirit, when it comes not in, according to the Order of the Covenant; take a single Promise, and no more in the Covenant, and thou shalt make God the God of confusion, and not of Order, and Christ the Minister of Sin, and the Spirit to speak peace, not according to the Order of the Covenant, who ever they be, that will build on a particular Promise, and not observe the order of the Covenant, can have no sure Peace from it, who are they then, that will plead the Covenant, and not observe the Order of the Covenant.

I will evidence this to you in five or six particulars. 1. When one pleads a promise in the Covenant, and hath no good, nor well grounded interest in the Covenant, that is against the order of the Covenant; the Covenant must first be ours, and then we may plead the Promises of it; we come to plead the Farm of a Field that is not ours, and that we have not payed for, when we plead the Promises in the Covenant, and hath no interest in the Mediator of the Covenant, we plead the Junctur, when we have not married the man; before we can have a right to the Apple, we must have a right to the Apple-tree. I will be thy God, before I give thee peace, or give thee pardon. This is the great substance and marrow of the Covenant, they that cannot say, that God is their God, and yet will take a Promise of Pardon, and of peace, they overturn the order of the Covenant; readily many come and plead the Promises, and God may meet them with, *what hast thou to do; to take my Covenant in thy mouth?* is the Covenant thine? Is the Mediator thine? thou but breaks thy neighbours Orchard, to go and take a Promise, and not in the order of the Covenant; thou but steals it, and runs away with it, like a man that will break his neighbours Orchard, and take away the Apples that grows on his neighbours Tree; the Mediator is not thine, the Tree where the Apples grow is not thine, thou may take promises, but thou overturns the Order of the Covenant, If thou take a Promise, and not marry the Promise-maker. 2/y. They overturn the Order of the Covenant,

nant, who plead the promises of the Covenant, but they forget the Commands of it; the Covenant is made up of Promises and Commands, the Commands are indeed fewer, they are indeed not so exactly prest, as in the Covenant of Works; now he that will plead a Promise, and go to it as his own, and tell his neighbour, I have gotten a promise, and in the mean time flights the Command, he overturns the Order of the Covenant; if ever peace come in by a promise, it must come in by a way suiting the Order of the Covenant. 3/y. They overturn the order of the Covenant, that plead the conditional Promises of the Covenant, and have never prest the absolute Promises; the conditional promises, are promises of peace, and joy, and pardon, and communion with God indeed; but as ye shall hear, the absolute Promises, *I will take away the heart of stone, and give thee a heart of flesh,* must be accomplished before the promise of Pardon; the Lord hath promised pardon, but he hath promised it only to the penitent; he that prays for pardon, and hath not repented, he tempts God, and God must overturn the Order of the Covenant, if he give pardon before Repentance; the absolute Promises must be fulfilled before the conditional: and he that will say, I have gotten peace, and pardon, or fellowship and communion with God, and yet hath never been effectually called, never knew what Faith and Repentance was, or the taking away a heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh was; what ever Promises he talk of, he hath overturned the Order of the Covenant, the first and absolute Promises, must be fulfilled before the conditional: So who ever sayes, give me peace, pardon, and communion the day in the Church, and yet hath never had the accomplishment of the absolute Promises, he tempts God to overturn the order of the Covenant. 4/y. They overturn the order of the Covenant, that would plead some promises of the Covenant, and neglect others; the Order of the Covenant is, to whom one Promise is fulfilled, all promises, tho not in the same degree, are also to be fulfilled; there are several will plead, Lord, forgive me my sin, give me pardon,

but the promises of Sanctification, the promises of Influences for Holiness, in the Life and Conversation, the Promises of cleansing, they plead not these: They that go ordinarily to Christ for Justification, and forget Him for Wisdom and Sanctification, they indeed seek the Promises, but they would have him overturn the Order of the Covenant, and the Lord is peremptory, in keeping the Order of the Covenant, and he will not break it; for if he brake it, he would overturn the whole contrivance of Grace; which we do when we plead the Promises and forget the Commands. 5ly. They overturn the Order of the Covenant, who, tho they mind the duties of the Covenant, yet they mind not all the commanded Duties in the Covenant; there is some Idol they would spare, that readily the Covenant binds him most against; it's true, when we enter in a personal Covenant with God, we bind against every Corruption, but especially our Idols; yet it's strange, that the thing that we incline especially to spare, is that which we are most bound to wrestle against, if it be Pride, Carnality, Earthly-mindedness, Sensuality, Lasciviousness, that which in a personal Covenant we are most bound to wrestle against, is the thing we are most prone to spare, and he that does so, overturns the Order of the Covenant; the thing that thou does, when thou art entered in a personal Covenant with God, if thou spare thy Idols, if God spare thee, he will overturn the Order of the Covenant. 6ly, and lastly, they overturn the Order of the Covenant, who would have in the beginning, and when they lay the foundation of a Work, the thing that God hath promised them, at the putting on of the Capstone; I have known several precious to God, that have concluded a work of Effectual calling not to be real, Why? say they, I have not that Peace, and that Joy in believing, that I ought to have; but thou may believe twenrie years, before thou have joy in believing; There is Peace in believing, but not in the first laying of the Foundation of the Work, nor is there Joy in believing ay when we would be at it; no, we overturn the Order of the Covenant, if we do this; and the truth is, as ye shall hear, the great reason why we have so little Sweetness from the Covenant,

nant, we observe not the Order and Method of the Covenant we might have a great deal of Sweetness, from the Promises that we want, and we might draw out of these Breasts of Consolation, refreshing Milk, if we knew the Order of the Covenant.

Use 2. I will close this Observation, with saying three things about it. 1. I exhort thee to get an Interest to the Covenant, and then to plead it; Marry the Man, and then plead the Contract, I prophetic to you all, that are not effectually called, and all that are not united to Christ in the Covenant, all that I have said, or that I am to say from the Covenant, or all that ye can plead from it, shall never be to your Advantage; there are great and precious Promises in the Covenant, *I will blot out your iniquities, and remember them no more, I will cast them behind my back, and cast them in the bottom of the Sea*; none of them all are to you, if ye have not married the Man. 2. Consider, if ye would follow the Covenant orderly, consider seriously, what a ridiculous thing it were, if a Sinner should go to that Promise, *tho your Iniquities were red like crimson, I will make them like wool, tho they were as scarlet, I will make them white as snow*: If ye should not observe the Order of the Covenant, and not observe what is Required before ye get that Sin pardoned; might not all Whoremongers, and Adulterers, and Murderers, and Blasphemers, and Sabbath-breakers, come and say, O here is a Promise, I will blot out your Iniquities, and will remember them no more, and I sprinkle clean water upon you, If they should not observe the Order of the Covenant; and by the way, take good heed, how ye bring in a Promise, if ye keep not the Order of the Promise, ye have no right to the Promise: Antinomians tell us, we may preach to Sinners rickling in sin, and bid them believe, immediately after the act of committing the Sin, and tell them, *tho your Iniquities were as Scarlet, they shall be white as Snow*, they observe not the Order of the Covenant. 3. I would have you in Order to this, that ye may observe the Order of the Covenant, know, how the Covenant is ordered, what is the Order and Method, in wher; God hath casten the Covenant:

nant: Since we can never get Benefit from the Covenant, except we observe the Order of it; if we plead one Promise, and forget as necessary an one, if we plead Pardon, and have not Repented, if we plead Peace, and are not effectually called; It's true, there are Promises of Peace and Pardon, but they are not pleaded according to the Order of the Covenant, and this leads me to the second Observation.

Doct. That in order to the glory of God, and the Peace and Salvation of Believers, God hath appointed an Order in the Covenant to be observed, and we must observe it. He hath appointed an Order, and an excellent Method in it, for it proceeds from the God of Order, and it's treated by the Mediator of the Covenant, the right Order of the Covenant is one of the sweetest Encouragements that Believers have; And I will let you see, that of all the Ingredients in the Covenant affording consolation, the Order of the Covenant is one of the sweetest.

To break then in upon it, there are two things I must premise, and shall only name, to make way to the rest. 1. Take notice, that a Covenant may be said to be Ordered two ways, 1. When all the parts of it are rightly Disposed and Ordered. 2. When all the parts of it, are rightly Ordered and Disposed, with a reference to the end; the first is called an Abstract Order, the second a Relative Order; in handling this Order of the Covenant, I will first consider the Order of it Abstractly, and let you see, that all the Promises are rightly Ordered; secondly, that all the Commands are rightly Ordered. 2. I will consider it with a reference to the End; There are two great Ends in the Covenant, the exalting of Christ, and the bringing the Elect to glory, and here I will let you see, that both the Promises and Commands, are excellently Ordered, in reference to Christ's Honour, and Believers peace and their Heaven. 2. I intend to let you see, of what Importance it is, for a Christian in his way to Glory, to observe the Order of the Covenant; for it's a deep contrivance of Grace, there cannot be a greater Delusion for a person to say, I have gotten Peace & Pardon, and I have the promise

mise of Peace nor Pardon, hath come in according to the Order of the Covenant, if it hath come in not according to this Order, it's but a Peace that Satan or thy own Heart hath given thee.

S E R M O N X X V I.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

AMong other Meditations that David had, when he was a dying, concerning the Covenant, he remembered the Order of it; had it been a Covenant, that had not been everlasting and sure, or had he sed on it, without observing the Order of it, it would not have afforded Peace; but among other things, he put in this, *Ordered in all things and sure*, the Lord hath made a Covenant with me, ordered in all things and sure. I proposed two Observations from this, First, that such as would have peace and sweetness from the Covenant, they must observe the Order of it, take a single part of the Covenant, without its Harmony and Order, it might have been a cord to Security, but it could not afford peace. I entered upon the second Observation, that God had appointed an Excellent Order in the Covenant, I will not Criticise on the various descriptions of Order, what it is, we have many Disputes with the Patrons of Ceremonies, that say, we have no Order, about the Definition of Order; some define it, To be a convenient placing of means and middles, that relate unto an end, one after another; but I will not insist in inquiring

quiring into the Nature of it, I proposed to inquire, First, into the absolute Order of the Covenant; secondly, into the relative Order; the Order of it, in reference to the two great Ends, to exalting of Christ, and the saving of the Elect. In the absolute Order, I proposed 1. To speak of the Order of the promises, and then of the Order of the Commands. 1, To the Order of the Promises. a truth very necessary to be observed, by all those who have the Promises, for their Charter, and that have all their Hope founded in them, many have written long Discourses of the Order of the Promises, which now I will not dwell on. I shall reduce all that I shall say, that is necessary for you to observe in your Practice, in reference to the Order of the Promises, to these three heads, 1. I would have you consider the Order of the matter of the Promise. 2. The Order observed in the timing of this matter. 3. The Order observed in the Dispensing of the Promise; the Spirit of God hath appointed an excellent Order in the Promises, in reference to all these three, and Christians would observe this Order.

- First, there is an Order observed in the matter of the Promises. 1. There are some Promises absolute, and some conditional, God hath made some Promises, if we were never so wicked, if never so drowned in nature, if never so carnal and sold under sin; yet the Promises takes us in, there are other promises he hath made, that we must be Gracious, Believers, Mourners, before we can hope for the accomplishment of them; it could not be expected in reason. I will take away the heart of stone, providing he have it not; but he could say, I will give you a heart of flesh, if ye have it not: So there are some promises Absolute, and some Conditional, they but tempt God, if they go to him with a Conditional promise, and want the Condition; but they may go to him with an absolute Promise, a Truth very necessary to be observed, we may go to him in prayer for pardon, for peace and communion, and press him with his promises peremptorily, while in the mean time, he might overturn the Order of his Covenant, if he grant it; that he cannot do, for the Covenant is the result of his eternal De-

Decree, and it's ordered by Christ, and is infinitely for our advantage, and for thee and me, to overturn that Order, were great presumption; we may go to him and say, Lord, give me Repentance, give me Faith, and take away the heart of stone, for they are absolutely promised; but we cannot go to him for peace, pardon and communion, and glory, so peremptorily, except we have the condition: So the order is necessary to be observed, some are absolute, and we may absolutely plead them, and some are Conditional, and may only be pleaded when we have the condition, which is necessary to be observed; when some complains, Lord, I have no peace, no joy, and comes away wailing it, no thou art a fool, thou has not gotten pardon, and how can thou have peace and joy. 2. Another thing to be observed in the matter of it, there are some things he hath promised presently, and some things are only promised for the future; there are several things promised for the present, *I will take away the heart of stone, and will be as the dew for influences of holiness*, but the perfection of holiness, is only promised for the future. So if we go to God and press him with perfect Mortification, perfect Love, perfect Holiness, that is in the Covenant, but it's not promised now, but it is to be expected afterward; so if we observe the method of the Covenant, we must observe, what is to be given now, and what is to be given in Heaven; for the one, we must exercise Faith, and for the other we must exercise Hope. So if you shall go and press him with the promise of perfect delight, perfect peace, perfect joy, if he give thee the hope of it, he answers thy prayer, for the promises of the Covenant bears, the one to be perfected now, and the other to be perfected hereafter. (3.) In the matter of the promise observe, there are some things promised absolutely, and there are some things promised, but there is a reserve in Gods heart; as for example, there is Adoption, Effectual Calling, Sanctification, if thou be a Believer, there is pardon and a Heaven; there are also temporal things promised, such as health, deliverance in trouble; now in the matter of the Promise, God is a Supreme Lord, he hath reserved a latitude to himself, that he will either give

give health or sickness, he will either give deliverance, or not give deliverance, what signifies the Promise then? Yes, very much, for he doth not prove untrue to his promise, even in temporal things, but better than his promise, if a man should promise to his neighbour an hundred weight of Lead, if he give him an hundred weight of Gold, ye would not say, that that man had broken his promise, but was better than his promise; if he give a sanctified improvement of the promise, the promise is not broken, but the Promise-maker is better than his promise; So we may go to him, and peremptorily say, Lord, take away this ill heart, and if he take it away, we may say, Lord, give me pardon, give me peace, joy, and assurance; but we cannot say, Lord, give me health and prosperity; the reason is, in the order of the Covenant, there is a liberty of exchange left to the Lord in temporal things, that he may give the thing, or a better thing; but he hath not left a liberty of exchange in spiritual and eternal things: for to speak with reverence, he would not be true to his promise then; if one would come and say, Lord, give me peace, if he answer not, but give him health, he would not be so good as his promise. (4.) In the order of the matter of the promise, take notice, there are some things promised, that God hath promised in the Covenant, but he hath not promised to give with these things, the discovery of them; he may give the thing, and he may hide it when it is given; he may be true to his promise, and accomplish the thing promised, and yet the person be like the man that sought his Hat, when it was on his head; it is one thing, to give the thing promised, and another thing to give the discovery of it; there may be some saying, *faits* his word evermore? hath he forgotten to be gracious? but our eyes may be darkned, and we cannot see the accomplishment of the promise; some may say, O! he hath not made out his promise to me, for I have not that peace, that joy, that assurance, these influences, that he promised; but thou may have these, and the promises may be accomplished, and thou not see them. So in the order of the promises, in reference to the matter of them, we are to take notice of all these four. (5/y.) Take notice, that the promises

in the matter of them, are so ordered, that like workmen about one work, one of them works to another's hand, one promise makes way for the accomplishment of another; as for example, the promise of Influences, *I will be as dew to Israel, makes way for that promise, and he shall grow as the Lillie, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon*, Hos. 14. 5. Every one of the promises, especially the first promises, makes way for the second; so, if God give repentance, the person may certainly argue, that he will get pardon; if he give faith, he will certainly get communion with Jesus; if he take away the heart of stone, he will sprinkle them with clean water; if he call them, he will certainly justify them; and if he justify them, he will glorify them; for whom he calls, them he justifies, and whom he justifies, them he also glorifies.

But 2/y, Another thing to be remarked, in reference to the order of the promises, and that is, the order of the timing of them; O but he was wise that drew this Covenant, and had excellent skill of ordering all the Articles of it: There are four things remarkable, in the order of the timing of the promises of the Covenant. 1. There are some promises Divines call Legal promises, there are other promises they call Evangelick promises; the Legal promises go before the Evangelick, *Joh. 16. When the Spirit shall come, he convinces first of sin, that is a Legal work, and then he convinces of righteousness, that is an Evangelick work*; this order of the Covenant of promises, relating to a Law-work, they go before the promises, relating to a Gospel-work; in the ordinary way of his working, he kills, that he may make alive, he hath torn, that he may heal, he smites, that he may bind up, *Hos. 6. These who are observing the order of the Covenant, and the promises of it, must expect them in this method, that the Spirit shall first convince of sin, and then of righteousness; some are convinced of righteousness, and they talk of Christ and his righteousness, before they be convinced of sin, but they are overturning the order of the Covenant.* 2/y, There is this remarkable in the order, of the timing of the promises, the promises that relate to a gracious estate, they go before the promises that relate to a gracious

a gracious frame; a person can never come to be in a gracious frame, before he be in a gracious estate, no, that is impossible, a natural man, and one that never had a Law-work, can never come to a gracious frame; an hypocrite may have flashes, and things that may put on the clothes of a gracious frame, but in the order of the Covenant, we must first be in a gracious estate, before we be in a gracious frame; all the Communion-days, and all the rods that a natural man comes under, and all the expressions of love to Christ that he hath, makes not up a spiritual frame; Why? he is not in a spiritual state, and the order of the Covenant must be overturned, if this be. 37. The Lord hath this in the order of the timing of the promises, that there are some promises he will begin early to accomplish to a Christian, and readily will keep them under these promises, the most part of their life; whereas it will not be these promises that he will keep other Christians under; as for example, there are some promises of conviction of challenges, of discovering of Iniquity, he may bring one under these promises, and effectually call them, and all their lifetime keep them under them; whereas many have these promises accomplished, and live but short while under them; the reasons are, in the order of the Covenant, God hath reserved a liberty to himself, the Mediator hath promised to make out all the promises to the Elect, but he hath reserved a liberty, he will keep one feeding on one promise all their life, and will change them to others, the reason is, he reserves a liberty to himself, in dispensing all the promises; so one may be brought in early, and challenged, and effectually called, and all their lifetime may be kept under the drop of Conviction, whereas others hold he may let out with a Pin, and bring thee easily to the promises of consolation; why? In the order of the Covenant, though he hath secured the main to every elect, yet the order of the promise is, that he should have a latitude in it, as Lord, which is not loosed by the obligation of the Covenant. 47. There is this order to be observed, in reference to the timing of them, that the promises of the first graces, which are fundamental and absolutely necessary, they are made out to the Elect, sometime

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at the third hour, sometime at the sixth, and sometime at the ninth, and sometime at the eleventh, it's near twelve then, but he hath reserved this liberty in the order of the Covenant, that though thou be an Elect, and shall have all the fundamental privileges, and all the privileges built on the foundation, yet some may have them at the third hour, some at the sixth, some at the ninth, and some gets them not until the eleventh; so, he hath ordered the Covenant, in reference to the timing of the promises so excellently, that yet he remains a Lord, the Marriage-tye that makes him an Husband, deprives him not of being a Lord, and of timing all the particulars, in reference to believers.

But Thirdly, Consider the Covenant in the manner of dispensing the Promises, and the order is remarkable in this, and here ye would notice these things, (1.) In Gods dispensing the Covenant, there is this order in the Promises of it, that the mercies bestowed, are all first given to Christ, and through him they come to be ours; the Fathers pardon, his Peace, and Communion with him, we come to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, through Christ; the Father has contrived the Covenant so, as they come to us all through Christ, and it is the more excellent order, that the smell of his purchase, and his intercession is on them; some move a Question, What is the reason that Christ should be an Intercessor, and should pray for the thing that he bought, and payed for? They tell, that the Father in the contrivement of the Covenant, he would first have his Justice satisfied, which is satisfied by his purchase: And secondly, he would have his grace glorified, which is by the intercession of a Suppliant, now when any thing comes the Covenant-way to a Believer, through Christ it comes, so as the price is considered that he gave for it, and that's a fruit of Gods Justice; and then the intercession is considered, so that there are in the Covenant Mercies, but it smells of the Fathers Justice, and of his Mercy, and of the Sons Purchase and Intercession; ye never get an Act of Communion, nor an answer in Prayer, but it hath the stamp on it, both of Christs Purchase and Intercession. 27. In the dispensing of the promises of the Covenant,

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venant, there is this order in the manner of dispensing them, that God dispenses them to Believers according to their capacity; readily he doth with them, as with the Corn, or the tender Plants, if he should open the Windows of Heaven, and let out Rain as a deluge, it would drown all the Corn and the tender Plants; but he makes drops fall here and there, and now and then, that the Corn and the tender Plants may spring up and grow; the promises are ordered so, as they are full, but we have no Vessels to contain the Oyl: It's remarkable, there are two great Apostles in the New Testament, *Peter* and *Paul*: *Peter* is brought up to Mount *Tabor*; *Paul* is caught up to the third Heaven; the Lord hath recorded these instances, to see how we would carry, if we had an Heaven upon Earth; *Paul* sees Christ transfigured, and *Moses* and *Elias* with him, and how carries he? *Master* (saith he) let us build here three Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for *Moses*, and one for *Elias*; the Text says, he wist not what he said; *Paul* he is ravished up to the third Heaven, and he knows not whether in the body, or out of the body, he heard things unutterable, and what follows, a messenger of Satan was sent, lest I should be puffed up with abundance of revelation. The order of the Covenant is so contrived, as the blessings of it, they shall not come on like a full deluge, as they did upon *Peter* and *Paul*, that descended on Mount *Hermon*. 3ly. In the matter of dispensing the promises of the Covenant, he hath wisely provided it so, that the Covenant-blessings shall be rather suited to our necessity, than to our appetite; there are two things that the Father considers in the blessings of the Covenant, and they are, our need, and our appetite; as a Physician that hath a Patient in a Fever, but he is roaring; he considers neither what is best for his need, nor for his appetite; had we been at the contrivement of the Covenant, we would have put in nothing but peace, pardon, and prosperity; these are nothing but roarings of Children in a Fever; but he hath put in among the promises, the cross, nay, the correcting with the rods of men; why hath he put in this? Though it agree not to our appetite, yet it agrees to our necessity; sometimes a desertion, and sometimes a prosperous condition, may be wholesome for us; therefore

therefore he hath appointed all the blessings of the Covenant to come through Christ, so he hath ordered them in a way, rather suiting our necessity than our appetite; which is necessary to be observed, when we lay our hands on our loins, and we tell, there is a Covenant of such promises, and I have neither peace nor joy, thou may have the thing that suits thy need, and be refused of the thing that suits thy appetite: so, if ye consider all these, ye shall find the promises are all well ordered, they are much better ordered than we would have carved them out, if we had been at the contriving of them; if we had been trusted with abundance of revelations, we would have been puffed up; if we had been on Mount *Tabor*, we would have roved; so, the Covenant is far better ordered, than if it had consisted of eminent raptures of love, and transcendent ravishings of joy.

Quest. But here is a difficulty, may some say, are there not many contraries in the Covenant, as for example, find we not mercy and justice in it? find we not Christ killed? find we not many Law-works and Evangelick? find we not plentiful promises, and dark providences? and can that be a well ordered Covenant?

Ans. To confirm that the Covenant is well ordered, I would have you notice two or three distinctions, that are most necessary to be observed by a Believer, and to be eyed in this deep of the ordering of the Covenant. 1. Distinguish betwixt the beginning of Christ's accomplishing a promise, and the end of it, ye would not think the beginning a piece of the same Web with the last, ordinarily when he begins to accomplish a promise, ye would think it a threatening, there is hardly any that looks on it, but they would think it like *Abraham's* going to Mount *Moriab* with his Son *Isaac*, with Wood and Fire to offer him up in a Sacrifice, ye would think that he were to accomplish a threatening, but wait until the end, and ye will see it otherways: the Gold-smith before he dress a Watch, he will take it all down, and then dress it; this is very necessary to be distinguished, for often at the beginning of the accomplishment of a promise, we are at, I am undone, and at the end, we are at, I had been undone, if I had wanted it; what ever contrary appear in the

Providence, in dispensing promises, yet it's but the half of his work. stay until the end, and ye shall see the end of the Lord; he began harshly with *Abraham*, and with *David*, and with better than *David*, with *Christ* himself, but it ended in this, he set him down at his own right hand, and bade all the Angels worship him. Any of you that he is accomplishing a promise unto, he is killing, that he may make alive, he is tearing and wounding, that he may heal; he is smiting, that he may bind up; however ye may go, sometimes weeping, bearing your precious seed, yet it will end in rejoicing, bearing your precious sheaves. 2. I would have you distinguish betwixt his dispensing of a promise, and your sense of it; readily your sense may be directly contrary to the nature of the thing; O but Sense is an ill Judge in the matters of Faith; I deny not, but Sense will strengthen and confirm Faith, but when it is strengthened in opposition to Faith, it is a great impediment to Faith: I will not believe, except I see, saith *Thomas*, it was his Sense that was a great impediment to his Faith; so we are to distinguish betwixt the matter of the work of his dispensing, and our sense of the work, like the vulgar people, we will be of one judgment one day, and another judgment another day; one day we will cry, *Crucifie, crucifie him*, and another day cry, *Hosanna, Hosanna*; one day we think, there is nothing more real, and another day we think there is nothing but delusion, and shall we lay weight on this? But learn to distinguish betwixt his dispensing of the promise, and your sense of it. But 2^d. ye would notice this, if ye would see the excellent order, both of making and contriving of the Covenant, that it's a Christians duty, ay to bring the providence to the promise, and not the promise to the providence; we are not to say, O in this dispensation, he is not true to his promise, but we are to bring the providence, & the lot we are under, to the promise; so *Abraham* staggered not at the promise, but judged him faithful that had promised; there is one thing that puts the capstone on the order of the promises, and a lustre on the Covenant, that it is so full of so great and precious promises, in reference to the Church of God; it's true, God hath concealed the time, and the way how he will accomplish

comply these promises; but believe it, and go home and rejoice in the hope of it, that all the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God; Popery, Judaism, and Quakerism, will all fall to the ground; the time will come, when Holiness shall be written on Horses Bells, when Wars and rumours of Wars shall cease, and men shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and the Lamb shall lie down with the Wolf, and not be afraid; and there shall be no more War seen in all the mount of God; ye may say, there is no ground for this; but the Mediator hath ordered the Covenant, and hath put in it, not only the blessings of Peace and pardon, and Repentance, relating to the like of thee and me, but he hath put in it the Order of the promises, relating to his Kingdom, tho there be no appearances of it, but all things against it; yet all that are against it, are but barking against a wall; for shall he cry, and shall it not be heard? shall he speak, and shall it not be done? No, all the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God; therefore, ye that have your heart broken, with something of the desolation of the house of God, ye may see those days afar off, with *Abraham*, and rejoice, and who can tell, but the Confusions of *Europe* this day, be the accomplishment of these Promises? the time is coming, and is hastening, and will be accomplished in due time, and all the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, as the Seas are full of water; and when ye go to him for your pardon, go to him and protest, that ye will not be satisfied, except he will fulfill all his promises to his Church.

SERMON. XXVII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

THe second property of the Covenant of Grace, that it is rightly ordered, I entered on, God who is the God of Order, hath appointed an excellent order in his Covenant; and it's necessary for a Believers consolation, to take notice of it; In handling of it, I proposed to speak to three things, the Order of the promises of the Covenant, the Order of the Commands, the Order of both the Promises and Commands, with reference to an end. I have spoken to the Order of the promises.

I come now in the second place, to speak to the Order of the Commands of the Covenant, and ye will find it of great necessity, for one who would profit by the Covenant; first, observe the Order of it, there is indeed an excellent Order among the duties of the Covenant; I cannot run through them all, that practick Divines have written about, I will reduce what I will say of the Order of the Commands, to four heads. (1.) The Covenant hath ordered Graces and Duties, to be knit together, to make up Obedience to the Covenant; it's not Grace only that fulfills our part of the Covenant, nor is it Duties only, but it is Graces and Duties knit together; we are commanded in the Covenant to pray, but to pray in the Spirit, we are commanded to mourn for Sin, but we are commanded also to believe, and repent; we are commanded to suffer when called to it, but if we give our body to the fire and want charity, it profiteth nothing; the commanding part of the Covenant,

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takes in both Grace and Duties; If a man perform never so many Duties, and want Grace, he fulfills not his part of the Covenant; Obedience and Duties without Grace, are like a Carcase without a Soul, or a Shell without a Kernel; and in effect, they signifie nothing, as to our part of the Covenant; there are some, they think they have the truth of Grace, and are negligent in Duties; there are others, they multiply Duties, but they make no conscience of the Grace, that should accompany the Duties; thou has no kind of order in the Covenant, the Lord hath knit the two together, otherways there is no suitable frame to the Covenant at all. 27. The Covenant, in the preceptive and commanding part of it, the first and principal Grace called for, is Faith; Faith is the special part of the Covenant required on our part, this is his Command, that is the great command in the Covenant of Grace, for it was not commanded in the Covenant of Works, *that ye believe in his Son whom he hath sent*; God hath required many things in the Covenant of Grace, but the great thing he hath laid on and commanded is Believing.

There are three or four things, will evidence the truth of this to you. (1.) Ye shall find the great Inquiry he makes, when he Inquires about a persons Estate is, after their Faith, If ye will but take a view both of his Word and of his Works, ye will find the truth of this; it is evident, that a man desires to know a thing by his inquiring after it; Joseph when his Brethren came down into Egypt he Inquired, Is the old Man of whom ye spake alive? So Joab when he returned from the Battel, David is very Inquisitive, Is the young man Absalom safe? Jacob was much on Joseph's spirit, and Absalom was much on David's; so in the Covenant of Grace, ordinarily ye will find, when he hath ado with any person, he asks; *canst thou believe, dost thou believe*, when he lays on the Cross, it is to try their Faith, 1 Pet. 1. 7. *That the trial of your faith being much more precious than Gold, that perisheth, though it be tryed with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*; If he delay an Answer to prayer, it is to try Faith, as he did with

the woman, he called her a Dog, as if she were not in his Commission, but in the end, he saith, *O woman, great is thy faith.* (27) It will be evident, that this is the main thing in the Covenant, in the Order of it, that we should believe, in regard of the great commendation given to it in the Covenant; it's remarkable *Heb. 11.* When the whole cloud of Witnesses, that covenanted with God, are brought in beginning at *Abel*, and coming down to *Abraham* and *David*, the thing especially commended in them is, *their faith*, no question, they had patience and love, but that which the Scripture cries them most up for is, especially their Faith; this evidences, that faith the greatest thing in the Covenant on our part, not only is it the thing that Christ makes a special inquiry after, but it's the thing of all the Qualifications thou hast, that Christ especially commends. (3) In regard of the honour put upon it in the work of Justification, we are justified by faith alone without the works of the Law, this is a special honour put upon it; it's a question among Scholars, why faith only, and not love, is employed in the work of Justification? they give this as the reason of it, faith is meetest for it; If ye inquire why the Eye sees and not the Hand? Why the Hand works, and not the Eye? The reason is, they are fittest to be Instruments in Seeing and Working; so faith is fittest to be the Instrument of Justification, for it's a receiving Grace, it's called a receiving of Christ in the Scripture. *John 1. 12.* But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name; Now, there is no Grace so fit to be honoured in Justification, where God gives the pardon of sin as a receiving Grace. A second Reason, why Faith is employed in the work of Justification, and not Love, because Faith will not wrong Christ's honour. *Rom. 3. 27.* We are told by the Apostle, *boasting is excluded, by what Law? by the law of works? nay, but by the law of Faith.* v 28. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by Faith, without the deeds of the Law. Faith excludes boasting and gives all the honour to Christ, if Love or Patience were

were employed in the work of Justification, they would plead to more meritorious causes, but Faith is the instrumental cause; so, no wonder Faith be made the principal condition of the Covenant of Grace, in regard it is so fit to receive from Christ, and it will not wrong Christ in his honour, it will plead for merit, in regard it is only to receive what Christ hath bestowed. But 4th. and lastly, Faith it furnishes all other Graces work, every other duty is influenced by Faith, patience, repentance, prayer, and love, are influenced by faith, for faith works by love, every other Grace is actuated by faith, so untill we come to believe, we cannot repent, we cannot suffer, we cannot pray; all these things, like a body without a Soul, will be dead and lifeless things, without this Grace of Faith. Lay all these four together, and ye will see, that in the Order of the commanding part of the Covenant, Believing hath the precedency of all other Graces and Duties; so in the Order of the commanding part of the Covenant, whatever other Duties God hath commanded, he hath especially commanded Believing, that is to be the first in order of our Obedience, & to have the precedency of all other Graces, which is necessary to be observed, for many think, that they can go about other duties before they believe, and that in a way suitable to the Covenant, but they are altogether mistaken; for there is nothing acceptable to God without Faith.

