





Division

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Section

1357

v. 1

EXPOSITION,

CRITICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND PRACTICAL,

*of* *James A. Rodgers*  
OF THE

ASSEMBLY'S SHORTER CATECHISM;

DELIVERED IN A SERIES OF

SABBATH-EVENING LECTURES.

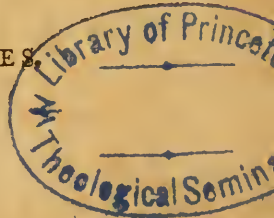
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## INTRODUCTION.

**I**T has been observed, that the book which needs an apology for the publication of it should never have been published. Conscious of the propriety and force of this observation, I offer no apology for publishing my Expository Lectures on the Catechism. May the blessing of Heaven render them effectual for accomplishing the salutary ends and purposes for which they were delivered in the pulpit, and are now offered to the public!

The Shorter Catechism, as is well known, was compiled by the celebrated Assembly of Divines that sat at Westminster almost a century and a half ago; an Assembly, perhaps, the most judicious, learned, and godly, that has met since the Apostolic ages. It was intended, as its name indicates, to be a model of catechising, especially the young and the ignorant, in families and congregations. The catechetical method of instruction, it is said, has all along obtained in the world, not only among Jews and Christians; but even among Pagans.

This is called the Shorter Catechism, to distinguish it from the Larger. Written by uninspired, and, therefore, fallible men, it does not pretend to perfection. But, for conciseness, accuracy, and comprehensiveness, it is, in my opinion, an incomparable system. Far is it above my commendation. Its praise is in the churches abroad, as well as in our island. The accuracy and precision with which the compilers of this admirable Book express the truth in opposition to error ancient and modern; the natural order in which they arrange

the numerous articles of our holy religion; and the perspicuity with which they delineate both its doctrines and its duties; I have often contemplated with silent admiration, and secret satisfaction.

Never has revealed religion wanted enemies and opposers. By stratagem and strength, fraud and force, the policy as well as the power of hell, has it been opposed.

What article of it has not been, in one period, by one adversary, or another, impugned and controverted? Well acquainted with the heresies of earlier as well as later times, the compilers of the Catechism have stated the several articles of it in terms the best calculated, not only to convey to us a distinct idea of sacred truths, but to guard us against contrary errors. This observation will appear in a more striking light when I come to exemplify it in particular instances. Truth and error, ever diametrically opposite the one to the other, cannot stand together. If the one stands, the other of necessity must fall. The most effectual method, therefore, any one can take to overthrow error is to establish truth in opposition to it. Can Dagon stand before the ark?

Such, upon the whole, is my conviction of the utility and excellency of this unparalleled summary, that, could I in the least contribute toward the revival of its credit, or, by preaching or writing, promote the study and the knowledge of its important and salutary contents, in no work should I engage with greater alacrity and zeal.

To evince the warrant, ascertain the nature, and enumerate the advantages of Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms, is a work, how important and useful soever, I am not now to undertake. It may suffice for me to say at present, that all the cavils and objections against them I have read or heard, originate in mistake. They go upon a supposition which exists only in the misapprehensions of cavillers themselves. To make such a groundless supposition, and then to  
reason



reason upon it, is to raise a superstructure without a foundation. Of all the objections against them, the two following, perhaps, possess the highest degree of plausibility.

1. Often has it been urged, that such summaries are derogatory to the sacred scriptures. Specious pretext! But it only is a pretext. Don't the objectors themselves know, that it is a groundless cavil? Do we substitute such summaries in the room of the sacred scriptures; or set the former on a level with the latter? That the inspired writings are the *only* rule of faith and practice we uniformly affirm, and strenuously maintain. But are there not other important purposes for which such summaries may be useful and necessary? Are they not necessary and useful as standards and tests of the orthodoxy of the ministers and other members of the church? Is not union the basis of communion in all societies, and particularly the church? Is there a Christian church, or religious society under heaven, without a confession of faith, written or verbal? Is there not a certain system each of these societies has adopted, and to which the several members of it are understood to adhere? Is not this the case with the most virulent opposers of Confessions and Catechisms, as well as the keenest sticklers for them? Strongly is this truth exemplified in our times, and even in our island. Never, perhaps, did any age or country produce more virulent defamers of Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms, than a modern species of reformers that arose among us upwards of half a century ago. But, notwithstanding their violent opposition to the standards of the presbyterian church of Scotland, all Christendom cannot furnish a religious party keener for uniformity of sentiment, or a rigid adherence to a particular set of religious opinions.

Is a mere verbal acknowledgment that the scriptures are the word of God, and the only rule of faith and duty, a sufficient test of orthodoxy? Is not this a de-

Writing to the young evangelist Timothy, he has been understood to intimate, not only that they were to be practised in coming ages of the church; but were in use even then. His words to the pious youth are these — *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.* 2 Tim. i. 13. How differently was the Apostle Paul minded from certain modern reformers? With them orthodoxy of sentiment, not to say sound speech, is of small consideration, a very slender part of religion, if any part of it at all. Not only does the great Apostle require Timothy, and in him all the other ministers and members of the church, to retain orthodox sentiments, but even sound words, and a form of sound words. He speaks, I say, of a scheme, a model, a pattern, a platform, or, as in our translation, a form of words, and sound words. And is not our Catechism such a form and model?

To show, however, that I do not consider this uninspired form of sound words, notwithstanding its accuracy and utility, either as the reason or the rule of our faith, to my explication of each of its answers, I prefix a text from the sacred oracles. The answer I do not receive on its own authority, or that of the learned Assembly that framed it; but on account of its conformity to the text that ushers in my interpretation of it, and parallel places of the scriptures of truth.

My Lectures I now publish in the same simple dress in which they were delivered from the pulpit.

A N

# EXPOSITION,

CRITICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND PRACTICAL,

OF THE

ASSEMBLY'S SHORTER CATECHISM.



Man's Chief End.

I COR. X. 31.

*Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do,  
do all to the glory of God.*

ONE thing the Apostle had in view in writing this long letter to the Corinthian converts, was to direct them in relation to the use of the flesh of animals offered in sacrifice to idols. It was, it seems, the practice of the idolatrous worshippers, after celebrating their feasts in the Pagan temples, to expose in the shambles, and use in their houses, what remained of the flesh of the sacrifices. Accordingly it came to be a question, whether it was lawful for Christians to buy such flesh in the market, or eat it at an entertainment. Now the Apostolical direction, in general, is this—When Christians went to the public market, or to an entertainment, if nothing was said in relation to what was exposed in the former, or what was set before them at the latter, they had no occasion to ask any question concerning it. But if, on the other hand, when they went

went to the market or a feast, they were told, the flesh offered to sale in the one, or used at the other, was the remainder of an idolatrous sacrifice, they were neither to buy nor eat it; lest their buying or eating should have been, by their Heathen neighbours, or fellow Christians, construed into an approbation of the offering of it to the idol. They were not only to forbear communion with idolatrous worshippers, but every thing that bore even the remotest appearance of their being accessory to it. Ever ought we to be exercised to have a conscience void of offence first toward God himself, and then toward man. For *whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must do all to the glory of God.* His glory is what he had ultimately in view in bringing us into being. It is the ultimate end of our redemption, as well as our creation. It must, therefore, be our ultimate aim in all our actions, natural; civil; and religious. The advancement of the glory of God is the ultimate end of all the creatures, and particularly man. This is the purport of the text; and conformably to it, the answer to the first question of our Shorter Catechism. For thus it runs—*Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.*

The propriety of placing this answer in the front of the Catechism is obvious. It relates to God the author of religion, man the subject of it, and especially the great end of it, the glory of God, and man's felicity in subordination to it; points of capital importance. The subsequent questions introduce the means by which this great end is accomplished.

This answer naturally resolves itself into the two following branches; Of whom it speaks, *man*; and of what in relation to man it treats, *his chief end*; which is *to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.* Of these I shall attempt an explanation in order.

I. Of whom the answer speaks, *Man.* Who is man, and what is he? He is a creature of the rational kind.

We

We are informed of only two species of rational creatures, the angelic and the human. In the vast universe there may be various kinds of rational as well as irrational creatures, of which we are totally ignorant. But of all the creatures known to us, man is the most extraordinary. He is a being of the compound kind; not wholly material; not wholly immaterial; but partly matter, and partly mind. He has been called a *Microcosm*; the world in miniature; a compend of all creation. In him, heaven and earth may be said to meet. In his material part, he is related to the beasts of the earth; having similar sensations and appetites. In his immaterial, he is allied to angels, the blissful inhabitants of the celestial world; and has powers and operations analogous to theirs. Well may every man, with wonder and gratitude, exclaim in the words of the devout Psalmist, *Marvellous are thy works, O Lord! Fearfully and wonderfully am I made!*

Of what man speaks, the answer? There once was only one man. But the individuals of the human species are now many. An Apostle of the New Testament, indeed, speaks as if there were only two men. 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47. But he speaks of the two federal heads, under whom all the other individuals of mankind are comprehended. According to the latest calculations, Asia contains five hundred millions of inhabitants; Africa an hundred and fifty; Europe an hundred and fifty-three; and America an hundred and fifty. Now, if there be between nine and ten hundred millions of human beings in the world at once, what countless millions must have lived in it during the almost six thousand years it has already existed?

Greatly diversified is the state of man. He once was a holy and a happy man. But that state of primeval purity and felicity is no more. Now, he is in a fallen state. In this state each of us is, or has been. Very different is the situation of one individual, and one nation of mankind, from that of another. One inhabits

a dark region, into which the blessed gospel, that discovers the only way in which fallen man can glorify and enjoy God, never yet has penetrated. Another is favoured with the gospel in purity and plenty. Many, under the dispensation of the gospel, are still in the state of nature; others in the state of grace, as a happy prelude of the state of glory. The present inhabitants of the world have been divided into thirty parts; of which nineteen are gross idolaters; five Mahometans; and only six Christians, including both the eastern and western Churches,—Christians of all denominations, Popish and Protestant.

Now the question recurs—Of whom speaks this answer? or, in other words, in what extent is man to be understood here? The answer is obvious. In what state soever man be, he is indispensibly bound to glorify God. Fallen man, indeed, is totally incapacitated for glorifying God, and disqualified for enjoying him. But it was by his own voluntary deed he disabled himself for the one, and unfitted himself for the other. His former obligation, therefore, is not in the least relaxed. It is natural and necessary. Nothing can possibly dissolve it.

But though all men, at all times, and in every condition, be inviolably bound to glorify God, the answer has a special view to fallen man, as favoured with the gospel; which discovers a method of glorifying and enjoying God, of which man, previous to his fall, and the promulgation of the gospel to him, was altogether ignorant. What endearing views does the glorious gospel give of God, and the now only acceptable way of glorifying and enjoying him as our own God in Christ! That this is the way of glorifying God, which the compilers of the Catechism had immediately in view, is manifest from the following question.

Why man only is, in express terms, mentioned here, it is easy to see. Far indeed is he from being the only creature by which God is glorified and enjoyed. All his creatures, of every species, contribute either actively

or passively toward the advancement of his glory. They all are partakers of his creative and providential benignity. Angels as well as men glorify and enjoy God in a manner incompetent for irrational beings. But the sacred Scriptures, of which this Catechism is a compend, were not intended for angels. For fallen angels no Saviour has been provided. To them no gospel is preached. Passing by angels, he pitched upon man. *Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of him?* Infinitely do thy thoughts transcend our thoughts; and thy ways our ways!

II. Of man it is affirmed, that his *chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever*. For the illustration of this branch of the subject, it may be necessary to enquire,

*First, What it is to glorify God.* God and man are said mutually to glorify one another. But, between his glorifying them, and their glorifying him, there is an infinite disparity. He glorifies them *efficiently*. They can only glorify him *declaratively*. This occasions the known distinction between his glory as essential, and as declarative. The former relates to what he is in his infinite essence and supereminent perfections. In this respect, he is no more glorious posterior to the creation of the heavens and the earth, than he was prior to it. What he is in himself to-day, he was yesterday; and what he has been and is, he ever will be.

That it is of his declarative, not his essential, glory this part of the Catechism treats, is abundantly obvious. Now glory supposes excellence, and is the effulgence or emanation of it. How glorious God was in himself from eternity, he himself only knows. It pleased his ineffably blessed self, however, at a certain period, to produce, out of nothing, the heavens and the earth, and all their numerous hosts. Man in particular was intended for the glory of God in this lower world. Eminently was he fitted, in his original state, for accom-

plishing this important end. How he glorified and how he enjoyed God, in that happy state, we will see afterwards. But that he might glorify himself in a singular manner, in the redemption of sinful man, the all-just Governor of the world, and Sovereign disposer of all events, I don't say *prompted*, but only permitted man to sin and fall. Of our fall and also our restoration, I will have occasion to speak in the sequel. It may be said, if only a part of mankind, and that by far the lesser, be saved, how is God glorified, or how is the end of man's creation accomplished, in the case of the nations and individuals of mankind that perish? The answer is easy. In the preservation and government of them, as his creatures, not to say the punishment of them as sinful creatures, he glorifies himself. His end he never can miss. The accomplishment of his designs nothing can defeat. Especially is he glorified in the recovery of the saved part of mankind; glorified much more illustriously than ever he could have been, had he not permitted sin to enter the world. That it is of our glorifying God in this saving way, through the intervention of the Mediator, a way totally unknown to man previous to his apostacy, extensive as his knowledge then was, the answer must be understood, is manifest from the connection between it and the subsequent one. But more particularly,

1. It *only* is in and through Christ that God makes gracious approaches to sinful man; and that sinful men can have any comfortable intercourse with God. In order, therefore, that we may glorify God in our now fallen state, we must, first of all, come by faith to Jesus Christ, and accept of that everlasting covenant of which he is the blessed Surety; the only medium of communication between heaven and earth. To believe in Christ is our chief, our first, our best work. Till we do this, we do nothing; we neither glorify God nor enjoy him. We may pray and praise; we may read and hear; but, without faith in Christ, neither our persons  
nor



nor our services can be accepted. This is the constant, the uniform doctrine of both prophets and apostles, What saith the Apostle of the Gentiles? *Without FAITH it is impossible to please God.* Heb. xi. 6. And again, *Whatsoever is not OF FAITH is sin.* Whatsoever it be, if it do not proceed from, if it be not performed *in faith*, it is, What? An acceptable service? No. It is SIN. Rom. xiv. 23. What saith the teacher come from God? He perfectly coincides with his Apostle. Thus he speaks: *This is the work of God*; the work which especially he appoints and approves; and, therefore, your first and chief work, *that ye believe in him whom he hath sent.* John vi. 29. Having believed in Christ, and the three-one God as our God in him, we are

2. To glorify God with our whole man, inward and outward; all the powers of our souls, and all the members of our bodies. Our minds we ever are to exercise in the study, and in order to the farther discovery of his being and attributes, of which we have but very superficial and imperfect views. Our wills should constantly be employed in the choice of him as our only and all-sufficient portion; and all the inferior powers of our souls in the contemplation and pursuit, love and esteem of him, as infinitely the best of beings, both in himself and to us; each of us, from his inmost heart, saying, *Whom have I in the heavens but thee, O Lord! neither is there any in all the earth I desire besides thee.* Psal. lxxiii. 25.

Our bodies as well as our souls are his; and with the former as well as the latter are we to glorify God. Ever must our feet be ready to run his errands; our hands to perform what works soever he is pleased to assign to us; our ears to hear his word; our eyes to contemplate both his word and his works. Especially are we to glorify him with our tongues. It certainly is not without special design the Psalmist so often stiles his tongue his glory. Psal. xvi. 9. cviii. 1. and other places. Is it merely because the faculty of speech dignifies

nifies man above the creatures that either are altogether mute, or can only utter inarticulate sounds? Is it not especially to intimate, that the tongue is a member of the body, which, in a particular manner, should be employed and instrumental in advancing the glory of God? Not only are we in the ministry to recommend God and religion to our hearers; parents to their children; but Christians, in every station and condition, to all with whom they are conversant. Could I address all the members of the Catholic Church, I might bespeak them in the Apostle's words to the Colossian converts—*Let the word of Christ dwell in you all richly; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs.* Col. iii. 16. We are to glorify God,

3. By a devout improvement of the discoveries of his supereminent being and perfections he has granted to us in his works; especially in his word. He once existed alone, and was known to himself only. Self-existent, and self-sufficient, he was infinitely happy in the contemplation and fruition of his blessed self. It pleased him, however, for the manifestation of his infinite being and perfection, to produce an unknown number of creatures capable of glorifying and enjoying him. Great, indeed, are our privileges and advantages. In a vast diversity of instances and views has he discovered himself to us. We cannot look upward or downward, inward or outward, but we must see God. Great are his work of creation and providence. Especially is the work of redemption great and glorious. What a clear and consolatory revelation has he made of himself in his blessed word! Here is a revelation of both law and gospel. We glorify God, as manifested in the former, when we are and do what it requires us to be and to do. We glorify God, as manifested in the gospel, when we receive and entertain it in a manner corresponding to the designs and views he has in favouring us with it. As the law shows what we should be and do, the gospel exhibits that grace by which

which alone we can ever be or do what the law requires. What glorious views of God, of his wisdom and power, justice and holiness, especially his grace and mercy, are here! What ineffable satisfaction has the devout mind in the contemplation of them! We are to glorify God,

4. By a conscionable performance of all the duties sacred and civil, personal and relative, incumbent upon us, in the places and circumstances an all-disposing Providence has assigned to us in the world, and the church. What a variety of duties are obligatory upon us all in common! How thankful ought we all to be for such multiplied opportunities of doing honour to our divine Maker and Redeemer! What distinguished opportunities of glorifying him do the stations of many afford them! When shall there be a holy emulation among us, who shall go before another in this good work? Are we ministers, magistrates, parents, or masters? Let us think what advantages attend our particular situations; in what instances, and by what means, we may severally contribute to the advancement of the glory of God in the world. Are we in prosperity? Let us glorify God, by a grateful acknowledgment of our obligations to him. *In the day of prosperity be joyful.* Eccles. vii. 14. Are we in plentiful circumstances? May we glorify God by liberally distributing; especially for the supply of Christ's indigent members, and other pious uses. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase.* Prov. iii. 9. Are we in adversity? Let us glorify God by justifying him in all that he does, and a patient resignation to his holy will. An afflicted lot affords special occasion for spiritual improvement to ourselves, and glory to God. *Glorify ye the Lord in the fires.* Isa. xxiv. 15. Let the head of every Christian family glorify God, by adopting good Joshua's exemplary resolution—*As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord.* Josh. xxiv. 15. Let those who are young glorify God by devoting to him, and his service, their vigour and their

their strength. What a precious season is youth! What a pity that so many should shamefully mispend it! Ample, indeed, is the encouragement the Redeemer gives to the young to enter into his service. How engaging and endearing his words—*I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me!* Prov. viii. 17.

*Secondly*, What it is, according to the import of the answer under consideration, *to enjoy God*. As it is man's chief end, in point of duty, to glorify, it is his chief end, in point of felicity, to enjoy God. Of his supporting power, the inferior as well as the superior creatures are partakers. But the former cannot be said either to glorify or enjoy him as the latter do. A created spirit, angelic or human, can only be happy in the fruition of him, who is the father of spirits. Infinitely happy in himself, he is the fountain of felicity as well as of being to his creatures. In inferior objects, many have sought satisfaction, but no one has found it. What egregious folly must it be, to substitute the empty creature in the room of the all-sufficient Creator! Of such folly, however, have we all been guilty.

Here is a portion commensurate to the vast capacities and desires of the human soul. Investigating and contemplating the perfections and works of the infinite God, the mind has the most rational and refined satisfaction. This, indeed, is a study worthy of our noblest powers, and in which they will be incessantly and unweariedly employed for ever and ever. He is the best, as well as the greatest of beings. What the satisfaction is that results from the fruition of him, he who has experienced it can best tell.

It neither is of the manner, in which innocent man enjoyed God, in his paradisaical state, or the spirits of just men made perfect enjoy him, in the celestial world, that I here treat. Of both I will have occasion to speak in explaining some subsequent parts of the Catechism. It rather is of the enjoyment of him in a state that intervenes between the two, I here speak.

The fruition of God in the way of the old covenant man early forfeited. All friendly intercourse between heaven and earth, God and man, in the way of that covenant, was stopped. But, to the astonishment of heaven and earth, a superior way of communication is opened.

Amply does the Redeemer restore what he took not away. From his mediation and intercession the highest glory to God, and felicity to man, result. In and through him we recover our forfeited interest in God, and the fruition of him, as his God and our God. How animating and comfortable his words to his disciples, *I ascend unto my Father and your Father, my God and your God!* John xx. 17. Each member, militant as well as triumphant, of that mystical body, of which he is the glorious head, can adopt his song, *Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places. Yea, I have a goodly heritage.* Psal. xvi. 5, 6. Militant saints are heirs, having the prospect, rather than the possession, of their vast inheritance. Heirs of what? Heirs of God; the infinite, the all-sufficient, the immutable, the everlasting God. Rom. viii. 17. God is theirs; his wisdom to direct in all dark cases; his power to strengthen for work and warfare, and to support under every trial; his holiness to sanctify them in soul, body, and spirit; his goodness to provide for them in time, and for ever; his veracity to insure to them the accomplishment of all his promises, however long it may be delayed, and whatever obstacles may lie in the way of it. This reminds me of one of the reasons for which saints may be stiled Priests, as they are. Rev. i. 6. When the typical Canaan was divided among the tribes of Israel, no part of it was allotted to the priests; and the reason assigned is this, *the Lord was their inheritance.* Deut. x. 9. In two respects especially do saints on earth enjoy God differently from glorified saints in heaven.

1. It only is in an imperfect and partial manner militant saints enjoy God. Are the capacities of glorified saints equal to the object of which they have obtained the fruition? Far from it. God is in every view infinite, and every creature is necessarily finite. But the blissful inhabitants of the celestial world enjoy him for ever, in as full a manner as is consistent with the essential disparity between the infinite God and his creatures. Any thing militant saints receive, is only a foretaste, pledge, or earnest.

2. It is mediately, or through the intervention of means, militant saints enjoy God. The immediate enjoyment of him, is the peculiar attainment of triumphant saints. It is in the use of means they can either glorify or enjoy God on earth. In and by ordinances, secret and social, private and public, he communicates himself to them, and they have sweet fellowship with him. To others ordinances may be useless and insipid. But of the utility and comfort of them saints are conscious. With what warmth does the devout Psalmist speak on this subject! The God of ordinances and of all comfort, he addresseth thus—*Lord! I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* Psal. xxvi. 8. *A day in thy courts is better to me than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, occupying the lowest place, and performing the meanest office in it, than dwell in the tents, even the most splendid palaces, of the wicked.* Psal. lxxxiv. 10. I may take notice,

*Thirdly,* Of the connection between our glorifying and our enjoying God, and of the precedency of the one to the other. The fruition ever accompanies the glorification of God. They are inseparably connected. We cannot glorify God without enjoying him; nor can we enjoy without glorifying God. In both creation and redemption are they conjoined. In both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, has God graciously and wisely connected them. So long as innocent

cent man glorified God by the fulfilment of the conditional part of the covenant of works, he, agreeably to the promissory part of it, enjoyed God. On the other hand, the moment he ceased to glorify, he was deprived of the enjoyment of God. The happy person, who is by faith instated in the covenant of redemption, in virtue of his instatement in it, at once glorifies and enjoys God.

As for the order in which these two points of the chief end of man are introduced, I mean the glorification, and enjoyment of God, the former is purposely prefixed to the latter. His glory is the primary, our felicity the secondary, part of it. No higher end can God propose to himself, in any of his works, than the advancement of his glory. To it nothing can be preferred; but every other thing subordinated. Shall we prefer our good, temporal or spiritual, to his glory? Shall man, in any thing, be exalted above God? But so mercifully and wisely has he adjusted matters, that his glory and our felicity are promoted by the same means. While, therefore, we are dutifully instrumental in the advancement of the one, we happily promote the other.

I need only to add here, that when I speak of the priority of our glorifying God, and the posteriority of our enjoying him, I do not mean a priority or posteriority of time. Man never did, nay, he never can, glorify without enjoying God. His glory, however, never is subordinated to our good, but our good must ever be in subordination to his glory. In all things the pre-eminence is infinitely due to God. Such are the two parts of the great end God proposed to himself to be accomplished by man's creation and redemption, and such the relation the one has to the other. I may,

*Fourthly*, Say a word or two with regard to the perpetuity of it. It is, in both its parts, of endless duration. What saith the answer? Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him *for ever*. Man was

made, and is redeemed for eternity. One of his constituent parts is, in its nature, immortal. Of dissolution it is incapable. Might it not be reduced to nothing? There is no reason to think the Almighty Creator ever is to annihilate any thing he has made; far less the human soul, one of the most excellent of his works. Changed both soul and body may be; but annihilated they will not be.

According to both covenants, man was to glorify and enjoy God in a twofold state; in an inferior state on earth, and a superior state in heaven. However the covenants differ in other things, in this they agree. In the first covenant, man was to glorify God and enjoy him on earth for a season, the length of which we cannot ascertain; and at the expiration of it, to be translated in soul and body to heaven, to glorify and enjoy God in it for ever and ever. The better covenant supposes also two different states, a state of imperfection on earth, and a state of perfection in heaven; in both which the redeemed, though differently, glorify and enjoy God. Of their seeing and serving God and the Lamb in the celestial world, and the endless duration of it, the inspired writer of the Revelation gives us a glorious account. *There shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face.* Rev. xxii. 3, 4.

To serve God and see his face, in the sense of the words now cited, and to glorify and enjoy God in the sense of the answer, only differ in expression, and in signification are synonymous. What it is to have the fruition of that inestimably precious privilege, the blissful inhabitants of the celestial world could best tell. May we all experience it in due time!

After a brief and plain consideration of what it is to glorify, and what to enjoy God; of the respect in which the one is said to have the precedency of the other, and the eternity of both; it remains that I,

*finally*, Consider this as man's *chief end*. It is his *end*, and it is his *chief end*.



It is his *end*. To enumerate the acceptations of the word *end* in holy writ is not my design. Although it be applied to time and place, it relates especially to an agent and an action. Now the glory of God, including the fruition of him, may be said to be man's end, in the few following instances.

1. In the intention of his Maker and Redeemer. God invariably acts in the most rational manner. In all his works he has designs, and designs worthy of his unerring wisdom. He did not create, he does not redeem, man for nought. Often are we engaged in enterprizes of which we are able to give no proper account; for which we can assign no sufficient, no satisfactory reason. But infinitely do the thoughts and ways of Jehovah transcend our thoughts and our ways. *The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* Prov. xvi. 4.

2. In respect of man's fitness for answering it. Let us consider man physically. With what excellent organs and powers are his soul and his body furnished! Let us view him morally, as an upright man. Such was he by creation. Such he now is by redeeming, sanctifying grace. How admirably adapted, how wonderfully fitted for the purposes of both his creation and redemption. *This people, saith God, speaking of his redeemed, have I formed for myself. They shall show forth my praise.* It is accordingly

3. The end both of man's creation and redemption, what God had in view, and for which man is adapted by the one as well as the other. Though between man's creation and redemption there is a manifest disparity, in other instances there is an analogy. Accordingly the inspired writers of the New Testament, in a number of places, express that sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost, which commences in regeneration, and is consummated in actual glorification, in terms evidently borrowed from the Mosaic account of man's creation. 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10. compared with Gen.

Gen. xxvi. 27. The reason is obvious. By this renewing work, man is restored to a state similar, though, in many respects, superior to that in which he was at first created. Thus in the new creation, as well as the old, all things are of God, and to him. He is the glorious author, and he also is the ultimate end of our redemption. So sings the church of the redeemed in heaven and on earth, to her now glorified Redeemer. *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* Rev. v. 9. To add no more,

4. It not only is his end as he is a man, and a new man, but is, or at least should be, the end of all his actions. In what particular instances, and in how glorious a manner, God has displayed his supereminent perfections in bringing us into being, and particularly in our redemption, I will have an opportunity to show in the sequel. Is it so? Are we indebted to God for our creation and redemption? Had he his glory ultimately in view in both? Then it ought to be our ultimate aim in all we as men, and as Christians, undertake and do. Did he give us existence? Did he ransom us from sin and death? Did he all this in order to the advancement of his glory? And shall we be indifferent whether it be promoted or not? Shall we not rather be emulously solicitous how, and by what means, we may contribute most toward the promotion of it? *You are not your own, O ye redeemed of the Lord! Ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit; for both are God's; his by creation, and his by redemption.* 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

This is man's chief end. This has been understood to imply inferior ends. As man ever was intended to sojourn, for a season, in this subcelestial world, he all along has had employ adapted to his earthly station. For what end he was placed in Eden, and how he was employed in it, we all know. Mankind still occupy different

different places, and have a variety of employments in the world, for which there will be no occasion in the heavenly state. But what others have called subordinated ends, I would rather call means appointed, and calculated, for accomplishing the great end. Did not Adam, by performing the works assigned to him in the terrestrial Paradise, glorify God? And, while he glorified, did he not enjoy God? Are not mankind, by diligence and fidelity in their civil callings, still to aim at the glory of God, as well as when they are engaged in the duties of religion? Let them ever recollect, that they hold such stations in the world, by the appointment of that superintending Providence that regulates and governs all persons and events in it. A cheerful acquiescence in the disposals of holy providence, relating to us and our situation in the world, is our interest as well as our duty. In cultivating the grounds, and in mercantile transactions, as well as in the closet, and even in the gates of Zion, may we both glorify and enjoy God. Happy, indeed, is the man, how scanty soever his circumstances, who, like Enoch, day after day, when he goes out, and when he comes in, in the shop as well as in the church, walks with God!

After an illustration so much in the practical strain, it is almost superfluous to add any improvement.

Is God such a superlatively excellent being? Are we indebted to him for such a boundless profusion of favours? The obvious result is this important question—What returns of gratitude has he from us for such undeserved munificence? Confounding question! Holy and humble Job's resolution shall be mine. *I will lay mine hand upon my mouth; for, behold, I am vile; and what shall I answer?* Job xl. 4.

Can we be happy in the enjoyment of God only? Then, what a wretched exchange has man made, in substituting the empty creature in the room of the all-sufficient God? Egregious madness! In this sense, however, each of us has acted the madman. Two capital evils

evils have we all committed; *forsaking the fountain of living waters, we have hewed out to ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water.* Jer. ii. 13.

In what a forlorn state do all the natural posterity of Adam come into the world; the most opulent prince, as well as the most lowly peasant! The one, as well as the other, in respect of his spiritual condition, is *poor, and wretched, and miserable*; and, to say, in one word, all that can be said, he is *without God.* Eph. ii. 12.

Truly happy is the state of all believers. Their state, in point of stability and permanency, is superior to that of Adam before the fall. Stumble, indeed, they may. They may even fall; but not totally or finally. In this sense they cannot possibly fall. The enemy of their felicity and comfort each of them can bespeak thus—*Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy. When I fall I shall arise. When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.* Mic. vii. 8.

Great, however, as the happiness of the new state of believers is, it only is introductory to a state in all respects *superior.* Return, therefore, unto thy rest, O my soul! For whom hast thou in heaven but God! Neither is there any in all the earth that thou shouldest desire beside him. *God is the strength of my heart, and he is my portion for ever and ever.* Amen!

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## The Sacred Scriptures.

2 TIM. iii. 16.

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*

**T**HAT he may recommend the sacred scriptures to us, the inspired Apostle reminds us of two things; their divine original, and the many salutary purposes which they are intended to subserv. They are the gift of heaven to the church on earth. The Spirit of God dictated them to the inspired penmen. They were only his amanuenses in committing them to writing, for the behoof of the church to the end of the world. They are of special use to the church. Many, indeed, read, who reap no saving benefit from the scriptures. This, however, is not owing to any defect in them. This inspired writer, in another of his epistles, assigns the true reason of it. The word does not, it cannot profit, except it be *mixed with faith*. Heb. iv. 2. Various important purposes, for which the scriptures are intended, are here enumerated.

*For doctrine.* They contain many capital doctrines, relating to God and ourselves. They teach us that God is, and what he is; particularly as in Christ. They discover what we are as sinners, and our consequent need of a Saviour, and salvation.

*For reproof.* The word is the special instrument and mean which the Spirit, as a spirit of conviction, uses for discovering the intrinsic evil, and awful demerit of sin; in order to awaken and alarm the sleeping and secure sinner.

*For correction.* Not only is a consciousness of sin, but the actual reformation of the sinner, necessary. It is not sufficient that we see so many things in and about us to be wrong. All that is amiss must be rectified and reformed. And, in fine, they are profitable

*For instruction in righteousness.* Clearly does revelation discover the indispensable necessity of a perfect righteousness, either personal or imputed, in order to our justification in the sight of the infinitely just and holy God; our utter want of such a righteousness in ourselves; our absolute need of the all-perfect surety-righteousness of Jesus Christ; and our access to it. They manifest the necessity and utility of personal righteousness, or inherent holiness; holiness internal and external, in heart and conversation; how it may be obtained by a believing application of Christ, as *made of God to us sanctification*; and, in a word, in what respects, and for what purposes it is useful, not at all as the foundation of our title to heaven, but to fit us for the possession of it. Such, my friends, is the heavenly origin, and salutary design of the holy scriptures.

To this view of them agrees the account the Shorter Catechism gives in the answer to the second question; for the consideration of which I have only been preparing the way. It runs in the following terms—*The word of God, which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, is the ONLY rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.* The propriety of the place assigned to this answer in the Catechism is manifest. The transition from the preceding to this is most natural. Is it the chief end of man to glorify and enjoy God? How necessary then that he be furnished with a rule sufficient to direct him how he may perform the

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one, and obtain the other? Is any one solicitous to glorify and enjoy God, and to know how he may do the one, and attain to the other? Here is a rule, the all-sufficient, the only rule, to direct him in relation to both. In order to pave the way to the elucidation of the answer, I must first direct the attention of my readers to a few preliminary observations.

To every careful reader it must be apparent, that there are certain *præcognita*, which, though not expressed, are necessarily implied in the answer; without premising which, we cannot see the propriety and importance of it. Such are the following considerations.

*First*, The great God who made, and who redeems man to glorify and enjoy him, and he only, is entitled to appoint and reveal the way in which this great end is to be accomplished. The way, as we have seen, is twofold; one adapted to our original, another to our lapsed state. Now, not only are we, without revelation, ignorant of the only way in which we can either glorify or enjoy God in the fallen state, but even upright Adam, great as the knowledge concreated with him was, did not at first fully know the way in which he was to glorify and enjoy him. If we suppose an interval, as I think we must, however short it may have been, between his creation, and the proposal of the covenant of works to him, during that interval, he must, in part, have been ignorant of the way in which he was to glorify, and have the enjoyment of his Maker. From his creation he was under the moral law, which is of universal and perpetual obligation. What the difference is between it, as written on the fleshly table of man's heart in his creation, and the federal form it afterwards assumed, the account which I am, in the sequel, to give of the covenant of works will lead me to show. Of the interdiction relating to the fruit of a particular tree, on which his duty and felicity were to depend, man must have been, at first, totally ignorant. Was innocent Adam, for a time, ignorant of a particular instance, on which

his glorifying and enjoying God were mainly to turn? Much more must his posterity be unacquainted with the only way in which they can either glorify or enjoy God in their now fallen state, till he be pleased, by the gospel, to reveal it to them.

*Secondly*, Though we had, along with the rule innocent Adam had to direct him how he was to glorify and enjoy God, the knowledge of it, and the ability to fulfil it, he then had; all this would be utterly insufficient to direct us how we are now to glorify and enjoy God. But who of all the posterity of fallen Adam can, according to the tenor and terms of the covenant of works, either glorify or enjoy God? Even on supposition that we could do all that Adam did, nay, all that was required of him before the fall, an insuperable obstacle would still lie in the way of our obtaining eternal life. We are sinners, and for our numerous and highly aggravated offences satisfaction must be made; and satisfaction adequate to the demerit of our crimes, and the dignity of the offended party. How shall this be effectuated? Are *thousands of rams*, or *thousands of rivers of oil* sufficient? No. But, may not human sacrifices do it? No. Even the *fruit of the body* is utterly insufficient to atone for the sin of the soul. But why do I talk either of our fulfilling the precept, or satisfying the penalty of the law? We are altogether *without strength*, and can do nothing. Rom. v. 6. The covenant of works was calculated for the meridian of the state of innocency; not for the fallen state. If ever, therefore, we sinful men either glorify or enjoy God, it must be in the way of another and better covenant. Hence,

*Thirdly*, Immediately after the fall it was revealed to man, that he was both to glorify and enjoy God in a way, of which he was till then, and, without supernatural revelation, must for ever have remained ignorant. The eternal secret was disclosed. To the astonishment of angels and men it was discovered, that, previous to  
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the violation of the covenant of works, and consequent ruin of mankind, nay, previous to the production of the heavens and the earth, a better covenant had been made with one in all respects superior to the first Adam. As man was undone by the breach of the one covenant, he was to be saved by the other. The original revelation of this wonderful expedient of Heaven for the recovery of our lost world, was granted to our fallen parents, prior to their expulsion from the garden. Gen. iii. 8, 15. Thus, before their exclusion from the terrestrial paradise, the way to the celestial was opened to them. Paradise was lost, and it was regained. And is their not a period approaching, at which the paradisaical state of the earth is to be restored? Yes. *We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, or righteous men; the abstract being put for the concrete, a thing not unusual in the sacred writings.* 2 Pet. iii. 13. At so early a period was the gospel preached in our world.

It is natural to ask here—Was the rule given to the first human pair, immediately after their original apostacy, to direct them how to glorify and enjoy God; or was the revelation which they received the same with that which we now enjoy? The same in substance it certainly was. For Adam himself, and his posterity, there is one common Saviour and salvation; one covenant of redemption for both, though differently administered in the earlier and later ages of the world and the church. There are, however, two respects, in which the revelation of this covenant differs in earlier and later times.

1. In point of perspicuity and extent. The radical revelation, which our original progenitors received, was, during the patriarchal ages, and the times of the Mosaic œconomy, in a gradual manner, amplified and enlarged. At last, by the personal ministry of our Lord, and of his surviving Apostles, it was completed, and the sacred canon closed. This was certified with a solemn declaration

ration that, as nothing is to be diminished from it, neither is any addition to be made to it. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

2. This revelation was, for many ages, verbal; transmitted by tradition from generation to generation. It was, however, in due time, committed to writing. It is a received opinion, that no part of the sacred books was written till the times of Moses. That he wrote the pentateuch, or first five sacred books, and the ninth plalm, we know; and it is the opinion of many that he also wrote the book of Job. Now, according to the best Chronologers, Moses was born about the year of the world 2433; and was sent to bring Israel out of Egypt about the year 2513. Thus did the world and the church subsist for no less than two thousand and five hundred years before any of the sacred books was written. Revelation was handed down by the long-lived patriarchs from one to another. The church, as well as the world, subsisted for upwards of four thousand years before any of the books of the New Testament was written. So much have we, who live in the later ages of the world and the church, the advantage of those who lived in earlier ages. I shall only add,

*Fourthly.* That revelation is indispensibly necessary to direct man how he is to glorify and enjoy God in the now lapsed state. One of the many stratagems the enemy of God and religion has used to discredit revelation, and defeat the salutary designs of it, is a specious, but most absurd pretext that it is unnecessary. It has been pretended that what is called *the light of nature*, is sufficient to direct man to everlasting felicity. But, if the light of nature be sufficient for one, must it not be sufficient for all? If it be sufficient, why is revelation granted to any? Does God any thing in vain? Can God be glorified and enjoyed in any other way than in CHRIST, or the covenant of grace? Now, without revelation, we cannot know that there is either a covenant of works or a covenant of grace. From the light of nature we may learn, indeed, that there is a God; and that  
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there is evil both moral and penal in the world. But as to the question, how sin entered our world, and how it is put away out of it, the light of nature is entirely silent. Fallen man still retains the faculties constitutive of human nature; and has some inbred notions of right and wrong. But in regard to the true knowledge of his duty, and the important concerns of eternity, he is naturally as stupid as he can be supposed to be, not to be altogether degraded from the rank of rational, to that of irrational animals. Nay, he often acts in a manner altogether unworthy of humanity. Accordingly, he is compared to the dullest and most stupid of animals; such as the ox, and the ass, even the wild ass, and the wild ass's colt. Isa. i. 3. Job xi. 12. To the more provident and sagacious animals man is sent for instruction. Prov. vi. 6,—11. Much indeed in relation to his best interests may he learn from them.

But, that we may form a proper estimate of the *sufficiency*, I should have said *insufficiency*, of the light of nature, and the necessity of revelation, let us take a view of the world unenlightened by the gospel; and attend to indisputable facts. We need not, in our present survey, pass the great Atlantic. We need not travel as far as the eastern verge of Asia, or the southern extremity of Africa.

In what situation were the inhabitants of Europe, nay the British Isle itself, previous to the coming of the gospel? Taking a retrospect view of them, do we find them walking, previous to the introduction of Christianity, in the way that leads to everlasting glory? The very reverse, alas, is the case! We find them acting in a manner which it is shocking to relate. I need not, as I hinted already, to say any thing of the Hottentots of Africa, or the inhabitants of New Holland. I may speak of the wisest, the most learned, the politest nations of Europe. Not only have the heavenly luminaries been deified; but almost every creature on the earth, and under it, worshipped as a God. Not only the fruits  
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of the earth and the more useful animals; but the ugliest and most noxious creatures; stocks and stones; nay, shameful to tell, prostitutes, and imaginary beings, which never did, nor ever will actually exist, have had divine honours paid to them. To such a shocking degree have imaginary divinities, nominal deities, been multiplied, that among one people, a people famous for refinement and literature, no less a number than thirty thousand have been found! An ancient writer informs us, that in one temple dedicated to Venus, in the city of Corinth, there were no less than a thousand priestesses who made prostitution a part of their devotions to that goddess. Not only have human sacrifices obtained in the world; but, it is said, that, in one Pagan temple, on a certain occasion, in the space of four days, no fewer than sixty-four thousand persons were sacrificed, I should rather have said murdered!

Such, my friends, is the situation of our world, unenlightened by the gospel. And, in such circumstances, is there no need for revelation? no need for the gospel to call men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God? What say the inspired writers on this head? A prophet of the Old Testament, in terms the most express, tells us that men may dream and say what they please; but *where there is no vision, or revelation, the people perish*. Prov. xxix. 12. An Apostle of the New Testament, in terms no less unequivocal and plain, affirms, that there is no salvation for sinful men in any other name but that of Jesus Christ. But what saith the Son of God himself on this subject? He speaks in a manner perfectly consonant to his Prophets and Apostles. Addressing his heavenly Father, he speaks thus—*This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*. John xvii. 3. Is it life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ? What can it be but death eternal not to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? How necessary, then, and  
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how inestimably precious the gospel! It, and it alone; reveals the only true God, and the only Mediator between God and man. This is the design and purport of that revelation which is the subject of the answer that comes now under review. Having made these preliminary observations, I proceed to a more particular consideration of the answer.

I may consider it under three heads; the designation given to revelation, *the word of God*; the extent of it, *it is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament*; and the important use of it, *it is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God.*

I. *The word of God.* This expression, in scripture, has a two-fold signification: It is applied to the *personal word*; who, according to the mysterious order of subsistence, is the second person of the glorious Trinity. This title is ascribed to him by the Apostle John especially. John i. 1; 14. 1 John i. 7. Why he, as distinguished from the two other persons of the Godhead, is called the Word, it would be a digression to show at present: It may suffice to mention one obvious reason for it. As it is by our words we communicate our thoughts to one another, it is by Jesus Christ God has revealed his will to us for our salvation and his glory. John i. 18. By the word of God in the answer is meant, that revelation of grace which God has vouchsafed to give us by his Son; who, as a prophet, reveals to us, by his word and spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

For what reasons revelation is designed the word of God, it is easy to see. Of it God is the author, the subject, and the end.

*First, The author.* What is said of the last of the sacred books may be said of them all—*The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, as Mediator*; to be by him, in the actual exercise of his prophetic of-

fice, communicated to the church on earth. Accordingly it is with obvious propriety styled *the word of Christ*. Col. iii. 16. He granted the first intimation of grace to our world; and, in all the intermediate ages of the world and the church, has either in person, or by his ambassadors, spoken in one part or another of the earth.

*Secondly*, The great *subject* of it. When in the answer to the following question the Compilers of the Catechism give us a general account of the scriptures, they reduce them to two heads, both which relate to God—what we are to believe concerning God, and what duty we are to perform to him. The divine word discovers not only that God is, and what he is in his being and perfections; but the wonderful designs he had from eternity, and accomplishes in time; particularly in the glorious œconomy of redemption. What a profound secret was the mystery of our redemption, till it pleased God, by the blessed revealer of secrets, to discover it! What astonishment has the disclosure of the important secret occasioned in heaven and on earth, among angels and among men! Did not Joseph eminently typify our Redeemer in the new name which he received on his advancement in Egypt? He was called *Zaphnath-paaneah*. Gen. xli. 45. This name, it has been observed, agreeably to the old Egyptian language, signifies the *Saviour of the world*; and, according to the Hebrew, it denotes *the revealer of secrets*. In both views was it applicable to Joseph. He was the happy instrument, in the hand of Providence, of preserving great numbers from the untimely death with which the long famine threatened them; and, for the extraordinary discoveries which he made by interpreting Pharaoh's prophetic dreams, he will be famous to the end of the world. But the name applies, in a peculiar manner, to the antitypical Joseph, or rather Jesus, who, as a prophet, is the revealer of heaven's secrets; and in all his offices, as prophet, priest, and king, is the Saviour of our lost world.

*Thirdly*,

*Thirdly*, The end of it. It is of him; and it is no less to him. It is the happy mean of the salvation of many millions of sinners, with an ultimate view to the glory of the *three-one* God. Glorified, as I said on a former occasion, he is by the works of creation and common providence; but, in an especial manner, by the still greater work of the redemption of the church; the applicatory part of which is accomplished, especially through the instrumentality of the word. *Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.* Psal. cxxxviii. 2. A person's name is that by which he is known and distinguished from another. Name, applied to God, denotes the discoveries which he has made of himself to his creatures. Such discoveries has he given of his being and perfections in his works of creation and providence. But the clearest and most consolatory revelation of God, with which our world ever was favoured, is in his blessed word. Most comfortable is it to us, and the highest honour does it reflect on himself. I am

II. To enquire into the *extent*, in which the word of God is to be understood. It comprehends the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. There are two extremes into which not a few have run in relation to the scriptures. Some, as we have found already, pretend that they are altogether unnecessary. Others pretend, that they are insufficient as a rule to direct us how to glorify and enjoy God. In this Jews and Christians, though they differ widely in other things, have agreed. Often have both affected to be wise above what is written. Becoming wise in their own imaginations, professing to be, in effect, wiser than God, they have shown themselves to be arrant fools. Often has Satan transformed himself into an angel of light. The manner in which both Jews and Christians have presumed to propagate their additions to the holy scriptures, has the appearance of an imitation of the traditionary way in which

revelation was continued in the church in the earlier ages of it.

The Jews pretend that, besides what Moses committed to writing in the *pentateuch*, he received from God a variety of revelations which he did not write, but communicated verbally to Aaron; that Aaron or his sons delivered them to the judges; the judges to the prophets; and the prophets one to another, from generation to generation. According to this hypothesis the Jews had a twofold rule to direct them in matters both civil and religious, one written in the sacred books, another verbal, transmitted by tradition from age to age. The last, according to them, ascertained the sense of the first. The written law, without the oral, they considered as doubtful and precarious, if not altogether unmeaning.

Exceedingly did these traditions multiply in the interval between the removal of the prophetic spirit from the Old Testament church, and the actual incarnation of the Son of God. Hence, on his appearance on earth, he found the Jews degenerated so far, that their religion consisted almost entirely in the observation of such traditions. Of them it is unnecessary for me to give any particular account. Not a few of them are nugatory and trifling; some whimsical and ludicrous; and others impious and wicked. Those traditions were collected; and the collection of them, in ecclesiastical history and among theological writers, is known by the name of the *Talmud*. This consists of two parts; the one containing the traditions themselves; and the other commentaries upon them. The collection is said to have been made by a Jewish doctor, about a hundred and fifty years after our Lord's ascension; and a commentary written upon it by another Jewish doctor, about a hundred years after that. This has been called the *Talmud of Jerusalem*; or a directory for the Jews inhabiting the land of Judea. As this commentary was judged to be obscure, another was written, and intitled the

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the Talmud or directory of Babylon. This last is said to be held in highest esteem among the Jews. But, as it was found to be voluminous, a Rabbin of the twelfth century abridged it.