Thirdly, In the Order of the commanding part of the Covenant, though Faith be first and principally required, yet it's not only required; *Papists* calumniate us, when they say, we preach, and say, that Faith is only required, it is the only Instrument of Justification, it is by Faith only that we are Justified; but it's not faith only, that is the condition of the Covenant of Grace, therefore in the order of the Covenant, the obedience to the whole Law comes in after believing; such as would observe the order of the Covenant, must be obedient to all the commands of the Covenant, it's remarkable, the obedience that the Covenant of Grace requires, hath these three Properties. 1. It must be new obedience, that is to say, obedience from a new heart, and obedience conform to the tenor of the new Covenant; the obedience is new, when the principle of it is Love;

Love, it was of old fear, but it hath a new principle, when the end of it is the exalting of Christ, it was of old the exalting of ourselves. 2ly. The obedience must be strict obedience, I would recommend to you the excellent discourse, that master *Allan* hath written in his *Vindicia pietatis*, proving, that the holiness he sayes of a Christian is strict, ay, no less strict than that of the Covenant of works requires, every Christian must be a Precisian, and must labour to strive and wrestle, and take the Kingdom by violence; to watch against the least beginnings of sin, and the least Inroachments of it on Christ's Honour; or else it's no Obedience according to the Covenant. 3ly. It must be perpetual Obedience, For if the righteous man fall from his righteousness, all the righteousness that he hath done shall be forgotten; So the Order of the Covenant runs, that there shall be Graces and Duties, making up our part of the Covenant, and among these Graces and Duties, Faith must have the precedency.

Fourthly, The Order of the commanding part of the Covenant requires, first and principally mortification, and then vivification; ye will find in the promising part of the Covenant, there are first promises, *Ezekiel 36. I will sprinkle clean water upon them, and I will cause them to walk in my statutes*: these that set to duties, without Mortification of Lusts, observe not the order of the Covenant; those that never knew what a work of Mortification of inward Lusts meant, but performs Duties at random, they may perform Duties, but not according to the tenor of the Covenant: they cannot have peace from the Covenant, that observe not the order of it; now in the preceptive part of the Covenant, though he command all the parts of vivification, yet he commands to begin at Mortification, to cut off the old man of Sin, *To cut off the right hand, to pluck out the right eye*, that is to say, to mortifie any Lust, that will be as painful to part with, as our right eye or our right hand; If one sew a new profession to an old heart, like new wine put into old bottles, or a piece of new cloth to an old garment, it's never suitable to the Covenant; so we see the Order of the commands of the Covenant, there must be Graces and Duties joyned together, the principal Grace in the Covenant

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is Faith, and where a person neglects that, he fails in the principal tenor of the Covenant.

Before I come to speak of the relative Order of the Covenant, as it relates to the end, I would have you take notice, that not only is there an order in the Promises, & Commands of the Covenant, but the Promises and Commands are excellently sorted together, they are sweetly joyned; take notice of the union betwixt the two, and I will speak to a twofold union betwixt them, 1. Take notice how sweetly they are unite. 2ly. How strictly they are unite.

First, Take notice how sweetly they are unite; for clearing of this, Take notice of three things. 1. The Promises are sweet to the Commands, I find some Divines cast it up, they say, for every Command in the Covenant, there are at least two Promises; I confess there are some Commands, we may get ten Promises relating to them, but take them at the lowest, there is no Command in the Covenant, but there are two Promises for it; ye need not go to think where will I get a Promise suited to this Duty? ye see, that the Promises & the Commands are most sweetly unite together, the Promise is a Bond on God to give strength for the Commands, and readily ye will get two Bonds in the Covenant, for every particular Command. 2ly. Take notice, how sweetly they are unite in this, that as the Promise influences obedience to the Command, so the Command influences, and evidences an Interest in the Promise; the way how to get strength to obey the Command is, to go to the Promise, and the way to know, if the promise be ours is, to try our obedience to the Command; so like two bearing a Burrow, they work to one anothers hand. 3ly. The two joyned sweetly together, contribute to keep the heart in an equal frame, the Promise holds out the Reward, and the Command holds out the service, If we had only a Promise, we would presume, and if we had only a Command, we would despair; and the two laid together, they sweetly, not only influence one another for our obedience, but the two joyned together, keeps them in an equal ballance, the promise keeps from despair, and the Command from presumption. So nothing could be sweeter joyned together, than the promise and the command in the Covenant; we could not

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want any of them; If we would be so foolish, as to wish the Covenant ordered only of promises, It had been no way our Interest, it had rather made against us than for us, had we gotten our desire. It had been among the rest of the roving of our Spirit; it's really our interest, that we should be servants, and to know our interest by our obedience; so hath he ordered the Covenant well, that hath twisted the two sweetly together, in a way suitable to our heart, and his Fathers honour.

Secondly. Observe, how strictly they are unite together, observe this in three or four things, and they are to be noticed by all, who would observe the Covenant. 1. Take notice, that if we have a title to the Promise, we are necessarily bound to the Command; to think that we will accept the promise, and lay by the Command, as to overturn the order of the Covenant, they are so knit together, that as a woman in marriage, in her accepting of the man, she is bound in obedience to him, so when we accept of the promise, or take it according to the tenor of the Covenant, we presently in that same very act of acceptance, are become bound to the Command; It implies a contradiction to say, we have gotten a Promise, when we cast at a Command, when we accept of the promising part, we engage to the preceptive part, the reason is, in the order of the Covenant they cannot be separar, they are so strongly knit together, that he that accepts of the Promises of the Covenant, he binds himself to the Commanding part of the Covenant; on the other hand if we engage to the commanding part, we have a strong Title to the promising part, the promising part of the Covenant, the greatest and most special Promises of It; if there be conscience made of the Commands of It, he hath a Title to all the promises of it, the reason is, the order of the Covenant, hath joyned the two together so strictly, that if we engage with the Commands, we have a right to the Promises. 2^{ly}. This strictness of the Union betwixt the two in the Covenant, which is excellently contrived in the order of It, appears in this, that the commanding and promising part of the Covenant, are in all their parts and pendants inseparably joyned together; if we have a right to one Promise, we have a right to all, we can.

cannot obey one command in the Covenant, and cast at another, for that overturns the order, and strict connexion betwixt the parts of the Covenant: I deny not, but one Promise may be sweeter than another, and we may be better at one duty than at another, we may get more liberty in one duty than another; but to accept one promise, and cast at another, to accept one duty, and cast at another, overturns the order of the Covenant, and whoever pretends to the Covenant, and thinks he hath a sweetness from it, and casts at one duty in the Covenant, and not at another, *He that offends in one, he offends in all, as James says, no, but we may be stronger in one thing, and weaker in another, but a willfull passing by any duty in the Covenant, and slighting of It, is an evidence thou despises It.* 3^{ly}. The strictness of the order of the Covenant, betwixt the Commands and the Promises, will appear in this, that there is no obedience to the Command can be given, without the Promise, and there is no evidence of a right to the Promise, without the Command; they are so inseparably knit, that a man could as soon pluck the Sun out of the Firmament, and stop the course of the Moon, as to obey the Commands, without the Promise, nor that I would have you to run away from the duty, but go to the promise with It; on the other hand, they are so knit together, that it's high presumption for a man, to lay claim to the Promises, except he give obedience to the Command; however some may flatter themselves, as the distracted man at *Athen*, who would go to the Harbor, with paper and ink in his hand, and call for all the Ships, and take a list of all the Goods into them, and come away rejoicing, that they are all his; there are many do so in the Covenant, they take the Promises & count them theirs, but there can be no comfortable evidence of a Title to the promise, if we conscientiously obey not the Command; the reason of It is, in the order of the Covenant, he that treated and drew the Covenant, in all the contents of it; so as there is no Title to the promising part, without the commanding part, and no obeying the commanding part without the promising part, so ye see the Order of the Covenant, in reference to the Promises of the Covenant, and

and the Commands of It, and the connexion betwixt the Promises and the Commands. I say no more of the absolute order of the Covenant.

Before I compleat this discourse of the Order of the Covenant, I would consider the relative Order of it, Order is a right situating of things in order to the end, now both the Commands and the Promises, whether ye take them separately, or joyntly in the Covenant, are excellently ordered, in reference to the ends of the Covenant; To open this unto you, I will shew you three ends, for which the Covenant of Grace is made with Believers, or with the Mediator in their name, and ye will find both the Commands and the Promises excellently ordered, in reference to all the three. (1) The Covenant of Grace was made, to exalt the Father. (2) It was made to glorifie the Son. (3) It was made, to make the salvation of the Elect sure and easie: now in reference to all these three Ends, the Covenant is excellently ordered in all things. I will speak a little to this, in regard the special Order of the Covenant lyes, in the wise ordering of the End, for which It's made. First, I will shew you how this Order of the Promises and Commands, tends to the honour of the Father. (1) This Order in the Covenant contributes to exalt the Father; there are some that write on the Covenant, they offer some excellent Reasons, to prove that the Father hath gotten a great deal more Glory, by the Covenant of Grace, than he hath gotten by the Covenant of Works, even the Adam had stood still in his Integrity. I will only let you see this, in two or three particulars; 1. Consider the glory of his Justice, the glory of his Justice is exceedingly advanced, indeed he had a great deal of glory of his Justice, when he sent the Deluge and destroyed the old World, and when he sent fire and brimstone, and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, all men might see the glory of his Justice in this, but this was nothing to what Christ met with from the Father, *awake, O sword, and smite the man that is my fellow*, any that heard of the Deluge, and of destroying Sodom and Gomorrah by fire, would say, that he is a just God, that would not suffer sin to go unpunished; but they that hear of this, that he took pleasure

to bruise his own Son, and had a delight in the breaking of Him, that when he stood a Sacrifice in the room of Sinners, he would not forgive him one Farthing; when he cryed upon the Cross with strong cries and tears, being in an Agony, and commanded the Sword to awake, and smite the man that is my fellow, he would not stay until his Sword was wet with his hearts blood; is there not great glory in his Justice? All the torments of the damned for all eternity, declare not his glory so far as the sufferings of Jesus Christ. (2) It exalts the Father, not only in his Justice, but in his power, all the things that ever he did to declare his Power, the making the world out of nothing, and giving so excellent an order to it, declares him an excellent God, but the power that appears in the Resurrection of Christ, and the working of Faith, which is the exceeding greatness of his power, outstrips that; when he made the World, he made it out of nothing, but here he brings it out of its contraries, he brings a heart of flesh out of a heart of stone, but the raising of Christ from the Dead, that had all that the Justice of God could do, and all that Satan could do, he rose and declared himself to be the Son of God with power. (3) If ye take notice of his Wisdom, he is the only wise God, the things that we quarrel at, we find that he did it in Wisdom, he hath given great proofs of his Wisdom, but in nothing more, than what he hath given in the Covenant of Grace; that his Son should come from his Bosom, and be personally unite to mans nature, and in that nature to suffer, that man might not be condemned; if he take his Mercy, his Love, and his Grace, and the rest of his Attributes, whatever appeared in the Covenant of Works, are all nothing to the contrivement of the Covenant of Grace; so the Order of the Covenant, is so well suited to the end, especially to his Fathers glory, that in all the things that are done, or would have been done, from the beginning of the world to the end, it never appeared so, as by the Covenant of Grace, the Father is exalted above all, that ever the Angels could devise, by this Covenant of Grace. But these are but one of the Ends, the glorifying of his Son, and making the salvation of the Elect sure and easie, are the two great Ends of the Order of the Covenant.

SERMON XXVIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

THere are three special ends of the Covenant of Grace, the exalting the Father, the glorifying the Son, the making the salvation of the Elect sure and easie; all these three the Covenant hath so ordered, that they tend to promote both the Promises and Commands; First, The glorifying of the Father, O but he is infinitely far more glorified by the Covenant of Grace, than by all the things that ever he did; but I have spoken particularly to this.

I come to the second, the glorifying of the Son, the Covenant is so ordered, as the Son is exceedingly glorified; Now, ye would consider Christ in reference to the Covenant, three ways, 2^d, Consider, that all the Glory of these three redounds to him alone.

First, Christ is the procurer of the Covenant, the Purchaser of it, however the Father hath infinite Grace, yet this Covenant was bought and payed for by the Mediator. 2, As he is the Purchaser, he treated the Covenant, he drew the Contents and all the Articles of it, he drew them to the satisfaction of all parties. 3 He is the Executor of it, all the Promises of it are the accomplishment of his three Offices; all the promises of pardon, are the accomplishment of his priestly Office; all the promises of holiness, are the accomplishment of his prophetic Office; all the Promises of ruling, are the accomplishment of his

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kingly Office. Now, since he is the purchaser of the Covenant, and the treator of it, and the executor of it, what a great deal of influence hath he on the Covenant?

2. The glory of all these redounds to him, there is none to rob him of them, some suppose, the standing angels pityed lapsed mans Case, when he was fallen, yet they could not help it, it was above their reach to contrive the Covenant, far more to purchase and execute it: so the angels could have no hand in it; and as for Men, since the Covenant was from eternity, they could have no hand in it, nothing contributed more to exalt the Mediator, for he was both the Purchaser and Treator of it, and payed for it, and executed it, and alone did it, without the help of Angel or Man. So the Covenant of Grace, cries down all Merit and Price, and the glory of the treating of it and purchasing of it, redounds only to Christ.

Thirdly, This Covenant is ordered suitably to the third end, to make the salvation of the Elect have three Properties; First, Sure; Secondly, easie to be attained; and thirdly, Suitable. 1. It makes it sure, the Covenant made with Adam, tho it had a perfect man standing as a parrle, yet he was a fallible man, Adam could fall and actually did fall, so it was put in the hand of a man, whose estate was great; but it was possible for him to be a Bankrupt and debaucher, and to make shipwreck of his stock; that made not the Salvation of the Elect sure. 2. This Covenant makes the Salvation of the Elect easie, for the Cautioner takes a Discharge of all things, by way of satisfaction and payment, so that there is nothing left for us to pay. 3. This Covenant is also suitable, to have Heaven without Holiness, is like Pearls on a swines snout, it will be only the Holy, that will come to glory, *For without holiness none shall see God.* So in effect the Covenant is ordered in all things, in its Commands and Promises, and the connection of the Promises and Commands, with a reference to the ends for which the Covenant was made, the glorifying of the Father, the exalting of the Son, and making the salvation of the Elect sure and easie, and then suitable to it. I shall

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say no more of the ordering of the Covenant, but will now come to the application of the point.

Use First, is the Covenant thus well ordered in all things, in its Promises and Commands, and with a reference to all its ends, then first, it serves for Information, and it informs us of these four things. 1. That one great Duty, that readily many Christians may neglect, who plead the Covenant, but they take no notice of the order, that the Mediator hath observed in the drawing of the Covenant, this order is not taken notice of, and I would press your Observation of the Order of the Covenant, with these four or five Considerations. 1. Not to Observe the Order of the Covenant, is to reflect on the Mediator, who when he drew one Promise to be accomplished before another, and one Duty to be done before another, understood what he was doing; he that would have absolute Promises to be accomplished, before the conditional, and promises of our estate in Christ, and being in him, before the Promises of our fellowship with him; he that in the Commands, would have believing to be a great Duty, and first and principally to be performed, understood well what he was doing; he that observes not the order of the Covenant, but snatches at a Promise, and takes a stolen Apple off the Tree that is not his own, he reflects on the Mediator; it was the product of his infinite wisdom, to order the Covenant, and he that observes it not, reflects on the Mediator. 2ly. The Spirit in the communication of Promises, and applying them, observes the order of the Covenant; the Spirit will not speak peace to him, who is not pardoned; the Spirit will not speak peace to one that is in nature, and without Repentance; the Spirit keeps the order of the Covenant, and if thou observe not the order of the Covenant, but wilt snatch at a promise of peace, without pardon, and at promises of pardon, without Repentance, and at a promise of Repentance, while thou art in a natural state, thou first reflects on the Mediator, that contrived the Covenant and secondly, on the Spirit, that understood the method of the Covenant. 3ly. Not to observe the method of the Covenant is, to make Christ the minister of sin; if one should take that promise, *I am he that blots out iniqui-*

ty, transgression, and sin, and observes not the order of the Covenant, that is a Promise made to them, that have a right to the Covenant, and to them that are effectually called, and to them to whom the Spirit of Repentance is given, ye that do this, make Christ the Minister of Sin, and the Covenant an occasion of Sin. 4ly. Not to observe the order of the Covenant, is the high way to a Delusion, nothing will contribute more to delude the Spirit, and to set up a counterfeit peace, than when we lay our head on the cod of a Promise, if there be a sound sleep gotten at all, it will be on that cod, but in the mean time, hath not observed the order of the Covenant, what kind of peace can there be from a Promise that a man hath stolen, and that one is making use of, that hath no right to it? It will be one of the quarrels against thee, that thou has broken the Orchard, and stolen the Fruit, for thou came not to it in the order of the Covenant; and this is the reason, why many their peace is neither so easie, nor so lastie, nor cannot abide a storm, for they take Promises, but not according to the order of the Covenant. 5ly. And lastly, not to observe the order of the Covenant, brings the soul readily under the threatening of God, and in the end, under the curse of the Covenant; it's a great assertion of a great Divine, says he, he that steals a Promise that he hath not a real Right to, hath a real right to the Threatning; so, where the order of the Covenant is not observed, the peace that we pretend to have from a stolen Promise, it turns to grief, and to a real Threatning, and in the end to the Curse. These Motives press you to observe the order of the Covenant, I believe there are many, that have been looking to the Promises, that have not observed this, but ye cannot plead the Promises, but according to the order of the Covenant.

Quest. It may be inquired here, what should a Christian do, that he may have a claim to the Covenant in the order of it?

Ans. For opening this to you, and it's the great thing that I design, in this branch of the order of the Covenant; I will offer you some few Directions, that ye may come to know a Promise, according to the order of the Covenant. 1. It

would have you to go home, and among other things, lay this before God, that ye have indrely submitted to the order of the Covenant, if ye have not adverted to it before, if ye have thought it enough, if ye have gotten a Promise in *Jeremiah*, and in *Ezekiel*, and ye presently lay down your head on that cod, and sing the *requiem* and peace to your self; go now and tell him, that ye submit to the order of the Covenant, and that ye could not make it better; if ye had been at the making of it, it's better ordered, than ye could order it, *For he was Christ, the power and wisdom of God*, that did it; and tell him, ye will take no promise again, except it come in by the order of the Covenant; make this one of the Articles of your Indenturing with him, that ye shall not rashly take a Promise, unless ye know the Tree to whom it belongs. 2ly. If ye would have peace coming in, according to the tenor of the Covenant labour to have an interest in the Covenant, and then plead the Promises of the Covenant; your interest in the Covenant is made up, by your interest in Christ, he is the Bride-groom, and the Covenant is the Contract; your interest in him is known, by your effectual calling; I have pitied some ignorant careless persons, that tell, they have gotten a Promise, but what is their right to the Covenant of Promises? will ever one get a Promise, that hath no interest in the Covenant? they may steal a Promise, and take an Apple off the Apple-tree that is not theirs, and lay their head on that cod, and sleep on it, but it's stolen, and they have the curse for stealing the Apple, and breaking the Orchard. Labour then to have an interest in the Covenant, that ye may say, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*; ye may ask the mark of one that hath an interest in the Covenant, if ye married the man in effectual calling, after long wooing of you by the Law, and ye have given your heart to him, and he hath given love to you, so that ye may say, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine*; but to plead the Promise, and have no right to the Covenant, and not to marry the man, is to steal a promise off a Tree that ye have no right to. 3ly. If thou would have a mercy coming in by the order of the Covenant, Observe, If the Spirit that accomplishes the Promises of the Covenant

Covenant, hath made out the absolute and fundamental promises in the Covenant, before the conditional; he first begins with the Promise of Repentance, and then he comes to pardon, and then he comes to the promise of peace, founded on pardon; thou that has a promise, that thou thinks hath come in by the order of the covenant, the Spirit hath kepted the order of giving thee it, if the Spirit hath given thee it, he first takes away the heart of stone, and then he sprinkles clean water, and then he gives the Spirit of Repentance, and then he will give thee to believe, and then give thee pardon; thou must come in this way, or then thou comes not in by the order of the Covenant. So if thou would have thy mercies coming in by the order of the Covenant; Observe, If the fundamental promises, and promises of the first Graces have been accomplished to thee, otherways in the rest of the promises, the Spirit must overturn the order of the Covenant, if thou thinks, he hath given thee peace, but not in this order and method, thou may cry peace, and make a blaze, but it will go out in the dark of the night; so if ye would know, if ye have gotten a promise in the order of the Covenant, Observe these rules 4ly. If thou would be at a promise in the order of the Covenant, take this rule, Observe, whether thou keeps the order of the Commands of the Covenant; the order of the Commands in the Covenant, is, first believe, and then pray, first believe; and then hear, first believe, and then rejoyce; believing is the great condition of our part of the Covenant, because he saw believing so glorious to him, and to his Father, that it would not rob him of his honour, nor wrong Christ of his glory, it will not do as readily our love would do, love would plead a kind of Works, but believing pleads only to be an Instrument of Justification; see that thou rightly observe the Commands, according to the order in the Covenant, that is to say, when thou goes to vent thy heart to God in a corner, thou hast first believed, and then thou hast prayed; when thou goest to the Church to hear a word, thou hast first acted Faith, and then thou hast heard; If this method be not kepted, thou observes not the order of the Covenant, So

if ye would know, If the Promise ye have gotten, hath come in to you according to the order of the Covenant; observe, If ye keep the order of the Covenant in your obedience, ye first believe, and that makes you take up the Bible and read, and to desire spiritual conference, and use Christian fellowship; we must first believe, and then obey, otherwayes, it will not be according to the order of the Covenant, we must ask in Faith, and what is not of Faith, is sin. *2ly.* And lastly, if ye would try, If the Promise ye have gotten comes in by the order of the Covenant, I exhort thee, to have a holy jealousie and suspitiousness, that ye may have been in a mistake, about that Promise, take a view of the Covenant; ye may say, that we preach doubtings with the *Papists* to folk, but I exhort thee, who hath gotten a Promise according to the order of the Covenant, not to doubt, your peace stands on as sure a ground, as heaven and earth; but we do exhort you, that ye do not lightly lay hold on a Promise, otherwayes into your coming by it, ye have taken an Apple off a Tree that is not yours, and hath but stolen a promise; try If ye have submitted to the Covenant, if ye have a right to the Covenant, and if the Spirit hath made out the absolute Promises, and if your life and conversation hath looked like the order of the Covenant, if ye first believe, and then pray, and come to the Church; if these be not, I exhort thee to suspect thy self, and rather to quite a Promise, than to entertain a deluding peace. So ye see the necessity of looking to the order of the Covenant, and the rules and marks, whereby ye may try, If any Promise ye have gotten, hath come in by the way of the Covenant, and if it hath not come in so, it will be vomited up again, and of all the ill smell'd things in the world, that will be one, to swallow down a Promise and vomit it up again.

Use. 2. The second use of the point, is there such an excellent Order in the Covenant, then I would have thee to submit to this Order in the Covenant, and I will offer you four cases, wherein I would press you to submit to the Order of the Covenant. I believe there are many, and I wonder often, that both my self and other Ministers, that we

are

are not more in preaching so necessary a truth, that it's not more ordinar, to tell people, that they have gotten a Promise, and they observe not the Order of the Promise. 1. I exhort you to submit to this Order of the Covenant, in your desires, when we go to God with our prayers, the thing we pray for, is never prayed for right, except we submit our desires to two things. 1. I desire you may submit your desires in trying the thing ye make request for, submit to it according to the tenor of the Covenant; do not say, give me pardon, when he hath not given Repentance; do not say, Justifie me, when he hath not effectually called you; for ye bid him in that case, overturn the Order of the Covenant. *2ly,* I would have you submit to it, in the answer of your desires, many a time we go to him, and of all the fruitless works we go about throughout the week, is prayer; we never know our selves a strae-broad better at the weeks end, than at the beginning of it, when we have been in secret morning and evening, and sometime at midtime of the day, the reason is, ye go not to him according to the Order of the Covenant; it's an unreasonable desire to bid him overturn the thing that his Son hath treated, and sealed with his own Blood, and payed for; we go to him, and desires him not according to the Order of the Covenant, we cry, give me Peace, and give me Pardon, and it may be, he hath not given Repentance; therefore learn from this Sermon, to submit your desires, and the answers of them, to the ordering of the Covenant, and I am confident, there are many that use to go to God, if ye would cast up your reckoning, what ye desired, and the way of your desires, whatever it was, it was something inconsistent with the Order of the Covenant, that the Mediator treated. In the second place, I would have you to submit your Practice, to the Order of the Covenant; ye were hearing, that believing is the first and principal thing, and other Duties must be influenced by faith; many, when they go to pray, observe not this, and when they come to hear, they hear not in faith; what ever they ask, they ask not in faith; they would have Prayer, Hearing, Repentance, without faith, which is not according to the Order of the Covenant; Submit thy practice to the Order of the Covenant,

nant, when thou goest to God, examine if it be according to the Order of the Covenant. 3ly. I would have thee submitting thy Enjoyments, to the order of the Covenant; I mean, even thy greatest spiritual Enjoyments; the Lord hath ordered the Covenant so, as he hath the timing of the Peace, and deliverance of his Church, and the communications of his Spirit to his people; many a time we would limit God, in asking peace, and delivering the Church, we bid him do this the day, or to morrow; the Covenant is so ordered, as he hath left the timing of these to him, who is a Lord of his Liberty; thou that wilt quarrel, I was at this Sermon and that Sermon, and I saw him not, and I go to him in corners, and I scarce find him, ye would take notice, that the ordering of the Covenant, it secures the mercy, yet it allows him the timing of it, in the ordering of the Covenant. And lastly, I would have you to submit to this order in the Covenant, not only your desires, your practices and your enjoyments, but also submit to it, in every thing, whatever be more comprehended under any of these three. O if this were more observed, readily there would be more peace.

Use 3. But to close all, because of the time, I would close all with a word to three sorts of persons, and shall say no more. The first shall be a word of Reproof, to them that observe not this order, and they are the generality among us; and the truth is, it makes up a frothy profession, these that perform duties without faith; these that have gotten a promise, without a right from the Covenant, they observe not the order of the Commands and Promises: they hear, they pray, they wait on Ordinances, they confer, and have spiritual fellowship, and in the mean time they do it without the spirit of faith; I tell thee, & I close with this part of these four Sermons, that thou observes not the order of the Covenant, and thou shalt never be the better of the Covenant: It was a well contrived and a wisely ordered Covenant, and ye that think to take Heaven in another order and way, and will not first believe, and then do, and thou wilt take a promise, without observing the order of the Covenant, thou shalt have the Lord meeting thee in the valley of decision,

decision, with, what hast thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth? And thou shalt have a real curse, for taking a promise that thou hast no right to, and stealing an Apple off a Tree that is not thine. 2ly. I exhort all of you, to observe the order of the Covenant better; it's a business of a Heaven and of a Hell, if ye would feed on the consolations of the Covenant, the blessed Jesus, who was the Wisdom of the Father, he drew it, treated it, contrived it in such an order, in Commands and Promises, and the sweet harmony of Commands and Promises, I exhort you, among all the Sermons Preached on this Text, that ye would observe the order of the Covenant, which readily may be more necessary for you than any part of the Bible; but for Believers, that have observed this, I have three or four things to say to them, and will close with it. 1. Christian. I exhort thee to build on the Covenant, O! it's well ordered: There are some Divines regrate, that in our Church we want Evangelick Psalms, taken out of the New Testament, on the immediate praises, not typical praises, but the express praises of Jesus Christ; though I be against the Papists in this head, yet it is a thing we may have drawn up; as Simeons Song, and Marias Song, to be sung among us; yet whatever of this be, we are to be praising him, for the right gilding of the Covenant; the Father could wish no more in the rigour of Justice, and we could wish no more, in the rigour of Grace, than we have gotten; therefore build not only on the Covenant, but when ye have any occasion, ye are to tune over a Song to God, and bless him for the order of the Covenant. and for the treating of the Commands of the Covenant. 2ly. I would have you making use of a main particular in the ordering of the Covenant, and the not use-making of it, undoes a Believers peace; that is to say, 1. The Covenant is so ordered, that he is to pay for all our debt. 2ly. He is to pay for all the infirmities of the heart. 3ly. When there are any failings, that he shall accept of the sincerity of the will for perfection, therefore go ye, and make use of the order of his own contriving, he hath done the business, so as there is not a Groat left to thee and me to pay; the Father hath received a ransom, and he hath
payed

payed the whole Shot, he hath ordered the Covenant so, as it's not laid on me in the Covenant, to take away my heart of stone, but it runs, *I will take away the heart of stone*; now I say, press this order of the Covenant on him, and be supported with it, for your friends, and for your selves; and when there comes to be any fall or breach made, and ye have gotten a wound for it, as a Believer may have all his bones broken, as *David* had his, *Psal. 51.* know, that he is bound to bind up your wounds, and press him with it, for he is abundantly able to pay; never press him with less than he hath undertaken in the Covenant; press him, that he would keep you from a delusion, and from laying a stollen Apple to your door, but have first a right to the Apple Tree. I will close this, with pressing you to improve these Sermons on the order of the Covenant; I know no Scripture will contribute more for your Illumination, than this order of the Covenant, for it may shake many of your peaces, therefore go and observe the order of the Covenant.

SERMON XXIX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

HAVING spoken in some preceeding Sermons to the order of the Covenant, and shewed the necessity of observing the order of the Covenant, both in its Promises and Commands, and rebuked those that steal a Promise, and lay it as a Cod to Security to sleep on, while in the mean time the promise comes not in, according to the order

order of the Covenant, the absolute promise not accomplished, and yet claiming to the conditional promise: A multitude of things of this nature have been handled.

But I come now to the third property of this Covenant, and sure, it's ordered in all things and sure; if this property were wanting, all the rest of the properties would be insignificant, for it would not be everlasting, though it were never so well ordered, nor it would not be comfortable unless it were sure.

The word in the Hebrew *Montanus*, renders it *Conditum*, others render it *Munitum*, it is ordered in all things and fortified; it is a word in the Hebrew, that comes from a Root that signifies to guard, a Metaphor borrowed from a Garrison, when Souldiers use to ly in Garrisons together; it's ordered in all things, and guarded and Garrisoned, but our Translation hath it, *It is ordered in all things and sure*, and accordingly I will take it in handling this Theme.

The word *sure* it imports many things into it, it is a Covenant that God will not change nor alter, nor yet that he will break; it is called 2 Chron. 13. 5. *A Covenant of salt*; when *Abijah* comes out to fight with *Jeroboam*, who had stollen Israel from the House of *David*, ought ye not to know, says he, that the Lord God of Israel, gave the Kingdom over Israel to *David* for ever, even to him and to his Sons, by a *Covenant of salt*; now salt is the thing that keeps any thing from putrefaction, the thing that is salted uses to be preserved; so ye find it Numb. 18. 19. speaking of the Priests portion of the offerings, *It is a Covenant of salt for ever before the Lord, unto thee, and to thy seed with thee*; so a *Covenant of salt*, that is, it is a Covenant that will not putrefie nor corrupt. But I will take this property of the Covenant, as it lyes translated in the Text, and shall propose this observation from it.

Doctrine. That among many excellent ingredients and properties of the Covenant, this is one, that it is sure, it is ordered in all things and sure. The mercies of *David* are called sure mercies, *Isaiah 55. 3.* *Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* But ye have

have a remarkable word, to confirm this property of the Covenant, that it is sure, among many others in the Bible, *Jer. 33. 20. Thus saith the Lord, if you can break my Covenant of the day and of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also my Covenant be broken with David my servant, &c.* Now, is there any thing surer than night and day in their season? Since the foundation of the earth was laid, this hath never failed, what ever seasons have been in the world, day and night in their season hath never failed; now the Covenant is no less sure than night and day in their season; a number of such like Scriptures might be brought to prove that it is sure.

Now I would insist a little in proving that it is sure, and then shall clear some Practical Questions about it, and 3^{ly}, shall apply it.

And first, that I may let you see that your Faith walks not upon Ice, that will crack under you, and break thorow, while you take you to the Covenant, but upon a sure foundation: I will offer you reasons of two sorts, to prove that it is sure, and the laying of them together, will make it appear a very rational truth.

I shall first give you some Negative Reasons; and secondly, some Positive Reasons; which being laid together, will evince, that it is guarded, fortified and sure.

Reas. 1. Negative. For the first, the Negative Reasons that will contribute to prove it sure, I shall reduce them to three heads, or rather there are three things, that use to make a Covenant or Bargain unsure, and all the three are removed from this Covenant of Grace. 1. Either there must be something makes it unsure on Gods part; or 2. There must be something on our part; or 3. There is something makes it unsure in the nature and form of a Covenant: These three ordinarily in Bargains makes them unsure, and none of the three can concur, to make this Covenant unsure; examine all the three, and ye will find it one of the best secured Bargains that ever was made to any.