The superstitious Papists, after the example of the corrupt Jews, pretend that, in addition to the scriptures of the New Testament, the Apostles received from our Lord a variety of canons and rules relating to the polity of the Christian church; which pretended apostolical constitutions, they say, have been handed down from the Apostolic ages, to be observed in every period to the end of time. But, not to insist on the many and obvious mistakes to be found in those constitutions, it may suffice to mention, that, from several circumstances, it is sufficiently manifest, they were not composed till long after the death of the last of the Apostles. There is reason to think, that they were not known in the world till after Christianity had been established in the Roman empire; and, through the ambition of aspiring church-men abusing that encouragement which they had from the secular powers, that episcopal hierarchy was formed, which afterwards produced the grand Antichrist. They seem to have made their appearance in the fifth, or at soonest, in the fourth century; when, as every one at all acquainted with the history of the ancient church knows, manifold gross corruptions had crept into it.

As for the books commonly called *Apocrypha*, I need not say much concerning them. Almost every one among us has opportunity to read them. The name *Apocrypha*, as is well known, is of a Greek original; and literally signifies *hidden* or *unknown*. It has been queried, why these books are called *Apocryphal* or *hidden*. For this different reasons have been assigned. It has been said, that the writers of them, or at least some of them, are not known. But this can be no reason for excluding them from the sacred canon. There are sacred books whose authority is not doubted, the writers of

of which are not certainly known. It has been said that they are so named, because they are not publickly read. But neither is this a satisfactory reason. For, though they be not publickly read among us, they are among others. They may be denominated hidden, or unknown books, because they want those characters and marks of divine authority, by which the sacred books are discovered and known to be the word of God. Accordingly, though those apocryphal books be sometimes, I think most improperly, printed along with the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, they are not intermixed either with the one or the other, but placed between the two. Many parts of them, we acknowledge, are useful. But uninspired they evidently are. They appear to have been entirely unknown in the first and best times of Christianity. Neither Jews nor Christians acknowledged the divinity of them, till the church of Rome did it. Nor did even the Papal church do it, till she had arrived at an exorbitant pitch of degeneracy. Even the wicked council of Trent, when it had the audacity to pretend to establish the divine authority of those books, found some parts of them so romantic and fabulous, impious and false, that it was ashamed to admit them into the sacred canon. The indications not merely of human frailty, but human depravity, which those spurious books exhibit, are too numerous to be recited on this occasion, and too obvious to escape the observation of even the most superficial reader.

In the sacred scriptures we find mention of a variety of books which were once extant, but are now perished. Useful they might be, but inspired they were not. Had they belonged to the sacred canon, they would, no doubt, have been preserved. Of them we find little more than their names. Such were the book of *the Wars of the Lord*, mentioned Num. xxi. 14. *the book of Jasher*, 2 Sam. i. 18. *the book of Nathan the prophet*, *the prophecy of Abijah the Shilonite*, and *the visions of Iddo the seer*. 2 Chron. ix. 29. Unless the writers of those  
books

books were the writers of some of the books of the Old Testament, how useful soever their writings might be for a time, they must have been uninspired men. Sooner may heaven and earth pass away, than any article of the word of God be lost.

There are also several places of the New Testament, in which there are supposed to be references to different books in high estimation among the Apostles, which, if ever they existed, are now lost. For instance, in the first epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle has been understood to refer to another epistle, which he had previously sent to them. For, in chap. v. ver. 9, he bespeaks them thus—*I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators.* There are in general two senses in which these words have been interpreted. Either he refers to the preceding part of the epistle which he was now writing, in which he speaks to this effect; or he means a former letter which he had sent to the Christian converts in Corinth; in writing which, how excellent and useful soever it might be, he was not divinely inspired, and, therefore, it did not belong to the sacred canon. The Apostle Jude, verses 14, 15, of his epistle, has been understood to allude to a prophetic book written by the ancient patriarch Enoch; of whose birth, exemplary life, and translation to heaven, the inspired writer of the book of Genesis has given us an account. Certain eastern writers tell us, that this venerable patriarch received from heaven many volumes of occult sciences, and mysterious discoveries. But this is all romance. There is extant, indeed, a book ascribed to Enoch; which, it is said, was buried in oblivion for many centuries, and discovered about two hundred years ago. To every unprejudiced person, however, must it be evident, that it is of a much later date, and lower original; written either by a Jew or a Christian under the direction of a fruitful fancy. Of a book written by Enoch, Jude says nothing. The fact that Enoch prophesied of the last judgment, the Apostle might be inspired

inspired to write, as a well known tradition, or as revealed to him by immediate suggestion from heaven. Whether he had his knowledge of the fact by immediate revelation from heaven, he was inspired to write it for the information of the church to the end of the world.

All such apocryphal books, whatever Jews or Christians may pretend, want that impression of divine authority which is peculiar to the canonical books, and by which they are distinguished from the uncanonical.

Is it asked, How comes it to pass that the books called canonical are so much superior to other books? The text that ushers in this Discourse accounts for it. They were, and no other books in the world were, given *by inspiration of God*. Here it is natural to ask what is to be understood by inspiration. Of it I need not attempt a logical definition. The general meaning of inspiration is obvious. I am not in this place to canvass the different hypotheses and questions concerning it; which have been agitated among theological writers. Of three different degrees, or rather kinds, of inspiration do they speak; which are distinguished by the names of *superintendency*, *elevation*, and *suggestion*:

The first denotes the lowest degree or kind of inspiration that can be supposed. It means that the sacred penmen, when they wrote the several parts of the scriptures, were under the superintending power of the Holy Spirit, so far, and only so far, as was necessary to preserve from gross errors and mistakes. The second signifies, that they were not only superintended by the Spirit, so far as was necessary to keep them from fatal mistakes, but elevated to a degree, to which, without such assistance, they never could have attained. The third, which is the highest degree or kind of inspiration, implies, that they were not barely assisted so far as to avoid mistakes, and to write in an elevated manner; but had immediately suggested to them, by the Holy Ghost, what they were to write. Such are the general kinds

kinds of inspiration, of which critics on this subject speak. Is it asked, Which of these kinds of it is intended in the text? Or, with which of them were the sacred penmen of the Old and New Testament favoured? On this, as on almost every other subject, writers are divided.

There are no less than four opinions. One insists, that no more is meant than a mere superintendency of the Holy Ghost, by which the writers of the scriptures were guarded against gross mistakes or blunders. Another pleads, that they were, on different occasions, favoured with different kinds of inspiration. For instance, when the evangelists wrote the history of our Lord's life and ministry, they had no occasion for any thing higher than the inspiration of superintendency, or, at most, elevation; for they only related facts of which they had a previous personal knowledge. But, in writing the prophetic books, or foretelling future events, the highest degree of inspiration was necessary. A third supposition is, that the divine Spirit suggested to the inspired writers the matter of what they were to write; but left them to their own choice of words. A fourth opinion, which I avow for mine, is, that the blessed Bible, for manner as well as matter, sentiment and expression, is the word of God, dictated to the sacred penmen by his unerring Spirit; and, therefore, it is our only rule to direct us how we are to glorify and enjoy God.

As for the first supposition, according to it, the blessed Bible may be a mass of lesser errors, and smaller mistakes. Agreeably to the second, the truths contained in the scriptures, how important soever, may be expressed in terms the most improper. With regard to the difference which the second opinion supposes between the inspiration of one part of scripture and another, it may suffice to observe, that men of a fertile invention may multiply metaphysical niceties without end; but of such distinctions the Bible itself has said nothing.

That the blessed Bible, for matter and manner, sentiment and stile, is the word of God, dictated by his divine Spirit to the inspired writers—that word itself, often and with sufficient clearness, intimates to us. How often is the Lord said to *speake* to Moses? How often is his *word* said to come to the prophets? Does not an Apostle of the New Testament speak expressly of the *words, which not man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth?* 1 Cor. ii. 13.

It is objected, that in the sacred books there is a visible diversity of stile and manner. The fact is admitted; and the reason is obvious. The Spirit of inspiration used, as his amanuenses, men of different birth, education, and accomplishments. He did not supersede, but employ in his service, the diversity of capacity and genius he found among them.

The books received as canonical by Protestants, and particularly among us, I need not enumerate. It is more material to remind my hearers of the manifold characters of divinity instamped upon them. The divinity of the scriptures is, indeed, a capital point. How necessary to our comfort is it, that we be established and confirmed in it! I am not to deal with the avowed enemies of revelation. But, may not exercised Christians be tempted to question the divine original and authority of the holy scriptures? They may, and often do labour under this heavy temptation. Manifold and unknown are the stratagemis, and machinations, which the cruel adversary uses to overturn the faith, and mar the comfort of militant saints. How audaciously impudent is he! After the attacks which he made on their glorious Head, what may not the members expect from him? Often, and justly, has it been said, that it is no sin to be tempted; sin lies in yielding to the temptation.

For an enumeration of the many excellent marks of the divine original of the scriptures, I refer my hearers to the Larger Catechism. Considering a full discussion

of the subject as unnecessary, I shall only suggest a few things at present.

*First*, Is there not apparent in the scriptures a divine majesty peculiar to themselves, which distinguishes them from all other books? Does not God speak, as well as act, in a manner becoming himself, and demonstrative of his infinite superiority to all his creatures? How proper and how emphatic the question, *Hast thou an arm like God? Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* Job xl. 9. Who ever heard the man Christ Jesus speak by the word, the word accompanied with the power of the Spirit, and was not constrained to say, *Never man spake like this man?* Let me

*Secondly*, Remind my bearers of the divine purity of the scriptures. In this, as well as in every other view, they are superior to all other writings that can come in competition with them. What disparity between them and the most celebrated compositions of Pagan antiquity! What glaring indications of human depravity do we find in the latter! Often are vices extolled for virtues. What vile impurities do we find in the Alcoran of Mahomet? Does it not tolerate, rather encourage, sensuality besetting swine rather than saints? Do not the scriptures, on the contrary, enjoin universal purity? Do they not discover purity as well as majesty worthy of God? I may

*Thirdly*, Call your attention to the uniform harmony and consistency of scripture. That we may see the strength of this argument, it must be recollected, that the scriptures were not all written at once, or by one and the same person. Far from it. In detached parts, and in distant periods, were they written; yet as uniform and consistent as if all written by one hand. Is not this a strong proof that, though written by persons far distant from one another in place as well as in time, the scriptures must have been dictated by the Spirit. How often do the most celebrated philosophers contradict each other, and even themselves? What palpable contradictions do we find in the Alcoran? The fact is

so glaring, that Musselmén, the votaries of Mahomet, themselves are constrained to admit it. For it, however, they pretend to account in a consistency with the supposed divinity of the book; but in how flimsy a manner! As Mahomet was employed in writing his Alcoran for upwards of twenty years, during that long period revolutions happened, which obliged the Deity to repeal certain laws which he had formerly enacted, and enjoin others in contradiction to them. What! A long period of twenty years! Could not the deity, at the commencement of a period not longer than twenty years, foresee every event, the most fortuitous, that could happen before the consummation of it?

What was a period of twenty years, in comparison of the interval between the writing of the first and the last of the sacred books? Instead of twenty, here is a period of many hundred years. From Moses, who wrote the first of the sacred books, till the Apostle John, who wrote the last of them, was an interval of a thousand and five hundred years.

Numerous inconsistencies and contradictions, indeed, have the enemies of religion pretended to find in the sacred books. But as often have the advocates of religion shown, to the conviction of the unprejudiced part of mankind, that all such contradictions are only pretended, not real.

For a satisfactory solution of the many inconsistencies which cavillers have pretended to find in the volumes of inspiration, I might refer you to our commentators and other writers. For a specimen, however, I shall mention the following instances. The period of the peregrinations of Abraham's family, which ended in their coming out of Egypt, is, in Gen. xv. 13, said to be four hundred years; but, in Exod. xii. 40, 41, four hundred and thirty. Easily are these two accounts reconciled. It was four hundred, or four hundred and thirty, according as the commencement of it is dated, from Abraham's leaving his native country, or an after period. The account in Exodus may reckon from his  
coming



coming out of Ur of the Chaldees; that in Genesis from about the birth of Isaac. The number of Jacob's family that went down to Egypt is, in Gen. xlvi. 26, said to be only threescore and six; in verse 47, threescore and ten; and in Acts vii. 14. threescore and fifteen. All these different accounts, however, are perfectly consistent. The first, which expressly excludes Jacob's sons wives, may also exclude himself, Joseph, and his two sons. Thus the number of his posterity amounted only to sixty-six. The second may include himself, Joseph, and his two sons; and then his family consisted of seventy persons. The third account may exclude Joseph and his two sons, reducing the number to sixty-seven; but may include the eight wives, who are not included in the former accounts; and then the number is threescore and fifteen, as mentioned by the inspired writer of the Acts.

In 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. it is said, that David bought the threshing-floor, and the oxen for sacrifice, from Araunah or Ornan, for fifty shekels of silver; and, in 1 Chron. xxi. 25, it is affirmed, that he paid to Ornan six hundred shekels of gold. But these accounts are not at all irreconcilable. The writer of the book of Samuel means only the spot called the threshing-floor, on which an altar was at that time erected, and the oxen for sacrifice. But the writer of the Chronicles intends the whole mountain or tract of ground on which the temple was afterwards built, with all its courts and the avenues leading to it. On it, when David purchased it, there might be several houses, for which, as well as the ground, it behoved him to pay an adequate price. Thus fifty shekels of silver might be as sufficient a price for the former, as six hundred shekels of gold for the latter.

The inspired writers of the books of second Samuel and first Chronicles, speaking of the duration of the famine with which David and Israel were threatened, for his vanity in numbering his subjects; the former, 2 Sam. xxiv. 13, calls it seven years; the latter, 1 Chron. xxi. 12, only three years. This difficulty has been removed

moved by supposing an error to have crept into the text in Samuel. What, perhaps, led some to think so is, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, known by the name of the Septuagint, has in the text in Samuel *three* instead of *seven*. But, for a solution of this difficulty, there is no necessity for a supposition so derogatory to the sacred scriptures. The famine, had it happened, was to last only three years for the numbering of the people. But there had already been a famine of three years, on account of the injustice and cruelty of Saul in slaying the Gibeonites. 2 Sam. xxi. 1.; and this famine had ceased only the year immediately preceding. This fourth, probably, was the sabbatical year, in which there was neither sowing nor reaping; and, therefore, if three other years of famine had now commenced, there would have been no less than seven years of famine; as stated by the writer of second Samuel. But it was for the last three of these seven years only the famine was to be inflicted, for the sin of numbering the people; as expressed in first Chronicles.

Once more. In 1 Kings viii. 9. it is said, that in the ark, which stood in the holy of holies, there was nothing but the two tables of stone. But, in Heb. ix. 4, the Apostle seems to say, that in it were the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, as well as the tables of the covenant. But, when the Apostle speaks thus, *wherein*, or *in which*, was the golden pot and Aaron's rod; the question is, To what does he, by the phrase *in which*, refer? Whether to the *ark*, the nearer antecedent, or *the holiest of all*, the remoter? That the golden pot and Aaron's rod were in the holy of holies is not, cannot be, doubted. But, even admitting that the expression *in which* refers to the immediate antecedent, the ark of the covenant, the Greek preposition translated *in* has an ambiguity in it, and admits of such a latitude as renders the Apostle's words fully consistent with those of the Old Testament writer. That it often signifies near a thing as well as in it, cannot be

be denied. Though the tables of the covenant only were actually within the ark, the golden pot and Aaron's rod, as well as the tables, and the ark that contained them, were deposited in the holy of holies. Though they were not, along with the tables, actually within the ark, they were near to it, probably as much so as they could be, not to be actually within it. This is all the Apostle means; and all that his words, in their most natural construction, can be understood to carry in them. Thus, between the inspired writers of the first book of Kings and of the Epistle to the Hebrews, there is a perfect congruity. In proof of the divinity of the scriptures, let us

*Fourthly*, Attend to the following consideration. The sacred writers, in a variety of striking instances, predict the most distant and contingent events; and predict them with as much punctuality and exactness, as if they had lived when they happened, and been on the spot to see them accomplished. I speak of *contingent* events, the accomplishment of which does not depend on second causes; and, therefore, cannot be calculated and accounted for by the laws of nature. Events there are, which the knowledge of the laws of nature may enable naturalists, not only to describe, but to foretel ages before they happen. The transit of a planet passing by a fixed star—an eclipse of the sun, occasioned by the interposition of the moon between it and our earth—or, an eclipse of the moon by the intervention of our atmosphere between the sun and it—the alternate ebbing and flowing of the sea—and similar events, can be calculated and predicted for ages to come. The reason is obvious. They depend on what we call the laws of nature; which are permanent and regular in their operations. But occurrences of the most casual and fortuitous kind, dependent on no such causes, and of which, from such established laws, no man can have any previous knowledge, did the inspired writers foretel, hundreds, many hundreds of years before they happened.

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The time, place, and persons concerned in events to come to pass in futurity, did the prophets of God specify with the utmost precision, and most circumstantial nicety. Let me exemplify this important observation in a few instances.

About three hundred years before Jofiah, king of Judah, was born, was it foretold that he, by name, should burn, upon an altar in Bethel, the bones of the idolatrous priests whom Jeroboam had employed to offer sacrifices upon it. This event is predicted with as much clearness and perspicuity as if the prophet had been writing the history of it. Compare 1 Kings xiii. 2. with 2 Kings xxiii. 17,—18.

Could a witness of the fatal end of Ahab and Jezebel have described it, in all its circumstances, such as dogs licking the blood of the former, and eating the flesh of the latter, in a more particular manner, than it was predicted a considerable time before it happened? With 1 Kings xxi. 17,—24. compare 2 Kings ix. 30,—37.

Not only did Isaiah in his prophecy, foretel, the return of the Jews from captivity, two hundred years before, but expressly named the very monarch, who, in the hand of Providence, was to be the instrument of it. Isa. xlv 1.

In how circumstantial a manner did Daniel predict the rise and downfall of four great monarchies; the Chaldean; the Persian; the Grecian; and the Roman! Chap. vii.

How minutely did the prophetic writers of the Old Testament speak of the most important of events; the actual incarnation of the Son of God, and the salutary consequences of it; the time of it, at the expiration of the seventy prophetic weeks, or 490 years; the place, and several extraordinary circumstances attending it!

How particularly do the inspired writers of the New Testament foretel the most momentous events to be accomplished in the church and the world from the ascension of our Lord till his second coming! In how lively

lively colours is the character of the Antichristian power delineated in the apocalyptic visions!

Must not the books which contain such predictions be divinely inspired? Must not such predictions proceed from that omniscient Spirit, to whom past and coming events are equally known? Must they not come from that Supreme being, who has the sovereign disposal of all events; the most casual as well as the most necessary? I shall only add,

*Finally,* The signal interposition and care of Providence for the preservation of those sacred books; and the transmission of them uncorrupted to the latest times. Many books, once useful and esteemed, both among Jews and Christians, have gone into perpetual oblivion. But the holy scriptures are preserved, and, though to many insipid, to the saints savoury and precious. Let us call to mind the great antiquity of the sacred books. In this, as well as in all other respects, they merit the ascendancy of all other books. The books of Moses, in all probability, are the first that ever were written. The famous Jewish historian, indeed, informs us, that the posterity of Seth, many ages prior to the birth of Moses, wrote their discoveries in the different sciences on two pillars, one of stone, another of brick; the former for their preservation in case of a flood; the latter in case of a conflagration. But this is a fabulous story.

Previous to the discovery of the useful art of printing; books must have been comparatively scarce. On different occasions have the sacred books been in apparent danger of becoming wholly extinct. Such was the degeneracy of the Jewish church, previous to the accession of good king Josiah to the throne, that the sacred books then written seemed to be totally lost. But to his joy he soon found that, through the interposition of an ever-watchful Providence, a copy of them had been preserved. This is thought to have been the original copy written by the hands of the inspired penmen themselves. 2 Kings xxii. 8.

It has been imagined that all the sacred books, written before the Babylonian captivity, were then lost; and restored by Ezra. But this opinion has no foundation, and is, in the highest degree, improbable. Do we not find Daniel, during the captivity, consulting the prophecies of Jeremiah, relating to the duration of it? Dan. ix. 2.

In the darkest times of the New Testament, when Popery was in its meridian, we find manuscript copies of the scriptures in almost every quarter; and translations of them into different languages. Thus, though other books have perished, the loss of which we cannot but lament, this blessed book, the Bible, never has, it never can be, lost. All past inundations and conflagrations, erections and subversions of great empires and cities, it has survived. The care of Providence has been in a signal manner exercised about it. As an invaluable depositum has it been committed to the church, and continued in her from generation to generation. Unadulterated has it come down from our forefathers to us. Indeed among the variety of manuscripts, no small diversity occurs. This may have been owing, in a great part, to the inattention of the transcribers. But, it has been observed, as an illustrious proof of the special care of Providence about this heavenly book, that none of these differences affect any one article of the faith and comfort of Christians.

I cannot dismiss this article, without recommending to your most serious attention an observation of the Compilers of our Larger Catechism relating to it. It is this—"The Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very word of God." How comes it to pass that there is so much scepticism among us? The reason is obvious. The religion of many is wholly of the speculative kind. To vital and experimental religion they remain utter strangers. The great matter, my friends, is to feel, on our hearts, supernatural

pernatural power co-operating with the word. Happy are the preachers who can congratulate their hearers as the Apostle did his—*Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, even in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.* 1 Theff. i. 5.

What wonderful effects does the word, accompanied by the Spirit, produce! To the ineffable satisfaction of the soul does it evince itself to be of God. Of the various and happy effects of the word, in the great work of the salvation of sinners, we have an account in the sequel of the Catechism. How solicitous should we all be, that we may experience the efficacy of it on our own hearts!

The sacred books are, in the answer, distinguished into the scriptures of the Old Testament, and the scriptures of the New; the former beginning with Genesis, and ending with Malachi; the latter beginning with Matthew, and ending with the Revelation. It may be asked, what the answer intends by *Testament*, what by an *Old* and a *New* Testament; and why it calls the books written before the incarnation of the Son of God the Old Testament; and the books written posterior to that event the New?

The word *testament* here is equivalent to the term *covenant*. What, in the general, is intended by a covenant, and what by a testament, almost every one knows. By this covenant and this testament, we understand that mysterious constitution, that glorious expedient, which God from eternity invented, and has in time revealed to fallen man for his redemption. Of it, either under the notion of a covenant or a testament, I must not now give any particular account; for of it, in both views, I will have occasion to speak in the sequel. In the writings of both the Prophets and Apostles, it is designed a *covenant*. In the writings of the latter, it is also often denominated a *testament*; the Evangelists and Apostles having expressed it by a word, which is on one occasion rendered covenant, and on another testament.

It may suffice to say, that, as transacted from eternity between the Father and the Son, it is, with the utmost propriety, called a covenant; and, as it is administered to us, it is a testament, rather than a covenant. All the rich blessings of it are disposed to us in a testamentary, rather than a federal way; not in a conditional, but in the most gratuitous and freest manner. Here is every thing belonging to a proper testament; a testator. *Jesus Christ*; legatees, *sinners of mankind*; legacies, *all the precious blessings of grace and glory*; and the confirmation of the testament by the death of the glorious Testator.

But, why speaks the answer of the *Old and New Testament*? Are there two covenants of grace; one by which believers were saved before the coming of Christ; and another by which they are saved after it? No. The covenant of grace, as we will see afterwards, is in itself the same in all ages of the church. There is, however, a twofold administration of it; the Jewish, and the Christian. That dispensation which preceded the coming of the Messiah is old and antiquated. The superior dispensation, which he has introduced, is new, and continues till the end of the militant state. For what reason the prophetic scriptures are called the *Old*, and the apostolical scriptures the *New Testament*, it is easy to see. The great design of both is to reveal that *one* everlasting covenant, by which the redemption of the church is effected.

Now the prophetic writings may be designed the scriptures of the *Old Testament*, for two obvious reasons. They contain the first edition of the everlasting covenant; and they were written during the old administration of it. Accordingly, they conclude with a glorious prediction of the actual incarnation and personal ministry of the Son of God; and of the appearance and ministry of the Baptist, his immediate harbinger; with a solemn injunction to the Jews, to continue in the observation of the laws and ceremonies which belonged to



to that typical dispensation, till the arrival of the important period, at which a superior dispensation was to supersede and succeed it. Mal iv. For similar reasons may the apostolical writings be stiled the scriptures of the New Testament. They contain the second edition of the everlasting covenant; and were written after the commencement of the new administration of it.