First, There can be nothing on Gods part; there are three things on mens part, that make a Covenant or Bargain

gain unsure, and none of them all concur in God: 1. Often men makes Bargains, and they forget them; it's remarkable *Pharaohs* chief Butler, when *Joseph* had interpreted his dream, promised that he would remember him, but when he was advanced to his Butlership again, he forgot him. *Gen. 40. 23.* But this cannot be incident to God in making this Covenant, *Psal. 111. 5. He will ever be mindful of his Covenant;* and *Heb. 6. 10. For God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed towards his Name, &c.* Now, forgetfulness in him, would be unrighteousness. 2^{ly}. Several break their Covenants, not only through forgetfulness, but through weakness and impotency, they are not able to fulfill them, and therefore they break them; now this cannot be in God, we believe, (and it is the first Article of our Creed, and we may believe all the rest the better that it is there,) *We believe in God the Father Almighty,* he that measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the Heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a ballance, is not he able to fulfill his Covenant? There is no promise in all the Bible, but he is able to fulfill it. 3^{ly}. Several break their Bargains through unrighteousness, they renege them again; there are some make vows to God, and they seek out all the evasions in the world they can get, to satisfy their Conscience, that they may be loosed from those vows; they do (as *Lycurgus* said some do with their Oaths and their Vows) as Children use to do with *French Kyles*, they are at a great deal of pains to get them set up, and in right order, and when they are all set up, they presently roll a Bowl among them, to throw them down again: but this cannot be in God, there's no Attribute in him prejudged by his unrighteousness, his mercy, his justice, his glory, is more advanced by this Covenant, than the Covenant of Works; so he cannot do with his Covenant, as we do with ours; readily they that do so with their Bargains and Covenants, they are like a Horse kept within a Hedge, they are peaceable, but when they break over the Hedge, they range over the Countrey; so do men with their Covenants, so long as they are

are kept within the hedge of the Covenant, they seek not so much after their lusts, but when they have broken over the Hedge, they get liberty to follow their lusts. So, there can be no failing of the Covenant upon Gods part.

2/y. It cannot be unsure on our part; It is true, here would appear the greatest weakness, but it is abundantly secured on our part; Remember ye not what ye heard, when I was speaking of the Covenants being everlasting; That a Believer cannot fall out of a Covenanted estate, unless God break unto him: Now it cannot be unsure, in regard there are four or five kind of promises in the Covenant, that makes it sure on our part. *First*, There are promises of the first grace, the want of an heart of flesh, the want of clean water (sprinkled on us, cannot make the Covenant unsure on our part, because all these are promised. 2/y. On our part, it's true we have grace, but it cannot act, and one may think, that will make the Covenant unsure, but there are promises of influence in the Covenant, *Hos. 14. 5. I will be as the dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the Lillie, and shoot forth his roots as Lebanon.* 3/y. That might make the Covenant unsure on our part, we may break and fall away; but there are promises of perseverance in the Covenant; remarkable is that promise, *Jer. 32. 40. And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me:* It's made an everlasting Covenant, because not only God will not turn away from them to do them good, but he will put his fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from him. 4/y. It may make the Covenant seem unsure on our part, that we are guilty, and will not that make him break? No, guiltiness on our part will not break the Covenant, for there are promises of repentance, and promises of a righteousness of faith, to cover our guiltiness, if once we be really in Covenant with him, he must break to us, before we can come out of a Covenanted estate with him. Must it not stand then on very sure terms? When there is nothing either upon Gods part, or our part, that can break this Covenant, and make it unsure?

But

But thirdly, The Covenant may be unsure, because of the nature or form of a Covenant; and in this Covenant, none of these two can concur to make it unsure; and First, there is nothing in the nature of it can make it unsure, in Disputes with some, who have laboured to loose the ties of National Covenants; there are three things hath been objected against them, It's true, all of them groundlessly objected against them; but that they be Objections against this Covenant of Grace, ye will find them far from having any foundation. 1. They tell us, a Covenant is not sure, when it is contrair to former lawful Oaths; no question a Covenant about indifferent things, contrair to former lawful Oaths, cannot be lawful; and the Instance they bring is, the ty of the Covenant was contrair to lawful Oaths, and therefore cannot be binding. But this cannot be pretended to in the Covenant of Grace in the least shadow of it. 2/y. They say, the Ty of a Covenant cannot be binding, when the matter comes to be impossible, the thing we promised when it was lawful, becomes sinful when it is impossible; yet the Ty of the Covenant, binds us to the utmost of our Endeavours, now in the Covenant of Grace, there is nothing in it impossible for God, nor can we say from the nature of this Covenant, that there is any thing in it impossible. 3/y. They say, a Covenant is not binding when the nature of it is unlawful, they say, if they promise to give a man a sword in his hand against such a day, and if the man Distract against that day, the nature of the case is unlawful, and comes to be altered; but this cannot be alledged in the nature of this Covenant, that there is any circumstance occurring, that God did not foresee, when he made it, and consequently, there can be nothing in the nature of the Covenant, to make it unsure; go through all the articles and parts of it, and there is nothing in the nature of the Covenant, especially proceeding from God, whose Will is the first Rule of what is lawful or unlawful; and ye will find nothing that can make it unsure; we maintain in Schools, that there are many things commanded, he might have commanded otherwayes; for his Will is the first rule of Truth and Error; it is his Will that makes this

this a Truth, and that an Error; so that, there can be nothing unlawful in it, nothing impossible in it, nothing contrair to any former deed or act of his, therefore there can be nothing in all the nature of the Covenant, that can make it unsure.

2^d, There is sometimes something in the form of the Covenant, that will make it unsure, as if one drew a Contract, and drew it not well, he put in all things necessary into it, but he put in some Irritant Clauses into it, that if a person fulfill not, and perform not such and such things, then and in that case the Covenant is void and of none effect; but there is nothing in the form of this Covenant that is Irritant, he was excellent at drawing the Covenant, he was Christ the Wisdom of God that drew it, it is the product of the Wisdom of God. *Tough we believe not, yet he is to abide faithful*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. likewise, Psal. 89. 30. *If Davids children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, &c. yet v. 34. my Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.* There is no Irritant clause in all the Covenant, that ever will make it unsure. So, laying all these negative Reasons together, either on Gods part, or on our part, or in the nature or form of the Covenant, ye will find nothing in it at all, that hath the least tendency to unsure it, but it remains sure, and therefore, as it is ordered in all things, so it is sure.

Reasons positive. Take some positive Grounds and Reasons to prove, that the Covenant is sure, (It shall be a witness against you in the day of the Lord, if ye seriously improve them nor for your advantage) take some sure foundations, on which it stands and is built, and in them ye will see how sure it is. *Reason 1.* All the promises of the Covenant, are the result of the Decrees and Purposes of God, It is not so with the Commands, the Lord may command to do something, he hath not decreed should be done, the Lord commanded Abram to kill Isaac, and offer him up in a burnt offering, he decreed not that he should be killed and offered up in a burnt offering; it is not so with the Promises of the Covenant, there is no Promise, but it is answerable to

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some purpose and Decree of God; there is nothing he hath promised to do, but he hath decreed it so to be; so that the promises of the Covenant, and the decrees are of equal extent, there are none of them larger and longer than other, what ever is promised, is decreed; and in order to the salvation of the Elect, what ever is purposed is promised, the decree cannot be altered, Psal. 2. 7. *I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said to me, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* His Decrees are surer than the decrees of the Medes and Persians, there is nothing can alter his Decree, his Counsel must stand, shall he say it, and shall it not be? shall he decree, and shall it not come to pass? What a reflection were it on the unchangeable God, if his Decree could be altered? so the Covenant must be sure. *Reason 2.* This Covenant must be sure, for it is founded in his Love as well as his Decree. Jer. 31. 3. *I have loved thee with everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness will I gather thee;* the Covenant is as it were gathering with loving kindness, there are some acts of Justice, that he hath seemed to us to change, he commanded *Jonah* to go to *Niniveh*, and proclaim it will be destroyed, yet he will not destroy it; it's true, there was no change in God in that, for he threatened to destroy it only conditionally, in case they repented not, and they repented; but there is no act of his love, that ever he seemed to propose, that ever he seemed to change; what ever is founded in his love, ye will not find changes of it, except it be to the sense of a Believer; and the Covenant is founded in his everlasting love, and consequently, the Covenant must be everlasting it self, because it is grounded in his love. *Reason 3.* The Covenant cannot be but sure, in regard it's founded in the Blood of his Son; It's purchased by Christ, ye have heard, when I was speaking on that, *He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*, when I spake of the Author of the Covenant, and of the fourfold influence, that Christ had on this Covenant, among other things, I told you, he hath purchased it, there no Article of it all, but it is the price of his Blood, he gave himself and died for that end, that he might purchase the Covenant; and since

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It is in every article of it purchased by him; and since, before ever the Father consented to one Article, or subscribed to one Article of the Covenant, he laid down his life and shed his blood, how can that Covenant alter? Shall his Blood be as the woman of Tekoa said of Absalom to David, *All we are like water spilt upon the ground, that cannot be gathered up again?* Shall his Blood be so? that is impossible. So, this Covenant standing on these three Foundations, is it any wonder, that it be intirely and absolutely a sure Covenant, as well as a well ordered Covenant? but add in the 4th. place, consider the Seals he hath put to the Covenant; since it is the result of his Decree, and of his Sons Blood, and of his Love, these were enough to ratifie it; but he hath to do with unbelieving hearts, that scarce will credit him, therefore he hath put to many Seals to it; and I will only name you three or four Seals, he hath put to the Covenant to make it sure. 1. He hath sealed it with the death of his Son, the death of the Testator maketh the Testament of force, Heb. 9. 16. *where a Testament is, there must also be of necessity, the death of the Testator, for a Testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no force at all, while the Testator liveth.* 2ly. He hath Sealed it with the Witness of his Spirit; every Believer is Sealed by the Spirit, Ephes. 1. 13. *In whom also after ye have believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise; it is an excellent confirmation of all the Promises of the Covenant, when he gives the Spirit.* 3ly. He hath confirmed it by his Oath, Heb. 6. 17. *Wherein God willing more abundantly, to shew unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, verse 18. That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation.* 4ly. He hath confirmed it by the Seals of the sacraments, Baptism and the Lords Supper, which should move you, when ye hear of the occasion of the Sacrament of the Supper, to run to it; there are many very indifferent about it, yet in other places, they run to the occasion in multitudes. All these four Seals laid together, prove this Covenant to be sure, *for whom he loves, he loves to the end.* Lay all these grounds together, and these four Seals supple-

ded, and ye will see, that there is not the least ground left to doubt of the certainty of it, for both as to the negative and positive Reasons, it hath all things that can ficker a Covenant.

To make way to some Questions about this sureness of the Covenant, I will give you these two things supperadded to all the former Grounds, to prove it sure. 1. The Covenant of Grace is surer than the Covenant of Nature; now the Covenant of Nature is very sure, the mountains stand firm, and the Sea keeps its ebbing and flowing, the Sun keeps his Course, and the Moon keeps her Course; and loses not an hour, and the Stars keeps their course; so that a man may prognosticate all the Eclipses to the end of the World; the reason is, the Covenant of nature is so sure, and the order given to them is so sure, as there may be a sure Prognostication given, of all the changes to the end of the World; yet they are not so sure, as the Covenant of Grace; he may alter the Covenant of Nature, and not be unfaithful, he may make the Fire not burn, he may make the Sun stand still, he may make the Iron swim, he may make the Hills skip like Lambs, he may divide Jordan, and may alter many things in the Covenant of Nature, and not be unfaithful; but if he alter one Article in the Covenant of Grace, if he glorifie not one that is Redeemed, and pardon not one that is a penitent, he would be unfaithful, he would deny himself; for God may alter and overturn things in nature, but he cannot alter one Clause of the Covenant of Grace, without a reflection on his Faithfulness. 2ly. This Covenant of Grace is so less sure, than the Covenant of Redemption, that was made betwixt the Father and the Mediator; for in effect, it is a Stream of that Ocean, there are many of our Divines, that continue still, to make the Covenant of Grace, & the Covenant of Redemption, one Covenant; Mr. Dickson hath distinguished them, & as appears very rationally, they having distinct Articles, and distinct Parties, but whether they be distinct Covenants, or Equal, they are equal in the point of certainty, they are not surer than other. So that if Christ might break one Article of the Covenant of Grace, he might break one Article of the Covenant of Redemption.

SERMON XXX.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

IT is one sweet Property of the Covenant of Grace, That it is sure, I laboured to prove this in the forenoon, and before I apply this Doctrine, there are two practical Questions, I will but briefly touch.

Quest. The first is this, Is not the Covenant unsure in some things? Particularly, Is it not unsure as to the date and time of the accomplishment of the Promises? who can tell when he will bring in the Jews, or when the fullness of the Gentiles will come, or when he will give deliverance to his Church, or when he will return to a Believer, whom he hath deserted? Do we not find the Promises generally *sine die*, there is no day nor term put in the Promises? who would take a Bond, and count it a sure Bond, that had no term nor day set down in it? and doth not this render the Covenant unsure? Now for clearing of this Question, I desire ye may take notice of these three things. 1. It's true, the Promises have not a day set down, they that will sit down, and tell within such and such a time, such and such things will come to pass, they are adding to the Covenant their own Inventions; yet we have in the Covenant several things, relating to the term and day, that are sufficient, and ye will find four things relating to the Term and Day. 1. Ye find the vision is for a set time, there is a determinat time with God, *Psal. 102. 13. Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion,*

on 2 Sam. 23. 5.

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*Zion, for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come; So we know, and may comfort our selves in this, that there is a set time of the accomplishment of the Promises with God, Habakkuk 2. 2, and 3. vers. And the Lord answered, and said, write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it, for the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie, though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry. 2. We have this relating to the Term, that it will be a short time; It's among the last Letters, that we received from the Mediator of the Covenant, Revel. 22. 12. Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according to his work shall be, He is making all the haste he can, he will not tarry, nay he will come quickly, and that is more than he will not tarry. 3ly. We have this in the Covenant, that that time will be a seasonable time, when he comes with the accomplishment of the Promise; It will be a seasonable time, 1 Pet. 5. 6. Humble your selves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. 2 Cor. 6. 2. For he saith, In a time acceptable I have heard thee, &c. That is, a seasonable time; now what would we have more? Is there any uncertainty in the Promises, though they be *sine die*, or though they be given as a Bond without a Term? When he hath put in all these, that there is a set time, and that it will be a short time, and accomplished in a seasonable time? But I add Secondly, that though there be not a day set in the Promises, and God delay the accomplishment of the Promises; yet his delaying the accomplishment of the Promises, and not putting in a day, are for our advantage. I will offer you three things remarkable, in Gods delaying the accomplishment of the Promises. 1. Sometimes he will delay one Promise, and yet be accomplishing another, the Promise that we would be at, we stand in need of the accomplishment of another before it come, several times he delays the Promise of Pardon, because we have not been humbled enough, we are waiting for the Promise of Peace, and he follows us with a challenge, or a trouble in the Conscience, the wars seems to grow now, the delaying of a Promise of Peace may be advantageous, for the sore must be*

ript up, before any thing can be applyed for healing: this delay is our Interest, though we expect (when we take our selves to a Promise) that we must have the Peace, the quiet, the joy, that Believers have; you mistake it, the wound must be lanced better, before any healing can be applyed. 217. Sometimes he delayes the accomplishment of the Promises, and we learn some Duties in the time of the delay, that readily we would not have learned, if we were enjoying the Promises; several times the delaying of the Promise puts us to the exercise of Patience, Heb. 10. 36. *For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may inherit the promise;* after the will of God is done, there is need of patience; hardly is patience more tryed by Prison, or by any affliction, than it is by the Soul, that is waiting for the accomplishment of the Promise; often they will be at, *why delayes he his coming, fails his word evermore?* however Faith be a delaying Grace, yet in us it is often mixed with haste. So while he delayes the accomplishment of the Promise, he teaches patience, all the exercise we have for patience, it will be hereaway; therefore James sayes, *Let patience have its perfect work;* and that we may learn this Lesson, he will delay the accomplishment of the Promise we wait for. I add 317. This delaying the accomplishment of the Promise, makes nothing against the sureness of the Promise; 2 Pet. 4. 9. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;* it's remarkable, the Lord pronounced a curse against the Amorites, and the posterity of Ammon, that never lighted on them, untill the birth of the Promise; the date of the Promise, and of the threatening, may tryft together. So these delayes makes nothing against the sureness of the Promises, the clock will strick when the hour comes, the Promise will rise as punctually as the Sun rises, and the threatening will go down as punctually as the Sun goes down, it varies not from its appointed course, the clock that he hath set.

Quest. 2. The second Question is, can the Covenant be sure, since he varies and changes? He will give one thing for another

another, he will sometimes give one temporal thing for another, sometimes he will give a spiritual thing for a temporal; as for example, take the Promise annexed to the fifth Command, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy dayes may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee;* now one may honour their Father and their Mother, and yet go soon to the grave; how is he true then to his Promise? doth not he varie and alter, when for so long a day he gives glory?

Ans. For Answer to this. 1. In regard of Temporal things, he will alter and change a temporal Thing for a Spiritual and Eternal; but this sayes not, that the Covenant is not sure; suppose a man promise his neighbour an hundred weight of Lead, and when he looks for the accomplishment of his Promise, he sends him a thousand weight of Gold, would ye count that Man a breaker of his Promise? or because of this, would ye count the bargain unsure? He that is better than his Promise, is no breaker of his Promise. Now that variation proves not the Covenant unsure. 217. God cannot varie nor alter, in dispensing the Promises of the Covenant, as to Spiritual and Eternal things, there is nothing he can give in the place of Pardon, or in the place of Heaven, no, He does in this as a Father with an Heir, he may in Summer give him one sort of Clothes and in the Winter give him another; he may change his Dinner or his Supper, but he cannot alter his Inheritance, he cannot give any thing in the place of that: These Promises we may be peremptory in pressing, the accomplishment of which must be accomplished *in specie*, or in the kind; there is some Debt payed by permutation or change, and there is some Debt payed *in specie*, these Spiritual things in the Covenant cannot be payed by permutation, but they must be payed *in specie*; in Spiritual things He cannot varie, O! they are so great Promises, such as the Promises of His Son, the Promises of Himself, and of all things purchased by him; that to speak with reverence, it is impossible for God to make greater Promises. So that ye see, though there be no day in the Covenant, and though there be some latitude left in the Covenant as to Temporal things, yet none of them

make against the sureness, and stability of the Covenant, but it's a Covenant ordered in all things and sure.

Now I shall apply this *Doctrine* in three practical *uses*, and so put a close to the Property of the Covenant, that it is sure.

use 1. First, Is this Covenant so sure, surer than the Covenant of Nature, founded on such sure Foundations, standing on such sure Rocks, such as the love of God, the Decree of God, the purchase of Christ, and sealed with His Oath, having all these negative and positive Reasons, belonging in the Nature and Form of it, without any irritant Clauses; and so secured on our part, that he must break, before we fall out of a Covenanted state? It serves for Information, and that in these three particulars. 1. Is the Covenant so sure? Then be informed of what a sure bargain they make, that can say, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*, &c. The nature of the Covenant will always abide, and our appetite after it will always grow; there are some things that we set our hearts upon, such as our Strength, our Comeliness, our Riches, our Reputation and Credit, and they take the wings of the morning and are gone, when we would faintest enjoy them, there are other things we set our hearts upon, that abide with us, there are some things we love, we come to loath again, O! how will we loath the things we ardently loved; but both remain here, the things contained in the Covenant are sure, and our appetite after them will eternally grow; what an excellent bargain must they make, they who are every day feeling Death gaining ground on them; what an excellent bargain do they make, that have an interest in this Covenant; that word, *Psal. 73. at the close, It is good for me to draw near to God*, why draw near, *v. 26. My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever*; Now what can we say for ever to? ye cannot say, Husband, my Wife, my Estate, my health are for ever, but *God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever*; may it not be cryed in the ears of many, to whom I have been preaching this quarter of a year, (Why spend ye your money for that which is not bread, incline your ear and hear,

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and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the more mercies of David?) all ye that buik a flour that will wither in your hand, will ye be invited to get an interest in this Covenant, and it will stand by you, and be sure, when all other things will bid adieu to you; produce your Tack of Time, and of your enjoyments if ye can, but there are some nothing will prevail with them, no not though an Angel should come down from Heaven and preach to them, they will only give it a hearing, like one hearing a lovely Song, or hearing one playing on a well tuned Instrument of Musick, but it would get no impression on the heart, *As many as were ordained to life believed. 2ly. Is it so sure?* Then see the obligation ye have to the Mediator of the Covenant, that as he ordered it well in all things, in all the Articles and Clauses of it, so he resolved on securities for it, that to speak it truly, were more than necessary; it's remarkable in the Covenant, God hath given Securities, that were more than necessary to secure it, they were rather suited to our unbelief, for whom he treated the Covenant, than to the necessity of the thing; he knew he had to do with unbelieving hearts; that would be constantly doubting, and seeking security of this and that, and I appeal to any of you, when ye have gotten all these Confirmations and Seals spoken of, would ye not sometimes seek a Sign to confirm it further, or then ye will not believe? but the Mediator in treating the Covenant, hath driven the nail, and rooved it so fast, that there were no possibility to draw it again: O! this obligation we have to him, ought to make us take with the feelings of all other things the better, that he makes one Fatherless, another a Widow, and another sick, when we find our lot all reeling in the World, we ought to take it well, since he hath treated the Covenant well and sure. How well may ye bear with all the feelings and changes in your Lot, and variety of Dispensations ye are trusted with, ye are trusted with one case this year, and another the next year, but all should be welcomed, since the Covenant is secure. 3ly. Is the Covenant thus made sure, then see from it, what weight may be laid on the Promises, and the Articles of it, sometimes his People will be with the Promises,

as men walking upon Ice, that will crack, and fall in, and drown them; some prophane Rascals, dar not hazard upon the Covenant, and the Promises of it, they count them all Fanaticisme, and count them all Fanaticks that take themselves to the Covenant, and the Promises of it; and even Believers are at, *what is become of his promises, doth his word fail for evermore?* O! but his Testimonies are sure; they are Secured, and Ratified by more than was necessary to secure the thing, there are many things added, because of our unbelief, Christ thought, we would scarcely trust him, therefore he would have them Sealed with his own Blood.

Use 2. Secondly, for Use, is the Covenant sure, it serves for Exhortation, and it exhorts to these two things. 1. Is the Covenant thus sure? Then Christian, labour to make it sure to thee, it is one thing to be sure in it self, and another thing to be sure to thee; Divines distinguish betwixt *certitudo mentis*, & *certitudo entis*, the certainty of the thing, and the certainty of the mind about that thing; now if it be sure in it self, make it sure to thee, if it be not so, thou may go under much anxiety, and disquietness of Spirit; and that thou may do this, I offer thee three Rules to walk by, I know there are many think themselves sure, but your web that ye have woven, is but a Spiders web, the least sweep of a Besom, or even a Flea going upon it, will pull it all down, Then 1. Make your Interest in Christ sure, the Woman that marries the Man, makes all the Articles of the Contract sure, now the Covenant is the Contract, and she that marries not the Man, cannot claim a right to the Contract; make your Interest in Christ sure, and ye make all the Articles of the Contract sure; ye that know not that Christ is in you, and are not labouring to secure an interest in him, by all the Characters given of him, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, ye can have no claim to the Covenant, nor the Promises of it, no, no; they cannot claim a right to the Apple, that have not a right to the Apple-tree, they may break the yeard and steal one Apple, but they have no legal right to the Apple-tree. I have often since I began this Doctrine, with the sword of the Lord, laboured to loose the fingers of them, that gleepe to Promises, and take them

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not in the order of the Covenant. 2/y. If ye would make sure your interest in the Covenant, and make it sure to you, I would exhort you to take the Covenant, the promising part of it, in its full latitude, and freedom, remember ye not; when we were speaking of the order of the Covenant, we told you, that a Believer should quit Christ of nothlog of his Bond, the Father when he dealt with him, forgave him not one farthlog, he required of him fully, according to the tenor of the Covenant of Works, for he knew, he could well pay it: there are Promises of pardon, of Repentance, of influences, of a glistered Righteousness, &c. He is able to acquit himself of the whole Bond, the thing that makes it unsure to us, we take not up the promissary part of the Covenant in its full latitude, and puts him not to it, in all the Articles of it, and Clauses of it, to make them out; what ever thy case be, that makes the doubt of thy interest to the Covenant, there is not a case thou can be in, but there is a promise for it; I have gotten something of the Seed of God in me, but it's not active, nor in exercise, it's mingled in with much corruption; I cannot get a Righteousness to cover it, what ever it be, put him to it, whether it be in the case of hardness of heart, or the want of influences, or dulness in prayer, or wandring of the mind in prayer, put him to his promise in the full latitude and extent of it, for he is like a strained Breast, it's an ease to him to have the Child sucking its fill, and the more it sucks, the more the breast is eased; put him to his Promise, even to the utmost, and the more ye put him to it, in all the variety of cases ye can be under, (for ye will get variety of Promises) the welcomer; put him to it, without Dispensation in Spiritual and Eternal things, and this will be the way to secure you in the Covenant. 3/y. If ye would make sure your Interest in the Covenant, and make it sure to you, then look to the commanding part of the Covenant, look it be in the order ye heard of, first believe, then pray and meditate on all the Commands, for what is done without believing is sin, without Faith it is impossible to please God; so if ye would secure your Interest in the Covenant, and secure it to you, look to the Commanding part of it, if we were true to these things,

and

and labouring to secure our Interest in Christ, the Apple-tree that bears all the Apples would be ours, if we were putting him to the promising part of the Covenant to the utmost, for every thing we stand in need of, and minding the commanding part in the order of the Covenant, mingling in believing in all our Duties, and looking upon it, as the great condition of the Covenant, indispensibly required to all the Duties of it; we would not have so many complaints, that we are unsure about the Covenant; but carelessness and slothfulness, is the Nurse of doubting, the best way of clearing doubts, is diligence. But 2ly. Is the Covenant thus sure, as ye have heard? I exhort you, not only to make it sure to you but since God hath made it so sure, labour ye to be sure to him; it's true, if we be once in Covenant, we cannot fall out of a covenanted estate again, the promises of Grace, the promise of Influences, of Pardon, of Repentance, and a gifted Righteousness, they are all secured to us in that Covenant; yet this opens no door to security, if we would have the Covenant indeed secure, as it is sure on Gods part, we would labour to be sure to him; and here I offer you three things. First, Several come under vows and obligations to God, sometimes at the Sacrament of the Supper, and sometimes under affliction, and they break over them again, and O! but it's a dreadful thing to break unto the Lord, it is a notable Bridle upon the head of corruption, to bring it under a vow. *I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and how shall I go back?* says *Jeptha*; if the thing be commanded of God, that thou hast vowed, thou has a double ty upon thee to keep it; but if it be indifferent, the Lord prizes it highly, see an instance of this in the *Rechabites*, *Jeremiah* 35. 6. *Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever, &c.* and they kepted it, and three hundred years after this time, *Jeremiah* could not perswad them to drink wine, when he set pots full of wine before them, they said, we will drink no wine; and the Lord commended them for it, and promised them. *verse* 19. that *Jonadab* should not want a man to stand before him for ever. So if thou would make the Covenant sure to thee, take heed thou break not over thy vows, least

least God give thee over to follow thy lusts. 2ly. I exhort thee to walk dependently upon God, like a Child that dar not trust his own legs, if he be young, upon the top of a Rock, or in a windy day, therefore he goes in his Fathers hand; if thou would be sure to God, never neglect prayer morning and evening, and in all thy business go to him in prayer, the man answered well, when he was asked, what wilt thou do with such a business? I must go to God, says he, and know his mind; the person that can ly down without prayer at night, and rise without prayer in the morning, there is no temptation, but he is a prey unto it, there is no gutter, but he may fall into it, Why? He is not walking in his Fathers hand, but upon his own legs. 3ly. Christian, if thou would be sure to him, be oft examining thy self in thy case, let us not run on like a Bankrupt, that never examines his case.

Use 3. Thirdly for Use, Is the Covenant so sure? Then improve it for consolation; I know not how many ways practically it might be improved, for the consolation of Believers. 1. It might be improved for consolation, in reference to all the reelings of times; I doubt if any generation have seen mo reelings, and that to the worse, than this generation, what a deal of toyling, tossing, and alteration there is, and hath been; but the Covenant is sure, reel times as they will, and serve that reeling Master who will, there is no alteration in the Covenant, for it is sure. 2ly. It's a great Cordial against all the revolutions of our case; some days we are refresh'd and cheerful, and another day we are cast down and discouraged, yet this is consistent with the sureness of the Covenant; rejoyce in the certainty of the Covenant, under all these vicissitudes and changes; alterations of providence, as this reeling world is full of them, whilles Winter showres, and then Summer bloks, to's and fro's, ups and downs, are the ordinary and constant lot of men, so long as they live in time, but yet the Covenant is sure, there is no alteration there, the Mediator hath driven the Nails, and rooved it so fast, that he hath gotten his Fathers Oath for all the Articles of it, and sealed it with his own blood. O! how may this make you, who can give an

an account of all the changes, the ups and downs ye have met with, whiles a bit of Meadow, and then a Hill, whiles a Burn with some Briars about it, and then a Brae; How sweetly may they sing? [the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure;] since the day he treated this Covenant, it's like a Rock; nay, since *Abraham's* days, nay, more since eternity; ye heard, it was Contracted from eternity in the purpose of God, there was not, nor will not be the least alteration of it to eternity.

But to close this Discourse, I will shut it up with these two words, 1. I would have you now and then taking a view of this Covenant, greater and better things cannot be desired, than are contained in this Covenant; ye have now heard many Sermons upon it, wherein all the things that I judge necessary, to be spoken to, and many more yet to be spoken to, have been handled; I would have you make use of all the helps ye can get from the Covenant, and be often sorting the Promises, as Apothecaries use to do with Herbs, laying them in Bundles together, that when ye have to do with such a promise, ye may know where to get it, and after ye have considered the Covenant in all the Articles of it, add to it, these are all sure. 2ly. The generality of Ranters, and these that come under temptations from Satan, they question not, but that the Covenant is great, the Promises exceeding great and precious, but all the matter is, if they be sure; this is the thing that makes ungodly men lay their souls at the Stake for a while of their lusts; they resolve to take a time of it, and the ground of it is, the Covenant is not sure; but be taking a view of all the particulars ye have gotten laid down before you this day, and be persuaded, there is no greater certainty, that the Sun will go down the night, and rise the morn, that the Moon will keep her course, that the fire is hot; yea, there is no greater certainty ye have heard with your ears, and seen with your eyes, than this Covenant is, in all the Articles of it; therefore answer all your temptations with this, that are tempting you to call the Covenant Phantasm, and call them Phanticks that take themselves to it; but take

this

this Covenant, and view it in all the Articles of it, and ye will find it sure, and then ye shall be made to sing, *the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure.*

SERMON. XXXI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

I Have spoken to three Branches of this verse, First, the nature of *David's* security, with which he encourages himself at death, it is a Covenant. Secondly, the Parties Indenturing in this Covenant, the Lord and me, the Lord hath made with me. Thirdly, the properties of this Covenant, whereof very remarkable are mentioned by him, it's everlasting, it's ordered in all things, and it's sure. I will not resume any thing that hath been spoken to, but I come to the fourth Branch of this Verse, which contains the superstructure, and that which *David* builds on this Covenant so qualified; and there are two great things he builds on it. First, All his hope of salvation. Secondly, Satisfaction to all his desires, *this is all my salvation, and all my desire*; now mens desires are vast, it is not easie to find that one thing that will satisfy all our desires, but saith he, *this is all my desire*, or that satisfies all my desires, I desire no more, since he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

But I will take the first of them to be the Subject of some few Sermons, *this is all my salvation*, the word in the Hebrew *Col-segni*, it's rendered by *Montanus*, *cuncta salus mea*; these

these words are not in the Hebrew, but supplied by Interpreters, as being implied in it; it's a pathetick expression, *all my salvation*, but these words are put in to make up the sense.

Before I can reach what I design, there are two Textual doubts necessary to be cleared: 1. What is meant by *salvation*? 2^d. How this Covenant can be called *all his salvation*? For the first, What is meant by *salvation*? The word *salvation* hath several senses in Scripture, it's sometimes put for the Doctrine of the Gospel, so ye find it, *Heb. 2. 3, 4.* speaking of the word of the Gospel delivered by Christ, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?* That is, the Doctrine of the Gospel, ordinarily it's put in Scripture, as ye will find it *Heb. 1. last Verse, Are they not all ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister to them, who shall be heirs of salvation?* that is of Heaven.