The particular times of writing the several books of the New Testament cannot be precisely ascertained. Nor have we any sufficient ground to think that they were written according to the order in which they are now arranged. But, that they were all written posterior to our Lord's ascension, and, of consequence, after the erection of the Christian church, is manifest. Is any solicitous to know what the Jewish œconomy was? He must consult the writings of Moses and the Prophets. Is any desirous to learn in what respects the Christian œconomy differs from the Jewish, and is superior to it? He must apply, for information, to the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. The Jews had the Redeemer's first testament typically ratified *by the blood of goats and calves*. We, Christians, have his last testament actually confirmed by *his own infinitely precious blood*.

The most part of the Old Testament, as is well known, was originally written in *Hebrew*, and the New Testament in *Greek*. The reason of writing the former in Hebrew; and the latter in Greek, is obvious. The Hebrew was the language of the Jews, to whom the prophetic oracles were originally committed. The Greek was most universally known when the scriptures of the New Testament were written. Accordingly, previous to writing any part of the New Testament, the scriptures of the Old had been translated into Greek. The translation, which goes under the name of the *Septuagint*, is well known. It has its name, which signifies seventy, from the number of persons supposed to have been employed in it. The history of this famous translation of the Old Testament is, in short, this. Ptolomy Philadelphus,

phus, king of Egypt, having erected a fine library in the city of Alexandria, was solicitous to fill it with the most curious and valuable books which he could collect from all quarters ; and, having been informed that the Jews had a famous book, which contained the laws of Moses, and the history of their nation, applied to Eleazar, the Jewish high-priest, for a Greek translation of it. In order to induce the high-priest to comply with his request, he liberated all the Jews whom his father, Ptolemy Soter, had reduced to slavery. The Jewish high-priest sent to the Egyptian king an exact copy of the Mosaical law, written in letters of gold ; and along with it six elders out of each tribe, in all seventy-two ; who are usually stiled the seventy interpreters ; because seventy is the round number. They were received with marks of great respect by the king, and conducted into the isle of Pharos, where they were lodged in a house prepared for their reception ; and furnished with every accommodation. They set about the translation immediately ; and finished it in seventy-two days. The whole being read in presence of the king, he admired the profound wisdom of the Jewish law ; and sent home the elders loaded with presents for themselves, for the high-priest, and for the temple.

Mysterious are the ways of holy Providence ! The great Governor of all worlds, and Lord of the church, had other views than either the king of Egypt, or the high-priest of the Jews. The king of Egypt meant the enrichment of his library. God intended the enlargement of his church. Alexander the Great having, with a small army, and in a short time, conquered almost the then known world, the Greek language became common to all the countries which he subdued. Now it was put into the heart of the king of Egypt to accomplish a translation of the sacred oracles into Greek, that they might become known to thousands of thousands, to whom in another language they were perfectly unintelligible. Was not this translation of the Old Testament scriptures

tures into the language most copious in itself, and most commonly understood, a happy prelude, a joyful preface, of the approaching propagation of the glorious gospel among mankind, in all quarters and countries of the inhabited world?

It has been observed, that the Gentile profelytes to the Jewish religion were most numerous in the ages that immediately preceded the coming of Christ in the flesh; and that this Greek translation of the Old Testament was universally used by the Jews, who, in great numbers, were dispersed in all the countries contiguous to Judea, is well known. This occasions the distinction between two words in the New Testament, *Greeks* and *Grecians*; which, though similar in sound, differ in signification. By *Greeks*, we are to understand the natives of Greece, a country on the south-east extremity of Europe; and by *Grecians*, those who, though by birth Jews, used the Greek language. Were the scriptures written originally in different languages, the languages of the different nations among whom they were at first published? Is not this a plain intimation, that they are to be translated into the various languages of the several quarters of the world, into which they may, either at an earlier or later period, penetrate? How impious and how absurd is the conduct of the Romish church! Why does she confine the scriptures to the Latin language? If the ancient Romans, who understood and used the Latin, might translate them into their language, why may not the inhabitants of any other country translate them into theirs? How thankful should we be, that we have the scriptures in a language we understand! How would our pious ancestors, at the commencement of the Protestant Reformation, have valued such a privilege!

I shall only add a word or two, in relation to the division of the sacred books into chapters, and the subdivision of them into verses. In the first ages of Christianity, it is said, they were divided into short paragraphs.

graphs. When they were first divided into chapters; it is difficult to determine. Many say it was in the thirteenth century; others that it was as early as the eleventh, if not sooner. Some have held, that the Old Testament was always divided into verses. But it has been observed, that they were not numbered, as we have them, till, perhaps, the fifteenth century. As for the New Testament, it is said to have been subdivided into verses only in the sixteenth. Great, indeed, are our advantages. If we either do not read the scriptures, or do not understand them, how inexcusable must we be. Having considered the extent of revelation I am,

III. To speak of the important use of it. *It is the only rule to direct us how we are to glorify and enjoy God.* As to our glorifying God, which is our bounden duty, and our enjoying him, which is our highest felicity, and the necessity of revelation to direct us how to do the one and obtain the other, I have no occasion to say any thing here. I need now only to consider the scriptures under the notion of a *rule*, and the *only* rule to direct us in the important matter of glorifying and enjoying God. I am to consider it,

*First, As a rule.* The term here used by the Compilers of our Catechism is, perhaps, taken from Gal. vi. 16.; where the inspired Apostle bespeaks the Galatian converts thus—*As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.* These words have, indeed, been differently interpreted. The phrase, *this rule*, has been understood to refer to the preceding context, where the Apostle shews, that, though the Jews had greatly the advantage of the Gentiles under the Old Testament, under the New it does not at all matter whether persons be of Jewish or Gentile extraction. Both are now on a level. The only thing that concerns both, is to be savingly in Christ, and thus to be new creatures. Or it relates to the general strain of this epistle, which is to show, that the salvation of sinners;

sinners, whether of Jewish or Gentile descent, is entirely of grace, through faith *which is in Jesus Christ*. Or, in fine, it is to the general tenor of the sacred scriptures of both Testaments. The great end and use of them is to be the rule, the only rule, to direct sinful man how he, in the now fallen state, may glorify and enjoy God.

The appositeness and sufficiency of divine revelation, as a rule to direct us in this weighty concern, must be, to every intelligent and unprejudiced person, abundantly manifest. It is at once a copious and plain directory. Does any careless sinner, who hitherto has been without serious consideration, now begin to reflect and bethink himself? Is he conscious, that hitherto he has lived without God and all religious experience? Is he ashamed of himself and his past folly? Does he wish to begin to glorify and enjoy God? Is he solicitous to know how he is to set about this great and good work? Here is a directory for him. From it he may receive the most authentic and the fullest information. Every qualification of a rule, and a rule sufficient to direct us in this most important of all concerns, does the blessed Bible possess; especially the three following.

1. *Authority*. On this account it is designed a *law*. Isa. viii. 20. It is enacted by him who is the supreme Ruler of the universe and Lord of the church. To him all legislative power originally belongs. It is, therefore, of the highest authority. This law we must obey. This rule we must observe. It is upon our highest peril if we do not. Thus, if we do not, in conformity to this rule, glorify and enjoy God, we insult his authority, we defy his power; and, who ever *hardened himself against the great God and prospered?*

2. *Perfection*. All things necessary to be believed or practised by us, in order to our glorifying and enjoying God in this present state, are either expressed or implied in the holy scriptures. If, therefore, we come short of our duty and our happiness, it is not owing to any defect

fect in the rule, but to our want of conformity to it. The imperfection is in us, not in the rule. Often in the scriptures is their perfection asserted. As in Psal. xix. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.* And, in the passage from which the text that introduced this discourse is taken, 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17. the Apostle bespeaks his son, Timothy, thus—*From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* And,

3. *Infallibility.* This is the necessary consequence of the divine inspiration of the scriptures. They were, indeed, written by imperfect, and, therefore, fallible men. In other instances they might err; and did err. But, in writing the sacred books, they were under the immediate inspiration, the infallible impulse, of that unerring Spirit who cannot possibly err. For, as the Apostle Peter testifies, *the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake, and also wrote, as they were moved, and guided, by the Holy Ghost.* 2 Pet. i. 21. How many make their own reason or comprehension, not revelation, the standard of their belief! When any thing in religion is proposed to them, either to be believed or practised, the question with them is not, whether the scripture reveals and enjoins it? but it is immediately sifted at the bar of their corrupt reason; and, as it appears to them fit or unfit, proper or improper, it is received or rejected. This is a rock on which many have struck, and which has proved fatal to them. It is not our own comprehension, but divine revelation, that is to be the rule, as well as the reason, of our faith. Were we to admit nothing into our creed but what we can comprehend and account for, how short would it be! Nay, we would soon have no creed at all.

Tell

Tell me an article of religion, in relation to which I cannot start difficulties, the solution of which would nonplus the ablest divines in Christendom. Mention any thing in nature, about which I cannot propose questions, which the greatest naturalists on earth would find a difficulty in answering. To transcend reason and to contradict it are two things essentially different. That many things in revealed religion far transcend our reason and comprehension is readily admitted. But that any thing in it contradicts sound reason is denied. To every thing which the scriptures reveal, we are indispensibly bound, on the authority of the divine revealer, to give the fullest credit. Every thing it enjoins, interest, as well as duty, requires us to do. Many, indeed, who read the scriptures err both in sentiment and conduct. But this cannot be attributed to the scriptures; which, with sufficient perspicuity, point out the path of duty. That woful corruption of our intellectual and moral powers, which will come under consideration in the sequel, accounts for it.

*Secondly*, This is our *only* rule. So the answer affirms with a particular view. That the scriptures are not merely a rule, but the *only* rule, to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God, is affirmed in opposition to those, who, from an impious supposition of the imperfection and insufficiency of the scriptures, have presumed to add to them. That they are our rule, and *only* rule, might be asserted in opposition to Deists, who, from a vain pretence of the sufficiency of natural religion, set revelation entirely aside, as a thing altogether unnecessary. It might be affirmed in opposition to Quakers, who are guided by an enthusiastic light within them. This religious sect, as is well known, arose from a layman; and made its first appearance in England about the middle of the last century. They are so denominated from the unusual enthusiastic commotions and agitations that appeared among them; and which, they pretend, were the effects of the operations of the divine Spirit. This

part of the answer, in short, refers especially to the controversy long agitated between Papists and Protestants, in relation to the sufficiency of the scriptures. The question between them is this. Is the word of God, which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, without any additions, *written* or *unwritten*, not only a sufficient, but the only rule, to direct us how we are to glorify and enjoy God? Or, is it in any instance or instances wanting, so as to render tradition necessary to inform us in relation to things about which it is silent? Of the additions which Papists have made to the sacred oracles I have given a short sketch already. It is of the manner in which they account for their conduct I now speak. For the necessity and warrant of their traditions they plead from a variety of considerations. A few of them may be mentioned. Thus they plead—

1. Protestants themselves allow the authority and obligation of unwritten traditions in the first ages of the church. If they were necessary then, why not now?

The answer is easy. That the church, for a series of ages, had only an unwritten and traditionary revelation, I have already admitted. But can Papists pretend, that tradition is as necessary posterior to the writing of the sacred books, as it was prior to it? Was not the state of matters exceedingly different in the first ages of the church from what it is now? Then the prophetic spirit was in the church. Then the Son of God frequently appeared to the Patriarchs in a human form, and conversed with them. Has not the prophetic spirit removed from the church? Has not the highest heaven received the Son of God? Does it not retain him till the final restitution of all things?

2. In the New Testament are intimations of words spoken by our Lord in the days of his humiliation on earth, which no one of the apostolical writers has recorded, and, therefore, they must be handed down by tradition from one generation to another. An instance  
often



often condescended upon is in Acts xx. 35. ; in which the Apostle, in his solemn charge to the elders of the Ephesian church, addresseth them thus—*I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak ; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive.*

How inconclusive this argument is, in behalf of unwritten traditions, any impartial reader will see. That our Lord, either in express terms, or in effect, said, as is here represented, cannot be doubted. But what is this to the purpose? That he spake, as well as did, many things not recorded in the New Testament is certain. The last of the four Evangelical historians has informed us, that there were *many other things which Jesus did and said on earth, that neither he nor the other Evangelists had written.* John xxi. 25. As for the words which the Apostle mentions to the Ephesian elders, they are no more an unwritten tradition ; but, on the contrary, a part of the sacred canon. Had the many unrecorded things which the Redeemer said and did in our world been necessary to be known, believed, and practised by us, they also would have been written. The Popish church pleads,

3. That the Apostle Paul recommends, rather inculcates, the observation of traditions in the church ; for thus he bespeaks the Thessalonian converts—*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.* 2 Thess. ii. 15.

Is not a repetition of this passage a sufficient refutation of the Popish interpretation of it? That the believing Thessalonians are here enjoined to hold traditions is a fact. But, what traditions? Such traditions as are held in the Romish church? No. But the traditions which the Apostle taught them when he preached among them ; and by his former epistle to them as well as this. The traditions which we have been taught by the Prophets and Apostles, it is our interest, as well as our duty, to hold

hold fast. Of such oral laws, or unwritten traditions, as Papists hold, the Apostle speaks nothing.

4. It is pretended, that there is a necessity of traditions to supply the place of some parts of the sacred scriptures now lost.

That there are, especially in the scriptures of the Old Testament, intimations of books once known, and probably useful, which are now lost, we have seen already. But the extinction of such books, not to mention other considerations, is a certain proof that they were not given by inspiration. There is, however, one place in the New Testament, in which, the Popish church insists, there is a plain intimation of an inspired book now lost. In Col. iv. 16. the Apostle enjoins the members of the Colossian church, not only to read the epistle which he was now writing to them, but to read an *epistle from Laodicea*. In relation to this epistle, said to be from Laodicea, there is, indeed, among interpreters, some diversity of opinion. There is still extant an epistle said to have been sent from the Apostle Paul to the Laodiceans. But the general opinion is, that this letter is spurious. It is by many thought to have been written by some of the heretical sect of the Manichees. Accordingly, by the letter from Laodicea, which the Colossian converts are enjoined to read, may be intended one of the inspired epistles which the Apostle had written to the churches; of which, perhaps, the Laodicean converts had obtained a reading; and which some circumstances in their case, unknown to us, might render it highly necessary for them to peruse. In short, it must either have been one of the inspired epistles contained in the scriptures of the New Testament, or one of the uninspired productions of that age. If the latter, we have nothing to do with it as any part of the rule to direct us how we are to glorify and enjoy God. Thus the word of God, contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the *only rule* to direct us in the important concern of our glorifying and

and enjoying him; to which nothing is at any time to be added, whether by pretended new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.

This subject I shall now dismiss with a few reflections, arising naturally from the foregoing explanation of it. And,

*First of all,* We see whence the necessity of revelation originates. For supernatural revelation, during the original state, there was no necessity. Man then, indeed, both glorified and enjoyed God. But the knowledge which he had from his creation, including the superadded intimation relating to the forbidden tree, was sufficient to direct him, both how he was to do the one and obtain the other. Now, the state of matters is quite altered. Neither can we glorify or enjoy God, but through the mediation and intercession of that blessed Mediator, whom the light of reason never can discover; and whom Adam in innocency knew not.

How insufficient is natural, and how necessary revealed, religion! The former, indeed, discovers that there is a God. And if there be a God, reason, as well as revelation, teaches, that rational creatures are indispensably bound to act conformably to his moral perfections. They must be pious toward God, as well as just and merciful to one another. From reason may we learn, that there is such a thing as moral evil in the world. But, can it inform us either how it entered, or how it can be put away? To revelation do we stand entirely indebted for the important discovery, the interesting information, that the Son of God *appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

With what veneration should we read, as well as hear, the word! It is the word of God. What a profound veneration have the blinded votaries of Mahomet for their Alcoran! If a Jew or a Christian but touch it, he incurs no less a punishment than immediate death. Nay, if a Musselman himself touch it with unwashed hands, he must be put to death. Blush, Christians!

How

How many baptized infidels have we among us! They treat the blessed Bible with total neglect; or, if they read it all, it only is that they may cavil, or turn it into burlesque. But, in proportion as others disesteem the Bible, let us esteem it. Precious and favourable is it to saints. In how endearing a manner, in how high terms, do we find them speaking of it! *I have esteemed the words of his mouth, saith Job, more than my necessary food.* Job xxiii. 12.

How necessary is it that we be well established and confirmed in the belief of the divinity of the scriptures! None of us can tell what winds of temptation may blow; what trying times may come upon us. From what temptation can we expect to be altogether exempted? Are you solicitous to be well established in the belief of the divine original of the scriptures? Seek the happy experience of their saving efficacy on your own hearts. Such experience of their salutary efficacy will be to you the most satisfying proof of their divine original.

The accomplishment of the œconomy and work of redemption, appears to be the great object which God all along has in view in his government of this lower world; to which the revolutions of empires, particularly the invention and improvement of the arts and sciences, are rendered subservient. In a variety of instances might I exemplify this observation. A long series of wonderful providential events, in which the design of an over-ruling Providence to preserve and enlarge the church, is most apparent, might I here recount. Of one thing, on account of its immediate connection with the present subject, I cannot but remind you. I mean the wonderful subserviency of the art of printing to the propagation of the knowledge of the sacred scriptures in modern times. Sadly, indeed, has the liberty of the press been abused. To the worst of purposes has this excellent invention been prostituted. But, for the accomplishment of the most salutary purposes,

poses, has the all-wise Ruler of the universe, in these later ages, led men to improvements in the most useful art of printing, and other things that facilitate the practice of it, which seem to have been, in all former ages of the world, unknown. It has, indeed, been an opinion, that the art of printing has been known, in a great eastern Empire in almost all ages. But how inferior is their method of printing to ours? I speak of the art of printing as now practised in Europe. This is known to have been an invention of the fifteenth century. Is it not worthy of particular observation, that this important discovery immediately preceded the Protestant reformation? Was it not granted to the world with a special view to the propagation of the reformed religion in it? In former times, books were not only comparatively scarce; but in a form far less commodious than we now have them. They were in volumes or *rolls*, written on one side, and rolled on a staff or stick. Books in this form are said to be still used among the Jews. Thus, in the scriptures, the phrase, *the volume of the book*, occurs. Psal. xl. 7. The invention of proper materials for writing and printing, as well as the art of printing and binding books in the present form, has also contributed towards the spread of scripture-knowledge. Anciently it was usual to write on pieces of lead, brass, copper, wood, or stone. The law, which Moses received from God to deliver to Israel, was written on two tables of stone; which has been supposed to be marble. Skins of animals were long used for paper. This probably gave the hint for the invention and improvement of parchment; which is said to have been used in writing for many hundred years before linen-paper was known. We read of the *parchments* which Paul left at Troas, and which he desires Timothy to bring with him. 2 Tim. iv. 13. By which parchments, may be intended either the original copies of the Apostle's epistles, or a famous copy of the

Old Testament, on which he set a high value; and for the safety of which he was particularly solicitous. There are said to be Indian books, written on the leaves of certain trees, extant to this day. The Egyptians are said to have written, in ancient times, on the fine inner film or skin of a kind of bulrush or reed that grew on the banks of the Nile; of which there is mention in the punishment of Egypt; denounced by the Prophet. *The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.* Isa. xix. 7. The word *paper* in our language differs only in termination from the Latin name of that famous reed. That the invention of linen-paper between five and six hundred years ago, has been subservient to the increase of the Christian religion is obvious. For what important and manifold salutary purposes has the glorious Mediator been entrusted with the actual administration of the universal kingdom of providence! Is it not, that all events, prosperous and adverse, which happen in the world, may be over-ruled by him, for the advancement and extension of his spiritual kingdom; which, though for a season in the world, is not of it? Thus the great mystery of providence in the world, and the glorious mystery of grace in the church, go hand in hand.

How admirably are the different degrees of revelation, with which the church in earlier and later times is favoured, calculated and adapted for answering the important purposes intended by them! During the patriarchal ages, the church subsisted in a kind of domestic state, in a few detached families, the heads of which lived many hundred years. Thus was the true religion preserved and transmitted by tradition from Adam to Moses. The worship of the patriarchal ages seems to have been exceedingly simple; few ceremonies and ordinances belonging to it. When, in process of time, human life was contracted within the narrow bounds of seventy or eighty years; and, in the times of Moses, the

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the church assumed a national form, and the rites of religion were exceedingly multiplied, revelation was committed to writing. That polity of the church was settled, which was to continue in it till the actual arrival of the important period which the Apostle calls *the time of reformation*, when the Son of God introduced a new and superior dispensation. How much was the revelation granted to the Jewish church suited to the constitution of it! How admirably is the revelation which the Christian church has received, adapted to the nature of it! How fit is it that the last dispensation of grace be the best? Often is the gospel-state, or New Testament church, stiled the kingdom of heaven. Nearest in time, it is also nearest in nature to the celestial state.

What high regard is due to the sacred oracles! Does a distant friend write a kind letter to you, and shall you so far disregard him and it, as never once to read it? Must he not, in this case, consider himself as affronted? Shall he not resent the affront? Has your best friend in the heavenly world written so long, so consolatory, so kind a letter to you on earth? And shall you not read it again and again? Let me ask, Is this best of books read in your families, and in your closets, every morning and every evening? But this is not all. There is another question no less necessary than the former. How do you read it? Do you read it as the word of the living God, and his word to you? Do you read it in faith? The word whether read or preached profits only when it is mixed with faith. Do you read it with warm and grateful hearts? Do you read a letter from a beloved friend at a distance with indifference? You do not. May I not pose each of you in the words of Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, *Understandest thou what thou readeſt?* Do you retain what you read? Are your memories repositories of the oracles of God? Do you, in fine, apply and practise what you read?

Let me now, for a conclusion, exhort each of you, my dear friends, to the diligent perusal and daily study of

the holy scriptures. Has the great God vouchsafed to you such a copious revelation of his blessed will for your salvation, in subservience to his glory? Has your dear Redeemer, to whom you are under such strong and tender obligations, said, *Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me?* It must be your highest interest, as well as incumbent duty, immediately, and with alacrity, to comply with his gracious injunction. Are you young? Ponder, day after day, your divine Redeemer's engaging words, *I love all them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.* Are you old? The period must be at hand when you will see this blessed book no more. Are you parents, masters, or governors; having children, servants, or pupils, committed to your care? Enjoin, encourage them, to search the scriptures. In this field a treasure of inestimable value is hid. Do you wish to find it? You must search, and again search, till you do find it. For a great variety of saving uses and purposes, were the scriptures written, and must you read them. Are you conscious that, notwithstanding all you have heard in relation to the deformity of sin on the one hand, and the excellency of the Saviour on the other, the one as well as the other is to you, in a great measure, unknown? Search the scriptures, for they testify of both. In what a frightful form is sin represented, and in what an engaging light is the Saviour exhibited in them? Are you sinners in a state of spiritual death? or are you faints in a state of spiritual languishment? Search the scriptures, for they are the happy means of quickening in the former case, and reviving in the latter. Are you afflicted and comfortless? Search the scriptures, for they are the special means of such consolation to souls, as nothing earthly can either give to the person that wants it, or take from the person that has it. Are you in prosperity? or are you in adversity? Search the scriptures. In the prospect of life, and in the prospect of death, search the scriptures.



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Faith and Practice.

ROM. xvi. 25, 26.

*According to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest; and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.*

**M**YSTERIOUS are all the works and ways of God. Especially is the œconomy of our redemption a mystery; which angels as well as men must ever be unable fully to unravel. What the Apostle immediately intends by *mystery*, in the words which I have chosen to introduce this Lecture, is the vocation of the Gentiles in the times of the New Testament. This happy event, indeed, was in a gradual manner discovered and predicted in the several ages of the Old Testament. But there is reason to think, that the Prophets were far from understanding the full intent of the prophecies which they were inspired to utter. Even when the period commenced, in which their predictions were to be realized, the proper design of them was misunderstood. The Apostles themselves did not at first properly understand the extent of their commission. The partition-wall, which, for a long series of ages, had separated between Jews and Gentiles, was now broken down. But, to  
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the discontinuation of the distinction between the two, the first teachers of Christianity did not sufficiently advert. Accordingly, among the various orders of extraordinary and temporary ministers, with which the church in the first ages of the New Testament was favoured, there were persons stiled *Prophets*. 1 Cor. xii. 28. —by whom we may understand men furnished, in an eminent manner, with the Spirit, to enable them to understand the prophecies of the Old Testament, and to explain and apply them to their own times and circumstances. The important purpose for which the glorious mystery of the calling of the Gentiles was now unfolded, in a manner unknown in former ages, the inspired writer of this epistle intimates in the words which I have read. It was in order that sinners of every nation, and of every description, might be encouraged to believe in JESUS, as their common Saviour; and that, from faith in him as their Sovereign as well as their Saviour, and love to him in the one character as well as the other, they might serve him. These two important points, *faith* and *obedience*, comprehend the whole of religion. What is the design of the sacred scriptures? To be a rule. A rule of what? Of faith and obedience. This reminds me of the answer to the third question in the Shorter Catechism. The question is this—*What do the scriptures principally teach?* The answer runs thus—*The scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.* The immediate connection between the preceding answer and this is easily seen. Is the holy scripture intended to direct us how we are to glorify and enjoy God? How necessary then that we understand what it reveals to us, and enjoins upon us; in order that we may accomplish this important end? The subject of this, as well as the preceding answer, is the word of God, contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. The former relates to the great design of the

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the scriptures; this to the general contents of them. The first division of the scriptures is into the Old and New Testaments. The scriptures of the Old Testament, the inspired writer to the Ephesians denominates the *Prophets*; and the scriptures of the New, the *Apostles*. Eph. ii. 20. The writers, by a well known figure of speech, are here put for their writings. The Jewish church was built upon the foundation of the doctrine of the Prophets; the Christian church on the doctrine of both Prophets and Apostles. On a former occasion we found, that, though the sacred writings ever have been divided into books, written by different men, and on various occasions, the subdivision of them into chapters and verses, is the uninspired work of later times.

The ancient Jews are said to have divided the Old Testament into three parts. The first comprehended the five books of Moses, which they reckoned of higher authority than any of the writings of the later Prophets; the second, a number of the prophetic books, to which they ascribed a secondary sort of inspiration; and the third, the books to which they attributed only that kind of inspiration, which has already been distinguished by the name of superintendency. The Pentateuch, they are said to have subdivided into fifty-four sections, corresponding to the number of sabbaths in what is called their intercalated year. In other years, they are said to have conjoined two short sections on two different sabbaths, in order that the whole law might be read in the space of the year. Our Saviour, speaking of the Old Testament in the days of his humiliation, seems to refer to two divisions of it. On one occasion, he divides it into two great parts, *Moses* and the *Prophets*. Luke xvi. 31. By *Moses*, we are evidently to understand the first five sacred books; and by the *Prophets*, all the other books written by inspired men, previous to the incarnation of Christ. In another place, he distributes

butes the scriptures of the Old Testament into three parts; *the law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.* Luke xxiv. 44. He is generally understood to allude here to the division of the sacred books then in use among the Jews. They are, indeed, said to have divided them into twenty-two books, answering to the twenty-two letters of their alphabet. But the principal division of their inspired writings was into three parts. The first contained the five books of Moses; the second the Prophets; and the third the Psalms; or, as they are usually styled, the *Hagiographa*; which is a Greek word, literally signifying, the holy writings. These comprehended four books; the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

The sacred books of both Testaments, in respect of their contents, might be distributed into historical and prophetic, doctrinal and practical. As the church had subsisted in the world for between two and three thousand years before any one of these books was written, the first, as was most necessary and fit, is historical; giving us a brief detail of the most interesting events which had happened in the world and the church prior to the writing of it. It informs us of the creation of the world, the fall of man, the first revelation of a Saviour, the consequent formation of a church on earth, and the transmission of the knowledge of the true God from generation to generation, during the long period of two thousand and four hundred years. As the church was foreseen to subsist for many ages posterior to the writing of the last of the inspired books, it, as was most requisite and proper, is prophetic; foretelling the most important and interesting events that are accomplished in the church and the world, from the commencement to the expiration of the long interval between the writing of it, and the final restitution of all things. The duration of the world, and of the church in it, may be divided into three great periods; the first  
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prior to the writing of all the sacred books; the third posterior to it. The scriptures written in the middle period look both backward to the ages which preceded, and forward to the times to come. There is, therefore, an obvious propriety in their beginning with history, and ending with prophecy. As the redemption of the church was unaccomplished during the Old Testament, a great part of the inspired books, which were written then, is prophetic. The glorious topic on which both the earlier and later Prophets dwell, is the coming of the Son of God, the Saviour of our world, and the salutary consequences of it; particularly to the Gentile nations.

The scriptures of the New Testament obviously distribute themselves into three parts; a historical, an epistolary, and a prophetic. The historical part includes the first five books. The first four of which contain a compendious history of our Lord's life and ministry. The book of the Acts relates the travels and successful ministrations of his Apostles and others, whom he employed in propagating his religion in various parts of at least three of the four great quarters of the world, in which till then it had been unknown. The epistolary part comprises all the following books of the New Testament, the Revelation excepted. The epistles are distributed into two classes, particular and general. By the former are meant apostolical letters, sent either to particular churches, or individual persons. By the epistles denominated catholic, universal, or general, are intended such as were immediately written either to the diffused body of believers in all parts of the world, or at least the great body of Christians sojourning in a particular country or countries. The prophetic part is comprehended in the last of all the sacred books. Here is an astonishing series of prophecy, in the investigation and study of which the most learned and godly in the several ages of the New Testament have been employed;

and in relation to several parts of which they have entertained very different sentiments. It foretels the most interesting events which have been accomplished, especially in that part of the world called Christian, for almost sixteen hundred years past; and which will be fulfilled in the ages to come.

In the prophetic scriptures of both Testaments, however, we have an intermixture of both promises and threatenings; of the completion of which, in ordinary cases, friends and foes are duly apprised. In short, it is necessary to observe here, that, though one book is called historical and another prophetic, one doctrinal and another practical, it is not meant that the first is wholly historical, or the second altogether prophetic; the third entirely doctrinal, or the fourth entirely practical. In each of the inspired writings, there is a wise and gracious intermixture of histories and prophecies; doctrines and precepts; promises and threatenings.

The contents of the sacred scriptures may be reduced to two great heads, which are usually distinguished by the terms *law* and *gospel*. Two things especially are necessary on our part, *faith* and *practice*. It is, therefore, indispensibly needful that we be furnished with a sufficient warrant for the former; and an unerring directory for the latter. This accounts for the propriety as well as the necessity of a revelation both of the gospel and the law. The gospel is the foundation of our faith. The law must regulate our conduct. Of the one and also the other I will have occasion to speak particularly in the sequel. I need only to say in this place, that the gospel, properly so called, is a rich assemblage of precious promises, which to us are altogether unconditional and gratuitous. The law, in opposition to the gospel, consists of a great number of precepts inculcating a variety of important duties, which we owe to God, to ourselves, and to one another. A proper attention to the  
essential

essential difference between the law and the gospel, is of great importance. To confound the one with the other is truly dangerous. The phrase *gospel-precepts*, so often used by our modern preachers and writers, to say no worse of it, is in the highest degree inaccurate and improper. It bespeaks inattention to the true nature both of the law and the gospel; and the proper distinction between the two. The precepts belong not to the gospel, but the law. To this analysis of the general contents of the scriptures agree the words of the answer now under review. The holy scriptures teach especially two things, *faith* and *obedience*.

Among other important uses of the scriptures enumerated in the text that ushers in the preceding lecture, *instruction* is expressly mentioned. This supposes ignorance. By the fall, man has lost the knowledge of his duty, as well as ability to do it. It, therefore, behoved the Redeemer to be a prophet to teach us, as well as a priest to save us from guilt and wrath, and a king to govern and defend us. Now by his word, rendered effectual by the special agency of his Spirit, does he instruct ignorant sinners. The scriptures teach *principally* two things. It is not meant here that they teach any thing of such insignificance, that it cannot be said to belong either to the things which we are to believe concerning God, or the duty which he requires of us. The manifest design of inserting the word *principally* is to intimate, that the contents of the whole scriptures may be comprehended under two heads, matters of faith and matters of practice. This division of the inspired writings occasions a distribution of the Catechism, as a compend of them, into two parts; the former containing the different articles of our faith; the latter the several branches of our duty. Faith is here purposely, and for reasons sufficiently obvious, prefixed to practice. But more particularly,

The *first* part of the scriptures, and, therefore, of the Catechism contains the important articles of our faith.

When it is affirmed that the scriptures teach what we are to believe concerning God, an objection readily occurs. Do not the scriptures contain a variety of things relating to ourselves as well as to God? and are we not to believe the former as well as the latter? The answer is easy. They do, indeed, contain the history of our creation, especially of our redemption. But in both the former and the latter, God is the first cause and the last end. All things in the world and the church, belonging to creation and redemption, are of God and to him. The scriptures may be said to contain especially four things relating to God; what he is in his supereminent being and perfections; the mysterious distinction of persons in the one undivided Godhead, in respect of which he is one in three, and three in one; his eternal purposes and designs; and what he is, and what he does, in pursuance, and in the execution, of them.

This last article includes all his external works, which have been reduced to three classes; creation, providence, and redemption. They may be comprehended under two; creation and providence. The latter is either general or special; as it is versant about all the creatures, or about man in particular. In a signal manner was it employed about man in his original state. In a manner still more conspicuous and glorious is it manifested in the redemption of fallen man. With this view was sin permitted to enter the world. Sinful, indeed, and miserable is the fallen state. Wonderful is the expedient devised for our recovery. Wonderful, especially, is the person on whom this most important of all works has been devolved. In the constitution of his mediatory person, the wisdom of God shines with distinguished lustre. Excellently is his mediatorial character adapted to the state and exigencies of the persons whom he has come to save. Are they ignorant? He is a prophet to instruct them. Are they guilty? He is a priest to atone for their guilt? Are they in slavery to sin



sin and Satan, from which neither angel nor man can extricate them? When there was neither human nor angelic hand to help, that omnipotent Redeemer, who is a Sovereign as well as a Saviour, said, *The prey shall be taken from the mighty, the lawful captive shall be delivered.*

In order to accomplish this arduous work, however, it behoved the Son of God to become the Son of man; and in our nature, our world, and our stead, to submit to a series of unprecedented and unparalleled sufferings. But great and difficult as the work was, *it is finished.* God is infinitely glorified. The redemption of the church is accomplished. Ineffably is *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that called him to his work, pleased both with him and it. Highly has he been exalted. Richly is he rewarded for it. All-sufficient and wonderfully suited to our circumstances is the redemption he has obtained. Manifold and various, great and precious, are the benefits which it comprehends. The way of uniting us to the Saviour, and interesting us in his redemption, is at once calculated for the manifestation of his glory, and adapted to the case of sinners. Here are blessings, the possession of which may be obtained in this life; especially the three capital benefits of *justification, adoption, and sanctification.* Here are blessings which we cannot expect to obtain till the arrival of the important period of our dissolution. Here, in short, are blessings in relation to which the first sinner belonging to the election of grace, and the last, are on a level. The possession of them, the former and the latter, will obtain at once. Such are the blessings which the great body of believers of every age earlier and later, and in all quarters of the world, will obtain, when that joyful event, in the animating prospect of which the saints of all former generations have lived and died, *the resurrection of the dead in Christ*, shall be accomplished. This is a brief analysis of the  
 contents

contents of what I called the first part of the Catechism. Important and interesting contents! Such are the articles of our belief concerning God.

The *second* part of the scriptures, and consequently the Catechism, as a summary of them, relates to the various duties which we owe to God, ourselves, and one another. It begins with the following question—*What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?* This introduces that law, which is of perpetual as well as universal obligation; and under which, therefore, in one form of it or another, man ever has been, and ever will be. Of this law, the ten commandments are the sum; and, as each of these ten precepts has both a positive and a negative part, expressed or understood, it requires certain duties, and forbids the contrary sins. To the moral law, the Compilers of the Catechism, with great propriety, subjoin an account of fallen man's inability to fulfil it. How necessary, then, and how useful, the subsequent ordinances and means which God has appointed, and which, therefore, it is incumbent on us to use, in order to our salvation from the sin and danger which we incur, both by doing what the law forbids, and omitting what it requires! These duties of religion, and means of salvation, are in general of two sorts,—teaching and sealing ordinances. The reason of this diversity of ordinances in the church is manifest. They are adapted to two different sorts of persons unconverted sinners and imperfect saints. And as ordinances, whether teaching or sealing, neither have in themselves, nor derive from administrators, any efficacy to render them effectual, either for the conversion of the unconverted, or the edification of the converted members of the church, there is most fitly added, last of all, a directory for prayer, in relation both to the matter of it, and the manner. Are we sinners? Is salvation exhibited to us? Is it through the intervention of certain means only that we can expect it to be applied

plied to us? Are the means without efficacy and success except a heavenly blessing attend them? Then it must be our interest, as well as our duty, by frequent and fervent prayer, to insist for the accomplishment of the ancient promise to Zion, her children, and their spiritual provision—*Blessing, I will abundantly bless her provision—I will satisfy her poor with bread.*—This is a summary of the contents of the second part of the Catechism. It only now remains, that, in the

*Third place*, I attend to the order, in which the two great parts of the scriptures and of the Catechism, *faith* and *duty*, are here introduced. It is not accidentally; but with an important and manifest design, that what we are to believe concerning God is prefixed to what duty he requires of us. How consonant to the scriptures, in this as well as other instances, is the Catechism! How conspicuous in the scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, is the precedency of faith to duty? Let me, for an example, select one of Paul's epistles. The first that occurs to my thoughts, is the epistle to the Ephesians. To every careful reader it divides itself into two parts; a doctrinal and a practical. The former, comprising the first three chapters, contains especially what we are to believe and profess. The latter, comprehending the last three chapters, relates, especially, to the duty incumbent upon us as men, and as Christians. Privilege and duty ever have been connected. It was so under the first covenant; and it is so especially under the second. The order, however, is now inverted. According to the old covenant, obedience preceded final acceptance. But according to the better covenant, acceptance precedes obedience. The reason of this alteration is obvious. Our acceptance now does not at all depend on our own personal obedience; but is entirely grounded on the obedience of another, even the vicarious obedience of Jesus Christ. It, therefore, is as complete at once as ever it can be.

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The sinner, who for the first time believes in Christ just now, is fully and finally accepted; as much as the believer, who has been performing a series of evangelical obedience for many years past.

According to the tenor of the first covenant, the acceptance of man's obedience preceded the acceptance of his person. The reason has been assigned already. The justification of his person depended upon the perfection of his obedience. But, according to the tenor of the better covenant, our persons are accepted first; and, in consequence of the acceptance of our persons, the good works we perform from evangelical principles are accepted also. That this is the order of the new covenant, the scriptures both of the Prophets and Apostles uniformly teach. Thus, to intimate how different the order of the one covenant is from the order of the other, almost as soon as the one was violated, and the administration of the other commenced, the world was furnished with an instance of acceptance both as to the person and his services, which exactly corresponds to the account which I have now given. It is the instance of no less a person than the first believer, and of the first martyr, of whom we have express mention in the sacred records. I do not positively affirm that he was the first sufferer for religion; far less that he was the first believer; but that he was the first of whose martyrdom, and of whose faith, we have an express account. It is said, Gen. iv. 4. *the Lord had respect to Abel, and to his offering.* It is not said, that, in conformity to the tenor of the old covenant, the Lord had respect first to his offering, and then to himself. But, conformably to the tenor of the superior covenant, he had respect first to himself, and then to his offering. Was it on account of his personal worth that he was accepted? Was the acceptance of his offering owing to the intrinsic value of it? No. The inspired writer to the Hebrews accounts both for the one and the other

in quite a different manner. By faith in Christ to come, and the one offering, by which he, the great High Priest of our profession, was in due time to perfect them who are sanctified, he was accepted, both in his person and in his sacrifice; when Cain, because he had not faith, was not accepted either in the one or the other.

But, though our own personal obedience be not necessary as the ground of our acceptance, in our persons or our services, yet it is indispensably necessary as the effect and the evidence of it. That faith by which we apprehend the surety-righteousness of Jesus Christ, as the only meritorious cause of our acceptance before God, ever is an operative principle in all who obtain it. If we, in fact, believe what the scriptures teach concerning God, as our God in Christ, though, in virtue of our believing, we be as effectually freed from condemnation and wrath as if we never had incurred it, and as infallibly intitled to eternal life and felicity, as if we never had forfeited it, our faith will prompt us to be as solicitous to perform good works for necessary uses, as if we were to escape hell and obtain heaven by them. Saving *faith ever worketh by love.* Gal. v. 6. Love is the sum of all that the law requires; love to God, the sum of the first table; and love to man, the sum of the second. Evangelical obedience, therefore, is most justly designed *a work of faith, and a labour of love.* 1 Thesi. i. 3. With what propriety then does the text prefixed to this Lecture, denominate it *the obedience of faith?*

How justly do the Compilers of the Catechism put what we are to believe concerning God before the duty which he requires of us? *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Without faith it is impossible to please God.* A two-fold faith is necessary; the faith of the law, and the faith of the gospel. In two respects especially is the latter necessary; for assistance, and for acceptance. *In the Lord Jesus Christ* we have both an all-perfect righteousness for acceptance, and an all-sufficiency of strength

for work and warfare. Let us, therefore, go *in the strength of the Lord God*, and let us make mention of his justifying righteousness, *even of his only*. Psal. lxxi. 16. Isa. xlv. 24.—Let me now make a reflection or two for improvement. And, in the

*First place*, It seems to have been an ancient, as it certainly is a useful, practice, to read the sacred books in order. Is not this proper both in the family and the closet? Is not reading the word, as well as praise and prayer, a part of that social worship, which either is, or at least should be, performed in each of your families every morning and every evening? And is it not proper, in ordinary cases, to read the scriptures in a regular manner? There is, however, among the religious families which do so, some diversity of practice. One family reads on, morning and evening, from the beginning of *Geneſis* to the end of the *Revelation*. Another family reads the *Old Testament* in the morning, and the *New* in the evening; beginning the day with the scriptures which were written in the earlier times; and ending it with those which were written in the later. It is not here meant, that either families or individuals should always confine themselves either to the one order or the other. They may, both in social and secret duty, read, especially, such passages as the Lord may have made most useful to them; or which may be more immediately adapted to their situation, whether they be in prosperity or in adversity. In the

*Second place*, How inexcusable is our ignorance of God, and of the duty which we owe to him? Has he not revealed himself to us as he has not to others of mankind? With what nation under heaven has he dealt, in this respect, as he hath done with us? Shall we after all perish for lack of knowledge? If we be deficient in point of duty, the defect is not occasioned by the want of a sufficient rule to direct us in it. What excuse then can we plead? In the

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*Third place,* How many invert the order which God has appointed? They begin in religion where they should rather end. The first thing with them is the last, and the last first. They do many things; but one thing is wanting of such importance and necessity, that, without it, all other things avail nothing. *All men have not faith.* The duty which God requires of us all, is not intended to qualify us for coming to Christ, or to pave the way for our believing in him. Nothing is required of us to qualify and entitle us to believe in the Saviour, but that we be sinners of the human kind. Our good works, so far are they from preceding and preparing the way for faith, ever suppose it, and proceed from it. He who approacheth to God in any duty, or does any thing in religion, must first of all believe that he is in Christ the gracious rewarder of them who in faith, and with assiduity, seek him; and without faith, it is impossible, in any other way, to please God. In the

*Fourth place,* How vain and unavailing is the faith of many professors of religion? They profess to believe the law which testifies of sin, and also the gospel which testifies of the Saviour. That they are sinners, and that they depend on Jesus as their Saviour, they are ready on all occasions to profess. But their religion is all in words. *What do they more than others?* Is not faith without works dead? Can such a faith save a sinner? It is neither new nor uncommon for persons to profess to believe, and yet to perish. Is there not, in every period, a perishing as well as a saved part among the hearers of the gospel? Whether do you belong to the former or the latter? *Take heed, brethren, lest,* after all the profession you have made, *there be still in you the evil heart of unbelief.* We may see,

*In fine,* The grand criterion by which evangelical obedience is distinguished from every other species of religious service. You go the round of religious duty, The great question is—From what principles, and with

what views do you act? Does love constrain you? Do you by faith apply and improve the all-sufficient grace of Christ for assistance, and his all-perfect righteousness for acceptance in every duty? Do you from your hearts, as well as with your lips, adopt the Apostle's words—*The life I now live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God. Whether I live, therefore, I live to the Lord; or whether I die, I die unto the Lord.*



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## God's Being and Perfections.

JOHN iv. 24.

*God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

**T**HE preceding part of this chapter informs us of an interesting interview between our divine Redeemer in the days of his humiliation, and a woman of Samaria. Samaria was the capital of the kingdom of Israel, in distinction from the kingdom of Judah, of which Jerusalem was the metropolis. The occasion of the distinction between those two kingdoms was this. Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, refusing to redress certain grievances, of which his subjects complained, ten of the twelve tribes revolted from him, and erected themselves into a distinct kingdom under Jeroboam. The greater part of the ten tribes had been carried away out of their own land, and their places supplied by strangers from Babylon and other parts.

Thus the inhabitants of Samaria now were a sort of mongrels; partly Jews and partly Gentiles. Especially was their worship of the mixed kind; for they had absurdly agreed to blend the worship of the God of Israel, with that of the gods of the nations. 2 Kings xvii. 33. Accordingly, Samaria had long been the common resort of Jewish renegades. The Jews and the Samaritans, therefore,

therefore, had the utmost aversion to one another, especially on a religious account. The chief occasion of it was this. When Nehemiah, that eminent reformer, required the Jews, who, contrary to the law of Moses, had married strange wives, to put them away, Manasseh, the son of the Jewish high-priest, who had married a daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, and the avowed enemy of the Jews, refused to put away his wife, and fled into Samaria. Whereupon Sanballat built a temple upon mount Gerizzim, in opposition to that on mount Moriah, and made his son-in-law high-priest of it. This occasioned a lasting contest between the Jews and the Samaritans about their respective temples.

In vain did the Samaritans pretend, that their temple on mount Gerizzim, in opposition to that at Jerusalem, was the seat of the public worship of the God of Israel; and that, therefore, it behoved all the Jewish worshippers to repair to it. The Jews pled, and justly, that Jerusalem and the temple at it, was the place which God had chosen in preference to all other places for the celebration of his solemn worship. But our Lord here informs the Samaritan woman, that typical places were about to be abolished, and no one place to be holier than another. Under the better dispensation, it matters not where persons worship, provided they do it in an acceptable manner; a manner conform to the nature of the object of worship, and as he requires. For *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must do it in spirit and in truth.* To this account of God, agrees the description of his being and perfections, which the Compilers of the Catechism have given us in the answer to the fourth question—*God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.*

Having divided the contents of the scriptures, and of this excellent compend of them, into two parts, what

we are to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man; I now enter on the consideration of the first of these comprehensive subjects. The answer that now comes under review, may be divided into two parts. There is, *first*, the all-glorious Being of whom it speaks; and, *secondly*, what is predicated of him.

I. The glorious subject of it, *God*. There are especially two senses in which the title God is to be understood.

In an inferior, rather improper, view, it is applied to creatures; and even to creatures of the basest as well as of the most excellent kind. That unhappy being, who is commonly known by the infamous names of the *Devil*, or the *Accuser*, and *Satan*, or the *Adversary*, is also stiled *god*; and, to distinguish him from others, *the god of this world*. 2 Cor. iv. 4. The idols of the nations, on account of the worship which their blinded votaries pay to them, are called *gods*. This is sometimes an official title; and given to civil rulers, to signify the high authority belonging to them, as the vicegerents of the great God, the governor and ruler, as well as creator and upholder of all worlds. Psal. lxxxii. 1. The word in Exod. xxi. 6. which we translate *Judges*, signifies, in the Hebrew text, *gods*. This high title is also applied to angels. Psal. xcvi. 7. That angels are here intended by *gods*, the inspired writer of the epistle to the Hebrews shows. Heb. i. 6.