The other difficulty is greater, how can the Covenant be called *all his salvation*, or *all his Heaven*? Are there not rivers of pleasures at his right hand, and who would be content to take the Covenant for all their Heaven? For Answer to this; take notice that there is a figurative speech in this, the object is taken as including the act relating to its object; some read, *it is all the conduit or channel through which my salvation runs*; but the current of Interpreters take it thus, *this is all my hope of salvation*, as in the following words, *this is all my desire*, the act of the soul is taken, that is, this is sufficient to all my desires; so here, the object is taken as including the act, *this is all my salvation*, that is to say, *this is all my hope of salvation*. That ye may be perswaded of this the more, take notice, 1. That *salvation* is sometimes taken in this sense in Scripture, as *Luke 19. 9. This day is salvation come to thy house*, that is, *this day is the hope or assurance of salvation come to thy house*, says Christ to Zachaeus, when he called him down from the Tree. 2^d. Ye shall find one, even David, in personal Covenanting with God; who uttered these words, expressing very confidently his hope of *salvation*, *Psal. 16. 2. O my soul, thou hast laid unto the Lord,*
thou

thou art my Lord, &c. Which generally is understood of personal Covenanting; but *vers. 9. For this my flesh shall rest in hope*; there ye have him building the hope of salvation on this Covenant, his flesh shall rest in hope, on the account of his entering in a personal Covenant with God, this is all my hope or assurance of salvation.

But there remains a third difficulty, how can this be called *all his hope of salvation*? Is not Christ and mercy amongst the grounds of his hope of salvation? Shall I rob Christ to cloth the Covenant with the honour due to him? But the Covenant is as the Case, and Christ as the Jewel, for all the excellency of the Covenant comes from Christ; this as ye shall hear, excludes the Covenant of Works, and it's one of the places some bring against Justification by Works; but this Covenant neither excludes Christ, nor mercy, for they are like the blood that run through all the Vetus of the Covenant, so *this is all my salvation*, the meaning is, *this is all my hope of salvation*. If any shall ask, what ground have I to hope that I will come to glory? This is all my hope of salvation, that God hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and this is all my salvation, &c.

Having cleared the words to you, I will take two Observations, and shall be but brief on the first, that I may come to the second. *Observ. 1.* That Believers have in their straits, and especially at their death, the hope of salvation for their encouragement. *Observ. 2.* That all the ground of their hope is, that God hath made with them an everlasting Covenant, &c. It's founded on the Covenant of Grace, and on their personal and proper interest in it, these two ly natively in the words, and hearken to them, If ye would have some of the greatest things of greatest concernment, cleared unto you.

Doct. For the first, That believers have the hope of salvation, as an encouragement in their greatest affliction, but especially at death. David is at his last words, as the beginning of the Chapter tells us this, many proofs ye have in Scripture of this, as *Gen. 49. 18. Jacob* is making his Testament, and tells his Children what will befall them, and what Legacy he leaves
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leaves

leaves them, and in the midst of it, he puts in something for himself, Lord, saith he, *I have waited for thy salvation*, he takes this portion to himself, and encourages himself with it; It were needless to prove this, that believers have in their straits, and at death, the hope of salvation to encourage them with, the Martyrs have washed their hands in the flames, and counted them beds of Roses, because of the hope of salvation; some of the Martyrs have told their Neighbours, let us walk a while in the fire, and in the twinkling of an eye we will be at our Fathers house: When they were weeping over Master Ridley in his house, do not weep for me, saith he, for I shall have a sharp Dinner, but I shall have a good Supper.

Quest. 1. Before I apply it, I would Inquire a little in the Doctrinel part, how it is? or when it is, that the hope of salvation proves so great a encouragement in straits, and at death to Believers? Whence is it, that it proves so supporting?

Ans. For opening this to you a little, ye would notice these four or five remarkable things, First, the back that bears affliction is patience; now the hope of salvation strengthens patience, 1 *Thes.* 1. 3. The Apostle joyns these three together, *Your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.* I deny not, but there is in affliction a twofold patience; there is, as some call it, a desperate patience, men force themselves to be patient; many are at, *there is no hope for me in God*, we will walk after the imagination of our own hearts; and there is a stupid and ignorant patience, like the patience Nabal had in his drunkenness, O so courageously as he speaks to David's Messengers, 1 *Sam.* 25. 10. *Who is David? or who is the son of Jesse?* There be many Servants now a-days, that break from their Masters, *Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?* And vers. 37. when Abigail his Wife had told him, after he had been drunk, what was Davids purpose, his heart grew stupid, or his heart died within him; Many have such patience, that wears off

when

when the stupidity wears off; but none of these are the patience of hope; so long as hope lasts, patience lasts, and it's easie to go through affliction, and hope put betwixt the Lord and it. 2/7. It's an encouragement, in regard not only helps its patience, but it influences joy, *we rejoyce in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh experience, and experience patience, and patience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.* It's observed by some Divines, that there are two Graces that hath a special influence on a Believers joy, Faith and Hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. *After ye believed, ye rejoyced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.* The reason why these two Graces influences a Believers joy is, Faith assures what Christ hath done, and Hope assures what he will do; now lay these two together, the assurance of what Christ hath done, and will do, is it any wonder that there be a great deal of chearfulness in tribulation? Faith hath influence on our joy, and so upon our hope, and he that goes through the valley of the shadow of death, and the heart filled with chearfulness and joy, is it any wonder that he be encouraged, and be not damped with affliction? 3/7. This hope of salvation is a great encouragement, in regard it fills the heart with an earnest longing after salvation, suppose it be in the case of death, none longs more for Heaven, than those that have assurance of it: It's a remarkable word ye have *Rom.* 8. 23. *And not only they, but our selves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we our selves groan within our selves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body, for we are saved by hope:* Mark here, they that have received the first fruits of the Spirit, should be longing, now we groan, why groan we? We long for glory, the fore-casts they have gotten of glory, are appetizing, and makes them long, yea groan for it. The persons that have no rational hope of glory, are indifferent about it, when the Lord tryts with affliction that threatens death, he that hath the hope of glory, knows he is near the thing that he hath been groaning for, no wonder it prove a special encouragement, in regard it's an answer of the groaning, that they that have had the first fruits of the Spirit have been groaning for. 4/7. This hope of salvation, cannot but be

a special encouragement in affliction, and at death, because this hope of salvation influences contempt of the world; there is nothing will make the world more despicable in ones eyes, than the lively hope of Heaven; it's remarkable that is spoken of Abraham, Heb. 11. 9. *By faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange land; and what moved him to sojourn in this land? v. 10. For he looked for a city that had foundations, whose builder and maker was God: Could not Abraham be content with Canaan, it was a pleasant land, a land that flowed with milk and honey? But the thing that made him look upon this land, as a thing not much to be prized, he looked for a city that had foundations, whose builder and maker was God; the hope he had of Heaven, made him think little of Canaan: Ordinarily an earthly man hath nothing, If ye take the world from him, to counter-balance the loss of it with; but take Canaan from Abraham, it will not much trouble him, for he looked for a City, &c. And this is a great encouragement under any tribulation, when we can get an heart to condemn the world, for it is that Pitch that sticks to our fingers, that makes either affliction or death so grievous; but where a person hath gotten the hope of salvation, he looks on the world as Abraham looked on Canaan, he looked on it as a strange Land, and looked for a City that had foundations, &c. 5^{ly}. The hope of salvation proves a great encouragement, in regard of Hope, especially when the Soul comes to the full assurance of Hope, it hath assurance of these three things, 1. It assures the salvation to be certain, for hope grounding it self on Faith, hath apprehended its object; for Faith & Hope have the same object, but diversly considered; Hope brings in Assurance of the certainty of the object, so where the Soul comes to a lively hope of salvation, it's sure. 2^{ly}. Hope brings Assurance, that the object is transcendent, that the salvation looked for, will counter-balance all the afflictions of time, *The light afflictions of this present world, saith Paul, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed; and what a special Cordial is this in affliction, and at death?* 3^{ly}. Hope discovers the suberviency of affliction to Glory, through much affliction we must enter into Glory: It may be said of every Christian, as Christ said to the two Disciples*

disciples going to Emmaus, *Ought not he to suffer these things?* Now, when one comes to be lively in the hope of salvation, it not only assures, this is a rock, a resting place, but it assures, that all our afflictions will be swallowed up in that. Now lay all these together, the influence that the hope of salvation hath on patience, and joy, and groaning after glory, and contempt of the world, and that it hath in it the assurance both of the glory to come, and the transcendency of the glory, and the suberviency of affliction to that glory; I say, lay them all together, and I hope ye are convinced, that the hope of salvation is a special Cordial, though ye were under the greatest affliction, and even at your last word.

Quest. 2. The second Question I shall clear, what is this hope of salvation, that is so great a Cordial in affliction and at death? It's true, we have no express definition of Hope in our Catechism; many think it's included in the description of Faith, it being an act, whereby we rely on God for the good promised, and not yet accomplished, differing only from Faith in that, that the object of Faith is present, and the object of Hope is future; but that ye may know what this hope of salvation is, I will describe it thus, *It's a supernatural grace, wrought by God in the heart of a believer, whereby he expects and waits for from God, the good of the promise not yet accomplished.* It's a supernatural grace, grace cannot be the hope of salvation in a natural heart, there cannot be a lively hope in a natural heart, nay, Heathens cannot have this lively hope, they have had some hope of resemblance since the Fall, their hope is like an old Tower, that is all fallen and ruinous, ye find some pieces of the Wall standing, which tells there was once a stately House there, but now there is nothing but a bit of old Wall; so the hope of the natural heart that remains since the Fall, is but a bit of a decayed Tower, it's not a house wherein a man can shelter himself from challenges, from rain, storm, and terrors; it's a supernatural grace, and Heathens they can have no hope of salvation, but some reliques of the old Wall, that says, once there was a House there. Next, it is a supernatural grace wrought by God, all the Angels and Ministers could

could not work this grace of hope, therefore if ye find a person tending to despair, all the Ministers ye can bring to them, cannot bring them to this hope of salvation till God work it. 3/y. It's a supernatural grace, wrought in the heart of a Believer, the person must be first a Believer, before he can have the hope of salvation. 4/y. The object of it is, some good not yet accomplished, for hope that is seen in no hope; so if ye would see what this hope of salvation is, that is so great encouragement in affliction, and at death, it's a supernatural grace, wrought by God in the heart of a believer.

Quest. 3. There is only one practical Question, to make way for the application that I shall clear, and it's this; Have all believers this hope of salvation in their end, to encourage them with? *David* had it indeed, but have all believers; and all that are in Covenant with God, have they this hope of salvation? The rather this difficulty is to be noticed, in regard, 1. The Lord sometimes will bring some to their last words, very despondent, full of fears; there are many, their first assurance hath been, the setting their foot on the Shore; and many have gone in to glory, and the tear in their eye, with the fear of the pit; have they all then this hope of salvation, to be their encouragement at their last words?

Ans. I will Answer this in these three or four particulars. 1. All Believers have grounds of the hope of Salvation, they are all within the Covenant, they have the promise of God, the promise of God, and the purchase of Christ; it's true, their Evidences may be out of sight, and so dark, that they cannot read them in the night, and readily the tear may be in their eye, and they cannot see to read their Evidences; yet generally, all the Elect and Believers, they have, as learned men observe, this hope of Salvation, either *in promisso, in decreto, or in semine*, they have a ground to hope for Salvation, and ye must distinguish betwixt these two, the actual hope, and the ground of hope, it's true, the very unbelievers, and ungodly men, have a possibility of hope, which is a great mercy, there is hope for a living man, the Devils and Apostat Angels, would buy this possibility of hope

hope at a dear rate, but they are excluded from a possibility of hope; but the Elect they have a possibility of hope, either *in promisso, in decreto, or in semine*, they have the actual ground of hope, though readily the exercise of their hope be slow. 2/y. Though God deny to some the assurance of hope, yet ordinarily he gives the full assurance of it, then it's a Question among Divines, what is the reason that many that have gone doubting all their dayes, that when they have come to die, have had more peace, more joy, more clearness, than before? They Answer, that God, who is the Steward of our peace, and of our joy, keeps it till then, and then he letteth it out. And 2/y. They, whom God denies the full assurance of hope, they will be content of bare marks at death, and under affliction, they would not be content of it another time, and the marks they rejected when they were well, they are forced to take them then, And 3/y. He may deny it for good reasons known to himself, and they are especially three, why even at the latter end of some, he will deny them the actual exercise of the hope of Salvation. 1. To let them see, that he is Lord of his own Grace, and of his own time, to dispose as he thinks fit; for if there were alwayes a hope of Salvation, in the end we would think it due; though he give it ordinarily, yet he makes exceptions, to let us see, that he reserves a latitude to himself, and will not fix nor determine a time; for the communication of his influences. 2/y. There are some that die under some unrepented sins, they may have gone through their whole lives, and may have heard many Sermons, and yet may be secure, and quiet, and hardened, though their Consciences could tell them of some secret guilt, they have committed in their life, unrepented for; no wonder he give them a Storm in the mouth of the Harbour, not to take away their hope, but to let them see, that he is Lord of his own Grace, and of his own Time. Mr. Sibbs Observes, that they have had manifest terrours in their end, that had severest in their life, a person that goes under a quiet peaceable way of Religion all their life time, who neither in the beginning, nor progress of it, hath had many Terrours, will have a Storm in the End; though he secure

their Salvation, yet he may deny the strong actual exercise of the hope of Salvation, all their Life-time.

4/y. Though the Lord deny the Joy, or Assurance of the hope of Salvation, as there is Joy and Assurance of the hope of Salvation, evidenced in Scripture, yet there is in all Believers, a secret Innitency of hope, as there is a secret relying of Faith, so there is a secret Innitency in hope; I have been witness to some, that at Death-bed could be brought to no hope of Salvation, and when they were bidden quite and renounce and despair of the hope of Salvation, no, they durst do nothing of that kind, which evidences, there was some secret act of Innitency on Christ, and hoping for the thing promised, though there was not the actual exercise of it. So in Answer to the Question, ye have all these four, First, that all men have a possibility of hope, that the Devils, and Apostat Angels cannot have. Secondly, Believers have alwayes the grounds of hope, either in the Decree, the Promise, or in the Seed. Thirdly, If the Lord deny them the actual exercise of hope, it is either to chastise them, for some Unrepented guilt, or for tryal, to let them see that he is Lord of his own coming and going, and not to limit him to a Time. Fourthly, to learn them to distinguish, betwixt a secret act of hope, so that a man cannot well call it hope himself, yet it hath hope imported in it, and a real act of hope, that is strong, lively and in exercise; so that generally the point holds, that Believers in their latter end have the hope of Salvation, and this hope is a special cordial to patience, and longing for Glory, and to all that I have formerly spoken of.

Sermon

SERMON XXXII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

David the Son of Jesse in his last words, like the Nightingale, sang sweetlest toward his end; he hath sung of the Covenant, and hope of Salvation, he had from it, he had fallen in Adultery and Murder, and many grievous sins. yet he casts not away the hope of Salvation, but he dies with it among his last words, because God had made with him an everlasting Covenant, &c. I opened the meaning of these words, *all my Salvation*, I followed the Doctrinal part of the first Doctrine, I will come now to the Application, and be brief in it.

But do Believers in their straits, and at Death, ordinarily rejoyce in the hope of Salvation? there is a threefold use I will speak a little unto.

Use. The first Use is of Exhortation, be exhorted to get this hope of Salvation, it's excellent in your Life, but chiefly comfortable at Death; all things then will be bidding you adieu: it's recorded of *Quintus Curtius* in the Life of *Alexander*, that when he was going to *Asia*, he distributed his Kingdom among his Favourites, and when one asked him, what he would leave to himself? he answered hope; man must in a little distribute his Estate and Moveables, and what will he leave to himself, except he have this hope of Salvation. I exhort you to get this Hope, ye that want it.

But ye will ask, how ye shall come at it? For helping you to it, I would offer you some considerations, and some Practices for helping you to it.

First,

First, Take notice of some Considerations, and I shall name these Three, First, it may help you to this, that ye are under a possibility of this hope, hope is possible for you, it were a folly to preach among the Devils, or the damned in Hell to hope, for they are excluded from all possibility of hope, If they had ten thousand worlds, and every one of them better than this World, they would give it all for hope, if it were but possible for them to get it; but there is a possibility for you, in a little ye will be beyond the possibility of it, if ye do it not now. 2/y. Consider what a dreadful thing it is, to be without the hope of Salvation; the Apostle Ephes. 2. 12. Knits these two together, *having no hope, and without God in the world*; if ye be without hope, ye are without God, and what have ye in your hand, if ye be without God? It's but a poor thing ye have in your own hand, ye have your little Cottage and your Dyer, and your clothing, is that your all? If ye be without the hope of Salvation, ye have your all in your hand; what a dreadful thing is that, and what a poor man is he, that hath no more but what he hath in his own hand. 3/y. I exhort you to Consider to press you to get this hope of Salvation, that ye are trysted with a tossing time, a time of tryal, If we were without hope, says Paul, we were of all men most miserable, what will be your cordial in all the trials and afflictions ye may meet with, If ye want the hope of Salvation? I might add many more to press you, to get this hope of Salvation, but if ye ponder these that I have given you, they may be of great weight.

I would offer you four Practises, I that would second these Considerations with, to press you to get this hope of Salvation. 1. I exhort you to take heed of a counterfeit hope, *The hope of the hypocrite, says Job, shall be like the giving up the Ghost*, They gloss it well, that say, *The hope of the hypocrite, shall go away, as the giving up of the Ghost*. True Faith and true Hope, had never greater enemies than the counterfeit of them; *Jeroboam* was a great Politician, when he resolved to keep Israel from the worship of the true God at *Jerusalem*, he will not keep them from all worship, but will set up in the place of one God, two calves, one at *Dan*, and another

another at *Bethel*; Some gloss it, he will give them dayly work, if he set up a counterfeit hope; better have one true God, than two calves, and there is nothing will hinder them more from the worship of the true God, than these two calves, therefore take heed of counterfeit hope; for Whoremongers and Adulterers, will enter into the Kingdom of God, before proud Pharisees, and they that have counterfeit hope. 2/y. If ye would win at this hope of Salvation, I exhort in the second place, to be more diligent, Heb. 6. 11. *And we desire, that every one of you, do shew the same diligence, wheretore diligence? To the full assurance of hope unto the end*; be not slothful or negligent, a person that would come to this Hope, would not only be serious, but diligent in his seriousness; we must be both diligent and serious, or else we cannot have a well grounded hope of salvation. Therefore if ye would be at this Salvation, that comforted David at his last words, take heed of a counterfeit hope, and be diligent and serious in it. 3/y. If thou would attain this hope of Salvation, thou who art without it, I exhort thee to be a serious student of the Covenant, the great ground of hope is from the Covenant, all that we may expect from Christ, or mercy, is holden out in the Covenant; therefore a Christian that would grow in this hope of Salvation, or would have it real, should (like a Child) be lying at the Breasts of the Covenant, and sucking out of these Breasts; Observe the Conditions of the Covenant, if thou understand not the Covenant, and suck not out of the Breasts of the Covenant, thy hope is but a patched up hope, and like the hope of the Hypocrite, that hath only a Portraiture in the Soul, and not a living hope; study these things, if ye would be at a well grounded hope of Heaven. I know there are many would be at a well grounded Hope of Heaven, they see they must die, and that their dayes will not ay last, and that it will not be the thoughts of creatures, that will determine, whether they be good or evil; if ye would have a hope, that will stand through in that day, observe these things, consider there is a possibility of getting it, It may be it close before this Winter be done, and consider if ye have no hope, and be without God, ye have no cordial in

In affliction, and at death, In a little ye must divide all that ye have, and leave it behind you, and not take a frothie thing to the grave with you, and except ye retain a hope of salvation, ye take not so much as a sheet to the grave with you, take heed of the counterfeit hope, and be serious and diligent, and suck your hope out of the Covenant.

Use 2. Another Use of this Doctrine, is this hope of salvation so great a Cordial in affliction, and at death? I would from this encourage you that hath this hope, of all the places of Scripture ye may take up that morning and evening, 1 Pet. 1. 3. & 4. and sing. *Blessed be the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, &c.* Suppose ye count on never so many Cresses, if ye have hope of Salvation, he hath made up in one Jewel, all that he hath cast down in all his desponditions to them; ye that have this hope, I exhort you to two things, first, to live answerable to this hope; secondly, I exhort you to strengthen it; first, ye that have this hope, live answerable, many a time our hope and our way is knir together.

Quest. 1. I will prosecute this Exhortation in answering this Question, how a Christian that is hoping for Heaven, lives answerable to his hope? for it is unsuitable for us to profess the hope of glory, and live as we do, we speak of our Countrey but seldom, and we speak not as Travellers going home to their Countrey.

Ans. 1 will answer this in these few particulars. 1. A Christian lives up in some measure to his hope of Salvation, when he is careful to do nothing that will contradict his hope; if we be without faith, it's impossible to please God, and so without hope of Salvation; there is no prayer we put up, but we should examine, is there Faith in it? we preach nothing, we hear nothing, we read nothing, but we should examine, is there a mystery of Faith in it? we should do nothing but what may consist with our hope; *Nehemiah* reasoned well, when he was bid file into the Temple to save his Life, *shall such a man as I be*, sayes he? If a man
wrong

wrong you, and ye find thoughts of revenge against him, and will not forgive him, ye contradict your hope; have ye the hope of the forgiveness of a Debt of a thousand talents, and will thou stand with thy fellow servant, for the Debt of an hundred talents? if ye have the hope to walk with him in white, and to have all the guilt of your heart, and your way washen in the blood of the Lamb, and will ye stand at a Trifle; that expects the removal of a mountain? 2ly. Positively, one comes up to the hope of Salvation, in the practice of these four things. 1. We walk like our hope, when we keep company in the world like our hope, we profess we are strangers in this world, and hopes in a little to be at home, in less than threescore and ten years, and yet we keep not company like our hope; it's a remarkable word of *Abraham's*. *Heb. 11. 9.* By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, the heirs with him of the same promise; *Abraham* kept within doors, and whom had he to converse with? He had *Isaac* and *Jacob* heirs of the same Promise, Travellers in a far Countrey, upon the account they are countrey men, and minds to be at home, they travel, they converse, and traffick together, and can thou have hope to be in Heaven, and not wa k suitable to thy hope here? if a Person given to error or prophanity, be the person with whom thy converse is most, and yet hopes to be in the land, where there is neither error nor prophanity, thy walk contradicts thy hope. 2ly. As thou would walk like thy hope in thy company, so I would exhort thee, to walk like thy hope in the strain and hight of thy way; why art thou not more spiritual in thy converse in the world? O! how strange is it for me to profess, I take communion with God, for my chief happiness, and hopes for an eternity of it, and yet can be content with so little of him here; if thou hope to have an eternal communion with him, can thou be content to hear a Sermon, without communion with him? can thou go to a Corner and be content, without communion with him? when thou walks contrair to this, thou walks not suitable to thy hope? if thou have the hope of Salvation, thy secret converse with God, and when thou comes to have publick

public Ordinances, they will all keep up a suitableness to thy hope, otherwise thy hope is false. 3ly. If thou would walk like thy hope, manifest it in thy contempt of the world; the hope of Glory, ought to fill thy heart with contempt of the World: I suppose any saw a man that had a great estate, and had many Farms coming in, and a great many fields of Corn, if ye saw him gathering heads of Corn after the Reapers, among the Beggars, would ye not undervalue his Spirit, and think he walked very unsuitable to what God had given him? The truth is, when Believers are vexed and intangled with the world, constantly having their Joy and their Sorrow, Ebbing and Flowing, as the World ebbs and Flows with them, they walk not like their hope of Heaven: I like the Observation of a great Man, he says, in all the Bible it's never found, that a truly godly man was covetous; and is it not a strange thing, that now it should be the noted sin of Professors? they were guilty of many gross sins, but they were never guilty of that, and they that have the hope of Salvation, expecting to wear a Crown, and to see him as he is, and to carry Palms in their hands, and does not manifest their contempt of the World, they are like a man, having a great Estate, and yet found among the Beggars, gathering after the Reapers. 4ly. If ye would walk suitable to your hope, then ye would manifest it in affliction and death, thus David did here, the last words of the Son of Jesse; I have read it in the *Turks History*, they say a Christian cannot be serious, in believing, that there is such Joys after Death, as the Christians profess, the reason is, say they, they are so unwilling to die; great fears of death evidences small hopes of Heaven. 5ly. If ye would walk suitable to your hope, it would be manifested in your care to get these hopes; Why do we press you to embrace the Covenant, and hearken unto the offers of Salvation, but that ye may come to have that hope of Salvation ye look for?

I exhort you in the second place, to labour to strengthen your hope; wherefore the rather brethren, we exhort you, to give all diligence, to the full assurance of hope; rest not upon a general of hope; unless ye get the full assurance of it; I will not say, the want of assurance of Heaven is a sin, but the

the want of diligence to get assurance is a sin, God may delay assurance of Heaven for Tryal, or for Chastisement.

Quest. Ye may ask, How shall we come by the strengthening of our hope?

Ans. I will offer you three Rules to strengthen your hope, and I beseech you to ponder them. 1. Christian, if thou would have strong hope of Heaven, labour to get a strong love to Christ, the thing that shakes our hope to Heaven is Fear, and perfect Love casts out Fear. 2ly. I exhort thee, to be frequent in exercising thy hope of Heaven, ordinarily any thing gathers a habit by oft acting it, ought it not to be fear that should be putting a person to abstain from sin, or to be comforted against the difficulties of the time? If a Christian meet with Temptations to Sin, if he be under fear of Hell for it, I will go to Hell, if I do this, it is not the way to strengthen hope; but when we are encouraged under difficulties, from the hope of Glory, that in a little, we will be above difficulties, it is the ready way to strengthen hope. 3ly. If ye would have your hope of Heaven strengthened and made sure, observe your experiences ye have of God. *Rom. 5. 4. Patience worketh experience, and experience hope, and hope makes not ashamed;* it's true, the great ground of our hope, ye will find it in the Covenant, therefore observe well your Experiences ye have of God, and of His Word. I would give to Christians three Rules, in their observing experiences of God. 1. Know, that one may have experience of God, and not know that they have it, in the time they have it, there may be a real experience of God, a gracious experience, and yet in the time a person hath it, they may not know they have it; let but any take the discourse betwixt Christ, and the two Disciples, going to Emmaus, all the time that Christ is with them, they know him not, and they speak out much unbelief, *we thought this should have been he, which should have redeemed Israel*, and on the matter, they said, they are beguiled; and yet after he is away, they said, *Did not our heart burn within us?* They observed not the burning of the heart in the time, but after he is away, their heart burns: Many have sweet experiences of Christ, that think not much of them in the time, but after

after they are away, they would give their hearts blood to have them again; there may be a very real experience of God given, and yet in the mean time, not take it for a glorious experience. 2/y. I would have the Christian know, to keep up their hope by experiences of God, that experiences will sometimes be altogether out of sight; so that thou can neither see them in the time, nor after they are gone; I like the advice I have sometimes given a Christian in that case, in keeping up his hope of Heaven, is not to cast away hope, when all experiences are out of sight, but there are two things to keep up hope, when experiences are out of sight. 1. Take up shelter under the absolute Promises, ay when we are dung from our Evidences and Marks, we should not sit down and despair, but go to the absolute Promises, such as, *I will take away the heart of stone, I will sprinkle clean water upon them, &c.* And there may be hope there. 2/y. When experiences are away, it's a Christians duty to seek a new Extract of them again, like a man that hath payed some Debt, and he hath gotten a Discharge of it, but he hath lost it, and he is charged for the Sum again, and he goes to the Register, and takes out a new Extract; So thou art not to cast away all hope, but to go to him for a new Experience, and readily that will be an Extract of the true Discharge, and be as valid in Law, as the Discharge thou hast lost. Record your Experiences of God, and when ye want them, ye are not to cast away your hope of Salvation.

Use 3. The third Use, Is the hope of Salvation so sweet, and so necessary, it serves for Tryal; try of what Mettals ye are made of, I believe there are none sitting here, but they are all filled with the hope of Salvation, your hope will make many of you ashamed, and your Hell may be hotter, than ye had not hoped for Heaven. I will only leave this discourse of the hoping of Salvation, with giving these three Marks, whereby ye may try, if your hope be a Helmet, as the Apostle calls it (Ephes. 6. 17.) of Salvation, of the right Mettal, or only a Counter. 1. The hope of Salvation that is right, we are begotten to it, 1 Pet. 1. 3. *Blessed be the Lord who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, to an inheritance, &c.* It's not a hope of our making, which in Effectu-

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all Calling we are begotten; if thou cannot prove thy Effectual Calling, and thy Regeneration, and that thou art born again, and in Effectual Calling begotten, all thy progress, all thy diligence, and all thy parts, will not prove it a lively hope; therefore examine your Effectual Calling, if ye were begotten again by the Gospel, otherways your hope shall perish with you. 2/y. The hope of Salvation, which is of the right stamp, carries along with it Mortification, Acts 15. 9. *Purifying your hearts by faith*; we have hearts within us, like stables, that would be often mucked; there is a Dung-hill within, that Pride, and that Passion of thine, if ye have the lively Hope of the Inheritance, ye will be cleaning, ye will be sweeping the House every day; what are ye carrying every day out of the heart? there are many that have great hope of Salvation, and if they were dying, they would tell many stories that they had of marks of Salvation, but if ye be not purifying your self, and observing what of corruption ye are carrying out, and what degrees of corruption ye have gotten the victory over, and if there be not this, your hope is not right. A 3d Mark ye have, Collos. 3. 27. *Christ in you, the hope of glory*; What account can ye give of Christ dwelling in you? Where he dwells, he dwells as a King, as a Refiner, as a Counsellor, as a Comforter, as a Leader, as a Guide; He is holden out in all these respects in the Covenant; It's no, if ye have Parts, if ye have Gifts in you, but what account can ye give of his dwelling in you? uses he to sup with you, and ye with him? walks he in you? he hath Promised, *I will walk in them, and dwell in them, and be their God*; when ye meet with Temptation, ye will talk of the hope of Glory, but is Christ dwelling in you, the hope of glory? Lastly, This hope of Salvation, it both flowes from diligence, and is accompanied with diligence, Heb. 6. 11. & 12. *And we desire, that every one of you shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope to the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises*; thou hast a great hope, and a slothful conversation; I have often wondered to see, how careless a way, and so great hope, do we talk of so great a hope, and think we have no more ado, but gather heads,

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among the Stuff, and live as the Begger? Now, put your self to the Tryal in all these four, and if it want these four, it will be a hope, that will be like the giving up of the Ghost, and will leave you in the day of your distress:

SERMON. XXXIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

After David hath spoken of the nature of his Security, that it was by way of Covenant, and after he hath spoken of the Properties, he mentions the encouragements, and superstructures he builds on the Covenant, they are two, *This is all my salvation, and all my desire*: The first of them, I have spoken unto, and shewed you, how the Covenant was all the hope of Salvation, that a Believer had; Gods Mercy, and Christ's Righteousness, Abstract them from the Covenant, it might as well be pleaded by Devils as Men, the thing that makes us have the hope of Salvation from them, and not the Apostat Angels, is the Covenant.

But I come now to the second Superstructure and Encouragement, he hath from this well ordered Covenant, *it's all my desire*; it is not easie to satisfy all desires, our desires run very wide, but this is all my desire; Two things are necessary for clearing this to you. 1. How the Covenant can be called our desire? some gloss it thus, the act is put, say they, for the object, the desire is an act of the will, and sometimes a distinct affection from the will, the *velle*, or that which is the proper act of the Will, is a desire,

fire, and how can the Covenant be called, *this is all my desire*? Therefore some gloss it thus, *all the object of my desire*, the desire is put for the thing desired; or as others will have it, *This is satisfaction to all my desires*, or, *the thing that satisfies all my desires*, and all my desire is, that God hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, &c. But there is a great difficulty behind, How can the Covenant be called satisfaction to all our desires? have we not many Irregular desires, and can it be called satisfaction to all our desires? Therefore the meaning must be, all my lawful or regular desires, the Covenant satisfies all that I can lawfully desire. Now desires may become Irregular, and unlawful two ways. 1. When we desire things unlawful, covetous and lascivious desires, the Covenant satisfies them not at all, but rather condemns them. 2ly. Desires may terminate on lawful objects, in an Irregular way, and the Covenant satisfies them not, a person may have desires after the Covenant, and yet these desires may prove very irregular.

There are three kinds of desires about the Covenant itself, and all these may be irregular desires. 1. Sometimes we desire the blessings of the Covenant, without a right to the Covenant; as if one would desire the fruit of an Apple-tree, without a right to the Tree. 2ly. And sometimes we desire the blessings of the Covenant, and forgets the commands. 3ly. And sometimes we may desire the promises of peace and consolation, without the promises of Effectual Calling; these desires terminate on lawful objects, but they are irregular desires, and the Covenant will not satisfy them; but all our regular desires, all that are warrantable and according to the Covenant, there is in the Covenant satisfaction to them all; the person that hath a Covenant relation to God, they have in that relation, satisfaction to all their desires.