But in the answer now under consideration, this high character is to be understood in a sense infinitely too high for the most exalted creature in heaven or on earth. Here it is appropriated to the self-existent, the all-sufficient, the independent Creator, to the everlasting exclusion of all creatures. How near soever they may be to him, in point of relation and fellowship; in Deity, and the prerogatives of it, they never can be partakers with him. Thus this name, in the proper acceptation  
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of it, is not only applied, but appropriated to the divine Being. Names are used among men to distinguish the different individuals of the same species. But between the Supreme Being, and every species of created beings, there is an infinite disparity. The supposition of a plurality of gods is equally irrational and antiscrptural. Various names and titles has God assumed to himself in the scriptures. The Rabbinical writers among the Jews have reckoned up no less than ten names of God; of which it is unnecessary for me to give you an enumeration. JEHOVAH has ever been accounted his incommunicable name. Expressive of his infinite being, and superexcellent perfections, it is appropriated to him in opposition to all his creatures. He seems evidently to appropriate it to himself. For thus he speaks—I AM JEHOVAH; *that my name, and my glory will I not give to another.* So the verse without the supplement reads. Isa. xlii. 8. That this name is peculiar to him, seems to be intimated in Amos v. 8. *Seek him that maketh the seven stars, and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, JEHOVAH is his name;* that is, a name peculiar to that great Being who alone can do such mighty works. The same thing is repeated in similar terms. Chap. ix. 6. To which I need only to add the words of the Psalmist, which are still more plain. For thus he addresseth God—*That men may know, that thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most High over all the earth.* Psal. lxxxiii. 18. It has been observed of such names as are ascribed both to God and his creatures, that when they are applied to him; in contradistinction to them, they have an emphatic particle affixed to them, to intimate the infinite pre-eminence which Almighty God has above all other beings. But the name Jehovah has no such affix. The reason is, It never is to be applied to the creatures; but ever is

to be appropriated to their great Creator. It has also been observed, that, though other names of God have a plural number as well as a singular, this incommunicable name has no plural. The reason is obvious. It is the peculiar name of God, and God is ONE. Such was the veneration which the ancient Jews are said to have had for this ineffable name, that they would not allow themselves, on any occasion, to pronounce it. It has also been an opinion, that, in the early ages of the Jewish church, it never was expressed except by the high-priest. It is added, that when the form of benediction which had been prescribed, obliged the high-priest to express it, the people testified their profound veneration for it by making a low bow, or prostrating themselves on the ground.

As for the title *God*, used in the answer, though, as we have seen, it be applied both to the Creator and his creatures, we can be at no loss to know when it is to be understood of him, and when we are to understand it of them. Not only the nature of the subject to which it is applied, but something expressed or implied in the text or context, in which it occurs, shows whether it is to be understood of him or of them. In the forecited lxxxii. Psalm, for instance, in which it is applied to civil rulers, we can be in no danger of mistaking them for real Deities, or proper Gods; for it is expressly affirmed in words addressed to themselves, *Ye shall all die like men; and fall like one of the princes.* verse 7. When it is applied to the idols of the nations, such epithets accompany it, as evidently show what they are in their origin and nature. They are designed *other gods* Exod. xxiii. *Strange gods.* Gen. xxxv. 2. *Molten gods,* Exod. xxxiv. 17. *New gods,* Judg. v. 8. The Hebrew word, which we render *God*, is often used and applied to the Supreme Being in the plural number. This has been understood to intimate a plurality of persons in the undivided Godhead, or the great mystery of the Trinity; of which in the sequel. I am

II. To consider what is predicated of this glorious Being in the answer. *He is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.* I am now entering on a task sifter for angels than men; sifter for the spirits of just men made perfect, than the mortal inhabitants of this lower world. That God is, we know. But what he is, who can tell? The question, What is God? may be said to be both the first and the last in religion. It is one of the first which children are taught to answer. But a full answer neither angels nor men can give to it. Zophar's question, *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?* Job xi. 7. though thousands of years have elapsed since he proposed it, remains to this day unanswered. Similar to it is Agur's profession and question—*I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?*

On this subject, the wisest and the best of men are readier to propose questions than to answer them. There are especially two things relating to God, which it is indispensibly needful for us to know and believe; that he is, and what he is, so far as he is pleased to reveal himself to us.

First, That he is. The necessity of a firm belief in this fundamental truth is abundantly obvious. It is the foundation of all religion, natural and revealed. One that denies that there is a God, is called an Atheist. There is, indeed, a sense in which all mankind in their unconverted state, especially the inhabitants of the unenlightened parts of the world, may be denominated *Atheists*. In this view is the word used in the Greek text. Eph. ii. 12. Atheists, in the usual acceptation of the  
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the word, are distinguished into two classes; *speculative* and *practical*. A speculative Atheist is one who disbelieves and denies the being of a God. Speculative Atheism may be subdivided into *direct* and *indirect*. A speculative Atheist of the former kind is one, who, in express terms, denies and disavows the being of God. A speculative Atheist of the latter sort, is one who pretends to allow that there is a God; but denies something so necessarily included in the idea of a God, or so essential to him, that to deny it is, in effect, to deny his being. Does one, for instance, allow that there is a God, but deny that there is a providence? the disavowal of the latter is a virtual renunciation of the former. It has all along been a question, Whether there is or can possibly be a direct speculative Atheist? The discussion of this question, as unnecessary, I now wave. In Psal. xiv. 1. indeed, it is affirmed, that *the fool hath said in his heart, that there is no God*. But is it not the wish of the un sanctified affections, not the proper determination of the deliberate judgment, which these words express?

A practical Atheist is one who acts as if there were no God to superintend his conduct. Of practical Atheism, who among us can plead innocent? Are not the instances innumerable in which we all have acted in a manner incompatible with a due persuasion of the Being, the perfections, and the providence of God? On this account, let us all take shame to ourselves in the sight of our omniscient Maker. That there is a God, is a truth that admits of a vast compass of proof. As it is the foundation of natural as well as revealed religion, Pagans and Mahometans as well as Jews and Christians allow it. Universal and obstinate as the depravity of human nature is, the notion of a Deity seems to prevail throughout the world. What nation, under heaven, is so abandoned and barbarous as not admit of some sort of Deity and religious worship? That there

is a God, is a truth, which all the works of creation, and all the works of providence, concur to proclaim. Against Atheism both reason and revelation remonstrate. That there is a God, is the radical, the primary, the fundamental principle of revelation. The very first thing which it asserts is, that the divine Being, who is equally without beginning and without end, at the commencement of time, produced out of nothing that vast universe, of which our little world is but a small part. Of the being, perfections, and providence of God, even the most gracious person on earth, indeed, may be tempted to doubt. But if we entertain a doubt concerning God in any of all these respects, it is not for want of evidence. Great, indeed, is the infidelity and scepticism of the depraved heart. Let us, therefore, guard against the suggestions of Satan, and of our own hearts; studying to be well established and confirmed in this fundamental truth.

As to the great question, What is God? there are especially two sources of information concerning it; the works of God, and his word. From his works of creation and providence, which we have access every day to contemplate, we may learn, not merely that he is, but in so far what he is. *The heavens declare the glory of the Lord, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech, nor language, where their voice is not heard.* Psal. xix. 1, 2, 3. *For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.* Rom. i. 20. In these works he appears a Being of unbounded sovereignty, doing what he pleases without control; as all-wise, doing all things in the best manner, and for the best ends; as all-powerful, nothing being able to defeat his designs or obstruct the accomplishment of them. But in his word, he has manifested himself



himself to us in a manner peculiarly gracious and endearing. The word discovers him as in Christ. What a delightful employment, to a devout mind, to contemplate the stupendous works of creation and providence in connection with the word! How astonishingly delightful to think, that he who produced, in an instantaneous manner, and by a word, the almost unbounded universe, is our redeeming God! If we consult revelation for a direct answer to the great question, *What is God?* It gives especially a threefold answer to it. It affirms that *God is LIGHT.* 1 John i. 5. This character bespeaks three things; infinite knowledge, immaculate purity, and unbounded felicity. It asserts that *God is LOVE.* 1 John iv. 16. This truly is an amiable view of God. It evidently refers to the endearing discoveries which he has made of himself in the astonishing œconomy of our redemption. In the words which introduced this Lecture it is said, *God is a Spirit.* This leads me to the more particular consideration of the

Second member of the division of the answer; to consider what is predicated of God—*God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.* This I may distribute into two parts; what I may call the nature of God, and his supereminent perfections.

*First, His nature.* He is a spiritual Being. In order to assist us in forming some faint notion of this infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Spirit, let us, in the entry, take a view of spiritual natures of the created kind.

The most obvious distinction of creatures is into two kinds, *material*, and *immaterial*. Of material beings, we know of a great variety of species, and there are, no doubt, various species, of which we know not. Of the immaterial kind, we know only, as I had occasion to observe in a former Lecture, of two species, the angelic and the human. Angels are stiled *spirits.* Heb. i. 14.

The human soul also is denominated a *spirit*. Eccl. xii. 7. How difficult is it to form a distinct idea, or give a proper definition, of a spirit? Notwithstanding that our soul is a constituent, and the principal part of our nature, how ignorant are we of it? How unacquainted are we with the mysterious union between it and the other constituent part of our nature? How unknown to us are the nature, the society, and the enjoyments of angelic spirits? What then can we pretend to know of that great Being, who is the Father of spirits?

Between body and spirit, matter and mind, there is an essential difference. Body denotes a compound being, resolvable into the parts of which it is compounded. In a spirit there is no such composition; and, therefore, it is incapable of dissolution. Thus, spirit is superior to body. Man is superior to the other creatures in this lower world. For, though he, in common with them, has a material part, he, in superiority to them, has an immaterial. Angels are superior to men. For they are wholly immaterial and immortal. The superior excellency and worth of the soul our Lord intimates when he asks, *What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* What in all the world is of equal value with it, or can be a sufficient equivalent for it? Thus mind bears such a physical resemblance to God as matter does not. God is the former of our bodies; but he *is the Father of our spirits*. Between the divine Spirit, however, and every other spirit, there is the utmost disparity. Spirit, as applied to God, is to be understood two ways. It denotes the third person of the mysterious Trinity, as distinguished from the first and the second. In John v. 7, for instance, the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, is distinguished from the Father and the Word. The Spirit, in the mysterious order of subsistence, is the third person, the Father the first, and the Son the second. But, in the text which ushers in this Lecture,  
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it denotes that uncreated, underived, self-existent, independent Godhead, essence, or nature, which is not peculiar to one of the divine persons, but common to all the three. God is affirmed in the answer to be a Spirit, according to the scriptures, and in opposition to an ancient sect of heretics, who, understanding every thing spoken of God in a literal sense, particularly what is affirmed in relation to the creation of man, whom he is said to have made after his own image, held that God has bodily parts and a human form. Those heretics are, in ecclesiastical history, called Audeans, from Audeus their leader, and often *Anthropomorphites*, a name compounded of two Greek words, the one signifying *human*, and the other *shape* or *form*. That corporeal parts and bodily members, are in the scriptures ascribed to God, is certain. For this ascription of a human form and bodily members to God, two reasons may be assigned.

1. It may have been occasioned, in several instances, by the appearances of the Son of God in a temporary human form, especially in the patriarchal ages. Then his actual incarnation was foretold. But it was not to happen till a distant period. In order, therefore, to confirm the ancient believers in the faith and expectation of it, they were, on various occasions, favoured with visible representations and anticipations of it. We read, for instance, Gen. xviii. chapter, of three angels appearing to Abraham in the shape of *men*; and for this reason expressly called *men*. That one of them was the uncreated Angel of the eternal covenant is manifest; for he is expressly stiled *JEHOVAH*, which we have already found to be the incommunicable name of the everlasting God.

2. It is in accommodation and condescension to our capacities and apprehensions. Were the great God to speak of his essence and attributes, as he is in himself, instead of being informed, we would be confounded.

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He speaks, therefore, of his perfections and operations in terms manifestly alluding to human properties and actions. On persons whom we love, we look with an evident air of complacence and satisfaction. Thus God's face denotes his favour. We become acquainted with persons and things by seeing or hearing of them. To intimate that perfect knowledge God has of his creatures and their circumstances, eyes and ears are attributed to him. It is chiefly by our arms and hands we exert our bodily strength in performing the various actions of life. Often do the scriptures apply arm and hand to God, to express his irresistible power, and the glorious effects of it in his works of creation, providence, and grace. Thus the attribution of bodily members to God, can be accounted for in the fullest consistency with the spirituality of his ineffable nature. How different is the divine Spirit from every other species of spirits! He is an uncreated, underived, independent Spirit. What he is, he is in and of himself. This phrase, indeed, has an ambiguity in it. In one view it does, and in another it does not, apply to God. It may, in short, be understood either positively or negatively. Positively understood, it does not apply to him. He is not self-produced. No thing can give being to itself. It cannot be both the cause and the effect. Negatively interpreted, it applies to God in opposition to all creatures. He is not from any other. All other spirits are from him. He has being in and of himself. I am,

*Secondly,* To consider the supereminent perfections of the divine nature, according to the order in which the Compilers of the Catechism have here enumerated them. Properties of two kinds, *essential* and *personal*; are attributed to God. Of the latter, by which the different divine subsistencies are distinguished, a following answer speaks. It is of the essential perfections of that divine nature, which is not peculiar to any one of the uncreated three, but common to them all, this answer treats.

treats. These perfections are divided into two classes, which have been distinguished by different names. They have been called *primary* and *secondary*, *negative* and *positive*, *incommunicable* and *communicable*, *natural* and *moral*.

In whatever view we consider God, we must strictly adhere to the proper notion of a Spirit. Every idea of composition must be banished from our minds. The perfections of God neither are essentially different from himself, nor from one another. In various views, however, has he discovered himself to us. The reasons of the different appellations given to the two classes, into which his essential perfections are usually distributed, are obvious. Of the three attributes called incommunicable, I shall give a brief account in order.

The first is *infinity*. To be infinite, according to the literal signification of the word, is to be unbounded and unlimited. In every view must creatures be limited and bounded. Of what astonishing extent must the great universe be? Modern discoveries in astronomy open to the human mind prospects and views, which give it such exalted ideas of the divine perfections, as astonish and delight in a manner no words can fully express. Here are worlds upon worlds, unnumbered and unknown. But vast even beyond imagination as the universe is, it cannot be absolutely unbounded. It must have limits and boundaries though to us unknown. Accordingly, the Supreme Being is said to transcend, far transcend, the very utmost limits of creation. This is necessarily implied in Solomon's words—*Will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built?* 2 Chron. vi. 18. The knowledge of those angelic beings, who have attended the throne of God, and have been employed to execute his orders in all parts of his vast empire for between five and six thousand years, must be very extensive; but it is not infinite.

In every view is God infinite. A number of instances in which he is so, we have in the sequel of this answer. In the Larger Catechism, there is mention of other instances, which, though not expressed, are implied here. Such is the perfection of God. A kind of perfection the scriptures ascribe to angels and to men. Not only the unfallen angels, but triumphant saints are said to be perfect. The perfection of creatures, however, must ever correspond to their nature. Limited is the latter; and, therefore, bounded must the former also be. When our divine Redeemer commands us to be perfect *as our Father who is in heaven is perfect*. Matth. v. 48. he cannot mean an equality between his perfection and ours; but only such a similarity as comports with the infinite disproportion between God and all his creatures. God is said to be infinite in felicity. Different degrees of felicity obtain among the creatures. I do not speak of the creatures incapable either of felicity or misery. In a very low degree only can many creatures feel either pleasure or pain. But, as the happiest of creatures are of a limited nature, their felicity also must be circumscribed within certain boundaries. How happy the great God is, he himself only knows. Infinitely happy has he ever been; and must he ever be. An enhancement of his felicity on the one hand, and a diminution of it on the other, are equally incompatible with his perfection and immutability. In perfection and felicity, he is eternal and unchangeable, as well as infinite. This reminds me of the

Second incommunicable attribute of Deity; *eternity*. The word which, often in the sacred scriptures, is translated *eternal*, or everlasting, is not altogether without ambiguity. It is used especially in two views; to denote either a limited or an unlimited duration. The ceremonial institutions delivered to the ancient Jews, for instance, are said to be *everlasting*, or to continue *for ever*. Exod. xxvii. 21. We read in Gen. xlix. 26.

of the *everlasting hills*; so called, to intimate their great antiquity, stability, and duration. The word sometimes expresses a duration, which, though not without beginning, is without end. In this view, angels and men, and, indeed, all the creatures may be said to be eternal; for, though they had a beginning, they will have no end. But eternity, in the proper and full acceptation of the word, which signifies a duration equally without beginning and without end, is peculiar to the great God. The supposition that there was a period at which God began to be, is equally repugnant to reason and revelation. Accordingly, as reason, as well as revelation, though not with equal clearness, evinces that there is a God, and that what he now is, he ever must have been, the wiser Heathens have acknowledged the eternity as well as the unity of God. Much, indeed, have they said in relation to the genealogy of their gods. But they, perhaps, intend gods of an inferior kind, in contradistinction to one supreme God. It has been observed, that the ancient Egyptians, who dealt much in hieroglyphics, or mystical figures and symbols of deified persons and sacred things, represented the Deity by a circle, to signify a Being equally without beginning and end. The Romans, for the same reason, are said to have built their temples in a circular form. Pythagoras, a celebrated philosopher, who flourished about five hundred years before the birth of Christ, enjoined his disciples to move in the worship of the Supreme Being in a circular manner.

But for a clear and satisfactory view of this, as well as every other perfection of Deity, we are indebted to supernatural revelation. To the eternity of God it gives numerous attestations. The prayer of Moses, the man of God, is ushered in thus—*Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, ere ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from EVERLASTING to EVERLAST-*

ING thou art God. Psal. xc. 1, 2. *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the SAME, and thy years shall have NO END.* Psal. cii. 25, 26, 27. *Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the EVERLASTING God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?* Isa. xl. 28. *Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts, I am the FIRST, and I am the LAST, and besides me there is no God.* Chap. xlv. 6. One of his all-glorious titles is, *The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy.* chap. lvii. 15. Accordingly, in order irrefragably to prove the supreme Deity of our Saviour, he is stiled THE FIRST and THE LAST. Rev. i. 8, 11.

In his being, in his wisdom, in his power, in his holiness, in his justice, in his goodness, and in his truth, is the great God eternal, as well as infinite and unchangeable. In time, indeed, we have emanations and effects of his being and perfections which did not obtain from eternity. But in himself he is in time what he was prior to the commencement, and what he will be posterior to the expiration, of it. Infinitely does his duration differ from ours. Our duration consists in a succession of days and years; one past and another to come. But eternity, the duration of the great God, is an everlasting now. Days and years, indeed, are applied to eternity, and to God. But infinitely do his days and years differ from our days and years. How significant is Job's question? *Are thy days as the days of man? Are thy years as man's years?* Job x. 5.

The third perfection of Deity, mentioned in the answer as incommunicable, is his *unchangeableness*. The divine immutability has been considered in a twofold view; as *physical* and as *moral*. By the former, may be



be intended the immutability of his infinite essence. By the latter, may be meant the stability and inviolableness of his purposes and designs. Now that God, in both views, ever is invariably the same is manifest. To this important truth reason and revelation give their united testimony. His immutability may be inferred from his perfection. If a being changes, it must either be to the better or the worse; and the supposition of either the one or the other implies imperfection. A change to the better bespeaks past imperfection; and to the worse present. A change of design, as well as a change of nature, discovers imperfection. One alters his purpose from an inconstancy of temper; another from an unforeseen occurrence; and a third from inability to perform what he really intended to do. Now in all these cases, the change indicates imperfection. But as God is universally and absolutely perfect, with him there can be no change. Is he, at any time, said to repent of what he hath spoken, or what he hath done; to delay the accomplishment of his promises, or forbear the execution of his threatenings? The expression is metaphorical, and accommodated to our imperfect apprehensions. It denotes a change in his providential administration and conduct; no change in his will and purpose. Similar expressions applied to God and to men must ever be interpreted in a manner that comports with the subject to which they are immediately applied. To the absolute inmutability of God in his essence and will, the scripture gives numerous and glorious testimonies. *God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent: Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Num. xxiii. 19. *He is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what is his soul desireth, even that he doeth.* Job xxiii. 13. *The counsel of the Lord standeth, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* Psal. xxxiii. 11. *The heavens and the earth shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all*  
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of them shall wax old as a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. Psal. cii. 26, 27. *I am the Lord, I change not.* Mal. iii. 6. Accordingly, as an infallible proof of the divinity of the Saviour of the world, it is affirmed of him, that *he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* Heb. xiii. 8. What a rich spring of consolation is this to the church! What uncertain creatures are we? How fleeting are all worldly comforts! How precarious are all our earthly relations and friends! But with God there is not so much as the *shadow of turning.* Infallibly certain is the fulfilment of all his promises and purposes. *Wait, therefore, on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say, on the Lord.* Psal. xxvii. 14. God, in short, is UNCHANGEABLE, as well as INFINITE, and ETERNAL; in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. I shall proceed to the consideration of those attributes of Deity, which are usually distinguished by the name of *communicable.*

Is it asked, for what reasons are they called *communicable*? Are they communicated from the Creator to the creatures? Do they now subsist in them as they ever do in him? By no means. Between God, in every respect, and his creatures, the disparity is natural and necessary. Neither being nor any of the properties of it can possibly belong to creatures as they do to God. These perfections, however, are called communicable for an obvious reason. God has produced creatures, which in being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, bear such a distant and faint resemblance to his being and moral attributes, as the infinite disparity between him and them will admit. There are especially three respects in which they subsist in the great God, as they cannot possibly do in the most exalted of the creatures.

1. In him they are unoriginated and underived. For, as I said already, what he is, he is in and of himself.

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In all creatures being and the perfections of it must be originated and derived. What they, as creatures, are, they are not of themselves, but of God. So speaks the great Apostle of the Gentiles in his oration to the Athenians—*In him we live, and move, and have our being.* Acts xvii. 28.

2. In God they are essential and necessary. He cannot but be; and he cannot but be infinitely, eternally, and immutably wise, powerful, holy, just, good, and true. The being of all creatures depends upon his Sovereign will. Neither are these moral perfections natural and essential to rational creatures as such. Man, for instance, in his original state, was wise and holy, just and good; but his original wisdom and holiness, righteousness and goodness, were not essential to him as a man. For when he sinned, he was deprived of them; but he did not cease to be a man.

3. These perfections not only belong to God, but subsist in him infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably. Many creatures are wise, powerful, holy, just, and good; but neither in wisdom, or power, or holiness, or goodness, are they infinite, eternal, or unchangeable. Their being, and all the perfections of it, are not only circumscribed and limited, but had a beginning; and, though they have no end, it is not because they are in themselves incapable of change, or necessarily without end; but because God in sovereignty has decreed the continuation and perpetuity of them. No less than seven different instances in which God is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, are here specified.

Being is ascribed both to God and to men; but infinitely different is his being from theirs. Having already considered the nature of God as a Spirit, I need not now insist on his being. His being is uncircumscribed and unbounded. Every where is he in point of operation; upholding all the worlds and all the creatures he has made. Every where is he in point of observation;

servation; inspecting and superintending all his creatures and all their actions. But this is not all. He himself is every where. His essence is no less unlimited than his power. He is the omnipresent as well as the omniscient God. Between his immensity and omnipresence metaphysicians have distinguished thus—In respect of the latter, he fills the great universe—In respect of the former, he transcends the utmost boundaries of it. His omnipresence, therefore, is included in his immensity. Of this glorious perfection of Deity the Psalmist has given us a majestic description in the following words—*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there? If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there? If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.* Psal. cxxxix. 7,—10. How magnificently is his omniscience described in the following verses!—*If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike unto thee.* ver. 10, 11. Now, as the being of God is necessary, it is not only without beginning and without end; but incapable of change. The scripture, therefore, ascribes being to God, as if it belonged to him only, and to no other. And no wonder; for he exists as no other can exist. How emphatic and expressive is the account he gives of himself to Moses! *I AM THAT I AM.* Exod. iii. 14. The import of which words no tongue, human or angelic, can fully unfold. It is, as if he had said; I am what I ever was, and what I ever will be—What I am, I am in and of myself—And what I am, is known only to myself. When an ancient Patriarch asked the uncreated Angel of the everlasting covenant—What is thy name? He appeared as if he wished to wave the question. He said, *Wherefore is it, that thou dost ask after my name?* Gen. xxxii. 29.

As for the order in which the moral attributes are here arranged, it is unnecessary to assign particular reasons for it. The propriety, however, of prefixing wisdom to power, is obvious. The great and glorious works which God, by an exertion of his Almighty power, produceth in the several ages of time, he, in the most consummate wisdom, preconcerted from the unbeginning ages of eternity. In each of them he discovers deep design. They all reflect the highest honour upon his inscrutable wisdom, as well as his resistless power and boundless goodness. Let us now, in a very cursory manner, review the several attributes called *communicable*, in the order of the answer.

1. *Wisdom.* Neither of this, or of any other of the perfections of Deity here enumerated, need I give any logical definition. The general meaning of wisdom, as applied both to God and to creatures, is manifest. In comparison to the wisdom of God, the wisdom of men and angels is foolishness. This may account for an expression, the design of which otherwise may not be so obvious. It is said, *he chargeth his angels with folly.* Of folly, angels as well as men are capable. But the perfection of the divine Being excludes all possibility of folly. Infinitely superior is God in wisdom to all his creatures. Necessarily limited is the wisdom of all creatures. It neither is without beginning, nor in itself incapable of an end. But absolutely unbounded, equally without beginning and without end, is the wisdom of God. His wisdom or his knowledge is not greater in time than it was from eternity. In order that he might display this shining perfection of his nature, he purposed in himself from the earliest of ages to create all worlds; and particularly to redeem the church. How admirably are his works of creation, providence, and redemption, calculated for the accomplishment of this important design! Were we to take a survey of creation, and to view the œconomy of redemption, how would we be de-

lighted! how would we be astonished! Whether we look upward to the heavens, or downward to the ground; whether we search the bowels of the earth, or the bottom of the sea; the mineral, the vegetable, or the animal world, can we forbear to exclaim with the devout Psalmist—*O Lord, how manifest are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all.* Psal. civ. 24. In the contrivance of works of such magnitude, and of such vast variety, how conspicuous is wisdom! On the general map of creation, our little world is no more than a point merely perceptible. In the preservation and government, as well as the creation of such astonishing worlds, what deep design and consummate wisdom do we discern! In the survey and contemplation of such stupendous works we are lost in unutterable and everlasting wonder.

Especially does this eminent perfection of Deity shine with distinguished lustre in the hemisphere of the church; in the grand œconomy of our redemption. Into this superior display of wisdom do angels look with amazement. From the church on earth, and the most glorious of all works accomplished in it, those celestial intelligencies desire to learn *the manifold wisdom of God.* Eph. iii. 10. In the several stages and steps of redemption may we trace the manifold wisdom of God. How worthy of its infinite Author is this glorious scheme! What anarchy and disorder did sin introduce into the moral world! Did not even the divine attributes, in the view of its entrance, seem to be at variance among themselves? While mercy pled that sinners should be spared, justice insisted for the infliction of deserved punishment; and an adequate satisfaction for the offence it had received. But wisdom, as a great umpire interposing, to the astonishment of all worlds, proposes an unexpected expedient; in which mercy and justice, with equal readiness, acquiesce. In consequence of which, justice has its utmost demands answered; and mercy has the most copious

copious egress to sinners. How conspicuous is wisdom in the choice of the Substitute and Surety of sinners! How proper that he, who, in the mysterious order of subsistence, is the middle person of the Trinity, should be chosen to be the Mediator between God and men! So wisely are matters adjusted, that, though an exchange of persons is admitted, and satisfaction accepted from the Surety in the place of sinners, the same specific nature that sinned suffers and satisfies for sin. What a glorious display of incomprehensible wisdom have we in the constitution of the Mediator's person! Must not he, who is a partaker of the natures of the offended and offending parties, be the fittest to act and bring about reconciliation between them? In the applicatory part of redemption, as well as the impetration of it, how illustrious is wisdom! Numberless are the instances here, in which the footsteps of wisdom may be traced. In the first ingathering of sinners to Christ, the season, the means, and all the other circumstances of it, how manifest is the wisdom of God! In the disposal of them posterior to their conversion; in the manner of carrying on the good work in them, from the commencement to the consummation of it; in their manifold and complicated afflictions and trials outward and inward; in the various signal supports and deliverances which their redeeming God works for them; what demonstrations have we of *wisdom*, which never can be non-plussed, and never can err. When the mystery and work of grace and providence shall be perfected in them, and they look back on all the way the Lord their God leads them in the wilderness, with what unanimity and joy will they approve of his wise dispensations and disposals concerning them in the world!

2. *Power*. This perfection, as well the preceding, is ascribed, though very differently, both to God and to his creatures. To irrational creatures as well as rational, is it ascribed. How magnificent is the descrip-

tion of the strength of *Behemoth*? Job. xl. 15,—34. Concerning this extraordinary animal, indeed, interpreters and critics are divided in their sentiments. It is by many understood of the elephant; which is the largest, the strongest, and, at the same time, the most tractable of terrestrial quadrupeds. This animal is well known both in Asia, and in Africa. The *Behemoth* has been by others understood of a singular sort of four-footed beast, known by the name of Hippopotamus, or the *river-horse*. This animal is found about the Nile, and other rivers of Africa. Power is applied especially to creatures of the rational kind. But what is the strength of an angel in comparison of the power of Jehovah? In power no less than in wisdom is he infinite. What the extent of his power is, he himself only knows. Ever is a distinction to be made between the extent of his power and the counsels of his will. Never has he acted, nor ever will he work, according to the full extent of his power. Can any thing be impossible with God? No thing, to speak with strict propriety, can be too hard for the omnipotent God. There are, however, two sorts of things, which it may be said, he cannot consistently do. But this inconsistency or impossibility of doing them, far from arguing any defect of power, arises from his perfection and immutability.

It may be said, he cannot consistently do any thing that he has not decreed to do. The reason is evident. His perfection and his immutability require, that he ever exercise his power in conformity to the counsel and determinations of his Sovereign will. Eph. i. 11.

It may be affirmed, that God cannot either decree or do any thing in itself absurd or inconsistent with his perfections. Accordingly, there are no less than three things, which, the scripture expressly affirms, he cannot do. He cannot look with approbation on sin. Heb. i. 13. He cannot deny himself. 2 Tim. ii. 13. He cannot lie. Heb. vi. 18.



Eternal and unchangeable, as well as infinite, is the power of God. Glorious are the discoveries and proofs which he in time gives of his power, as well as of his wisdom. What a lofty description has one of the first sacred writers given us of the power of God, displayed in his astonishing works? *He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smitteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little is known of him: but the thunder of his power who can understand!* Job xxvi. 7,—14. With still brighter splendor does this great perfection of the Godhead shine forth in the work of redemption. How instantaneously was that vast mass of matter, which we call the great universe, produced out of nothing? *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.* Psal. xxxiii. 6, 9. But how hard a work is redemption! Neither was it in so easy a manner, nor so soon, accomplished. That divine person, who, with a word, and within the small compass of six days, created the heavens and the earth, was employed in this arduous work for no less than long thirty-three years. In order to the accomplishment of it, it behoved the Lord of life and of glory to be brought to the dust of death. Numberless are the instances in which Almighty power is requisite and exerted in the application of redemption. Signally is it exerted in the first regeneration and gradual sanctification of sinners.

Great

Great is the strength of indwelling sin. Were it not for the power of God, it would be for ever invincible. But what a pleasing reflection is it, that how strong soever sin and Satan may be, the Redeemer and his grace are infinitely stronger!

3. *Holiness*. This truly is a darling perfection of Deity; an attribute which especially he delights to honour. Holiness is, indeed, ascribed to creatures. But God is infinitely, eternally, and immutably holy, as well as wise and powerful. In the creation of angels and men, and in all his other works, providential and gracious, in the world and the church, has he manifested his holiness, as well as his wisdom and his power. Not only is he infinitely removed from all moral impurity; but in numberless instances shows how much he abhors every species of it. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* Psal. cxlv. 17. As our redemption is the chief of the ways and works of God, in it especially is his holiness displayed. Strikingly was it manifested in the preternatural formation of the holy humanity of Jesus Christ in the womb of an unholy woman. Irrefragably was it demonstrated in the extreme sufferings the Redeemer underwent in the stead of unholy sinners. That it was for the vindication and honour of the divine purity, as well as justice and veracity, he submitted to such unparalleled sufferings, he himself intimates to us—*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.* Having uttered this grievous complaint, he seems as if he would correct himself; for he adds—*But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.* Psal. xxii. 1, 2, 3. It is as if he had said—Why do I complain of my unexampled sufferings? Are they not indispensably requisite for the manifestation and glory of thy immaculate purity; to which sin hath done such indignity and dishonour?

Eminently

Eminently is this bright perfection of the Godhead manifested and glorified in that mysterious sanctifying work of the Spirit, which at a very early period commenced; and, in all the several intermediate ages of the world, has been going on in the church! Myriads of myriads now in the better world, have had the happy experience of this inward and hidden work, which no man knows but he that is the distinguished subject of it. On account of which works, we have, in the scriptures of both Testaments, numerous ascriptions of holiness to the glorious Author of them. In these ascriptions angels join with saints. So the evangelical Prophet informs us. *In the year that king Uzziab died, says he, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the voice was filled with smoke.* The effect which this vision of the unspotted purity of God, and the consideration of his own impurity, had upon this holy man, we learn from what follows. *Then said I, Wo is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.* Isa. vi. 1,—5. Similar to the words of the evangelical Prophet, are those of the Apostle John. *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within, and they rest not day and night, saying, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts gave glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever, and*

cast

cast their crowns before the throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Rev. iv. 8,—11.

3. *Justice.*—Infinitely, eternally, and immutably just, as well as wise, powerful, and holy, is God. Gloriously does his justice appear in his moral government, and in all the several acts of it. Holy, he hates sin; and just, he punishes it. In the distribution of gracious rewards on the one hand, and the infliction of just punishments on the other, is his justice manifested. In all the temporal judgements which God inflicts on persons and families, nations, and churches, for sin, does he display his justice, as well as his holiness. But the most tremendous display of it is in the sufferings of the Son of God, in the capacity of our fulfilling Surety. How awful the commission given to the bloody sword! *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd.* Zech. xiii. 7. Such another spectacle the sun never beheld. Nay, the sun blushed, and was ashamed to behold it. Be astonished, O heavens! Rather than that sinners should not be saved; rather than that the justice of God should not be displayed and glorified in their salvation, he would subject his own dear Son to a death, at once the most ignominious and the most excruciating. Having thus received a vicarious satisfaction for their sins from his Son, in the capacity of their fulfilling Surety, his justice appears no less than mercy in their salvation. So speaks the great Apostle of the Gentiles, in relation to their justification; and what he affirms with regard to it, is equally applicable to every other part of their redemption. *Being justified through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness; that he might be just, as well as merciful, and the JUSTIFIER of him that believeth*  
in

*in Jesus.* Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26. So far is justice now from being an obstacle in the way of our salvation, that it, no less than the love and the faithfulness of God, affords the fullest security for it. Did justice forbid the egress of mercy to sinners without an adequate satisfaction for sin? No less does it require the actual communication of all the blessings which the Surety has purchased for sinners. The communication of these benefits is at once an act of justice and of mercy. Unworthy and needy are they. But infinitely worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and the blood which he shed. So eminently is the scheme of redemption concerted, that in it there is no less a display of the most tremendous, than of the most consolatory attributes of Deity. Nay, in consequence of the interposition of the Mediator, inexorable justice itself wears no longer an alarming, but, on the contrary, a most encouraging aspect. *Is it a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them who trouble the saints?* It is no less a righteous thing with him to recompense *rest* to the now troubled saints. In other words, justice is equally conspicuous in the distribution of rewards to the godly, and punishments to the ungodly. 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.

5. *Goodness.* This, indeed, is an amiable perfection of Deity. In goodness, as well as wisdom, power, holiness, and justice, is God infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. Innumerable are the instances in which he has manifested his goodness. What but goodness could prompt him to create the heavens and the earth? What but goodness could stimulate him to redeem any of his sinful creatures? Good, indeed, as well as wise and powerful, did God appear in creation. What honour does the Mosaic account of it reflect upon his goodness, as well as his wisdom and his power? With great propriety does the inspired Writer conclude his account thus—*And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good; and the evening and*

*the morning were the sixth day.* Gen. i. 31. On this joyful occasion *the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.* Job xxxviii. 7. Good, as well as wise and powerful, does God appear in the preservation and government of this great universe. But the most astonishing display of this, as well as all the other attributes of Deity, is in the redemption of the church. In the formation of the great plan, and in the execution of it from first to last; in the impetration, and also the application of our redemption, he appears good in a manner, and to a degree, that astonishes the inhabitants, not only of our own, but likewise of all other worlds. Whether we consult the annals of eternity, when the important plan was concerted, or the records of the past ages of time, in which it has been carrying into execution, we are constrained to exclaim with wonder and praise—*Truly God is good to Israel!* Psal. lxxiii. *Lord! what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him?* Psal. viii. 4. *O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!* Psal. xxxi. 19. O the unknown *length and breadth*, the unknown *height and depth* of the undertaking, the dying, the redeeming love of Jesus Christ to sinners of mankind!

Thus, the goodness of God might be considered not only as essential and relative, as it is in himself, and as it flows unto his creatures; but as general and special. Of it in the former view, all the creatures, as such, are partakers. Of it in the latter view, the saved, in an especial manner, are partakers. The celebration of the sovereignty and riches of it, manifested in the several stages of the great work of their redemption, will be their incessant and unwearied employment for ever.

6. *Truth.* From this perfection, God is oftener than once denominated in the scriptures. Thus Moses sings—*He is the rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of TRUTH, and without iniquity, just and*  
right

*right is he.* Deut. xxxii. 4. In this, as well as in each of his other perfections, he is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. His truth, veracity, or faithfulness, refers especially to his promises and threatenings; insuring the accomplishment of the former, and the execution of the latter. But, though he both executes his threatenings and performs his promises, he does both the one and the other at the time and in the way, which to his sovereignty and wisdom appear most proper. A work either of mercy or judgment may be delayed, or it may be hastened. But what he hath said, in the way of promise or of threatening, he will, either at an earlier period or a later, infallibly do. Often, indeed, has the Divine veracity been arraigned. For an instance of the non-execution of his threatenings, the well known case of the Ninevites has often been urged. Not only was their destruction threatened, but the time of it specified. The Prophet was commissioned to cry, and to say unto them—*Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.* Jon. iii. 4. But it is added, verse 10, *God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not.* But must not a candid reading of the passage suggest to every unprejudiced mind an answer to the groundless cavil? Was there not, if not expressed, at least necessarily implied, in the threatening and warning, an intimation that they were, or they were not, to be destroyed according as they did or did not, repent and reform? Thus, on the one hand, their non-repentance and destruction, and, on the other, their repentance and preservation, were necessarily connected. Is not this the plain purport of the warning? And did not the event exactly correspond to it?

Of God's breach of promise, indeed, we read Numb. xiv. 34. He bespeaks Israel in the wilderness thus—*After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your*

*iniquities; even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.* Strange expression! But is it not one of the many expressions, in scripture, accommodated to human capacity, and borrowed from human conduct? The consistency, the full consistency, of it with the Divine veracity and immutability is sufficiently manifest. That there was a non-accomplishment of the promise in relation to the typical Canaan, to the greater part of the Israelites who came out of Egypt, is certain. But what was the cause of this non-accomplishment of it? Was it owing to a want of veracity in God? Was he unable, or was he unwilling, to do what he had said? No. An inspired Apostle of the New Testament develops and unfolds the mysterious expression; assigning the true cause why Israel did not enter into the promised land. *For some, when they had heard did provoke; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.* Heb. iii. 16,—19.

The accomplishment of the promises to the church or to particular persons, as well as the execution of the threatenings, may, indeed, be long delayed. Obstacles seemingly insurmountable may lie in the way. The utmost opposition may be made to his work in the church and in the soul. Matters, to friends as well as foes, may seem desperate. But a delay with God is no denial. Often has the extremity of the church, and of her particular ministers and members been his opportunity. During the delay of the execution of his threatenings, sinners may become daring and presumptuous. *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily; therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* Eccl. viii. 11. During the non-fulfilment of the promises of God the saints are apt to be  
discouraged



discouraged and intimidated. What comfortless and desponding words are these? *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* Psal. lxxvii. 7, 8. But why does God either postpone the infliction of threatened judgments; or the communication of promised mercies? For both he has reasons worthy of himself. Sovereignty is a darling perfection of his nature; which, by his works both of mercy and judgment, he delights to honour. How signally does he exercise his patience and forbearance toward unbelieving and impenitent sinners? Is it not fit that militant saints should ever have occasion for the exercise of *faith, hope, and patience?* But the full and final accomplishment of his promises, as well as the execution of his threatenings, he has infallibly insured. *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.* Hab. ii. 3.

This is a summary view of the *being and perfections* of the great God. On such a sublime subject how ready are we to *darken counsel by words without knowledge?* Job xxxviii. 2. Agur's confession shall be mine. *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.* Prov. xxx. 2, 3. I reckoned it the less necessary to dwell on this most important of all subjects, in the explication of this answer, as his works of creation, providence, and redemption, from which we learn his being and perfections, will come under our review in the sequel.

From what hath been said, we see, the design which the great God has in all the discoveries which he has made of himself to us; and with what view, and for what end, we should contemplate and study both his glorious works specified in the subsequent part of the Catechism;

chism; and his blessed word which is the subject of the answers to two preceding questions. His design in both, manifestly, is to make himself known to his rational and intelligent creatures. From both, therefore, let us endeavour to learn more and more of that Supreme Being, and of his supereminent perfections, in the investigation and contemplation of whom all created intelligences, of every species, will be unweariedly employed for ever and ever.

Again, we may infer the absurdity, as well as the impiety, of forming and entertaining, even in our minds, any representation of the great God, similar to the idea which we have of a material being. What figure or image can possibly represent an immaterial and omnipresent Being? What unjust, low, unworthy views of God do many entertain? I do not speak of Pagans or Mahometans. Even by them, of whom better things might be expected, it has been pretended, that the supposition of an immaterial being implies an absurdity and contradiction. It is argued, That whatever exists must be material. Difficult, indeed, as I said already, is it for us to form a proper and adequate conception of an immaterial being. But the difficulty does not at all arise from the inconsistency or contradiction in the supposition of such a being; but from the imperfection of our capacity and apprehension. How has the great Jehovah been dishonoured and degraded by low conceptions, and most injurious representations of him? Let us all be aware of internal and mental idolatry.

How important and how necessary is it to be well established in the belief of the being and perfections of God! Woful, indeed, is the prevalence of Atheism, infidelity, and scepticism in the world, and even among nominal Christians. How many modern Sceptics have we? The ancient Sceptics were a sect of philosophers well known in history. They have been known by the name of Pyrrhonists, from their founder Pyrrho. The

The distinguishing tenet which they held, was, that, as we can only judge of things from appearances, and appearances often are deceitful, every thing must be to us precarious and uncertain; and, therefore, we must ever remain in a state of suspense and doubt. With the Pyrrhonians, another sect of ancient philosophers, known by the name of Academics, who were the followers of Socrates and Plato, mostly coincide in opinion. The pernicious tendency of such a spirit of scepticism and infidelity is sufficiently evident. The necessity of the firm persuasion of the being and perfections of God is obvious. If this foundation *be destroyed, what can the righteous do?* Psal. xi. 3.

What a sufficient and fit object of trust for this world, and also for that which is to come, is God, and God as in Christ! How empty and how uncertain are all creatures? Insufficient is creation, all creation, to be a portion to one soul? But on how firm a bottom do they rest, on what a permanent foundation do they build, who, by a fiducial recumbency, depend on God? What a happy choice have they made! How great and glorious their prospects and views! In the fruition of the all-sufficient God, how happy must they be! and what a blissful eternity will they have! Let persons of every description, therefore, *be wise and be instructed. Kiss the Son of God, the Sovereign, as well as the Saviour, of the world, lest he be angry; for if his wrath be kindled but a little, blessed are all they, and they only, who put their trust in him.* Psal. ii. 10,—12.

Is God a Spirit, and such a Spirit as we have described? Then let us not only worship him, but take particular heed from what principles, in what manner, and with what views, we do it. Ever must we worship him with our own spirit, and under the influence of his Spirit. *Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* 1 Sam. xvi. 7. *How just his complaint!*

The

*The Lord said, This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me; but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men. Isa. xxix. 13.*

Is God, in fine, such a being as we have described? He must be at once the best friend, and the most dangerous enemy. The Almighty God an enemy! Tremendous thought! To whom is he an enemy? He is an enemy to sinners. So saith the scripture. *God is angry with the wicked every day. Psal. vii. 11.* An angry God! Awful thought! How necessary then, and how salutary the advice—*Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at PEACE: and thereby good shall come unto thee. Job xxii. 21.* *If God be for us, who can be against us? Rom. viii. 31.* Happy, indeed, is the people whose God is Jehovah. *Their heart and their flesh may fail them; but God ever will be the strength of their heart and their portion for ever. The fig-tree may not blossom, nor may any fruit be found in the vine; the labour of the olive may fail, and the fields may yield no meat; the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there may be no herd in the stalls: yet even then shall they rejoice in the Lord; they will joy in the God of their salvation.*

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## The Oneness of God.

1 TIM. ii. 5.

*There is ONE God —*

**T**HIS chapter is introduced with an apostolical exhortation to the ministers and other members of the church, to pray for men of all nations and descriptions; Gentiles, as well as Jews; kings, as well as subjects. The Jews of old, notwithstanding the peculiar and narrow dispensation they were under, were required to pray for the prosperity of the several cities and countries, in which they at any time sojourned. Explicit and full, to this purpose, is the letter which the Prophet Jeremiah sent to the Jewish captives in Babylon. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon, Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.* Jer. xxix. 4,—7. Especially must it be incumbent on the ministers, and the members of the New Testament church, to pray for mankind of all nations and conditions; the high as well as the low; not only that they

may be restrained from persecuting and molesting the church; but that they may be converted to it, and become useful members of it. For *God will now have all men, Gentiles and Jews; the rich and the poor, to be saved. There is one God* of both Jews and Gentiles. During the Old Testament, he was in a peculiar manner the God of the Jews. But under the New, he is equally the God of Jews and Gentiles. For, as the text speaks, *There is ONE, and only one God.* So faith the answer to the fifth question in the Catechism—*There is one only, the living and the true God.*

To the preceding account of the being and attributes of God, the Compilers of this comprehensive and well devised System, with the most evident propriety, immediately subjoin an account of the unity of God. That God is one, is a fundamental truth in religion. It has the concurring suffrages of reason and revelation to support it. This short, but important, answer might be divided into three particulars—That God is ONE—that he is one ONLY—and that he is the LIVING and the TRUE God.

I. GOD IS ONE. The various attributes predicated of God, as I observed already, neither are really distinct from his essence, or from one another. Three different modes of personal subsistence are ascribed to the Godhead; as it belongs to the first, to the second, and to the third of the eternal three. But the Godhead is indivisibly one. *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, and the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.* Now, that God is one, is affirmed here in order to the establishment of a radical, a primary article in religion, both natural and revealed; and in opposition to the heresies both of earlier and later times.

Such is the wild heresy of the *Tritheists*, who, opposing the dictates of reason, as well as the doctrines of

of revelation, hold, that there are three distinct Godheads; or that the one Godhead is, or, at least, may be, divided into three distinct parts; one belonging to the first person; another to the second; and another to the third.

Such was the absurd heresy held by an ancient-sect of *Polytheists* of the third century, known in ecclesiastical history by the name of Manichees; denominated from their leader Manes, by birth a Persian. What they held in general is, that there are two Gods, or two first causes of all things. The one, they say, is the cause of all good—the other of all evil; the latter, the author of the material creatures, consequently of our bodies, and the God of the Old Testament; the former, the cause of the immaterial creatures, consequently of our souls, and the God of the New Testament. The infamous founder of this unhappy sect seems to have borrowed his notions from the ancient *Magi*, a sect of religious philosophers among the Persians, and other eastern nations. From them the names *Magic* and *Magicians*, in use to this day, seem to have been derived. They held that there are two first principles, the one the origin of all good, and the other of all evil. The former they called *Oromasdes*, the latter *Arimanius*. Light they considered as the most expressive emblem of the good God; and darkness as the fittest symbol of the evil. This sect is said still to subsist in Persia.

The supposition of two co-eternal Beings, independent Gods, or first causes, is no less repugnant to sound reason than it is to the sacred oracles. It implies a contradiction; and what implies a contradiction, or is in itself absurd, is irrational, no less than antisciptural. Let us attend to the just definition and proper idea of Deity. Does it not denote a self-existent, independent Being, prior to all other beings, and the cause of them? Is not this the true, the just, the consistent

sistent notion of Deity? Such a being, and such a being *only*, is God. Now let us for a moment suppose a plurality of gods. Either those gods are, or they are not, equal in duration and other respects. Are they in duration and all other respects equal? Then no one of them can be God. For the being that is not prior and superior to all other beings is no God. Are they unequal, one superior and another inferior? Then the latter, at least, cannot be God. If there be two Gods, either the one is, or he is not, the cause of the other. If the one be the cause of the other, the latter cannot be God. If the one be not the cause of the other, neither can the one or the other be God; for God not only exists prior to all other beings, but is the cause of them. Thus from natural principles can we demonstrate the impossibility of a plurality of gods. Irrefragably does reason evince the important truth, that *God is ONE*.