Without insisting further in clearing the words, I will take one Observation, and readily follow it in three or four Sermons, for it is a great truth, and as important a truth, as any that hath yet occurred in this Verse, and the Observation shall be this;

Doctrine. *That the Covenant is satisfaction to all our desires: If God hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, it's that which*

which may satisfie all my desires; It's true, It will not satisfie our irregular and unwarrantable desires, It will not satisfie covetous and lascivious desires: I remember I read of a man, who came to a Philosopher, O saith he, he is a happy man that hath all his desires; the Philosopher answered, he is a happy man, but a far happier man, that desires nothing but what he ought to desire: so, If we desire nothing but what we ought to desire, the Covenant will satisfie all our desires. This shall be the Theme that I resolve to follow a little, that an Interest in the everlasting Covenant, is satisfaction to all our lawful desires. It will be a great work to convince you of this, but I hope to make it appear from very rational grounds, and so let you see, that the torment we have in our life, It's not from want of grounds of satisfaction to our desires, but from the irregularity of our desires, we go in our desires beyond what we ought.

That the Covenant affords ground of satisfaction to all our desires, before I prove it, I must give you this Caution as Introductory to it: Satisfaction of desires consists in two things, 1. The object that satisfies must be adequat and full, it must be as comprehensive as the desires are large, otherways it cannot satisfie; it is very observable that School-men teach, that in glory, if there were one desire unsatisfied, it would be a degree of misery, he that hath an appetite, and hath his desire unsatisfied, is in so far miserable; and if there were one desire, and one thing in our appetite not satisfied, it would be a degree of misery; so, what is satisfying to desires, must be adequat and fully proportioned to the desire. 2ly. As it must be a full, so it must be suitable satisfaction, as some describe it, it consists in a suitability of the object to the faculty; so that if ye ask, what is that, which satisfies the desires of the soul? It's a full object, and an object suitable to all the faculties in the soul: so when we say, the Covenant satisfies all our desires, there are two things we must instruct to you, that the Covenant is full & comprehensive of all the good we can desire, and that these good things are suitable to our desire: these two I will labour to make out in this Sermon, that I may prove that the Covenant is satisfaction to all our desires, I shall first prove

prove it to be full and adequat, and then prove It to be suitable, and consequently prove It full satisfaction to all our desires.

First, That the Covenant is full, abundantly adequat and comprehensive of all the things we can warrantably desire: for clearing of this, I will offer you first some general proofs of it, and secondly some particular and special proofs of it.

First, I will offer you some general proofs of it, and by way of Introduction to them, I will give you this in the entry, *That God in the Covenant resolved to lay himself out to the utmost, Mat. 22.* the Gospel-offers in the Covenant, are like to a certain King, that made a Marriage-feast, at the Marriage of his only Son; a King making a Feast, and making a Marriage-feast at the Marriage of his only Son, thou may be sure he would lay himself out to the utmost at that Feast; so the Lord hath laid himself out to the utmost in the Covenant: This being generally premised, it may make you expect, that it will not be difficult to prove, that the Covenant contains satisfaction to all our desires.

And I will offer you these four general proofs of it, 1. The Covenant contains all the excellences that are to be found in the Creatures; ordinarily our desires they are regulate by our senses, like *Eve* we see the Apple, and we have an appetite after it, according as we see, our appetite and our desires are regulate; by hearing and seeing, there is nothing excellent that ever we heard of, or saw, but It's contained in the Covenant; take a view of the Covenant, and ye will find in it the promises of a Kingdom; nay more, of Bread, Wine, Milk, Honey, Myrrhe, Spices; ye will find also in the Covenant, promises of Fountains, Gardens, Beds of Roses, ye will find Gold, Linen, Eye-salve: there are some Divines have taken pains in some of their Books, to gather all the similitudes together, and they evidence, that there is nothing excellent in the Creature, but It's promised in the Covenant; If a man have a desire after Gold, and fine Gold, if he have a desire after Linen, and fine Linen, after Bread, Wine, Spices, Beauty, ye will find one, who is white and rudy, hath promised all these in the Covenant; what ever It be that a man hath an appetite after,

after, ye will find it in the Covenant; and since the Covenant contains all these things that are excellent among the Creatures, is it any wonder that it satisfie all desires? all pleasure, profit, honour, or what-ever the appetite can be carried after, is promised in the Covenant; and which is remarkable, Gold, Bread, Wine, fine Linnen, &c. they are but shadows that are to be found among the Creatures, the substance is only to be found in the Covenant: It's called fine Gold, to distinguish it from Gold in the earth, it's called fine Linnen, for all other Linens are but black in comparison of this; It's called Eye-salve, for Salves may be Salves to our finger when it is cut, but it's much to make up Eye-salve; all excellencies in the Creature, are only to be found in the Creature in the Shell, and are to be found in the Covenant in the Kernel. 2ly. All that is in glory, and all that is in Heaven, are contained in the Covenant: The Apostle tells us *Isaiah 64. 4. Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.* It is a strange description given of Heaven in Scripture, *Rev. 21. 10. It's called a City, and a great City, and vers. 12. The wall of it hath twelve gates, and vers. 14. It hath twelve foundations, and vers. 19. The foundations of the wall of the City, are garnished with precious stones, and vers. 21. The streets of the City are of pure gold, and vers. 22, and 23. There is no Temple there, and there is no need of the Sun there, for the Lamb is the Temple of it, and the Sun is the light of it; now, ear hath not heard, nor eye hath not seen a City like that which is described there, and the Covenant holds out all these; therefore some have well observed on this Text, that the Covenant not only satisfies all our desires, but it contains something more than our desires, our desires would never have reached the longing after such a City, that had such gates, and such foundations, and streets, &c. So the Covenant must contain satisfaction to all our desires, for all the excellencies in the Creature, and all the excellencies of glory, are promised in the Covenant. 3ly. The Covenant must satisfie all our desires, in regard it holds out to us what ever is in God; his Infinite At-*

tributes,

tributes, his Mercy, his Goodness, his Truth, his Power, all these are made over to us in the Covenant; there is more in God than we can desire, nay, there is something in God; that it is impossible for our wit to reach: It's remarkable *Mat. 22. 32. Christ Proves against the Sadducees the resurrection from the dead, from that word he spake to Moses at the burning Bush, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living:* all the Philosophers on earth, could never have drawn that consequence out of that word; would not any have thought it so remote a proof of the resurrection, that no Physician, no Philosopher, nor no Jurist could have drawn such a consequence, unless Christ had done it himself? There is somewhat in that word; *my God, and I am the God of Abraham, &c.* that will require Christ to explain it. Now, in the Covenant he hath made over himself to us, and all that he hath, *I will be thy God, this shall be my Covenant with you, I will be your God, and ye shall be my people;* and is not this satisfaction to all our desires? But 4ly. to evidence this yet further, that there is satisfaction to all our desires, and a compleat satisfaction to all our regular desires in the Covenant, ye would take notice what I hinted at, when first I entered on this Verse; there is a three-fold Covenant necessary, to make up compleat satisfaction and security to our desires, and all the three kinds of Covenants concur in the Covenant of Grace. 1. There passes betwixt men a Covenant of War, and a Covenant of Peace, they are bound by that Covenant in offensive and defensive Leagues, there is a mutual Peace betwixt them, and a mutual War against the same enemies, they have the same friends and the same foes; this is a thing very necessary in satisfaction to our desires, and this is the Covenant of Grace, there is a reconciliation, a peace made up, and all the Articles of it are very favourable and advantageous. 2. To make up satisfaction to our desires, it is necessary betwixt Nations that enter in Covenant, that there be a Covenant of Commerce and Traffick, they will Import and Export Goods; so here, sometimes he Imports the blessings of Heaven, and sometimes he will Export other Goods, not to

wrong us, but to satisfy our desires. 3/7. There is a Marriage Covenant; now what can be more desirable, to satisfy our desires, than these three? for the Covenant partakes of all these three, and what can be more required of God, to satisfy all our desires? To be brief, the Covenant is holden out so, as it holds out things of infinite excellency, and our appetite being finite, it's impossible for us to have desire suitable, and adequate to the Covenant; *David* had said nothing but truth, If he had said, the Covenant is satisfaction beyond my desires. Now lay the four together, and ye will see, that since God was resolved to lay himself out to the utmost, according to his own heart, to satisfy all our desires, no wonder the Covenant satisfies our desires, since it contains all the excellencies of the Creature, and all that is in Heaven, and all that is in God, and that there is made over and secured to us, not only a Covenant of Peace and War, and a Covenant of Traffick, but also a Marriage-Covenant, wherein our Maker becomes our Husband. These generals contribute somewhat to evidence, that the Covenant may satisfy all our regular and warrantable desires.

I will follow the rest with answering five or six Questions that may occur about this, that the Covenant satisfies all our desires, and they will contribute much to clear and confirm, that there is in this Covenant satisfaction to all our desires.

Quest. 1, It may be asked, suppose the Covenant be full and suitable, yet it satisfies not all desires, unless they have a right to that fullness; It's a very difficult thing to satisfy all desires, a man proves not the Covenant to satisfy all desires, that proves it to be full and suitable, but I have not a right to it.

Ans. For answer to this, this will be no Exception against the Covenants satisfying all desires, if ye take notice of these things. 1. It's true indeed, It may be a very hard Case I confess, the Covenant is full and very suitable, but my desire is to have a Right and Satisfaction in the Covenant. In answer to the Question, I say first, the Covenant offers a Right, thou couldst desire no more in the offer of a Right, than the Covenant holds forth, thy desire is satisfied to the full, thou art offered all the excellencies

excellencies in the Creature, and all that is in Heaven, and all that is in God, there is no less offered thee in the Covenant, thy desires are satisfied to the full as to the offer, and as to the terms on which the Offer is made, there is no more required of thee in the Covenant, than to take all these and make them thine; no more but take and accept them, would thou have the Covenant made to thee, whether thou accept of the terms or not? So in the Covenant, thou has the offer of a right, on the easiest terms our heart could imagine. 2, Thou that says, the Covenant answers not all my desires, I would have thee to consider in the second place, all that get a right to the Covenant, the right to it is not of their buying or meriting, but it comes through the grace of the Covenant; so it may satisfy all thy desires as to this, the price of the right is payed in the Covenant, the offer of the right is payed in the Covenant, so thy right to the Covenant comes through the grace of the Covenant, there is not only the offer of a right, but the communication of a right, and even that communication of a right, comes through the grace of the Covenant. 3/7, I would have thee that makes this exception, that thou has no right to the Covenant, because it answers not all thy desires; do but accept of this Covenant, and embrace Christ on the easiest terms, and thou shalt find thy right to the Covenant confirmed by the Covenant; to be brief, thy desire of a right to the Covenant may be satisfied, If thou wilt but add to thy desires, the accepting of the Covenant, and embracing of the offer; put forth thy trembling hand and take the Covenant, and thou shalt find it satisfy thy desires, as to thy right to the Covenant; so there is none can justly except, that the Covenant satisfies not all desires, If they desire a right to the Covenant; I tell thee again, If thou wilt but accept of and embrace this Covenant, I make the offer to thee in His Name this day, take it, and it's thine. But to confirm it the better, I will offer thee two or three things, 1. If thy desire be of a right to the Covenant, If thou accept of the offer, thy desires shall be satisfied, notwithstanding of all thy former guilt, If thou have a desire of a right and an interest in the Covenant, though thou were a Murderer, a Whore-

Whoremonger, a Persecuter or a Blasphemer, thou shalt have thy desires satisfied; the Covenant excludes not thee, but rather it tells thee, though thou has played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return unto me. 2/y, The Covenant will not stand at the weakness of thy faith, if thou be one that desires a right to the Covenant, and if thou accept of it, though thou take it with a trembling hand, and with a palsie arm, though it be a trembling and shaking faith, if thou have a desire to accept the Covenant, there is in the Covenant, that which will satisfy all thy desires, though thy faith be but like a grain of mustard seed, or a bruised reed, or a smoking flax; If it be sincere, it will satisfy thy desires, if thou accept the Covenant. But 3/y, If thou accept the Covenant, it shall satisfy thy desires, and satisfy thee, as to thy right of it, though thy faith be mingled with much corruption, suppose thou cannot say, I believe, yet say, I accept, & let the next word be, Lord, help my unbelief. 4/y, If thou wilt accept this Covenant, thou shalt be satisfied in thy desires of a right to it, though thou have no price in thy hand to give; if thou have no money, yet thou may buy without money, it's God that sells, and he sells without money and without price; so thou cannot say, thou has no price to give for a right to it, the Covenant may satisfy thy desires in that, for the price is payed in the Covenant; so I suppose, the first Objection is satisfied, for I have holden out the Covenant to be full, containing all that's in the Creature, all that is in Heaven, and all that is in God; If thou shalt say, It satisfies not my desires, I desire a right to it, and cannot win at it, but as to the offer of a right, and accepting of the least faith, for all former guilt, and a faith mingled with corruption, and a faith that cannot buy, because they have no money, the Covenant dispenses with all these; therefore if thou be not satisfied in thy desires of a Right, the fault it's not in the Covenant, but in thy self, for thy desires of a Right, comes not to be satisfied, but through the Covenant.

SER.

SERMON XXXIV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

IT must be an excellent thing that can satisfy all our desires; how vast are our desires, & how unsatisfiable? would ye then know what it is that satisfies all our desires, the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, and this is all my desire? I was offering you some reasons, why the Covenant satisfies all our desires; I was entering to answer some Objections, that would contribute to clear it, I named one, two or three more I will name you, and then shall come to the Application.

Object. 1. It may be objected in the first place, that only can satisfy all our desires, which being alone enjoyed is satisfactory; take a man in prison, in Poverty, in Contempt, will the Covenant alone satisfy him? have we not lawful desires after Meat or after Apparel? and if these be nothing, can the Covenant satisfy all desires: for Answer to this, ye shall notice three things.

1. That all outward things, in so far as they are necessary (and we can only warrantably desire them, in so far as they are necessary) are promised in the Covenant; it's a rare thing for one to die of hunger, thousands die of Surfeit and Gluttony, where one dies of Hunger, and yet the Covenant satisfies their desires as to necessities. 2/y. Ye shall notice, suppose there were want of necessities, yet it's accomplished and made up in other things, Gold will compence Brass and Copper, he that hath God and a right to Heaven, will hardly complain of the want of Health,

Health; he corrected his word well that said, there is nothing left me but God, and but God said he, and what would I have more? 37. The Covenant alone it will satisfy all desires, In regard it compenses, and makes up any thing that we can desire that is wanting; a remarkable Instance ye have of this in the Bible, *Jacob* he got the Blessing, *Esau* he got the fat of the earth. *Gen. 27.* *Esau* cometh to meet *Jacob* with four hundred men, *Jacob* offereth him a present, *Gen. 32.* *Esau* he refuses to take it, I will not take it sayes he, for I have enough; take it, my brother, sayes *Jacob*, for I have all; now, he had not the fat of the earth, if he would have counted his whole Stock, it would have but amounted to two Bands, but he had the Blessing, God was become the God of *Jacob*, he had seen God in a Vision at *Beirbel*, and God had blest him, therefore he can say, take it my Brother, for I have all; now he that hath all, hath satisfaction to all his desires, so the Covenant alone, holding out Christ and the Father in our offer, is alone satisfying.

Object. 2. Another Objection may be made against this, my heart desires, sayes some, the possession of the Promise, the accomplishment of the Promise is not the Covenant, my heart would have the accomplishment, I would have the Peace, the Joy, the Consolation that is promised, and I would be at the Heaven promised; now how can the Covenant satisfy all desires? it contains excellent promises indeed, but it contains not the Peace, the Heaven, and the Joy promised, and how then can it satisfy all my desires?

Ans. For opening this to you, I desire ye may take notice of three things. 1. Ye must take notice, that there is a twofold Inheritance, or a twofold Possession; there is a possession of the Promise, and a possession of the thing promised; several times Believers are called in the Bible, Heirs of the promise, was ever a man called an Heir of the Charror, he may be called Heir of the Land that the Charror carries; but the Believer may be called an Heir of the promise, the reason is, because the Promise is a great part of the Inheritance, a person in Covenant with God,

is an Heir of the Promise, as *Isaac* and *Jacob* are called; so that there is an Inheritance of the Promise, as well as in the the thing promised; a very necessary thing to be observed, for there are many precious to God who think, if they were in Heaven, and if they enjoyed the glory that is to be had there, they would count themselves as Heirs; but while thou hast a Promise, thou art possessing an Inheritance, for the Covenant it self is a kind of possession; thou that sayes, thou would be possesst in the promise. and it's no words, and a Covenant thou would be put off with, thou mistakes, for the Covenant and the Promise is an Inheritance, and thou art no Minor in the case, but art possessing as a Major.

27. Take notice ye that would be at the Possession of the Promise, & that thinks all your desires will not be satisfied until then, that the Covenant, though it put you not in the possession of the promise, yet it makes the Possession as sure, as if it were in your hand; that which we have in a promise from God, it's even as sure as if it were in possession; it's remarkable, *Psal. 3. 7.* The Psalm is entituled, a psalm of *David* when he fled from *Absalom* his son, *Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek, thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly*; how could they be broken, when he was flying from *Absalom*? But *David* had a promise for it, and he counts it as sure as if it were in his hand; it's true it's not so sweet nor so refreshing, as if it were in hand, but it's as sure; lo ye see, though the Covenant put us not in possession of the promise, yet it holds forth that which is as sure, as if it were in possession. But the 3 thing I will give you, that will more fully answer the Question, and remove the Objection; that the delay of the possession of the promise, is no denial of it, and to desire the possession of the promise, except it be in the method of the Covenant, is an irregular desire; ye heard, that the Covenant satisfies all regular and warrantable desires, but to desire the possession of a thing, before we have fought for it, and done that for which we came into the world, is an irregular desire; so if thou say, I have a great desire of the possession of the Peace, the Joy and the Heaven, that the Covenant holds forth, thou art irregular in thy desire; would thou

thou be at the possession before, thou hast run the race; or would thou be at the Crown, before thou hast fought the battel? that is an Irregular desire, and the Covenant is not to satisfy these desires. the Covenant possesses thee in the promise, and that's an inheritance, and makes it as sure, as if it were in possession.

Object. 3. There are lawful desires of the Creatures, and of eschewing the Cross, and the Covenant satisfies them not; may we not warrantably desire convenient Food, many seek no more from God, and gets it not, they may have hundreds of Temptations about their Food, and how to eschew the croile, and doeth the Covenant satisfy all their desires? For answer to this, I would have you notice these things.

Answer. 1. Take notice, that we may desire indeed, lawful convenient Food, and it may be denied, and the removing of the Cross, and it may be denied; but in this case, the Lord satisfies the desire of our necessity, however he satisfies not our appetite, he may satisfy the cry of our need; If he shall kill us with Hunger, why not? If Famine be the Post to bring us home to our Fathers house, why not as well as a Fever? Whatever be the way he bring us home, he satisfies the scope of our desires, the scope of our desires to him for temporal things, if they be lawful, they run in this Channel, that he would give us the things of time, in subordination to the things of Eternity, If we seek them otherways, we seek them Irregularly, we seek Bread and Cloths to help us to Heaven, but if he make Famine, and Nakedness to help us to Heaven, he satisfies our desires; sometime we will go to God, and cry, Lord, give me this outward Mercy, and remove this Cross, for that will be helpful for my Heaven, If he deny the Mercy, and keep on the Rod, and yet help thee to Heaven, he satisfies thy desire; as if a Patient should cry to a Physician, O! I am burning in a Fever, give me water to drink; but he makes a Cordial and gives him to cool him, he grants his desire, though he give not water to drink; so in affliction we cry, Lord, remove this affliction, and help me to Heaven; he lets the affliction ly on, and helps thee to Heaven, does he not grant

grant thy desire? we are ill carvers of our own Lot, our desires about temporal things may be granted, when the particular way and manner of it, may be removed, he takes one way for the end, and we would take another; we cry to be brought to Heaven, in a Chariot, and he thinks fit we should be brought in a Carr, we would be at glory with a fair wind, and he thinks fit in a cross wind; but if we come to glory, as well with a cross wind, as a fair wind, the desire is granted. Another thing I would have you consider, is this, Though we desire temporal things, and get no satisfaction, yet the Covenant may satisfy our desires, the reason is, It's rare to find us regular in temporal things; such a Woman would have her Husband living, and she would quire God many other things, If he would not remove the delight of her eyes; another does so with her Child, and yet they both die, notwithstanding God makes it up, and he grants their desire, they think they cannot have contentment in the World but in such a Lot, they have swallowed and drowned all their contentment, If that be taken nway; the case is so with David, there is a Child Bathsheba bare in Adultery, the Child falls sick and dies, he lyes on the ground, while the Child is lying sick, and will not eat all that time, after he hath cryed to the Lord, the Child dies, was it not much better, the same Woman bore him a Solomon, than that the Child begotten in Adultery should live; to be brief, there is hardly any Objection can be brought from a Christians case, or from their worldly desires, but they may be all abundantly answered from this, that the Covenant is satisfaction to all our desires.

I would speak a little to the Application and Practical part of the Point, In regard it's a thing of great Importance, I resolve to fall from this Branch of the Verse, and therefore will apply it, supposing that I have proven it abundantly.

Use 1. And I will apply it in three or four uses, First, Is the Covenant Satisfaction to all our desires? Then it informs of three or four things. 1. It informs of what an excellent thing the Covenant must be, Riches may satisfy the Covetous, and Honour may satisfy the Ambitious, and uncleanness and whoredom may satisfy the Lascivious; but what

what a thing is there that will satisfy all desires? that is altogetherly to be found in God, and in the Covenant, ye that would have the thing in one Jewel, that the generality of men are seeking in many pieces of Copper Coin, get an Interest in the Covenant, and it will satisfy all your desires; O! but it must be an excellent Jewel, that will pay off all your Debt. 2/y. It informs what is the reason, that Believers have such a deal of quietness, even in the worst of cases, let them be in Prison, let them be in a Fever, in Reproach, or in Poverty, yet they have a great deal of sweet quietness; I will tell you, they have all their desires satisfied in the Covenant, they desire no more; and a man that hath all his desires, in what condition soever he be, he is quiet; the great ground of our disquieting is, we want something we desire, but a Believer that can say, He hath made with me a Covenant, he hath Bread, Apparel, Wine, Milk, Gold, Fountains, Kingdoms, Cities, and he hath them all in the Covenant; therefore no wonder, if men labour to take their quietness from them, if devils labour to take their quietness from them, yet they have still a great deal of quietness, for they have all their desires, and they are all contained in the Covenant. 3/y. It informs of a third thing, of what is the reason of all the exercises of Conscience, and disquietings, that Believers have; would ye know what it is, there is one thing that is all their desires, which is their security in the Covenant: now, no wonder when they are cross in that which is all their desire, to see them hanging down their head, and the feeble knees smiting one another, for when they are cross in their Interest in the Covenant, they are not cross in a trifle, but in that which is all their desire; so ye may see the reason of their peace, and their trouble, (one thing have they desired of the Lord, as it is, *Psal. 27.*) And as that one thing goes ill or well, accordingly have they peace or not. 4/y. Is the Covenant all their desire? It informs of what a different nature the Spirit of Believers, and the Spirit of the Ungodly are; there are many they never care for the Covenant, many say, who will give us Corn, and Wine, and many hunt after their Lusts; it's a wonder to see the great odds, betwixt the desires of Believers, and ungod-

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ly men, even as great odds as betwixt East and West, all their desires are satisfied, if they can say, *God hath made with me a Covenant*, wherein he hath made over himself, and his Son, and all that he hath; hardly will there a Cross come, that will ly heavy on, no wonder, for they have all their desires, and a man cannot count himself cross, that hath all his desires.

Use 2. Secondly, for Use, Is the Covenant all the desires of the Believer: Then I would exhort you to make it all your desire, O! we are plagued sometimes with Lascivious, Earthly and Frothie Desires, how excellently did the Philosopher *Socrates* answer the man, that came to him. and said, O! sayes he, he is a happy man that hath all his desires, but sayes he, he is a happier man that desires nothing, but what he may lawfully desire? labour to get your desires regulat according to the Covenant, that there may be nothing in your desires; but what is contained in the Covenant. I would press this with several Motives and Considerations, O! but the person is come to a noble Lot in his way to Glory, that hath his desires regulat, according to the Covenant, whether they be desires for the Church of God, or for themselves.

Readily ye may ask, How shall we get our desires regulat according to the Covenant? I will offer you two remarkable helps, and two Motives, to get your desires regulat according to the Covenant.

First then, for helps to get your desires regulat according to the Covenant, take these four things. 1. I would exhort you to study the Covenant, it will be an excellent help, to get your desires regulat according to the Covenant, if ye be acquaint with it; the Covenant should be the glass ye should be looking into, and bringing your desires to it, and the Covenant, like a face in the glasse, should resemble one another; believe it, Christian, who minds to come to Heaven, there is nothing thou needs, either for thy being or thy well-being, but it's contained in the Covenant; therefore be a student of it, and be well acquaint with it, it holds forth the things of Time, and things of Eternity, all the excellencies of God, all that is communicable to crea-

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tures,

desires, therefore he is not disquieted, he will come to an Hill side and sleep all night, another time he will be on the Sea all night, another time he came to *Jacobs Well*, and sought a drink of Water, he had tribute to pay when *Cæsars Tribute* was to pay, never one had mo crosses and more querrels, the reason is, he had no desires; If we could get the victory over our pride, our ambition, our lasciviousness, the hundred part of what we have, would satisfie us, but it's our appetite, and not our necessity, that hath a great influence on our torment.

Use 3. Thirdly for Use, Is the Covenant satisfaction to all our desires? Then the third Use is of Consolation, and it speaks comfortably, especially to three sorts; 1. To them that it may be have not much sense and experimental proof of God, readily when they go to pray, he hides, he neither gives liberty to pray, nor answers he their prayer, shall he sit down and say, he hath no satisfaction to his desires? No, if he lay in a part of the Covenant to you, the Covenant must be taken for the Inheritance, so long as we are Minors; we must look on the promises as an heritage; and if he lay in a promise, or a part of the Covenant to thee, bring not in a bad report of him, to say, thy desires are not satisfied, I came to his door, and I came from it as hungry as I went, and yet he hath given thee a part of the Covenant: It's lamentable to see so excellent a Covenant, purchased by such a person, contrived by such a Mediator, and to see believers lay so little weight on it; suppose he deny thee sense in thy spiritual interest, yet thou hast ground to sing, that thou hast satisfaction to thy desires; If he lay in a part of the Covenant, and clear up thy interest in it. 2ly. For Consolation, they that go through the world laden with Crosses, they hardly find the world but scouling on them, they may be prone to bring up an ill report on God, to say, he gives other folk their desires, but gives not me mine; but hath he given thee the Covenant, and wilt thou say any thing to thy interest in the Covenant? And wilt thou yet say, he hath not given thee thy desires? If he hath not given thee thy desires, they are irregular, go and repent for thy desires; Hast thou not in the Covenant drink indeed, Wine,

Wine, Milk; Honey, Gold, Eye-salve, Fields, Fountains, Kingdoms, Cities? and yet wilt thou say, he hath not given thee all thy desires; nay more, hast thou the City that hath the twelve foundations? Hath he made over by Covenant all that is in God? Remember ye that Note, that in the Covenant, God lays himself out to the outmost, like a certain King making a feast at the Marriage of his only Son, If ever a feast be great, it will be the feast of a King, and the feast of a King at the Marriage of his only Son: the scope of it is, that God lays himself out to the outmost, and yet shalt thou say, he answers not all thy desires? Go not to complain of your Straw Bed, nor of your Bread, though it were never so brown, if ye have an interest in this Covenant, ye have all your desires, and more than ye can desire, for there is something in God our appetite cannot desire. 3ly. It speaks comfortably to them, who know not what may be before them; O may some say, if I go forward, I will fall over head and ears, and all; and another says, O I am afraid I fall away, and many torment themselves with what is to come, and the evil they feared fell on them; but why art thou tormented, that has an interest in the Covenant? If thou have that, thou hast all that thy heart can desire; I will close all with exhorting all of you, to labour to regulate our desires according to the Covenant; when ye find ye desire a thing ye cannot produce a promise for, suspect it to be an unwarrantable desire, and all that hath gotten the victory over the corruption of their heart, if ye can go this height and ly down, and appeal to him that is the searcher of the heart, ye desire no more than what is promised, it's an evidence he hath mortified your desires, and brought you under the Bond of the Covenant; blessed are they that can say, the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, and I desire no more if he would make me a King, nay, and give me all that is betwixt the rising of the Sun and the going down thereof, I desire no more, for he hath made with me a Covenant.

SERMON XXXV.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

David is describing the Covenant that God made with him, that it was everlasting, and well ordered, and sure; he builds two great Conclusions on it, this is all my salvation and all my desire; the latter of these I have spoken to, it's a great mercy when we can have our desires regulat according to the Covenant; when there is nothing desired, but promised mercies; Irregular desires are the great foundation of the torment of our life, they cannot choose but have sweet contentment, and a life full of tranquillity, that have gotten the victory over their desires, not warranted by the Covenant.

But I will say no more of this, before I leave these two, there is one thing yet lying in them, *all my salvation, and all my desire*; the two joynd together Imports, that the Covenant is a perfect Charter, it's a very rational Deduction from it, That which is all the ground of the hope of salvation, and that which is satisfaction to all desires, must be a perfect Covenant; therefore, before I leave the handling of this Character of the Covenant, I will take in this, and handle it this day.

Doctrine. That the Covenant of Grace made with believers, is a perfect Covenant, it is a very useful Character of it, and comfortable, and therefore hearken unto it; It may be said of the Covenant, which David Psal. 19. 7. says, *The Law of the*

the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; and that which he says Psal. 119. 96. I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy Commandment is exceeding broad; it's as much as, I can see no end of thy Commands, they are so full and so perfect; this is an excellent character and property of the Covenant; whereas in other things we can see nothing but vanity, and emptiness, and froth, there is a perfection in the Covenant.

That I may the more distinctly handle this, I will propose these four things to be dwelt on: 1. I will prove by some reasons, that the Covenant of God is a perfect Covenant, 2ly. I will enquire in what respects it is perfect. 3ly. I shall clear some Questions, and answer some Objections against its perfection; and in the last place, I shall dwell on the Practical part of it.

Reasons. First, For some reasons to prove, that the Covenant is perfect; and indeed it's not easie to believe the Covenant to be perfect, every one will have their Objection against it; yet these are these four things that will very strongly concur, to demonstrat that it is a perfect Covenant. 1. That to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be wanting, must be a perfect Covenant, that is the proper definition of perfection; now this agrees well to the Covenant; there is nothing wanting in it, and nothing can be added to it; it is remarkable Rev. 22. *He that adds to the words of this Prophecie, God shall add to him the plagues written in this book; and he that takes from it, God shall take his name out of the book of life, that is one sure reason, to prove it a perfect Covenant.* Papists tell us, they say they add no corrupt additions, but perfecting additions to the words of this Book; now, corrupt additions is a contradiction, for a corruption is not an addition, but the Covenant is so perfect, as whosoever he be that offers to add to the words of this Book, God will add to him the plagues of this Book, and whosoever he be that takes from it, God will take his name out of the Book of life.

Reas. 2. That Covenant that is sufficient to make the man of God perfect, must be a perfect Covenant, that which is in it self sufficient to make a believer perfect, what can be more.

more requisite to make up perfection as to us, but the thing that will make us perfect? And the Covenant is sufficient to make the man of God perfect, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*: Now, since they are sufficient to make the man of God perfect, the Covenant must be a perfect Covenant that is thus useful.

Reas. 3. It will prove a perfect Covenant, if ye consider, that God in the Covenant is at the outmost of his offers, now there can be nothing wanting, if God be at the outmost of what he can offer. There are three things that in the Covenant evidences God to be at his outmost, so to speak with reverence, that he cannot go beyond the three. 1. The blessings of the Covenant, he cannot go beyond them, he cannot offer greater things than himself and his Son, and both these are promised in the Covenant. 2ly. He is at the outmost of the freedom of the terms, on which these offers are made; it's impossible to make an offer on freer terms, that we should accept of him, and turn from our iniquity, and hearken and incline our ear to the Covenant; what easier terms was it possible for God to make such great offers on? 3ly. He is at his outmost as to the Seals and Security of the Covenant; it's remarkable, when he confirm'd the Covenant to Abraham, Heb. 6. Because he had no greater to swear by, he swore by himself, that imports, that he gave the greatest Oath he could make, if he could have sworn by a greater, he would have sworn by it; so he is at his outmost, as to all these three; Must not that then be a perfect Covenant, where God is at his outmost, and where (to speak with reverence) he can neither make greater offers, nor freer offers, nor give greater security for his offers?

Reas. 4. That must be a perfect Covenant, which upon the grounds given in the Text, satisfies all desires, and is all the hope of salvation, this proves to be a perfect Covenant; our desires are very vast, they are ordinarily like the Sea, our desires they are like an Ocean, yet all desires, and even when they shall be racked to the full, the things contained in the Covenant shall satisfy them, and that for all eternity: so the

the Covenant cannot but be a perfect Covenant; so lay the four together, and ye will see it a perfect Covenant.

But the more clear handling of this will appear, if I will particularly enquire into what respects it is a perfect Covenant: It would take a long time to open this, I will confine my self to handling this, to four or five particulars; and in these shall let you see, in what respects it's a perfect Covenant. 1. It's a perfect Covenant in regard of excellency; it's perfectly excellent, if the things contained in the Covenant, had been many things like the gifts Abraham gave to Ketura his Concubine and her Children, it would be far from being a perfect Covenant, suppose it had been a life rent Bond, or a lifes Tack of health, or a little whiles flourishing in the world, what a silly thing had it been in the point of excellency? But the Covenant is perfect in this respect, the greatest things God can give, are contained in it, he will give grace and glory, and no good thing shall be wanting to them that live uprightly; no, he cannot offer greater things, he offers in the Covenant all that he hath, and to make us Ruler over all that he hath, *blessed shall that servant be, whom his Lord when he cometh finds so doing, verily he will make him ruler over all that he hath.* 2ly. It's a perfect Covenant, in regard it holds out not only all these excellencies, but it's a Covenant of the most excellent things in their perfection, in as far as they are communicable: Divines distinguish two sorts of Attributes of God, some communicable, some incommunicable, Infiniteness is incommunicable, Eternity is incommunicable; other Attributes of God are communicable, his wisdom, his holiness, his justice, his goodness, all the Attributes of God communicable, are made over to us in the Covenant, he promiseth they shall be forth coming to us; and there are some rays communicat to believers, like Beams proceeding from the Sun, they come from God the Fountain of Wisdom and Holiness, all the righteousness of Christ, in so far as it is communicable, and as we stand in need of, is made over in the Covenant; there is nothing in the Father or in the Son, that is communicable, but it's made over in the Covenant; since it is so, that the most excellent things are promised in the Covenant, and

all the excellencies of the Father, and of the Son, in so far as they are communicable, and we are capable of, are made over in the Covenant, It must then be a perfect Covenant in regard of excellency: What is possible for you to imagine? What is desirable, what is in the Father and his Son, and all that's in him, in so far as we are capable of, and are communicable, is made over to us in the Covenant. 3ly. It's a perfect Covenant in respect of duties; there are two things that make up the whole duty of Man, or of a Christian, and ye will find there was never any thing so perfect in both regards, as the Covenant is. 1. The Covenant is perfect in regard of Mortification. 2ly. In regard of Vivification. First, It's perfect in regard of Mortification, the Heathens and all Hypocrites know nothing of this mystery of the Covenant, the Covenant is perfect in regard of Mortification; If ye view three things required in the work of Mortification, ye will find them all called for in the Covenant. 1. The Covenant requires, that we should not only mortifie outward and scandalous lusts, but also inward heart lusts; the Covenant calls for both the two, all the Law-givers that ever gave Laws to the world, their Laws strike not at heart-ills, but the Covenant is thus perfect, as the lusts of the heart, the lust of the eye, eyes full of Adultery, even that the Covenant condemns, and makes Adultery; and so It's perfect, in regard It not only sneds off the Branches, but it strikes at the Root, even of heart-lusts. 2ly. The Covenant It presses the mortification of lesser things, even the things that we would think but a small evil, the Covenant presses that we should watch against every iniquity, and count nothing small that is committed against a great God. 3ly. The Covenant not only presses the mortification of heart-ills, and the least ills, but It presses the mortification of the most dear things, and things most precious to us, such as the right hand, the right eye, Mat. 5. 29. If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee, if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, &c. better to go to Heaven with one eye, than to go to Hell with two; so argues Christ, the smallest sin, the least appearance of sin; and the dearest of things, though it were as dear as the right eye,

eye, and the right hand, they must be mortified, and must not that be a perfect Covenant, that gives to perfect Laws?

Secondly, Take a view of Vivification, and of positive duties superadded to the work of Mortification, & ye will find it perfect in regard of these, especially if ye notice three things, 1. The Covenant presses universal obedience to the Law; not only the first Table of the Law, but the second, not only duties to God, but to our neighbour; the Covenant presses a believing of all that God says, God spake all these words, saying, Is the Preface to the Ten Commandments; they are all the words of God, if one of them had been spoken by the god of Ammon, if a second had been spoken by the god of Israel, we might have said, this was spoken by the god of Ammon, and is not to be obeyed; but all the Commands are the words of God, and therefore all are to be obeyed. 2ly. The Covenant in the point of Vivification, declares against slothfulness as well as scandals, the Covenant says, the tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, or the careless or barren Tree, will be cast into the fire, as well as the Tree that brings forth Accorns, and that is an evidence of the perfection of the Covenant; It's well observed of Jonah, a sleeping Jonah may ruine a Ship, as well as a Pirat; had there come an Enemy, or a Pirat upon the Ship that Jonah slept in, It could not contribute more to ruine it, than his sleeping, security and slothfulness will bring thee to Hell, as well as the grossest scandals. 3ly. The Covenant calls for grace as well as duty; there is nothing acceptable duty to God, but what hath grace at the bottom of it, if we give our body to the fire, and want charity, if we pray never so much, and pray not in faith, It's not acceptable; there is no right work of Sanctification, except the work consist of Grace as well as duties; must not that be a perfect Covenant, as to all the duties of Mortification and Vivification, that requires such exact obedience, as ye see required in It? 4ly. It's perfect, in respect It's a compleat answer to all our necessities; there is nothing our necessity can call for, but It's contained in the Covenant; the truth of this will appear, if ye take notice of two things, 1. There is no want a Believer can be lyable

to, but readily ye will get two promises in the Covenant relating to it; some have taken the pains to cast them up, and in their Treatises made appear, that there is no want a Christian can come under, but in the Covenant there will be at least two promises for one want, if ye go through particularly; Is it a heart of stone ye complain of? Is it an unclean heart? Is it weakness of Grace? Is it the strength of corruption? Be what it will, ye shall readily find two promises for what ever want a Christian can come under. 2ly. The Covenant holds out Christ in all his three Offices, it's certain, Christ being appointed of the Father a Physician, a Mediator, a Propitiation, he must be suited to all our wants; now Christ in his fulness is holden out in the Covenant; so the Covenant in all the promises of it, is nothing but the execution of his threefold Office, as King, Priest, and Prophet in the Church; hence I rationally infer, it's a perfect Covenant, for if there be a fulness in Christ, in whom a believer is compleat, and that fulness be communicat and dispensed, according to the tenor of the Covenant, then it must be a perfect Covenant, for there is no want, there is no strait, there is no case that can be perplexing. but at least ye shall find two promises, if not sometimes six relating to it.

Lastly, to prove it a perfect Covenant, That must be a perfect Covenant, the blessings whereof are to be eternal; indeed if they ended, if there were but a Liferent-Tack of them, suppose he should give us a Tack of peace, and of pardon, and all that God hath; suppose he should have made over all that he hath in the Covenant, and only given us seventy years Tack of them, as he hath given us of our life, and the date of our time, though it had been perfect in excellency, yet it had not been perfect in duration, but this makes it perfect in all things, and well ordered, that as the excellency of it stands in this, that all that is in God, and all the righteousness of his Son is made over to us; so it is to endure for all eternity. Now lay these four together, and ye will see, that the truth of this is unquestionable, that among many excellent Characters and properties of the Covenant, this is a special one, that it is Perfect.

Before

Before I apply this Doctrine, there are three Objections, one of them made by *Quakers*, another by *Papists*, and a third by *Episcopal men*, and Patrons of Ceremonies; and all the three I will remove:

Object. 1. First, It may be Objected, this Covenant is not perfect, why? there are many things revealed by a voice within us (say the *Quakers*) not contained in the Scriptures; that cannot be a perfect Covenant, that contains not all things necessary for Salvation; and this Covenant contains not all things necessary for Salvation; Why? The Spirit reveals this, and that to me, when there is no nearness to him, and this is necessary, and therefore the Covenant cannot be perfect; and indeed *Quakers*, who are multiplying, and against whom Ministers should give warning, they are twining up their Disputes to this head, for if they gain this, that the Spirit reveals new Truths, not contained in the Bible, they gain all their desire; what ever is born in on a man, they call it the work of the Spirit, now what can be replied to this?

Ans. For Answer to this, and to guard against this Doctrine of theirs, ye would take notice of three or four things about it. 1. The proper work of the Spirit of Truth, is not to reveal new Truths, but to open the eye to the Truths already revealed; when the Spirit, the Comforter, comes, he will guide you in all Truth, and bring all things to your remembrance, the work of the spirit of Truth is to bring all things already revealed to our remembrance; *The spirit when he comes, he shall take of mine, and shew it you, John 14. 16.* That is, He shall take my Covenant, and my Righteousness, & shall shew it to you: So the work of the Spirit of Truth is, to bring things to our remembrance, that Christ hath already revealed, when they are put to it; they cannot in all the Bible shew the least Promise, that the Spirit will reveal new Truths, but will bring things already revealed to our remembrance. 2ly. Take notice, that this principle contains one of the greatest reflections on the Scripture, if there were no more to make it odious to you than this, it is enough, for it sayes, the Word of God is not perfect, the Spirit sayes, It is perfect, and closes the Bible with it, if

any shall add to the prophecies of this Book, God shall add to him all the plagues contained in this Book; if there were no more to make it abominat, and odious, by all sober Christians, this reflection that it contains, on the perfit rule of manners, the Scriptures and Covenant of God, it is enough; and who will maintain a necessity of Revelation of new Truths, must maintain, that the things already revealed, were not perfit, and consequently reflect on God, who hath given man a rule, but not a perfit rule. 3ly. The evil of this will appear, in regard it were the way to destroy, and to turn not only mankind, but the Church of God into confusion; by what rule shall one discern the thing born in upon us, to be from the Spirit? they say, they are to Judge the Spirit by the thing born in upon us, and not to Judge the thing born in on us by the Spirit; Therefore in *German*, It was so born in on a man, to that hight, as to kill his own Wife, and on another, to blaspheme God, and on another to commit Incest, and shall we judge such blasphemies against God, and such horrid Acts of Murder and Incest, when born in on a person, to be from the Spirit? That would destroy both the Church of God, and all humane Society. And *Lastly*, It fathers on the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, all the horrid Inventions and Imaginations of mans own heart; what a dreadful thing is this, that the corrupt heart invents, and imagins, and then fathers it on the Spirit of God, and speaks lies in his Name? So if there were no more, to make you tremble at this principle of *Quakers*, & make you to believe the Covenant a perfit Covenant, it's more than enough. Now for all this Principle of *Quakers*, and the Objections they make, the Covenant is perfit, and all things to be believed, and to be done, are contained in it; and they that will say, the Spirit reveals new Objective Truths, by the Spirit within them, they are putting themselves to horrid Temptations.

Object. 2d. The second Objection is moved by *Papists*, who say, there are unwritten Traditions as necessary for salvation, as any thing contained in this Covenant; The Council of *Trent*, say they, appointed them to be received *pari pietatis affectu*, that the Scriptures are to be received; and here

is one of the great grounds, why the Christian Church, is so tossed with Divisions and Questions, about things they confess are not in the Scriptures, but are contained in a Rule as certain as the Scriptures; and makes not this against the perfection of the Covenant? It's not perfit, say they, in regard the generality of Christians, and all *Papists*, they take themselves to unwritten Traditions. I need not dwell on this, I trust there is not much need of crying down these Traditions in this place, in regard, I am perswaded, the most part believe the perfection of the Scriptures and of the Covenant.

Ans. I will only say these three things of these Traditions. 1. Take notice, That the most part of the things they offer for Traditions, as necessary for Salvation, if ye would but examine the grounds on which they are taken up, ye would admire, that men of such parts, go upon such shallow grounds; They say, their Traditions must come from the Apostles, why, Because we cannot tell when they came into the Church, such as the Office of *Cardinals*, &c. As if a man cannot tell, there is a Burn running through the Town, that yet cannot tell the Spring-head, out of which it comes: now, is not this a very shallow ground, these Traditions must be *Apostolick*, because none can not tell when they began. 2ly. I will say of these Traditions, the most part of them are but vain things, they look not to flow from the Spirit of God; there are many of them vain things, and tend more to prove a *Papish* Interest, than Christian Piety; no wonder then that Christians hear stand at them. 3ly. We reject all these Traditions, and there will never be peace untill all these Traditions be taken away, and till we come to resolve in the Covenant of God, and the Scriptures, to be the perfit Rule of manners, which are sufficient to make the man of God perfit. So it stands as a firm Truth, that the Covenant is a perfit Covenant.

Obj. 3. May it not be said, are there not many things necessary for Believers in their Faith and Practices, that are not contained in the Scriptures? As for Example, If there be a Question about forms of Ecclesiastick Government, that is not determined in the Scriptures.

Ans. To this, I will say two things. 1. It is enough to me justly to have aversion from any form of Government, if it be not determined in the Scriptures; many confess this, and yet they owne *Prelacy*, they say in all the Word of God, God hath left no particular Direction to such and such Officers, but what he hath left to all Ministers, he hath imposed no Duty on them, nor hath he told people how to carry to them, in all the Bible: Is not this a sufficient reason against them? is not this a yielding of the Cause? But 2^d. The Covenant is perfect, as to this, the Lord hath determined a form of Government, and hath set it up even among preaching Ministers of the Gospel, giving them the same qualifications, without any distinction, the Lord hath positively determined all things necessary for such and such Offices, and herein the Covenant is perfect, in regard it positively determines, what form of Government the Master of the house would have in his own house.

But secondly, Are there not many things relating to worship, that are not determined in the Scriptures, such as Forms, Gestures, and Garbs, and such like, and are these determined in the Scriptures? For *Answer*, If they be not determined in the Scriptures, they should not be practised, and this is a sufficient Argument; It's ordinarily the whore that busks her self, let the whore, or the *Romish Church*, wear a buskin all hanging with Ribbons, but let not the true Church wear that Garb; for the Bride, she isay comeliest in her native Purty; and really Gods Ordinances have another manner of Grace, in their naked purity, we need not set Forms in our Worship, all these things are determined in general Rules in the Scripture, *Let all things be done decently and in order*, let all things be done without strife, and let them be done in charity. To be brief, there is nothing in time and eternity, but it is contained in the Covenant, and so it must be a perfect Covenant.

Sermon

SERMON XXXVI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

Perfection is a comprehensive Property of the Covenant, I can say no more of it than I have said, Perfection is a thing, to which nothing can be added, and to which nothing is wanting; I laboured to convince you of this.

The practical part of the Point remains to be handled, Is the Covenant a perfect Covenant? There are three or four practical Uses of it, I will follow; I confess there is hardly any thing in Time, that we can ascribe the name of Perfection unto; the most excellent of persons have some defects, there is something wanting in them, there is something in their humor, and in their way, that sayes, they are not perfect, the most excellent of things are so, the rose will fade, and it hath a brier in it; but the Covenant is perfect.

Use 1. It serves then to reprove these, who take it not as perfect; and there are three or four sorts of Persons, that come under this Reproof. 1. It reproves *Quakers*, that tell us of new Truths, that will be revealed to one man, and not to another, they reflect on the Scriptures, they say the Covenant is not perfect, they blaspheme God, and destroy humane Societies; they make no Church certain, till their Revelation come; all that hath been done by Christ, may be overturned by a new Revelation; ye ought to be standing against this principle, they will be lying among you, and ye not know them; this is their great Principle,

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and that which now in their Books, they are hottest in following, guard against it, as ye would have God's peace, and hold by this, that the Covenant is perfect, it contains all your salvation, and all your desire. 2/y. It reproves *Papists*, the bul- of whole Religion lyes in humane Inventions and Traditions; Mr. *Baxter* Observes well, It's a ground to suspect them enemies to the Scriptures, for they will not admit the Scriptures to be the Judge of Controversies; it's even like a man declining a Judge, because he suspects him; but we maintain this Covenant to be a perfect Covenant, it contains all our Salvation, and all our desire; and we bid no more for the mind of God, than what is contained in it; and untill we see him, we will take these Letters of his, and trust them, and walk by them, and expect from him, according to what is contained in this perfect Covenant. 3/y. It reproves these among us, who will have the Covenant perfect, as to all things relating to Faith, but they will not have it a perfect Rule of Manners, they say, for ceremonies and forms of Government, we are not to seek them from Scripture, and a Covenant; and where should we seek them, if we seek them not there? and what have any thing to do in his house, that hath not his Warrant, If there be not determinations in the word about them, & if they cannot pretend to Christ's Commission, what warrant have they in his house? O! they cut the Throat of their own Conscience, while they deny this. 4/y. It reproves many practical Christians, who do not take the Covenant for a perfect Covenant; frequently it comes to be the case of a Christian, to doubt and question, and sit down, (like a Woman in Travail, thinking she will never be delivered,) seeking after some Sense and Experience, unless God communicate something, that will tickle their affection, they cannot take the Covenant, nor a Promise of the Covenant; thou does not believe the Covenant to be a perfect Covenant; readily thou speaks of it; as if it wanted out thy case; thou wilt say, it contains many things, but alas it wants out my case, thou understands not the nature of it, for it's a perfect Covenant, it's all thy Salvation, and all thy desire, and there is nothing wanting in it, that he that was wiser than thou, thought necessary

cessary to be put in it. All these comes under this reproof, and however thou joyns with *Papists* and *Quakers*, and all the Patrons of Ceremonies; In an hour of Temptation, when thou takes not the Covenant for a perfect covenant, yet it is a perfect Covenant.

Use 2. The second Use of the Point, Is the Covenant so perfect a Covenant, it contains what God can promise, and all that we can desire? then it serves for Information, and there are four or five things it informs of, and that a Christian should seriously ponder. 1. Is it a perfect Covenant? It informs of the Obligation we have to him that made it, and to the Mediator that treated it; there is nothing can be added to it, O! but he managed the business well, and there is nothing wanting in it, for it's a perfect Covenant, there is hardly a man hath a business, but we will find some fault. I like well the Observation a Moralist hath, says he, there are many, they are like witches, in finding out faults, whereas Wit lyes rather in covering faults; it's the greatest Wit that can best defend a bad Cause; ordinarily there is no man can go through the World, but there are ay some saying, see the fool, but what fault can ye find in the management of this Covenant; for it's perfect, I appeal in cold blood to any Christian, is there any thing can be added, or wanting in it? He that managed it, was Christ the wisdom of God, and the power of God, and carried the business so, as the most censorious wit, can neither add, nor find a want in it, some tell of one, a Critick, in the whole course of his life, he could scarcely find one action that pleased him; whatever any did, he found ay a fault in it; but bring out this Covenant, and give him the Spectacles of a Christian, and he will find it a perfect Covenant, he would not find in it the least fault or want; nor is there any thing to be added to it, which proclaims the Wisdom of the Mediator; our business was better in his hand, than if it had been in ours; for if we had had the managing of it, either there would be something added or wanting; but he managed it so, as there's nothing can be added or wanting. 2/y. Is it thus a perfect Covenant, then not only bless the Mediator, but make use of it, improve it as a perfect Covenant; there is indeed

Indeed the great use of the Point I would dwell a little on, and help you to improve it as a perfect Covenant; there are four cases, wherein we are to improve it as a perfect Covenant. 1. I exhort you to improve it in all Debates, this is a time full of Debates, ye shall find hardly two meet in one judgment in all things; here is Christ, sayes one; there is Christ, sayes another; there is one thing cryed up this year, another thing cryed up the next year: but the Covenant is a perfect Covenant; bring all your debates to the Scriptures, and to the Covenant, do not stand on the Judgment of Ranters, and prophane wicked men, that readily will not turn over a Chapter of the Bible in a week, it's impossible for them to know the word of God, no question, they may rant, and they may alter according to their shallow wits, like men in darkness groping, and knows not at what they stumble, *Isaiah 8. 20. To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* In all questions of the time that thou art tryed with in this world, if thou would be a person that would look out like a witty one, and a man of understanding, be well acquainted with the Scriptures, and understand them well; I would not value a man, that is unacquainted with the Scriptures, more than the barking of a Dog. 2ly. Improve it in all things, that relates to your peace; *Antinamians* and *Soci-nians* tell us, they can afford peace to the wicked, it's true their principle leads them to that, but we tell them, it will not be a spiritual peace, it will not be according to the Covenant; let them speak peace, it's not Christ that speaks peace, it's no peace from the inferiour Judge, if the supream Judge condemn it; what signifies peace from all the Ministers in the world, if the Master say, *depart from me, I know you not*; and if he say, *come to me, little children*, what signifies it, if all the Ministers in the world say, *depart from me*? therefore take up the Covenant, as a perfect Rule in order to your peace; if it speak peace to you, take the peace of it: if it speak war to you, take it, for it's a perfect Rule, to which nothing can be added. 3ly. I exhort Christians to improve it in a third case, and that is, to bear off Challenges and Temptations; frequently they come multiplying,

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make the Covenant, it's a perfect Covenant, why go ye about to be disquieted with, I think, and I fear, when it may be, neither thy thought, nor thy fear, hath a spiritual warrant; take the Covenant, it's perfectly the mind of God, and if ye knew how to improve it, readily ye might find, that there is no Temptation, nor Challenge of what kind soever, but ye may find an answer to it in the Covenant. I will offer you but these three things, that may occur, and they most ordinarily meet you. 1. Ye have a natural heart, go to the Covenant with it, it's perfect, *I will take away the heart of stone*; I like it well to see Parents, that teach their young ones to pray, they put this Promise and that in their hand; ye that have a gate of it, put in this Promise in their hand, *I will take away the heart of stone*, teach them in their youth to press this Promise, and bid them go to God, and the Covenant, where they will find this among the first Promises, *I will take away the heart of stone, and I will give you a new heart.* 2ly. If your case be great gullibness, what should ye do with it, should ye sit down and despair, and cast away your hope and confidence, and be waiting for death, as the Messenger that will take you to Hell; no, go to the Covenant with it, *Isaiah 1. 18. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wooll.* *Isaiah 43. 25. I, even I am he, that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* But 3ly. If the Challenge were, that ye want Repentance, and cannot get a heart broken for these things, ye have committed against God, go to the Covenant, and ye will find the Promises of Repentance; for as I said, it's a perfect Covenant, I defy you to instance the case ye can be in, but there may be two Promises made to it, if not six; therefore be improving the Covenant in all your debates, and disputes of the time, in all things that relate to your Consolation, and that relate to your Challenges. 4ly. I exhort you to improve the Covenant in all your duties, make use of it as a perfect Covenant, I declare from this place this day, that I take nothing for my duty to God, but what is contained in the Covenant; no man, nor society of men can make duties to God, nothing can be a duty to God meerly from the will of men;

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may more; It's enough to make it a quarrel, if we worship him according to the Traditions of men, and no wonder, for it says, this Covenant is not Perfect; therefore nothing can be a duty to God from men; though they were never so perfect or holy, they cannot make duties, but what are contained in the Covenant; and they who will take upon them to say, this is a duty, and this is a duty, and the contrair is a sin, they take Gods Office on them, for it's he that makes duties, and it's he that hath made them perfectly in this Covenant; and they that can keep up to the duties of the Covenant, they will in due time be made perfect in the Covenant.

Use 3. The third Use of the Point, Is it a perfect Covenant? then it's encouraging and comfortable to Believers; O! to be under a perfect Covenant, it's very comforting and encouraging, in these four or five Cases. 1. Compare your case with the case of the generality of men, the generality of men, they are seeking their contentment in other things than the Covenant, but the things are not perfect; It's observed, there are three great imperfections in all the Creatures. 1. There is nothing in the Creature compleat, there is neither Perfection nor Thing, even though men should say it were perfect in its own kind, yet not in every kind, some have Strength, and they want Wit; some have Beauty, and they have a wicked Ill humor; some have Riches, and they are base; some have Honour, and they are poor; there is ay some Briar in their Rose; ye will find several Worthies mentioned in the Scripture, who had their own Imperfections, *David* he had uprightness, but he was not free of Scandal; *Moses* had meekness, yet he wanted not Impatience; *Abraham* had Faith, yet he wanted not fear of his Life, when he went to *Egypt*, and to *Abimelech's* Court; there was in them a Rose that blossomed, but there was ay a Briar beside it; hardly can it be said of any thing, that ever was, that was said of Christ *Coloss. 2. 10.* And ye are compleat in him. 2. There is an Imperfection in the Creature of duration; suppose it were compleat, yet it cannot last, like *Jonah's* Gourd, it shadowed him from the heat of the Sun in the day, but at the evening it withered; a little time

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puts an end to it, there is no perfection of duration in the Creature, *Ps. 73. My flesh and my heart faileth but God is the strength of my heart, &c. 3. 7.* There is an Imperfection of suitableness, suppose the thing were intirely compleat and lasting, yet our humor & inclination may change, according to our appetite, for suppose the thing continue compleat and endure, yet our inclination may alter; hardly are there any thing constantly enjoyed, but the ordinar use of them is enough to give a surfeit of them. Now, there is imperfection in the Creature, but in this Covenant there will be no change, the thing is compleat; and ay the more enjoyed, there is the greater appetite, and the more longing desire. Therefore, ye that have an Interest in this Covenant, compare your case with all others, and suppose ye cannot count on such Bonds, and such Charters of Lands, yet consider, that they have but a perishing good, and ye have an Interest in the everlasting Covenant; be comforted with comparing your case with others. 2. I exhort you that have an Interest in this Covenant, to learn to understand your privilege; there are many Believers, like a young Heir, that cannot read nor write, they understand not their Charter; so many Believers understand not their privilege, because their understanding is imperfect, they go mourning and complaining of their case, while their understanding of the Covenant is imperfect.

Quest. I would move here one practical Question, what course a Believer should take, to understand the Covenant in its perfection?

Answer. I will offer you three Rules, that may prove helpful to you. 1. I would exhort you, ye have variety of Cases, whiles ye are full, whiles poor, whiles reproached, whiles deserted, whiles tempted, go to the Covenant with every case, and that will train you, and reach you the perfection of it, readily ye have scarcely the confidence sometimes to do it; but this was the way of Mr *Dickson*, if any thing troubled him, he laboured ay to get a Promise, and if he got it, he rejoiced, and in his old age, he wrote the Book *Therapeutica Sacra*, the cure of all cases by the Covenant; and if ye make use of the Covenant, ye will find there is no

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discouragement, no affliction, but ye will find a remedy for it in the Covenant. 2ly. I exhort you to be much in fear, filial ear, Ps. 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant*; the ready way to be acquainted with the Covenant is, to be a Christian much in fear, why does not he say, *the secret of the Lord is with them that love him? that rejoyce in him? or that believe in him?* the person that is fearing him, is driven to the Covenant. 3ly. If ye would understand your priviledge, and understand the Covenant, be more a student of the Covenant; consider the grounds ye heard laid down, he hath laid himself out to the utmost, he hath never holden in making Promises, untill he hath made that Promise, *He will make him ruler over all that he hath*; He hath ay gone on in making one Promise upon the back of another, untill he make over all that he hath; and make the person Ruler over all that he hath, and what would ye desire more? or imagine more? He put in Promises of peace, promises of pardon, promises of Adoption, and of Effectual Calling, and of taking away the heart of stone, and never stopped at Promises making, till he come to make him Ruler over all that he hath; and if ye were studying this, ye might understand your priviledge; and I am perswaded, all the disquietings ye might come under, flows from the not understanding the Covenant, therefore understand your priviledge.

That I may close this point, I will speak a word to two or three Cases, 1. It speaks a word to those, that seek their contentment in other things than the Covenant; some seek contentment in their lusts, some in the company of the wicked, some in their riches, some in their honour, but ye are all seeking hot Water under cold Ice, ye will not find it there; *Incline your ear and hear, and I will make a Covenant with you; why spend ye your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?* And I will tell you where ye will find it, there is a well ordered and everlasting Covenant, and that is the only thing that will afford true contentment; ye will find there perfect pleasure, Bread, Milk, Wine, Honey, Gold, ye will find Cities and Kingdoms, and ye will find all these in the Covenant, in the Kernel,

Kernel, and not in the Shell; seek not your contentment in other things, for the things that may give you content the day, may be your grief the morn, they may be a sting in your Conscience the moro, and like fire in your bosome, incline your ear and hear, why spend ye your money for that which is not bread? The Lord hath a quarrel with the people that hear not, as with the people of old, *my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* 2ly. It speaks to these, that think believers the greatest fools and Phanaticks in the world; why? They take them to yon Covenant; ye know not what ye say, it's a perfect Covenant, it hath perfect promises, and made upon the easiest terms; it hath perfect Seals, the Lord cannot add a greater Seal to it than he hath added; and think ye that Phanaticism? No, all of you that are following the world, and making a Covenant with the East-wind, ye know not what ye are depriving your self of, no, it's no Phanaticism, it's the solidest, the surest, and the most rational way that ever a man took himself to; take your self to this Covenant, why? It's a perfect Covenant, it's impossible to add to it, or take any thing from it. 3ly. I mention those that have taken themselves to it, and exhort you to be encouraged; and here for their encouragement I will only say two things, 1. I exhort you that have taken your self to it as a perfect Covenant, to which if ye were racking your wit, ye could add nothing; I exhort you to be encouraged under your imperfect priviledges, ye neither get in the Wilderness the meat, the reputation, the strength, the fellowship with God, that others get, ye could bear the better with all other things, if he made it up: what-ever imperfection be in the priviledge, ye have a perfect Covenant, therefore go through the world as the young Heir not yet come to his Inheritance, and that hath not much to spend, yet he hath an excellent Charter, and excellent Bonds: So what-ever imperfection be in your priviledge, ye have a perfect Covenant, be exhorted to rejoyce upon the account of the Covenant; it's a wonder to see David spend the 119 Psalm, and never a word of Christ in

In it all, except in one Verse, but in every Verse he mentions the Law, and Covenant of God; *I will rise at midnight and praise thee, because of thy goodness, I will sing of thy loving kindness*; therefore rejoyce in the Covenant, for it is perfect, and any that makes their Religion ly in complaints, all that ye say to God is complaints, and all that ye say to your Neighbours is complaints; take a rebuke in the Name of God, for what-ever ground of complaint ye have, ye ought to rejoyce in the Covenant, for it is perfect, and there is nothing can be added to it, nor taken from it. 2ly. I would have you who have the marks I have often given you, of an interest in the Covenant, to bring forth the Covenant, and not only make it a song to God, but offer it to your Consciences, when your challenges grow; if we were laying stress upon the Covenant, and taking it up as a perfect Covenant, we might have a better life of it than we have, but ignorance of the Covenant makes, that the half of his allowance is not enjoyed.

SERMON XXXVII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

HAVING spoken to the nature and properties of the Covenant, and resolving not to dwell much longer on this Text, I come to the latter thing that I suppose is to be handled in it; there are two Objections that might be made against Davids consolation from the Covenant, one taken from his own guilt and the guilt of his house, *although my house be not so with God*, another taken from Gods providence and his dispensations to him, *although he make it not*

to grow; so we shall handle the beginning and the close of the Verse together, as best agreeing to the method that I proposed, and did cast the words into.

The first Objection I will begin this day, which is, the smell of his guilt, and the guilt of his house, *though my house be not so with God*, &c. It's made a great Question, and there are diverse opinions about what is meant by Davids house, whether it take in the state of the Kingdom and Church, as sometimes it doth in Scripture, or whether it be his particular family, in which there was abounding Incest, Murther, and Adultery, and many other things; or whether it be the house of his body, and the tabernacle of his body, his person where there were many failings; likewise the meaning of the phrase, *Although my house be not so with God*, though it be not legally qualified, and be not so with God, as either God or I would have it; for there must be some such thing here, *yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*; so that before I can come to speak of his house, and the failings consistent with the Covenant, and of the answering their failings in the Covenant; there is one thing I cannot pass, and will handle it this day, it's this, comparing the Objection and the Priviledge together, my house is sinful, it's not so with God, yet notwithstanding it be so, he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant.

Doctrine. The Observation shall be, *That the Covenant made with believers it's a Covenant of Grace*; it's absolutely of Grace, the Lord makes the Covenant with them, although their house be not so with God, yet the Covenant is made with them, and this intirely proves it a Covenant of Grace. I will in the work of this day, comparing the Covenant with Davids house, handle this to you, that it's a Covenant of Grace, it's an absolutely free and gracious Covenant; it's a remarkable confirmation of this you have Ezek. 36. 32. The Lord hath in the former Verses set down many promises in the Covenant, such as, *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, a new heart will I give you, and I will put a new spirit within you, I will take away the stony heart, I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and write my Law in your heart*; and Verse 32. *Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be*

it known unto you, be ashamed and confounded for your own way, O house of Israel. Many precious promises hath he made in the Covenant, yet for the rise of them, be it known to you, saith the Lord God, not for your sakes do I this: That I may follow this a little, I confess it's the great thing of our Soul, If we were this day going to the grave, that he should make a Covenant with you, whose house is not so with God.

I will first prove this Covenant made with David and his seed, to be absolutely and intirely a Covenant of Grace. 2ly. I will inquire into the reasons, why God will have this Covenant of Grace. 3. I will clear a Question or two about it, and lastly shall apply it.

Reas. 1. First to prove it a Covenant of Grace, that is a Covenant of free favour, that's made with them, whose house is not so with God, it's a pathetick expression, there is much more implied than is exprest. That the Covenant is a Covenant of meer grace and free favour, will appear from these three remarkable truths. 1. We have no accession in procuring it. 2ly. The grounds and motives of it are only in God. 3ly. It hath all the properties of grace and favour into it that could be expected, to prove it a Covenant of Grace. 1. It proves it a Covenant of free grace, absolutely of free favour, in regard we are altogether secluded from having any hand in procuring it: It's observed in Dispute with Papists, there are four ways by which we might be conceived to influence a thing from God, and all these we are secluded from. 1. By way of merit. 2ly. By way of price. 3ly. By way of service. 4ly. If there were suitableness in us to it; several times there is beauty and comeliness, where there is neither merit, nor price, nor service, that will be alluring and procuring, but all the four ways we are secluded from having any hand in it.

First, There is no merit; there are two things necessary to make up merit; 1. The thing we give must be our own. 2ly. It must be proportioned to the thing we receive; the School-men cry down merit on these two grounds; in strict Justice, the thing we merit must be of something of our own, we must have a proportion of the thing to what we receive,

receive, and there is nothing of this in us in strict Justice, Adam could not merit any thing that could have the name of merit, it did result from the Covenant, and not from his obedience, for it was neither his own, nor proportioned to what he was to receive, there could not be a proper commutative Justice betwixt God and Adam, even though he had kept the Covenant of Works, far less could we merit, hapid man could not merit under the Covenant of Grace: 2ly. As we could give no merit, we could give no price; the reason of this is, the utmost we could do was, Sacrifices and Offerings, all the Heathens could never go beyond this, when they set their wits a-work to please their gods, they took the best things they had, to cast into the fire to their gods, but what are Sacrifices and Offerings to Him? Psal. 50. 10. For every beast of the forrest is mine, and the cattel upon a thousand hills. Psal. 51. 16. For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it thee, thou delightest not in burnt-offerings. Psal. 16. 2. My goodness extends not unto thee. Micah 6. 7. Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? What would all this signify as a price to him? 3ly. As we cannot merit, nor give a price, so there is no service we can do; there are servants that cannot buy nor merit, yet there are some pieces of service, by which they may bring an obligation upon their Master; but there is no service we can do, that can bring an obligation upon Him. Isai. 64. 6. But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Luke 17. 10. So likewise ye, when ye have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do. Lastly, suppose we have none of these three, we might influence a thing from God by beauty and comeliness, and suitableness to his inclination; but neither can this be: Read the 16 of Ezekiel, and ye will find what he found Israel, when he first entered in Covenant with her, Thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born, he compares Israel to a Child new born; as for thy nativity, in the day that thou wast born, thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor

nor swaddled at all, &c. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirts over thee, and covered thy nakedness; so the Covenant of Grace running in this strain, we must be altogether free from having any accession to it, there is none of us, but we may say, although my house be not so with God, when he enters in Covenant with us.

For further clearing of this, it will appear in these three or four Particulars. 1. Take a view of the persons he takes in Covenant with him, when first he meets with them, they are sometime simpler than other, and sometime baser than others, it's not many Wise, not many Noble, but God hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise; several times when he begins first to take them in Covenant, they are in regard of outward privileges, inferior to others, was not *Esau Jacob's* Brother? and the elder Brother? they had the same Father & the same Mother, and any thing that might be a difference, *Esau* had it, yet *Jacob* have I loved, and *Esau* have I hated: the persons he takes in Covenant, evidence it to be a Covenant of Grace and free favour; sometime they are the simplest, sometime the lowest, sometime among the grossest of sinners; what was *Paul*? what was *Mary Magdalen*? 2. It evidences the Covenant to be of meer Grace in regard of us, in that the Lord keeps different ways with them he takes in Covenant, after he takes them in, and yet he does them no wrong, there are some he will call at the third hour, some at the sixth hour, some at the tenth, some at the eleventh, he will give as much to them he calls at the tenth Hour, as to them he calls at the Third, he will give as much Glory, and as much Honour, and when he hath done that, he can tell, Friend, I have done thee no wrong, I may do with my own what I will; there may be one called in at the gates of Death, that may have as much, nay a greater gale of sweetness, than the old standing Christian ever had; it's remarkable, the good Thief on the Cross, never man exceeded him in a gale of sweetness, yet he scarce had it one hour, he had it out of Christ's own mouth, this night thou shalt be with me in Paradise, scarce any exceeded him in a flush of love, he tells

tells the Ill Thief, we are justly here, sayes he, but this man what hath he done? and yet he came in at the eleventh hour. So it evidences it's of Grace absolutely, in regard he will call what person he will in, and dispense to them as he pleases when they come in, tho they come in at the eleventh hour, yet he will give them possibly a Feast, that they that come in at the third hour get not. 3^d, It evidences it in regard of us to be of Grace, in that the dispensations of the Covenant, they are not only communicat to what person, and in what measure he pleases, but in the third place, their Dispensations are limited by no Law, either as to Time, or Place, or Duration, or Continuance under the Covenant of grace; we cannot tell when we will have communion with God, nor how long we will keep it; it will sometimes come before we be aware, and it will go before we be aware, the Design of it is to prove, that the dispensations of the Covenant of grace, depends on the Will and good pleasure of Him that gave them, so take a Believer at his fullest, the Covenant in the enjoyment of it, is proven to be of Grace, in regard the thing given, we can have no hand in it, and it goes, and readily he is no sinful cause of it; so these are clear evidences, that the Covenant is of meer Grace. This is the first ground on which I go, to prove the Covenant to be of Grace.

The second is, that on Gods part, all he does, proves it to be of Grace, might he not have said, that which is filthy, let it be filthy still? that which is dylog let it die? after Man had fallen, but he took another way:

The Grounds on which the Covenant stands, and the foundations Divines make, are three, and all the three are to be found in him; the first is, his Love; the second is, his Christ; the third, his Mercy; these three are the foundations on which the Covenant stands, and they all prove it to be of Grace. 1. There is his Love, it's so much the sweeter, that love is at the bottom of it, if the Father give a Jewel to his Son, but if he give it with a frown, or a token of anger, it would not be so much, as if he had given him a Farthing, with all the Testimonies of his Heart-love; but here we have a Jewel, and we have it with no frown

frown; it's remarkable, Deut. 7. 7. *The Lord did not set his love on you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, vers 8. But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn to your fathers:* Now, heard ye ever such a because as this? I have loved you, because I have loved you. What Logick would this appear to *Aristotle*? would they not call it an *Iden- tick*? but this holds well in the point of the Covenant, I have loved you, because I have loved you; so that there is the first rise of the Covenant, it's love; and if ye say, what was the rise of the Love? was it Beauty? was it Service? Merit? or Price? no, it was Love, I have loved you, because I loved you. 2. The great foundation of the Covenant is His Christ; therefore the Covenant is called, the sure mercies of *David*, now *David* was dead long before *Isaiah's* time; *It shall come to pass, says he, in the latter days, that David my servant shall be their King. David* was dead, but there were two *Davids*, and like the second Temple, the glory of the latter Temple, was greater than the first; now the sure mercies of *David*, are the sure mercies of the Covenant, which are called so, because they are founded on Christ, whose Type *David* was, and he a Branch sprung out of the root of *Jesse*. 3ly, The Covenant is founded on his Mercy, that ye may distinguish from his love, Mercy supposes misery; the proper object of Mercy is misery: we may rather call the ground of the Covenant Pity, *I had pity on them for my own names sake*, it's not love that inclines some to be favourable to them that are in misery, but pity, the same was at the root of the Covenant, he saw many to be created and born, and he knew they would eternally ruine, and out of pity he entered into this Covenant.

For further clearing and confirming of this point, that the Covenant is absolutely of Grace and free Favour, I would have you take a view of the Blessings of the Covenant, the conditions of the Covenant, and thirdly of the end and design of the Covenant; and all these three will evidence it, to be a Covenant of Grace. 1. Take a view of the Blessings of the Covenant, If ye will but view them in their greatness, that God should be our God, that Christ should be our Me-

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diator, that we should have Pardon, Peace, Fellowship and Heaven, readily we could neither Merit, nor give Peace, nor Service, but some trivial thing in time, but what could we do for Heaven? if there were no more to make Popery odious, that is enough, that they plead for Merit, they that will plead for Justification by Works; there seems to be some Magick in them. 2ly, If ye view the Conditions or Terms, on which they are made, it's impossible that there could be an Offer made, but upon some terms, unless God would bring all to glory, both the Reprobate and Profane, and the Godly, he behoved to make some terms, and it was impossible for him to make them lower, than to accept of, believe in, and embrace the Son. 3ly, If ye view the end of the Covenant, which is the exalting of the glory of his Grace; since the beginning of the World, he hath exalted his power in his Government of the World, and in the end, he will exalt his Justice; but here in making this Covenant, he hath exalted his Grace: so ye see this Covenant clear, that it is merely of Grace.

Before I clear any Objection against it, I would inquire into the Reasons, why the Lord would have this Covenant, absolutely of Grace and free Favour; many reasons are brought by them that treat of the Covenant, but I will pitch on three or four. 1. The Lord would have it a Covenant of mere Grace, that it might be sure; it could stand on no Foundation without tottering, but on his Grace, therefore it is of faith, Rom. 4. 16. *That it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed*; that which makes the Covenant sure is, that it stands on God's Grace; the Covenant of Works stood on Adam's free will, it's true he had an excellent qualified Will, and abundance of power, and con-created grace too, in as great a measure as he was capable of, yet when it stood on Adam's inherent grace, it could not be sure, but now it stands on God's grace, so that God's grace must fall, before the Covenant fail, why? he hath made it stand on the foundation of Christ, and so long as Grace endures, the Covenant endures. 2ly, As he hath made it sure to them that do not deserve it, so he hath made it a Covenant of Grace, that he might make all the

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refusers of it Inexcusable, *If I had not come, and spoken to them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloke for their sin;* he might have come and spoken the Covenant of Works, and that readily would not have taken away all excuses from them, but Christ came and spake the Covenant of grace, and if he came and spoke it, what cloke can be invented for sin, and rejecting of Christ in the Covenant? ye are told, he will forgive all bygones, if ye be but willing, and thoye have a mixture of unwillingness, yet if ye come with that unwillingness, and accept of his Offer, he will forgive; does not this take away all excuses? what excuse can the sinner have, and imagine to have, at the great day, when a Covenant of grace is offered to him, and yet he rejects it? 3ly. It's of grace, to keep the godly humble, it keeps them humble, if ye take a view of three things, that are brought under the Covenant. 1. The time was, when they were like the worst of sinners, there is not one piece of Clay in the hole of the pit, not one stone in the Quarrie, but they are like other, *Jacob is like Esau in the hole of the pit.* 2. Any thing that hath made the difference betwixt a Believer and a Reprobate, It's a thing given, *What hast thou that thou hast not received? and if thou hast received it, why boasts thou as if thou had not received it?* they are alike in natures, and any difference there is, it's but as ye saw on a wall, there is one place of the wall dark, and on another place there is a ray of the Sun, that ray came not from the Wall, but from the Sun, and if there be an Interposition, it will be as dark as any other place in the Wall, and this contributes to keep them humble. 3. The Lord would have this Covenant to be of grace, that he might exalt his Son, and there is indeed the great Reason of it, the Father intended to exalt the humane nature of the person of the Mediator, that is one Design, like the Dream *Joseph* saw in the Fields, I dreamed, says he, that all your Sheafs fell down, and mine stood up; this Dream the Father accomplishes in the Covenant of grace, he would have yours and mine, and all our Sheaves fall down, and Christs stand up; the exalting of him is well pay'd for, he merited it, does he not deserve it? the exalting of his Son is one great Design he hath, in
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preserving and governing of the World, for he hath done him, besides the love he had to him, a wonderful piece of service; that it is a wonder to be considered; so that the Covenant might be sure, that it might make the Reprobate Inexcusable for rejecting of him, and keep Believers humble, and yet exalt Christ, It's made a Covenant of grace. Lastly, he would have it a Covenant of grace, that there might run a considerable difference, betwixt it and the old Covenant of Works; I deny not, but there was grace in that Covenant, but it was nothing to this; these Reasons do sufficiently evince, why the Lord would have this Covenant of Grace.

Object. There is one only Objection I will answer, May not some say, did not our Cautloner purchase this Covenant? and in a legal sense, what the Cautloner hath pay'd, the Principal hath payed, as to all uses of Law, the Act of the Cautloner is to be imputed to the principal Debitor, and if the Cautloner hath payed, how can it be a Covenant of grace and free favour?

Ans. This Objection will be taken away, If ye notice three things, 1. It was Grace that made the Father give Christ; was ever the like of it heard tell of, a Father loving his Son, and loving him so well, and giving him for his enemy? would that derogate any thing from Grace? I like the Observation of a Divine, he says, there are many gracious promises in the Covenant, but the Kernal of the grace of them lies, in giving Christ; of all the wonderful acts that ever was heard tell of, the like of this was never heard, that the Father should give Christ; It's true *Abraham* offered to give his son *Isaac*, but *Abraham* was a Servant, and was commanded, and he had done a great sin, if he had refused; beside, he knew well that God was able to raise up an *Isaac* out of his Ashes; so that it was of grace he gave his Son. 2ly. It was grace, that he accepted his Son; I confess the sacrifice he offered, was of infinite value, but the Law provided, that the person that sinned should die, and he was not the person that sinned; It's a great wonder, that he accepted from any other, but from the person that sinned. 3ly. The glorifying the Mediator
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or the satisfaction, was a great act of grace. Remember ye an Observation I had, the last time we had the Communion on that Text, *Come to the wedding, all things are ready*; ye heard, the difficult things were put by hand, not only the decrees of Election, but the satisfaction of Christ is put by hand, neither could God, nor Man, nor Angels satisfy for us, 1. God could not satisfy, for he was not the person that sinned; Angels could not do it, upon the same ground; and Man could not give a satisfaction of infinite value, How should it be done then? He must be both God and Man in one person; what a difficult pass was this? he must be God to overcome, and Man to die; and so ye see, that Christ hath payed the Debt, and purchased the Covenant, and this derogates nothing from the grace of the Covenant, but rather confirms it to be of grace.

SERMON XXXVIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

FROM that branch of the Verse, *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*, I did infer, that the Covenant made with David, was a Covenant of meer grace, altogether independent from any Merit, from any Price, or Service, or Satisfactableness in him; without resuming any thing that I have spoken before, I come to the practical part of this, there is one Objection I would clear, and shall say no more of the doctrinal part.

Objection. Doth not the Covenant of grace injoy the whole Law, how can it then be called a Covenant of such indre grace

grace? nay more, ye have heard, there are things commanded in it, that are not commanded in the Covenant of Works? how can it then be a Covenant of meer grace and favour?

Answer. For opening, I desire ye may notice three or four particulars. 1. Obedience to the Law, is not the principal condition of the Covenant of grace, believing and accepting of Christ, is the principal command and condition of it, nay justifying Faith; however there be some in this generation, would fain put in love in the definition of faith, either designing a Socinian, or Popish error, they know not, that Faith is the principal condition, and that as justifying, though it cannot be separated from Works, they go inseparably together, yet in its nature and essence, it doth not include them, 2ly. I add, though the Covenant command the Law, and enjoin it, yet it does not enjoin it as a thing to be performed in our strength, Adam was to obey it by the strength of inherent Grace, but we are to obey it in the strength of assisting Grace; there is a Thesaurer appointed, *Who is made of the Father, our wisdom, sanctification, and redemption*; a very necessary Truth to be observed; some when they go about duties, they would wring them out of their own hearts, and do them in their own strength, that agrees not to the nature of the Covenant, the way how we are to obey the Law is, to abide in Christ, and bring our strength out of him, and the more we depend on him, and the oftner we come to him, we are the welcomer; he readily gives more than we ask, he will do as Naaman did with Gehazi, as one observes well, Gehazi running after Naaman, he asks a Talent of him, *I pray thee, sayes he, be content, take two*; we bake beside meal, and have a Thesaurer to bear our Purse, and to defray our expence, in every Inns, and in every strait we come to. 3ly. Though the Covenant command the Law, yet it will accept of the will for the deed, and sincerity for perfection; it was not so under the Covenant of Works, where it was threatened, *He that offends in the least, is guilty of all*; but in the Covenant of Grace, though we be commanded to be perfect, yet there will be acceptance of uprightness for perfection. 4ly. Obedience to the

Law is indeed commanded, but not to be our Righteousness. It would have been *Adams* Righteousness, had he stood under the Covenant of Works, but this cannot be commanded in order to our Justification; there is a Righteousness accepted, and that is one of the reasons, why the Lord in the Covenant of Grace accepts of less, than under the Covenant of Works; He first considers our lapsid estate, then he doth with us as a man, that hath a great Sum owing him, by a Creditor, he gets so much from the Cautioner, that he is content to accept of less from the Principal; all that God could expect, was from *Adams* self, his Bond admitted not of a Cautioner; but under the Covenant of Grace, there is less accepted at our hand, that there is so much done by the Cautioner. So it does not overturn the Truth of the Covenant, that this Covenant is absolutely free, and a full Act of free Grace, though there be a commanding of the Law in it.

Without Insisting more on the Doctrinal part, I will come to the Practical Use of it. 1. Is this Covenant a Covenant of so free Grace and Favour, made with those, whose house is not so with God? Is it a Covenant thus of meer Grace? the motives and grounds are not derived from us, but from something in God himself; it serves for several practical improvements.

Use 1. First, I would exhort you to take heed of making the wrong Use of it, so as to abuse this Doctrine of free Grace; two or three sorts of people come under the abuse of it. 1. Such as take liberty to sin, they abuse it, to take Grace, and make it a prop to sin, is an abuse of Grace; God forbid, says Paul, that we should sin, that Grace may abound; I like the Observation a Divine hath, he says, there cannot be a greater wrong done to an honest ingenuous man, than to say, he is an encourager to Drunkenness, to Swearing, to Adultery, to Murder, and to lying, what a reflection must it be on Christ, to say, that his Covenant is not of Grace. 2ly. All they that live in any known sin, and are cherishing themselves with the Doctrine of Grace, they abuse it; it is a Covenant of Grace indeed, but as ye heard, it's ordered in all things, ye cannot plead the conditional promises

promises, before ye make use of the absolute Promises. 3ly. Such as are pleading for pardon without repentance, they are abusing this Doctrine of Grace, and there cannot be a greater injury done to Christ; he hath mediat and treated this Covenant, and ordered it in all things, it's one of the great fruits of the deep of his Wisdom, and to go to abuse it, is a great wrong. 4ly. All ye that live careless, ignorant, secure, and scandalous, under the Gospel, and are alwayes pretending to Grace, and a Covenant of Grace, know, that to all your other guilt readily this may be added, as the capstone, that ye turn the Grace of God into wantonness, and fall asleep in your guilt, on this pillow, that this Covenant was free; therefore, whatever hath been said of Grace, as free, stand by all ye that are living in any known sin, and glorying in Grace, and makes no use of Christ for Repentance; whatever encouragement I have in commission to thee, that desires to feed on the Covenant, it's the Childs Bread; therefore let the former stand by; and the latter, take your own allowance.

Use 2. Is this Covenant of Grace? it serves for Information, and it informs of four or five remarkable things. 1. Of the great condescendency of Gods Grace, he had made a Covenant with *Adam*, the perfectest meer man that ever was; when God made a Covenant with him, he broke it; in the estate of Innocency, it was made with him, was it not a wonder, that ever he should have thought upon any other way with fallen man, when perfect man could not keep it; yet when after that Covenant was broken, and after the Bond, we had failed, He immediately thinks on another Covenant, and that to run in the channel of Grace; it's remarkable, man was lapsid and fallen, readily any then would have made it a ground of contradiction, which he turned up into an Argument of pity; O! the condescendency of Grace, O! the height, the depth, the breadth of his love; ye should be admiring his love, and sometime speaking of it one to another; that after we had broken one Covenant, he would immediately think of making another, and that founded on Grace, that it might be sure, it's of Grace, that may be sure.

Will ye be exhorted to be more in the meditation of this Grace, will ye speak often to one another, when ye have occasion, of the condescendency of his Grace; why should all your discourses run, in complaints of misery and difficulties, and not more in commending this admirable Grace, that manifested itself, when we had broken that Covenant, to enter in another, and found it on Grace. 2/y. Is this Covenant a Covenant of Grace? then it informs, of what is the ground, on which stands our enjoying the Priviledges of the Covenant: I like well the Observation of a Divine, he sayes, It's a necessar work for a Christian, to sit down, and consider, whence is it that one hath effectual calling, and another wants it? what is the reason, I have pardon, and another will never get it? and sometimes, what is the reason, that I am not in the lake, and left not to be tormented for ever and ever? would thou know the reason, it's Grace, and meer Grace, how necessar is it for us, when we take up the Covenant as a Covenant of Grace, to be considering, that all our Mercies privative and positive, what we are kepted from, and what we enjoy, they come all from Grace? for the Covenant is a Covenant of Grace, were we serious in pondering this, it would put a luster on our mercies, the smell of Grace would add a great deal of sweetness to them. 2/y. It would make us use them very humbly, what mercy has thou? grant it be prayer, or the Spirit of prayer? thou holds it of Grace, and alienarly of Grace, it's Grace, and Grace only, that hath put the difference betwixt thee and him; it's no wonder, that of all Christians, those Christians be the most humble, for when they come to glory, and hath on their Sundays Cloaths, Grace, Grace will be cryed, to be the Capestone; the *Papists* say, If we merited not Heaven, we would not be so glorious in Heaven; sayes one, to whom is the glory to be given? the distinguishing grace, preventing grace, the many privative and positive mercies, will be the ground of our Song; therefore take up a Catalogue, both of what thou has, and what thou hopes for, and give the glory to Grace. 3/y. It informs, upon what warrantable ground, we may wait for the calling, nay, for the Glory, even of the most wretched; it's true,

true, if our effectual calling were to be merited, If our pardon were to be bought, we might give over all hope, but since they come by Grace, the Glory is to be ascribed to Grace; there are three things in this Grace, that may warrantably make the soul hope. 1. Grace stands upon no by-gones, the sin against the Holy Ghost excepted; If thou were never so gross a sinner, if thou come and accept the offer of Christ, as he is held out in this Covenant, he is content to pass all by-gones. 2/y. This Grace stands not at the weakness of Parts, nor the meanness of Qualifications; no, Babes and Sucklings, and things that are not, Grace will prevent them, and pass by them. 3/y. Grace stands not at the weakness of Faith, even though it have some mixture of corruption; *I believe, help my unbelief*, laid the poor man; So thou may warrantably go to God, and pray for such a friend, that is living, and may be sees not the danger of his natural State, and thou thinks, he is so gone, as that he is incurable; thou knows not, that thou hast to do with a good God, who is the foundation of the Covenant of Grace; readily ye will say, what ground of hope? there is a Covenant of Grace, that is founded neither upon merit, nor price, nor service, but alienarly Gods Grace. These Uses of Information, and several others, I will not insist upon.

Use 3. Is this Covenant so free, and of Grace? then it serves for Exhortation; Be exhorted to improve it, as a Covenant of Grace; frequently Believers deal with themselves, as if they were often under a Covenant of Works, and hence it is, their consolation is no way answerable to their allowance; several times, they are like Children beside a full breast, the Child is lying, and it's lean, and ill-like, all the members of the body of it are decaying, the reason is, not because the Nurse hath not a full Breast, but the Child wants the art of sucking.

Therefore I will here press on Believers these two things. 1. I would exhort you, to take up this Covenant, as a Covenant of Grace. 2/y. I exhort you to improve it as a Covenant of Grace. 1. Take it up as a Covenant of Grace, and that ye may do this, two things I will only recommend unto you. 1. Consider, God intended absolutely to al-

the nature of the first Covenant, when he made the second; In the first Covenant, God required perfect obedience, he would not admit of a Cautiouser, nor of the least falling; were we under the Covenant of Works, there is not the least falling, nor the least idle word, but we might sit down, and conclude, it will eternally cast me in hell, for I am under a Covenant that binds me to damnation, for the least falling; but the nature of the Covenant is altered, & if ye would take up the Covenant of Grace aright, labour to understand the difference, betwixt the Covenant of Grace, and the Covenant of Works, that thou may not go ay judging thy case, as if the nature of the Covenant were not changed, but as if thou were under that Covenant, which is impossible for thee to obey. 2/y. Not only understand the differences betwixt these two Covenants, but examine these four things, that I have often mentioned, the principle from which it flows, and that is Love and Grace; the price that was given for it, and that is the Blood of his Son; the great contents of it, ye have often heard, that it's impossible for him, (to speak with reverence) to promise greater things, than he hath done in the Covenant, he hath promised Himself and his Son; and fourthly, consider the end of it, and that is, for the glory of his Grace, the end of it is, that ye may exalt his Grace; and so if ye would take up the Covenant aright, do not only state it in competition with the Covenant of Works, but consider it in these four that are last mentioned. In the second place, I exhort thee to improve it as the Covenant of Grace; I shall first shew you, who are they that do not improve, and 2/y. give some directions how to improve it, as a Covenant of Grace. There are three or four sorts of persons, that do not improve it as a Covenant of Grace. 1. However we hold in dispute on this head, preparatory Works, to be in Gods ordinary way, antecedent and introductory to conversion, yet we determine not the degrees of preparatory humiliation, no, there is some times the Lord opens the heart of a *Lydia*, and we read nothing of his Law-Work before; some may reason, my work is not effectual calling, why? I had never the legal humiliation, some hath; but what if he let out thy Byll with a Prin,

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and take a sword to others? What if he carry on thy work of humiliation with thee, in the progres of Sanctification? What if thy Legal Terrors be before thee, that some have had in the beginning of their work? He is an absolute Lord, that hath the oversight of this, thou that wilt sit and question all thy foundation marks, O! I was not humbled, the preparatory works was not with me as with others; however we maintain preparatory works against *Antinomians*, that deny them utterly, they say, to what purpose are they? we maintain a necessity of them, in so far as the Lord brings the work of conversion after them, as necessarily, as the thread must follow the needle. But 2/y. They do not rightly improve this Covenant, that would make up a hatch-potch, betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; readily there are some, they would lay some stress on Mercy and Grace, providing they had some works to mingle in with their Grace; I formerly hinted at it, it's impossible to be under both Covenants, and thou that would make up a hatchpotch of these Covenants, in order to thy Justification, thou art taking a way to mingle both together, and they will never wall well. 3/y. They rightly improve not this Covenant of Grace, that ordinarily reject the offers; as either being too far above them, or too far below them; several Believers, when they are called by the Gospel to come in to the Banqueting-house, they would be at some merit or price of their own, before they can treat with Jesus, about their pardon and their peace, these take not up the Covenant as a Covenant of Grace, and are not improving it as such.

Therefore, I will offer four Directions, especially relating to four practical cases, wherein Believers ought to improve the Covenant, as a Covenant of Grace. 1. When under the sense of unworthiness; O! such a silly heart as I have, and what can I do with it? Shall I go to God with it? Wilt thou take up the Covenant as a Covenant of Grace; I have, several times advised you to do with Christ, as the Father did with him, the Father in the Covenant of Redemption, forgave him not one farthing, he payed it to the utmost, for he knew he was abundantly able, there

he took pleasure to brulke him, therefore he required all that he had promised, and on the terms promised; so if he hath bidden thee come, and get the change of an unworthy heart, and told thee, that unworthiness is an argument of pity, do not sit down in the Land of Famine, as *Jacob's Children* were ready to do in the Land of *Canaan*, even when *Joseph* hath the Command of all the Store in *Egypt*, and if thou should go down with money in thy hand, to buy victuals, he will send thee home, and the money in thy sacks mouth. 2/y, It's an ordinary case, when we come under challenges, to say, there is no hope for me in God; what will ye say of Pardon, hath he not promised pardon? But say they, will he pardon the like of me? Will he not pardon the like of thee? He hath pardoned as great sinners, what made him pardon *David*, *Abraham*, *Manassah*, *Paul*, but Grace? And that same Sun that shined in their dayes shines now in our dayes, and that same Grace that was then, is to the fore yet. 3/y: Improve it, when thou goes to God with any Petition, though it be some great thing, may be thy heart is broken, under the Desolations of the Church of God, the grace of the Covenant may be a great encouragement to thee in that case, though thou think, O! such an undeserving thing as I am, and what can Grace do but cast me off? but thou may go confidently to him, if it be for thy self, if for thy friend in distresse, if for the Church of God; and though thou have no other argument, thou may press the Grace of the Covenant. Lastly, Improve this Grace in the judging of Fundamental Priviledges, and, in the building of thy hopes of eternal ones; First, Thy Adoption comes to be a Question, what? am I adopted to be a Son of God? A poor thing? But what could that hinder the Grace of the Covenant, if Grace thought fit to call thee to that Priviledge? These that are, ready to think on such great things, what is in my walk? Shall I enjoy God for all eternity? How can it be expected, that I shall enjoy him? but Grace is the great ground of all our hopes; to be brief, learn to take up this Covenant, as a Covenant of Grace, and to walk with himself according to it, there are none of you, but

but in a little while, ye will be at the gates of death, and this will be the great ground of your encouragement.

Use 4. The last Use is of Consolation, I would from this have Believers encouraged, there are three great encouragements ye have from it. 1. If ye be in Christ, His Grace is infinite, all your provocations cannot exhaust it, if ye be in Christ, it's like as a man would take a Milne-stone and cast in the Sea, the Sea will cover the Milne-stone, as well as it will do a little pebble stone, the greatest provocations will sink in this Grace, as well as the smal ones; It's true, if thou take occasion, and sleep secure on this cod of Grace, it shall be an aggravation of thy former guilt; but if thou be a penitent, this Grace will cover it, though it were great, as if it were small; therefore be encouraged, all that take them to this Grace, in its due Order, the Grace of it is infinite. 2/y. Ordinarily it's the nature of Grace, the more miserable the Object be, the more Grace is manifested, and appears, in that it did Terminate on that Object; the more wretched, the more Grace hath appeared in curing that wretchedness; so that God designs to exalt his Grace in this Covenant, and the more wretched and miserable, the more will Grace appear; Grace hath shined brighter, and hath the more of Grace into it, that it did Terminate on the like of *Paul*, *Mary Magdalen*, and a *Manassah*. 3/y. Consider, that one Act of his Grace is a pledge of another, if the Lord hath begun to give thee preventing Grace, in thy effectual calling, know the nature of this Covenant, and the Grace of it, it will not stop there, untill this crown and glorifie thee; if the Lord hath brought thee under this Covenant of Grace, and if he hath begun to prevent thee, and carry on a work of Grace in thee; it will never stop, untill it close, in perfecting Grace, and have the Crown set upon thy head. Let us bleis the Lord, that hath changed one Covenant, and hath given us another, wherein the greatest Testimonies of Grace, that could be given, are manifested; take your selves to it, and labour to improve it, and get an Interest in it secured, and ye shall find the comfort of it through all Eternity.

SERMON XXXIX.

2 Samuel 23. Verse 5.

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

I Have dwelt the most part of this Summer on this Verse, and purposes to close it this day; there are two Objections, one taken from David's guilt, *My house is not so with God*, another taken from God's Providence, *Although he make it not to grow*; The first of these I have handled in several Sermons, and told you, what was meant by David's House, it was not right with God. There are two Observations remains, and both of them Native, and very Important. First, There is this,

Doctrine 1. That Challenges for Guilt of our house, are excellently answered in the Covenant; the Application of the Covenant, is the proper Salve for such Sores; I intended to have handled this Truth at some length, but when I consider, that famous Mr. Dickson, in his Therapentica, a Book he hath written, for securing all Cases, by Application of this Covenant, hath handled this so fully, that I resolve to forbear; I recommend only that Book to you, where ye will find many diseases the Soul is lyable to, and they are all cured, by Application of the Covenant; it's not this Truth then, that I will insist on.

Doctrine 2. There is another Observation lyes in this, Although my house be not so with God, That though a Believer challenged for guilt, and the sins of his house, yet he is not cast at the Covenant. The sense of guilt ought not to
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put a Christian to cast at the Covenant. Though my house be not so with God, yet David can assert his Interest in the Covenant, notwithstanding of all his guilt, personal or publick, or in his Family: This is a Native Truth and Matie, ye have a remarkable confirmation of it, Nehemiah 9. 32. throughout the Chapter, he is confessing the sins of the Kings, of the Princes, of the Priests, of the Prophets, of his Fathers, and of the People, and yet in this verse he appeals to God, as their God, Now therefore, O our God, the great, the mighty and the terrible God, who keepeth Covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, on our Priests, and on our Prophets, and on our Fathers, and on all thy People, since the time of the Kings of Assyria, unto this day, &c. There a multitude of sins, that are confessed by him, throughout the Chapter, and he looks on God as Mighty and Terrible, and yet none of them, dings him from the Covenant; whatever be the smel of our Guilt, or of our Family, yet we are not to cast at the Covenant.

I will in following this truth, speak a little to these three things, First, I shall give you some grounds to prove, that whatever be a persons guilt, yet they are not to cast at the Covenant. Secondly, I shall clear some Practical Cases about it; and Thirdly, shall apply it.

First, I shall give you some grounds to prove, that whatever be a sinners guilt, he is not to cast at the Covenant, though my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me a Covenant; I will offer you these five remarkable grounds to prove it; The first I take from God, and there are three things in God relating to the Covenant, that will prove the truth of this: 1. For all our guilt God holds the Covenant firm, guilt casts us not out of the Covenant, it may cast us out of fellowship, that will not cast us out of the Covenant, Jer. 3. 1. *Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me, saith the Lord; and vers. 14. Return, backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married to you; there the Covenant holds firm, and since God holds the Covenant firm under guilt, we may warrantably plead the Covenant, even though we be guilty of many sins.*

When people are gully, God makes them offer of the Covenant, *Isai. 1. 18. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* *Psal. 68. Though ye have lien among the pots, ye shall appear as doves, &c.* And since God offers the Covenant, when we are most gully, may not we warrantably rely on it? 3/y. God hath given experience in Scripture, of his accomplishing his Covenant to them, whose house were not so with God; the great instances we have in *David*, in *Solomon*, in *Manasseh*, in *Paul* and *Peter*, who are now walking in long white Robes in Glory, they all prove, that he holds fast and accomplishes his Covenant, though their house be not so with God. All these laid together, evidence, and are the first ground of the point, that when we come to be challenged for guilt, yet we may warrantably rely on, and plead the Covenant.

2/y. The second ground is this, though it be true the Covenant be a created thing, it's finite, yet the rise and Seals of it are infinite; there is nothing properly infinite but all-analy God, and consequently the Covenant is finite, mercy is the rise of it, and truth is the seal of it, and they are essential Attributes of God; so, though the Covenant and promises be created things (though they be finite) yet the fountain of the promises, and the seals of them are infinite; now whatever guilt thy soul can be challenged for, thou has something that's infinite in the Covenant, the rise and seal of it cannot but be for finite guilt, a sufficient ground of relying on infinite mercy and truth; if *Peter* should stand and say, *Christ's righteousness*, I have denied him, if *Paul* should say, *Christ's righteousness*, I have blasphemed; his righteousness will not cover my sin; that which is sufficient to cover the sins of all the elect, is sufficient to cover the sins of any particular elect; there is ground under challenges to rely on the Covenant, the mercy of it is infinite, and the truth whereby it's sealed is infinite. 3/y. The great end for which God challenges for guilt is, to drive sinners to the Covenant; it's the great end for which he challenges and tells the person, my house is not so with God, it's not to drive them from the Covenant, but to it; the Law in this

this case becomes a School-master to lead to Christ; of all the Logick that ever I read, it was the worst in *Peter* to say to Christ, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*; he had rather ground to say, come to me, for he was the Saviour of sinners, and he had his Name *Jesus* on that score, because he saves his people from their sins. Now, to say, *Depart from me*, to him, the case is so, as when we say, our house is not so with God, and I cannot take the Covenant; the more challenges, the greater need of the Covenant; and here remember, that when challenges and terrours are impediments to faith, they are like *Jordan*, flowing over all its Banks, they are never kept in their proper limits, but when they rely on the Covenant, and the mercy and truth, that are the springs and seals of the Covenant.

4/y. Take notice of this, as one ground of the truth of this, that challenges and guilt should not drive us from the Covenant, but to the Covenant; ordinarily a rejecting of mercy is a dismal sin, hardly is there a greater injury done to Christ, than when challenges, or sense of guilt, puts us to cast at his mercy, and his Covenant; I like the Divinity of one that tells, *Judas* did Christ a great wrong in betraying him, but a far greater in despairing of his mercy; in betraying him he laboured to take away Christ's life as man; but in despairing of his mercy, he laboured to take away the life of God; there is no greater sin, than when we cast at his mercy; it is despair, to entertain challenges and dwell on them, and not rely on the Covenant; now despair of all sins against God, it's one of the most hellish like, and one of the greatest sins: I will let you see four evils that ly in this sin of despair, and are peculiar to it. 1. Despair opposes God in his greatest Commands, the greatest Command that ever he gave, was to believe in his Son, 1 *Job. 3. 23. This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ*; now despair is unbelief in the highest degree, therefore it opposes God in his greatest Commands. 2/y. It opposes God in one of his chiefest Attributes, the great end why he made the world, was not to be glorified in his Power, in his Wisdom, in his Justice, but in his Mercy and his Grace, there is the great end of Creation and Providence, that he may be exalted in his Mercy

Mercy and his Grace, and despair opposes him in this. 3^{ly}. Despair it enrages the soul against God, the damned in Hell that are despairing of Christs mercy, are weeping and howling, and gnashing their teeth, they would even bite God, if they could reach him; they are compared to a Dog gnashing his teeth; in the place of the damned, there is nothing to be heard there, but howling, and cursing, and gnashing of teeth, and that for ever and ever; the reason is, they despair of Christs mercy, had they hope after a million of years to come to glory, they would lay by their howling and cursing, but that hope is past them, the door is closed, and they are enraged, and fighting desperately, and none fights so desperately, as Souldiers that expects no Quarters. 4^{ly}. Despair makes every sin unpardonable, the smallest sin committed in the course of our life becomes an unpardonable sin, if it be venom'd with the venom of despair; so ye see, despair of all sins is most dreadful, and most dismal to God, and he that casts at the Covenant when he is challenged for guilt, must despair, and so eminently dishonour God. Lastly, We are not to cast at the Covenant, in regard there is no way of an outgate from challenges, but from the Covenant; let folk turn themselves where they will under terrours, there is no way of an outgate but from the Covenant, and readily they that seek their contentment in other things, and cast at the comforts of God, under their terrours, they are driven to seek an outgate in their lusts; I remember a Passage of famous Mr. Hutcheson, having one day to deal with a person under the terrours of God, with whom he had been several times, he made offer of the Covenant to him, but the man did cast at all the offers of the Covenant, and was overwhelmed with terrours, and after several arguments, he pleaded with him thus, sayes he, if ye stubbornly refuse the comforts of God, ye shall at length seek your comfort in your lusts; and a little after, the man turned profligate, and continued profligate and prophane. Now lay all these together, and ye will see the truth of the point, that when God challenges for guilt, it's not our part to cast at the Covenant, but the more firmly to adhere and cleave to it, and assert an Interest in it.

Before I apply it, there are two cases I will clear: First,

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one may ask, Shall every one under challenges lay claim to the Covenant? There may be a twofold difficulty here. First, I am not sufficiently humbled to lay claim to the Covenant, great sins should have great repentance, Manasseh was a great sinner, and the Scripture sayes, he humbled himself greatly before God; Or Secondly, readily one may say, I come short of grief for sin, and of the tears that an hypocrite will have, and shall I lay claim to the Covenant, and assert an Interest in it?

For removing of these, the truth of this will hold, that when we come to be challenged for guilt, we are not to run from the Covenant, but to rely on it, and assert an Interest in it; this Objection overturns not the truth of the point; For 1. There is a twofold suitableness of humiliation unto the sins we have committed; there is a Legal humiliation, and an Evangelick; a Legal humiliation requires an exact proportion of repentance, to the degree and measure of the sin; an Evangelick humiliation requires a sincere and upright repentance; now, when we come to be challenged for guilt, and would stand at embracing the Covenant, upon the account there is no suitable humiliation to the sin; consider it's true, if it be an unsuitable Evangelick humiliation, that is, not sincere, thou cannot plead the Covenant, but though it be not legal humiliation, thou may plead the Covenant. A man in his grief for sin, before he come to plead the Covenant, he should do as a man coming to a deep Water, O! saith he, I will drown before I come to the middle of it, therefore he casts about to see if he can get a Bridge; the truth is, the Gospel-suitableness is a Bridge to Legal suitableness; many take the Water, and ask not the way to the Bridge, therefore their terrours distract them, and it is as it were the beginning of Hell to them. But I add 2^{ly}. A hypocrite may have mo terrours when they are humbled, and possibly more joy at another time, than a sound believer will have, for terrours and joy are but pendicles of Grace, viz. of their Faith, Love, and Delight in God, they are concomitants of the great Graces of the Spirit; a Hypocrite may out-strip a sound Believer in terrours, and flashes of joy but they cannot out-strip them in believing, loving, and delighting in God; certainly Judas sorrow for sin, when he

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changed himself, as to the degree, was greater than *Peters*. I like the distinction *Divines* have, betwixt terrours of Conscience, and terrours in the heart; the least wound in the heart is dangerous, the pain of the heart is deadly, it does not admit of *solutio continui*, as Physicians say, but there may be a Fire and a Hell kindled in the Conscience, that little affects the heart, though a hypocrite outstrip thee in terrours and flashes of joy, yet if thou has win to the Bridge that leads over the deep Water of Legal humiliation, it's Evangelick sincerity; if in thy mourning thou has looked on him whom thou hast pierced, it's Evangelick humiliation.

There is another case occurs, By what rules may a sinner know that he is humbled for sin, that he may go and apply the Covenant? How shall we know that even Evangelically our humiliation is such, as we may go and make use of the Covenant? We say not (for answer) that all sinners, and all humbled sinners, may ay run to the Covenant; that great *Antinomian Crisp*, he makes use of that word, a sinner reeking in sin, Immediately after they have committed the sin, says he, they have no more ado, but go to the Covenant; but we say, they must repent, and be humbled, and believe, and go to the Covenant: we say, that thy Legal humiliation, not being suitable to thy sin, should not hinder thee from going to the Covenant, if thou be sincere. By what Rules then shall one try if he may plead the Covenant? I will offer three or four Rules: 1. Take notice of this, that Gods way in humbling sinners, and bringing them to the Covenant, is diverse; there are some folks wound he will let out with a Plin, others he will take a Sword to: as to the work of Effectual Calling, the beginnings of it are sometimes dreadful; it's remarkable, the Jaylor before he be baptized, O! but his work begins dreadfully, he thinks the Prisoners are all escaped, and he thinks there is nothing for him but death, and presently he calls for a light, and yet we find him immediately baptized; there is no such thing in *Lydias* case: there is no more, but God opened her heart: some folks will get their humiliation like drops of dew, there are others they will get it like a deluge. But 2ly. Gods way is diverse in bringing to the Covenant, so there are

are three qualifications of humiliation for guilt, that whatever person hath them, they may in that case warrantably go, and rely on the Covenant, and apply it. 1. When the soul comes to be humbled for that which is worst in sin; the worst is not that it is damning, but that it is dishonourable to God, and when the sinner comes to be humbled for guilt, as it is dishonourable to God, as having in it rebellion against his Law, ingratitude against his mercy, and contempt against his Majesty, when a soul is grieved for that which is worst in sin, in that case they may apply the Covenant, and rely on it, and have some sweet grounds of the accomplishment of the promises of the Covenant. 2ly. When the soul is so humbled, as it's content to take the Covenant on the terms of the Covenant, without the alteration of any of the terms, they are content to take him for a Saviour, and as content to take him for a King: Oftentimes we would alter something in the order and method, and nature of the Covenant; but when we are content to take it for good and ill, for duties and privileges, when the soul is so humbled, as it's content to take Christ for King, Priest, and Prophet, and to take him in all the Articles of it as it stands; in that case the soul is Evangelically humbled, and may plead the Covenant, and rely upon it. 3ly. When the soul is humbled not only for the guilt of sin, but for the blot of sin, that it hath defiled; a believer in his humiliation, is like a man that will not touch a Coal, some will not touch Coals because they are hot, but this man that hath a clean hand, will not touch them, because they are black. When a person comes to be humbled for the guilt of their House, that it is not so with God, it runs upon these three Channels, & if it run upon these three, the humiliation seems to be Evangelically qualified, and a person may very warrantably, according to the current of the Scriptures go, and plead the Covenant: And thus I have cleared the Doctrinal part.

Use 1. For Use of the Point; it serves 1. To reprove two sorts of people, First, those that plead the Covenant too hastily, and those that plead it too slowly. 1. Those that plead the Covenant too hastily, they go on in their peace, joy, and consolation, in down-right *Antinomian* Principles, they are reeking in sin, and yet go and plead the Cove-

What hast thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth, Psal. 50. since thou hates to be reformed? No, your hands will be knocked off from the Covenant; all that grip to the Covenant, and hath no Evangelick humiliation, your hands shall be knocked off. I tremble to see many dying persons pleading the Covenant, and hoping for mercy, yea, even some in old age dying, and pleading to the Covenant, and knows neither what Legal nor Evangelick humiliation means; take heed any of you that visits the sick, that ye send them not in to Hell reeking, and flattering them with a delusion in their right hand.

There are some plead the Covenant too slowly, they think they are never right but when they are under terrours, and they cannot long enough travel under them, they are as wading the Water, that goes over their head, and goes not about to the Bridge, it's righteous with God, to give them their fill of terrours, and to do with them as he did with that great Divine Mr. *Law*, who prayed unto the Lord, that he would give him terrours; that he might know what they were, and the Lord gave him his fill of them, so that he went to the grave, forbidding all men to pray for terrours:

I will only exhort one another of you, that are now and then put to this, *My house is not so with God*, to take the Covenant; be not driven from it, and I will give you three Rules in pleading of it. 1. Plead the Covenant in the right method of it, remember ye of the ordering of the Covenant, the Absolute Promises are to be taken before the Conditional, the Promises of the first Graces before the second; plead the Covenant in the right method of it, if ye cry, Lord, give me pardon, and has never gotten Repentance; if ye cry, Lord, give me peace, and has never gotten pardon, ye pray out of the order of the Covenant; the order of the Covenant is, we must first repent, and then have pardon, we must first have pardon, and then have peace, thou that presses the Covenant out of the order of it, thou art not praying in Faith, thou art tempting God, and blinding him to overturn the Covenant, that is well ordered in reference to particular case; and if thou hast never had the Promise of the first Graces, thou wilt not get the promises of the second, thou wilt never have peace, until thou get a new

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new heart, and repent, 2ly. I will give you this Direction, know, that though there be not a proportional sorrow to your guilt, nay, though possibly ye can hardly discern it Evangelically, yet plead the Covenant; Some all their terrors, on the great flood of them, are in the beginning of their Conversion; others get them in the progress of Sanctification, many have their praying, believing, and reading mingled in with terrors; if thou has a sound work the day, thou art baptized, it's well, or if he give thee thy terrors by drops, after thou hast closed the Covenant, it's well. 3ly. I exhort thee in pleading the Covenant, if thou has been humbled enough, and relied on it, and hast gotten any clearing of thy Interest in it, make not a dayly disput of thy Interest to it; it were good, when we have gotten any clearing of our Interest, to lay down principles, that we would walk by, in the whole course of our life; it's sad to have God as renewing our Evidences every day, or then we will not only dispute them, but deny them.

SERMON XL.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

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

THE latter Words of this Verse I will now handle, *Although he make it not to grow*; The scope of them is, to answer an Objection, against Gods making a Covenant with David: there were many Providences trying David, seemingly inconsistent with the Covenant, as he had guilt in his house, so he had Crosses, and grounds of fear for the future; all these are summed up in these Words, *Although he make it not to grow*, the word in the Hebrew from a Root, that signifies to sprout, or bud; some take it as borrowed from a Birds being with Eggs; *Junius* renders it, *non facit pullulare*; *Montan* renders it, *non gerit*

facit; both these Translations confirm our Translation, that he doth not yet make it to grow; but like a flower in the bud, or a bird in the egg, in due time it will grow; *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*, and tho Providences answerable to the Covenant, do not yet appear, they will appear, he will make them to grow, although he make it not yet to grow. Without insisting more to clear the words, I will take two or three brief Observations, and shall only name the two first, and speak a little to the third, and with it close the whole *verse*.

First, Ye may remember, it is implied in this part of the *verse*, that sometimes, when we would lay claim to the Covenant, Providences stand up to hinder us.

Doctrine. It's a most difficult put, to believe the promises against the stream of providence; remember the word Gideon answered the Angel, any would have thought, considering Gideon as a Believer, and he is recorded among the cloud of Witnesses, Heb 11. And considering it was an Angel that spoke it, *The Lord is with thee, thou valiant man*, when he was threshing his Wheat for fear of the Midianites, *If the Lord be with us*, says Gideon, *how is all this come upon us?* The providence that Israel and Gideon was trusted with, made him doubt the Promise, even out of the mouth of an Angel.

And here I would have you notice three things remarkable. 1. Several times the Promise, it seems to point a very direct cross way to the Providence of God; the Providence will seem to be walking toward the east, as it were, when the Promise is walking to the Airt direct contrary; so ye will find, if ye take the strain of the Bible; who would think but the godly should have prosperity? should have answers of Prayer? have many dayes of communion and fellowship that they want? who would think, but that the wicked should be broken? having all the Plagues written in the Bible coming on them? yet take this Bible, both in the Promissory or Threatning Part of it, and ye shall find the Promises, as it were quite contrary to the Providence; *Asaph* corrected every morning, and the wicked their eyes stand with sadness; *Psal. 73. 21*. Notice this, that it is a very ordinary

ordinary thing for Sathan in his Temptations, to bring Providences against the Promise, the Lord will give him a Commission sometimes, as he did to *Job*, take his cattel, take his sheep, and then take his Children, and then he put his body in his power, excepting only his Life; and when he hath done all this, he brings in his friends to call him an Hypocrite, and brings his Wife, to bid him curse God and die; never gets the Adversary more advantage, than when our back is at the wall, under the cross, and then he puts us to doubt of the Promise; Temptations never have such as back, as when they are backed with Affliction; so that a the Providence and the Promise seem contrary, the Politick Adversary will take advantage of the Providence, and put the Soul to doubt of the Promise. 3^{ly}. Note this, that a Believer, though he be called to live a life of Faith, and to be endeavouring it, yet he is strongly inclined to live a life of Sense; there is nothing more natural to us than this, of all the difficult things that *Luther* found, he professed it to be one of the greatest, to trust in a correcting God, and believe in a withdrawing God; men have such an inclination to live by sense, that the generality of the world, for a long time were enemies to Christians, on this ground, O! say they, they call us to believe in a crucified Lord, and he that was not able to save himself, is he able to save his People? so, since Providences go contrair to the Promise, and since Sathan will argue from providences against the promise, and find his advantage in our nature, to be inclining us so strongly to live by Sense, and not by Faith, no wonder it be a considerable Objection against the Covenant, that he makes it not to grow. This Truth, if it were beat out, might be singularly useful; I believe many has found it, that God's Providence, and his dealing with the Church, hath inclined you to the opinion of Ranters, that they are half Fools, that will credit one Promise, when they find all Providences rolling against that Promise; and how many times are ye put to it in your particular case, like *Rebecca*, ye have the Twins struggling within you, why am I thus, says she, under such terrors, and afflictions? there lyes the great exception I have against the Promise, and the Providence, that he makes it not to grow; Learn to guard against this, I will offer three or four remarkable things, that may contribute

guard against it. 1. Consider, Christian, the chiefest believer may have no considerable providence, when the providence is made an argument against the Promise; what strong tryals had *Abraham's Faith*? the Angel tells *Sara* that she should bear a Son, but she hath a dead womb; another time he is told by the Angel, that he must take his Son *Isaac*, and offer him up in Sacrifice, even though the promise ran, *in Isaac shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*; might he not not well argue, will all the nations of the earth be blessed in a burnt Sacrifice? He must take off his head, and offer him upon an Altar, but he considered not the deadness of *Sara's* womb, and staggered not at the Promise, but gave glory to God, and believed, that out of the Ashes of *Isaac*, he could accomplish his Promise. So that God's chiefest friends have not had considerable Providences, when they were made use of, as Arguments against the Promise. 2ly. Take notice of this, That all Providences work together in their ultimat end, for accomplishing the Promises; it's true, He whose way is in the Sea, and whose paths are in the deep waters, His motion is like the wheels of a Clock, any that would look on them, and see them move cross one to another; would wonder whereto they tended, but all these motions tend, to make the Clock stricke when the hour comes; all the Providences of God do tend to the accomplishing of the Promise, it's true, we see not their tendency; but they all tend, and in end all resolve in the accomplishment of the Promise. 3ly. Ye would notice this, that Providences are not a Believers Rule; I confess there is a sweet use of Providences, he that observes them, will understand much of the loving kindness of the Lord; there are some godly men of this Church, now in glory, there was nothing could befall them, but they were constantly put to turn it over, even the smallest of things, that they might read out some message from God under it, and yet never took them to Providences for their Rule, they took them to the Word, and to the Promises for their Rule; Providences are not our Rule, it's the Word of God, and the Promise, that we are to walk by; so that, be the Providence what it will, a Believer hath a Key to open it with, and interpret it by; therefore be the providence what it will, they need not

not stagger at the promise. 4ly. I will add this, that seldom is a Christian trysted with such Providences, but in one thing or another, they have the accomplishment of the promise, there is either one promise or another accomplished; if God deny one, he is making out another, and the accomplishment of one promise, may be a seal of the whole Covenant; I will say no more of this Truth, only guard against it, that Providences put not you to stagger at the Promise.

Doctrine: There is another word lying in this, *Although he make it not to grow*; and it's this, *That however God delay in his providence to accomplish promises, yet a Believer hath the promise in the seed, or in the bud*; The word signifies to spring, though he make it not to spring, a metaphor taken from a Plant, that is not yet above the ground, though Believers find not the Promises springing and growing, yet they have them in the Seed. There is a three-fold Seed, that accomplishes consolation to Believers, in their greatest difficulties. 1. The Seed they are looking for, is in the decree and purpose of God; *I know what thoughts I have to you ward, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*; The Lord is sending them to *Babylon*, and to encourage them, he sayes, *I know what thoughts I have to you ward, my hand is carrying you to Babylon*, but my heart is to give you an expected end; the mercy that they look for, though it grow not, yet they have it in the Decree and Thought of God. 2ly. Things hoped for, though they grow not, yet they are often in the Seed of secondary causes, and the tendency of them may be a Seed, out of which they may grow; the Lord sometimes may remove his enemies, and put divisions among them, and put them under challenges, and yet they may be the Seed of an outgate to the Church; readily he will tryst them with such providences, as in the beginning, none will see whereto they tend, and yet in the end, he will bring out of them the accomplishment of the Promise. 3ly. He will bring out the Seed out of the Providences themselves, the dayes will come, when holiness shall be written on horses bells, and the wolf and the lamb shall ly down together, and none of them shall hurt other; and possibly the child is unborn, that shall see these dayes of the mercies made over by the Covenant; and though

though they appear not, yet a Believer hath them in the Seed, they are like Seed sown in the ground, and a spring shall come: and here is a special encouragement, a Believer may have doubting and trembling thoughts, about the case of the Church, and astonishment whiles about thy own case, even for what appears above ground, but the Seed of deliverance to the Church, and other mercies to thee, are in the Promise; wait till the Spring come, and the Winter be over and gone, and thou shalt see them sprouting, as ever thou saw a Plant spring and sprout in the spring time.

Doctrine 3. Thirdly, Observe, That even when Providences make against the Promise, yet a Believer should rely on the promise, and on the Covenant, though he make it not to grow; yet it's sure, it's ordered, it's all thy salvation, and all thy desire, it's everlasting. So this point falls in natively here, and there are three things I will speak a little to here. 1. In what cases a Believer should rely on the Promise, when providences make against it. 2ly. On what grounds they should rely on the Promises. And 3ly. I shal apply it.

First, In what cases a Believer should rely on the Promise, when the Providence makes against it? And here I will instance four or five Cases. 1. When we pray, and God delays to answer; we ought then to take our answer out of the Promise; ordinarily we pray in the day time, and in the night time we are not heard, our throat may be hoarse with crying, and our eyes fall with looking up, and get no answer; in that case, a Christian is to take his answer out of the Promise, the Promise ought to supply, and make up the room of the Providence, the more patiently one wait for answers in prayer, and by still untill the Promise come, and take the Bible, and the Promise, and feed on it, untill the Providence come, the more peace when it is come. 2ly. Though Providences seem contrary to the Promise, yet we are to rely on the Covenant, and that even when God is writing bitter things against his Church; several times his Providences are plucking up that which hath been planted, and pulling down that which hath been built, he may bring Vine out of Egypt, and bring a wild Boar out of the Forest to trample it down; in that case they are to take them the Promise, they should credit and rejoyce in the promise, and take up the Psalm Book, and sing upon the credit of

of the Promise. A 3d. Case wherein they are to hazard on the Promise, when Providences seem contrary to them, is, when God withdraws and hides, and readily becomes a terror; several times he will do so, do ye not find him do so? Though he be your hope, will he not some times be your terror? any that read the Bible may think, If I be redeemed, now is he my terror? Thou hast forgotten the promise, and he hath put thee to read over forgotten Promises, and that is to put thee to take the Promise, untill the Providence come. 4ly. In all cases of Affliction; the Lord takes away a Husband, a Wife, a Child, and may be takes away Prosperity, and gives thee Adversity; in that case, he will take away the Providence from thee, and have thee to feed on the Promise; there is no case, wherein the Providence seems hardly comparable with the Promise, but he would have thee to feed on the Promise, and take the Promise in the place of the Providence.

Therefore, I shall shew you on what grounds, when God makes not the thing to grow, and we can see nothing above the ground in the Providence, that we should then especially adhere to the Covenant. 1. Let Providences be what they will, all the Seals remain at the Covenant; it is Sealed with the Oath of God, with the Blood of His Son, thou hast gotten it Sealed with the Seal of the Spirit of Promise, Ephes. 1. 13. Let Providences be what they will, God hath not taken away one Seal from the Covenant; grant it be ill with the Church of God, grant thou gets no answer of Prayer, grant thou be haunted with Terrours, and outwardly with Crosses, yet alwayes the Covenant is sure; He hath not broken off one Seal from the Covenant, it stands as at the beginning, it's sure, and the Oath of God is at it, the Blood of God is at it, and may we not then firmly rely on the Covenant? 2ly. I would have you notice, That several times God tryts Christians with cross Providences, purposely to make them rely on the Covenant; oftentimes the design of Crosses is, to try if Faith will take a naked promise upon the credit of God, and rejoyce in it; some afflictions come for chastisements of Sin, but some come meerly for trial, Job's Afflictions were of this nature, it's true, he was a sinner, yet all that came on him, was not for

for sin, but for tryal, the Lord bids Sathan examine him; *Hast thou considered my servant Job?* and how well can he say his Lesson, this was designed for tryal, to see if he would keep by God, and to the Covenant, in the midst of all that tryal; therefore, like a Master triumphing in his Schollars, the Lord tells Sathan, he still retains his integrity, though thou hast moved me against him without cause; in the midst of all his tryals, he will not take with it, that he was a Hypocrite; as there are some, they cannot be perswaded but they are Hypocrites, so there are some, none can perswade them that they are Hypocrites, I will maintain my integrity before him, that is, I will maintain it to his face. 3/y. Take notice of this, that hardly is there any thing more honourable to God, than to rely on a Promise, when all Providences seem against it; this gives glory to God eminently; but when we, like *Thomas*, will not believe except we see, and put in our hand in the print of the nails, it's dishonourable to him, *James 2. 23. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, and he was called, the friend of God: Abraham could not kyth himself more God's friend, in any thing he could do, than in believing, that out of the Ashes of Isaac, he was able to fulfil his Promise; and that though Sarah's womb was dead, yet he staggered not at the Promise: There is nothing more honourable to God, than when we can trust him against sense, and as Abraham believed in hope against hope. 4/y. Consider this, That relying on the Promise against Providence, as it's honourable to God, and excellently improved, when we are tryed, and all the Seals appended and continue firm at this Covenant; So Fourthly, Consider, that Providences they are all to be examined by the Promises, but the Promises are not to be examined by the Providences; if ye would know a Providence, if it be an Act of Mercy, or an Act of Wrath, ye are to try it by the Word, ye are not to try the Promises by the Providences, the Promise is the Touch-stone, by which the Providence is to be tryed; on this account it comes to pass, one may have a Rod in Mercy, and another in Wrath; and one may have sharp Dispensations in Mercy, and another may have them in Wrath; *My Son, despise not thou the chastisement of the Lord**

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Lord, for every son whom he receives, he chastens, and if ye be without chastisement, ye are bastards and not sons.

Use. For Use, I would press the practise of this in two Cases, First, In reference to the desolate Case of the Church of God; O! but Providences look unlike the Promises, in the Case of the Church, what? shall we, because his small handful are so Tossed, so Divided and Rent, and the Adversaries so great, so High and Potent, shall we therefore cast away Hope, but that he yet well arise, and revive his Work in the midst of the dayes? No, so long as there stands a Bible, and so well ordered a Covenant, and Promises, and in these Promises Scotlands Peace is concerned; therefore, whatever Providences seem contrair to the Promise, cast not away Hope, take the Promises, and read them, and apply them to the Churches Case; and feed on them, untill the Providence come. 2/y. Improve it, any of you that is Clogged in Spirit, Alas! ye know not what to say of your Case; Guiltiness and Terror stares you in the Face; but is there any Seal taken from the Covenant? Is it not Ratified by the Blood of his Son? and want ye ground of Hope, so long as it is so well Ratified; and though it grow not so well as to the outward man, yet ye have a Rich Charter, be not driven by Crosses from the Covenant; learn this, that ye would now believe, and credit the Covenant, and Promises, *Although he make it not to grow.*

Now from all that hath been said on this verse, I will only say these three things. 1. I shal give you a brief account of what led me to this Text, I found the refuge of the Soul in distress, to ly in the Covenant; sometimes at the gates of Death, when other refuges failed them, they found no other; I my self found no other for my Soul, but to run to the Covenant in the latitude and freedom of it, and since it appeared so sweet, it was somewhat troublesome to me; that I had not handled it ere now; but in handling of it, I gave an account of the nature of *David's* security, and then I handled personal Covenanting, *The Lord hath made with me*; ye heard ten or twelve Sermons on that head. And 2dly, I came and handled the Properties of the Covenant, that it was *Everlasting, Sure, and Ordered in all things*, where ye heard several things on the Order and Method of the Covenant, that a Christian should keep, to keep him from delusion, and false peace in the Covenant. 3/y. I came to the superstructures, *This is all my Salvation, and all my Desire*; I shewed you, that that man that will plead for Mercy and Grace, and hath no right to the Covenant, he hath no ground to plead them, more than Devils have, for they know that he is Merciful and Gracious, the thing that makes the Devils have no claim to his Mercy and Grace is, because they have no claim to his Covenant. I have now studied the

Covenant

Covenant, and laid it before you, as the great Foundation of Sanctification and Consolation, and as the great Charter of Iustification; Now I say, having gone through all these, I would put all of you, that has been hearing these Sermons, to these three Questions. 1. I would inquire, What more light have ye of the Covenant than before? *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant* Psal. 25. What know ye more of the Covenant than before? of the nature of it? nay, of personal Covenanting? of the Properties of it? of the Sweetness and Consolation that comes from it? if ye have no more light, and knowledge of it than before, the Lord, and the Stones and Timber of this Houe, shal be a witness against you in the day of reckoning, that this Covenant has been holden out to you, in the latitude and freedom of it, and among all things, that ye have heard, it may be a sufficient witness against you, when ye meet your Iudge in the Valley of Decision. But 2^d. Another Question is, Whether hath what ye have heard from the Covenant, made you enter in a personal Covenant with him? I have several dayes sent you home, beseeching you to enter in a personal Covenant with him, and I have given you Doctrines and Helps how to do it, and hath the wind blown it all away, and ye have done nothing? have ye not Covenanted against the corruptions, that the heart inclined you most unto? have ye Covenanted to accept of his Son, on the terms of the Covenant? I close this Text with wondering, how ye have gotten it sit out, if ye have not yet set about it, I exhort you in my Masters Name, in the close of this Text, that now ye would Indenture, and make a personal Covenant with him. Go and Indenture and Covenant with him, otherwise the Lord, and this place of Scripture, shal one day joyn together, and say, *Depart from me ye cursed, I know you not.* 3^d. A third Question is, Ye that have been hearers of me, whether now, when ye have heard me all out, ye have heard Christ commended, ye heard the Contract was well drawn, ye heard what grounds of Salvation, and what satisfaction to desires, is in the Covenant, and have ye not heard, how a person may plead the Covenant, under many challenges? Now, whether or not are ye content this day, to accept Christ on the terms offered, after ye have heard all, I could say, or read about it, are ye content to accept him; say ye, Amen, even so I take Him? are ye content on these very terms, holden out in the Covenant to accept him? I testifie unto you, that at the gates of Death, neither ye nor I will know of another way for refuge from his wrath, but to run to this Covenant; are ye saying now, even so I take him, as he is offered in the Covenant? then have him, and his Fathers blessing with him, a bargain be it, there wanted nothing twenty years since, but thy consent, the only thing that delayed the Marriage was thy consent; and if in the close of this day, this be thy Note thou hast gotten, even so I take him, according to the tenor of that Covenant, this shal be the place of Scripture, that thou shal bless the day, that ever thou heard it opened to thee, that thou was content to accept and embrace this Christ, on the credit of the Promise, thou may take him, and hazard all thy life on him.

F I N I S.

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