Accordingly, notwithstanding the many extravagant things which we find in the writings of the Heathens in relation to a multiplicity of gods, the wiser part of them have discovered, and admitted, that there must be *one and only one* Supreme Being. This has by some been supposed to be intimated by the inscription on the Athenian altar—*TO THE UNKNOWN GOD*. Acts xvii. 28. Athens, as is well known, was a celebrated city of Greece. It was a city of great antiquity. It produced the most famous philosophers, such as Socrates; and the most celebrated orators, such as Demosthenes. The Greeks in general were famous among the politer and more learned Pagan nations; and yet, even among them, fictitious gods and nominal deities were multiplied to a surprising degree. But might not the foresaid inscription carry in it an intimation that they had some faint notion of one Supreme God, superior to all other gods, though they knew him not? It is not, *TO THE UNKNOWN GODS* in the plural number; but *to the unknown*



known God in the singular. How many modern Athe-  
nians have we? How many, alas! worship an unknown  
God?

The oneness of God is often, and, in terms the most  
unequivocal and full, affirmed in the scriptures both of  
the Old Testament and the New. *Hear, O Israel! the  
Lord our God is ONE Lord.* Deut. vi. 4. *See now  
that I, saith God, even I am he, and THERE IS NO GOD  
WITH ME.* Chap. xxxii. 39. *Ye are my witnesses, saith  
the Lord—that ye may know and believe me, and under-  
stand that I am he; before me there was no God formed,  
neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am JEHOVAH,  
and beside me there is no Saviour. Fear ye not, neither  
be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have  
declared it? Ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God  
besides me? Yea, there is NO God: I know not any.* Isa.  
xliii. 10, 11. and xliv. 8. *As concerning, therefore, the  
eating of those things offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know  
that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none  
other God but ONE. For though there be that are called  
gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there be gods  
many, and lords many, but to us there is but ONE God.*  
1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6. *A Mediator is not a Mediator of  
one; but God is ONE.* Gal. iii. 20. It was a saying of  
one of the fathers, “If God be not ONE, he is not at  
“all.”

II. It is affirmed, that God is one ONLY. For thus  
the answer runs—There is but one ONLY, the living  
and true God. The word *only* is not introduced mere-  
ly as an expletive. It certainly has a design and mean-  
ing. Each individual of mankind may be said to be  
one. But in quite another sense is God one. Each of  
the individuals of mankind is numerically, but not spe-  
cifically one. For there are myriads of individuals of  
the same species with him. But God is a being, to  
whom there neither is, nor can be, another similar.

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From eternal ages did he exist alone. Now, indeed, there are unknown millions of other beings. But there is not another God, or being of the same kind with him. He made creatures; not gods. A created god is a contradiction in terms.

III. He is the **LIVING** and the **TRUE** God. These terms the Compilers of the Catechism have evidently borrowed from two places of the scriptures; the one in the Old Testament, and the other in the New. *But the Lord is the TRUE God; he is the LIVING God, and an everlasting king.* Jer. x. 10. And the great Apostle of the Gentiles bespeaks the Thessalonian converts thus—*They themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the LIVING and TRUE God.* 1 Thess. i. 9. In the

*First place, He is the living God.* This high character belongs, and is attributed, to him on different accounts.

1. Life is essential to him. The supposition of a dead God implies a shocking absurdity. As soon may God cease to be, as cease to live. Life cannot be said to be necessary or essential to creatures, as creatures. For there are inanimate or lifeless, as well as animate or living creatures. But in the idea of Deity, life is necessarily included. What the divine life is, the divine Being, and he only, knows.

2. He has life in and of himself. A vast variety of creatures have life. But their life they have not in or of themselves. They have it from God. *In him was LIFE, and the life was the light of men.* John i. 4. Hence

3. He is the origin and fountain of life to the creatures. The creatures are usually distributed into two classes; the former comprehending the *living*, the latter the *lifeless* creatures. Of life, in general, I need not attempt any definition. It has been defined to be a principle of motion and action. Different kinds, as well as degrees,

degrees, of life obtain among the various species of creatures ; for all which they are indebted to the LIVING God. We usually speak of *vegetable* life, that belongs to plants and flowers, shrubs and trees—*sensitive* life, such as obtains among the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea—and *rational* life, which is peculiar to beings of a superior rank in creation. Man in his primeval state possessed a twofold life ; that rational life which belonged to him as a man, and that moral life which was enjoyed by him as an upright man. And as he had in possession both natural and spiritual life, he had the pleasing prospect of that eternal life, which consists in the consummation and perfection of both. Death comprehends all the misery threatened, and life all the felicity promised, in the covenant man was then under. As he possesses life which renders him superior to all the other inhabitants of our lower world, he, in superiority to the other creatures, has it in a federal way. The life promised in the first covenant, man has, indeed, forfeited. But there is a superior covenant, by which the forfeited life is recovered. With the most manifest propriety, therefore, is the head of this better covenant stiled OUR LIFE. Through his mediation and intercession, we derive from the original fountain of light and life, a life of grace in this world, and a life of glory in that which is to come. Happy, indeed, is the person that has the possession of the former, and the believing prospect of the latter.

4. He may be stiled the *living* God in opposition to the *dead*, the *deaf*, and the *dumb* idols ; which the unhappy inhabitants of the unenlightened parts of our world worship. In the scriptures both of the Old Testament and of the New, are the high characters *living* and *true* predicated of him ; not only to express what he is in his being and essential attributes, but to distinguish him from all presumptuous pretenders to Deity. That it is with this view they are applied to him, both in the pas-  
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sage quoted from Jeremiah, and in the quotation from the first epistle to the Thessalonians, a bare reading of the two passages, in their connection, will show. The opposition between the living and the true God, on the one hand, and all imaginary Deities, on the other, the Psalmist states and illustrates in a manner the most conspicuous and convincing. *But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat.* Plal. cxv. 3, 4, 6, 7. In the

Second place, He is the true God. Others may be gods in name; but gods they cannot be in nature. Such were the idols which the Galatians worshipped previous to the coming of the gospel to them, and their conversion from Paganism to Christianity. Of this the Apostle reminds them thus—*When ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.* Gal. iv. 8. Are angels, or are magistrates, stiled gods? In name, not in nature, are they gods. Between the true God and all rival-gods, there is a necessary, an infinite, an everlasting disparity.

Is it so, that there is one only, the living and the true God? Then

*First*, How undutiful must it be to allow any creature, for a moment, to come in competition with the great God? What! shall a creature come in competition with the Creator? No rival can he suffer. It is not sufficient that we do not substitute any of the creatures in place of the great God. We must not, in any instance, set the one on a level with the other, or permit the former to come in competition with the latter. Let each of us adopt Asaph's words—*Whom have I in the heavens but thee, and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee.* Psal. lxxiii. 25.

*Secondly,*

*Secondly*, We see to whom we are indebted for our life, and to whom we should devote it. The living God is the author of it. He breathed into our nostrils the breath of life. Let it, therefore, be devoted to him. Let it be spent in his service and for his honour. The living, the living only have an opportunity to serve God in this world. They that dwell in the silent grave have no opportunity for it. So speaks pious Hezekiah—*The grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, they shall praise thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known thy truth.* Isa. xxx. 18, 19. How short and uncertain is life! Soon and suddenly may we be deprived of it. O then improve time and talents! How important, how solemn, the Redeemer's injunction! OCCUPY TILL I COME. Luke xix. 13. Let the choice and resolution of the Apostle be mine and yours—*Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lords.* Rom. xiv. 8.

*Thirdly*, Sinners spiritually dead must be incapable of enjoying as well as of glorifying God. Can spiritually dead sinners enjoy the living God? Such, however, were we all naturally. How necessary then must it be that we enquire solemnly, as in the sight of our omniscient Maker, whether we have yet passed from death to life? Are there not both spiritually dead sinners, and languishing Christians among us? Let the Psalmist's prayer be theirs—*Let my soul live, O Lord, and it shall praise thee.* Psal. cxix. 175. Mankind are usually comprehended under two divisions, the *quick*, and the *dead*. Among those who are naturally alive, multitudes are still spiritually dead. But as there is to be, at an after period, a resurrection of the naturally dead, there now is a resurrection of the spiritually dead. The former our Lord foretels. John v. 28. And in relation to the latter he

speaks thus—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.* verse 25. *Blessed indeed and holy is he that hath part in this first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him.* Rev. xx. 6.

*Fourthly,* How unworthy of God is all hypocrisy and dissimulation in religion! The God whom we profess to worship, is the true God; and ever must be worshipped in truth! He requires truth in the inward parts. Psal. li. 6. The heart, and the whole heart, does God demand. Often, alas! do his rivals occupy his place in the heart. Let us beware of a divided heart; of a heart divided between God and others. Incessantly, and in faith, plead the accomplishment of the ancient promise. Deut. xxx. 6.—*The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.*

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## The Sacred Trinity.

I JOHN v. 7.

*For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are ONE.*

**I**N each period of the church there is one article of truth or another, which, in an especial manner, is controverted. On this account it may be termed, in the apostolic stile, *the present truth*. 2 Pet. i. 12. The great question in the first ages of Christianity was, whether Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. Accordingly to this important truth the Apostles give their unanimous and most explicit attestations; especially the Apostle John, the longest lived of the Apostles, and the last of all the inspired writers. That Jesus, the Saviour of the world, is the Son of God, not inferior, but equal, to his divine Father, is the cardinal point in Christianity; and, therefore, has numerous and glorious testimonies adduced in proof of it in the scriptures of both the Old and the New Testaments. Here the Apostle probably alludes to the manner in which any thing doubtful was ascertained by the Jewish law. It was established by

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the concurring testimonies of two or three witnesses! Here we have three concurring witnesses in heaven, and as many on earth. Of three practical witnesses on earth verse 8th speaks. The verse read specifies three personal witnesses in heaven. Here we have the fullest revelation of the mystery of the Trinity; three persons, as such, distinct one from another in ONE individual Godhead. Having spoken of the being, of the perfections, and of the oneness of God,

I am now led to the consideration of the sublime mystery of the Trinity; which, in the Catechism, is stated thus—*There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. One God, and three distinct persons in one Godhead!* I am now, my friends, entering on the consideration of a mystery, which neither seraphic spirits nor glorified saints will undertake to unravel. What then can I say? or what can you expect from me, on such a subject? With the most obvious propriety did the ancient Jews call it *the mystery of mysteries*. That it is we know; but how it is we know not. No article of supernatural religion, however, is more copiously revealed. That there are three in ONE, and that there is one in THREE; three distinct persons in one undivided Godhead; and one undivided Godhead subsisting in three distinct persons; is the uniform declaration of all the sacred writers, from the Prophet Moses to the Apostle John. Hence, though we never can comprehend it, we are indispensibly bound to believe it. It is not our reason, but divine revelation, that is the rule of our faith. In order to pave the way for an explanation of the answer, I am now to suggest to you a few introductory observations relating to this glorious mystery. And,

*First*, It is an article of supernatural revelation. It is not discoverable by the light of nature. It can be known only by divine revelation. The knowledge  
which



which Adam in innocency is supposed to have had of it, lays no foundation for the supposition, that by the light of nature his descendents may discover it. The difference between day and night is not so great as that between the state in which he then was, and that in which they now are. His understanding was a lamp of light. Their understanding is gross *darkness*. Eph. v. 8. It has, indeed, been pretended, that the mystery of the Trinity was not altogether unknown to the Heathen philosophers, either prior or posterior to the birth of Christ. But even though we were to admit the supposition, that the Heathen philosophers had some indistinct notion or idea of the Trinity, it will not prove that it is discoverable by the light of nature. It is much more reasonable to suppose, that they might learn it from tradition. Some of them might have had intercourse with the Jews, or communication with others who had intercourse with them, and thus might learn it from them. That God, who has the sovereign disposal of all things, best knows his own designs, and has both wisdom and power sufficient to over-rule all providential events in subserviency to the accomplishment of them. Thus matters were so wisely ordered, that, in the ages which immediately preceded the first propagation of Christianity among the nations of the world, the Jews were in great numbers dispersed through all neighbouring countries; and this prepared the way for the introduction of the worship of the true God into places, in which, till then, it had been altogether unknown. Hence, when the Apostles came to any city or country of the Gentile world, they preached first to the Jews; and the first churches consisted partly of Jewish and partly of Gentile converts.

*Secondly*, The mystery of the Trinity has been an article of the Creed of both Jews and Christians; or, in other words, it has been known and believed in the church of God both under the Old and New Testaments

ments. That it is a doctrine of supernatural revelation, and, strictly speaking, known in the church only, we have seen already. Mahometans not only deny it, but treat it with contempt. As an awful token of the degeneracy of the modern Jews, and that they are abandoned of God, they deny it; calling it, in the way of derision, a Christian novelty. But that it is a part of the earlier as well as the later revelations, with which the church has been favoured; or, in other words, that it is revealed in the Old Testament as well as the New, and was believed in the Jewish as it is in the Christian church, I shall endeavour to prove in the sequel. That it was as clearly revealed to the Jews as it now is to Christians, and that they had as distinct views of it as we have, I do not affirm. But I said; and I say again, that in the scriptures of the Old Testament, as well as the New, we have sufficient intimations of a plurality, and even a Trinity, of persons in the one undivided Godhead.

*Thirdly*, The glorious Trinity is an article, which it is necessary for us all to know and believe. What God has not been pleased to reveal to us, it neither is possible or necessary for us to know. But what he has revealed we are indispensibly bound to know and believe. *The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever.* Deut. xxix. 29. Among the various articles of revelation, there are certain points which are of capital importance in the Christian system; and which, for this reason, have been designed fundamental articles, or *foundation-truths*. This mode of speaking seems evidently to be borrowed from Heb. vi. 1. *Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying the foundation, &c.* As a builder first lays the foundation, and then raises the superstructure upon it, persons need first to be initiated in the knowledge of the primary articles or fundamental truths of revelation,

revelation, that they may advance in the study and knowledge of the other parts of it. Now, that the doctrine of the holy Trinity is a fundamental article in revealed religion is manifest. The knowledge of it is indispensibly requisite, in order to a distinct view of the œconomy of redemption. In this important work, each of the divine Three performs his peculiar part, and displays his proper personal glory. Without the knowledge of the mysterious distinction of persons in the undivided Godhead, we cannot possibly have any proper view of the manner in which they concur and act in that great work. It is affirmed, that *it is life eternal to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.* John xvii. 3. Is there not here a plain intimation, that the knowledge of the distinction of persons in the Godhead is indispensibly necessary? The great doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, in short, is the grand characteristic of the Christian religion. By this it is distinguished and dignified above every religion in the world. The Pagans, as I hinted already, are ignorant of it; Mahometans and modern Jews deny it. It must, therefore, be incumbent upon us, as Christians, to be well instructed and confirmed in it; in opposition to the absurd hypotheses of adversaries of every denomination.

*Fourthly,* The mysterious nature of the doctrine of the Trinity can be no sufficient reason for our not receiving and believing it. That it is a mystery, and a very great mystery, who can deny? Of the numerous mysteries of our holy religion, it certainly is the chief. Often does the word mystery occur in the scriptures, and in different views may it be understood. It may denote what was altogether unknown in the world till revelation discovered it to the church; or what was at first discovered in an obscurer, and afterwards in a fuller and clearer, manner; or, in fine, a thing of such an abstruse nature, that, after the fullest and clearest revelations that can be made of it to us, it only is a very imperfect,

imperfect, indistinct, and inadequate conception we can form of it. And may not the sacred Trinity, in all these different views, be called a mystery? A mystery it ever has been; and it must continue to be. In heaven as well as on earth, to angels as well as to men, is it a profound mystery. A mystery, no doubt, it is. An absurdity, however, it is not. Human reason it infinitely transcends; but does not contradict. Often have adversaries egregiously misrepresented it; and by their wicked misrepresentations confirmed themselves in their prejudices against it. Did we hold that God is in the same sense one and three, adversaries might well triumph. But when we say that he is in one sense one, and in another three; or that the divine essence is one, and the divine persons three, where is the inconsistency or contradiction? I shall only add,

*Fifthly*, That the great article of the sacred Trinity has been the subject of much controversy all along, in the earlier as well as the later ages of the Christian church. On the head of the numerous opposers of it, in the earlier ages of Christianity, appears the infamous Simon Magus, of whom, and whose temporary hypocritical profession of the Christian religion, we read in the eighth chapter of the Acts. It is said, that he most impiously pretended to be God; and, in imitation of the Trinity, assumed three different personal characters, in which he appeared and acted in different places. In Samaria he pretended to be God the Father; in Judea God the Son; and in other places God the Holy Ghost. So awfully infatuated were his deluded votaries, that he and his strumpet Helena were the objects of their veneration and worship. His successors, though they differed from him, and from one another, were the most violent opposers and virulent defamers of genuine Christianity; and particularly of the sacred mystery of the Trinity. Their peculiar heresies are known to all versant in the history of the ancient church. To follow them  
through

through their manifold labyrinths of contradiction and absurdity could afford but small instruction to a popular audience.

Having premised these preparatory considerations, I proceed to as plain an explanation of the answer, as the nature of the mysterious subject will admit. The

I. Thing in the answer which offers itself to our consideration, is the word **GODHEAD**. This is a scripture-expression. Once and again does it occur in the New Testament. *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and GODHEAD.* Rom. i. 20.—*For in him, that is Christ, dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily.* Col. ii. 9. Godhead in the scriptures, and agreeably to them in the answer, evidently denotes that infinite, eternal, and unchangeable nature or essence, which is not peculiar to the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but common to all the three; and subsists, though in a different manner, in each of them. Accordingly,

II. It is affirmed, that in this undivided Godhead, there are **THREE PERSONS**. Personality, and a diversity of persons, the scripture expressly ascribes to the Godhead. Very different, indeed, is personality as applied to God, and as applied to his intelligent creatures. Inattention to the vast disparity between the two has led many into gross errors. Three human persons are three different beings. But the three divine persons are one being. An individual nature, of the created kind, admits of one and but one personality, subsisting in one person only. But the divine nature admits of three different modes of personal subsistence. It subsists in three persons, as persons, distinct one from another. It admits, as we will see in the sequel, of paternity, filiation, procession. Accordingly, to express at once the diver-

sity of divine persons, and the unity of the divine essence, as common to them all, the word *Trinity* was introduced, at an early period, into the Christian church; and ever since has been continued and used in it. It is not, indeed, in so many letters and syllables, extant in the scriptures. For this reason, adversaries have objected to it. But with what will not cavillers find fault? Is it not a very apposite and happy term to express this profound mystery? It is, as is obvious to all, composed of two words; the one signifying three, and the other one. For by the Trinity we understand three persons in one undivided Godhead; and one undivided Godhead in three persons.

Some have abstracted personality from the Godhead altogether. But this only is one of the numberless instances, in which the great God has been affronted and debased, by his presumptuous creatures, in a manner which it is a shame to mention. Others have held, that as there only is one divine essence, there can be only one divine person. They pretend, that the intimations of a diversity in the Godhead, which so often occur in scripture, must be interpreted not of different persons in it, but of one person sustaining different characters and relations, in which he occasionally appears and acts among his creatures. That one person, in our world, may, and often does, sustain a variety of characters, cannot be denied. He may be, for instance, a father and a son; in relation to one a father, and in respect of another a son. But do not these different characters, of father and son, even among mankind, imply different persons? If the Godhead subsists in one person as a Father, must it not subsist in another as a Son? Can there be a father without a son? or a son without a father?

A third sort have admitted, that there are three divine persons; but they thence infer that there must be three divine Beings. They do not attend to the infinite disproportion

position between divine persons and human. Two human persons must be two different beings. Though specifically the same, they must be numerically different. But infinitely does the divine Nature transcend all created natures, angelic as well as human. In terms the most express and plain, does the scripture at once affirm the ONENESS of the Godhead, and the mysterious DISTINCTION of persons in it. Nothing can be fuller and plainer than the declaration in the text prefixed to this Lecture. Expressly is the personality of the eternal Father, the first of the divine Three, mentioned in the scriptures. *God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of HIS PERSON*—Heb. i. 3. In a manner no less explicit and plain is personality attributed to the eternal Son, the second of the co-eternal Three. *To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the PERSON of Christ.* 2 Cor. ii. 10. The word in the Greek text used here, and applied to the eternal Son, is, indeed, different from that used in Heb. i. 3, and applied to the eternal Father. But the same word is by this inspired writer used elsewhere, and applied to *persons.* 2 Cor. i. 11. As for the controversies between the Greeks and Latins, or the eastern and western churches, about the proper signification of the Greek word translated *person*—I am not now to canvass them. The meaning of it among us is established and universally known. The discriminating characters by which the divine Three are at once distinguished, and related to one another, *paternity, filiation, and procession,* will come to be considered under a following head. The word *person,* is not, indeed, any where in the scriptures, directly applied to the third subsistence in the Trinity. But as he is every where affirmed to be a different subsistence from the first and the second, and equal to them, it follows, by the most necessary and unavoidable consequence,

sequence, that he, no less than they, must be, in the most proper sense of the word, a divine person.

The great truth asserted here, that in the undivided Godhead there is a distinction of persons, the scriptures clearly, and in places innumerable, intimate to us. The old Testament contains numerous intimations of it. These intimations are of two kinds; *indefinite* and *indirect*; or *definite* and *direct*. By the former I understand intimations, that in the Godhead there is a plurality of persons. By the latter I mean intimations, that in the undivided Godhead there is a Trinity of persons; not merely a *plurality*, but a *Trinity*.

An intimation of the former kind has been supposed to be couched in the plural word ELOHIM, which we translate God. Thus the very first of all the sacred Books begins with an intimation of this profound mystery. Gen. i. 1. Of it there are understood to be additional intimations in this chapter. For, in verse 2, there is express mention of GOD, and of the SPIRIT of God. And, at verse 26th, the omnipotent Creator is introduced speaking thus—*Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness*. He has, indeed, been understood to speak in the plural number here, after the manner of the potentates of the earth. According to this hypothesis the plural number bespeaks majesty, rather than a plurality of persons in the Godhead. But, not to mention other things, there is one obvious objection to this interpretation, which the abettors of it never have been able to remove. The fact, that this mode of speaking was used by the great men of the world in those early times, they have ever been unable to ascertain. It has been observed, that this part of the royal stile is of no very great antiquity, even in our own country. In the history of the fall, and the consequences of it, we have a further intimation of a plurality in the Godhead—*The Lord God said, Behold,*



*Behold, the man is become as one of US, to know good and evil.* Gen. iii. 22. On occasion of the introduction of the confusion of languages at the building of Babel, the great God speaks thus—*Go to, let US go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.* Gen. xi. 7. In the account we have of the destruction of Sodom, and the other cities of the plain, it is said—*The LORD rained upon Sodom; and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire FROM THE LORD out of heaven.* Gen. xix. 24. Is not one divine person here said to rain brimstone and fire from another divine person? Is not the former evidently to be understood of the eternal Son, and the latter of the eternal Father? In Psalm xlv. 6. there is express mention of one divine person, stiled God; and in verse 7th, of another divine person, called God and *his* God. That the former is to be understood of God the Son, our glorious Mediator, and the latter of God the Father, an inspired writer of the New Testament, as an infallible expositor of Old Testament scripture, informs us. Heb. i. 8, 9. To all which I shall only add, Isa. vi. 8. *I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for US?*

But in the scriptures we have numerous revelations of a Trinity; not merely of a *plurality*, but of a *Trinity* in the one Godhead. Such numerous intimations of this sublime mystery may be intended to intimate to us the great importance of it. The Jewish writers have pretended to find it in the incommunicable and ineffable name JEHOVAH. They have observed, that, though it contains four letters, it has in it only three *different* letters. In one of the three they find God the Father, in another God the Son, and in the third God the Holy Ghost. And the letter, in which they find the Son, they say is doubled, to signify the mystery of his two natures, the *divine* and the *human*. But, however this be, we have in the scriptures of the Old Testament, as well as the New, numerous explicit intimations

intimations of a Trinity. Is there not an intimation of it in Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.? Here the venerable Patriarch speaks thus—*GOD, before whom my fathers, Isaac and Abraham, did walk, the GOD which fed me all my life long unto this day, the ANGEL which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.*—May not God in the first member of verse 15th mean God the Father, and in the second God the Holy Ghost? And is not the angel spoken of verse 16th evidently to be understood of God the Son, the *Angel* of the everlasting covenant? Is there not a plain intimation of it in the form of the sacerdotal blessing under the Old Testament, which answers to the apostolical benediction under the New? Thus it runs—*The LORD bless thee, and keep thee; the LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26. May not the threefold repetition of the divine name be intended to signify the three divine persons? Is it not intimated also by the threefold exclamation of the *seraphim*? *One cried unto another, and said, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, is the Lord of hosts.* Isa. vi. 3. A Jewish paraphrast, who wrote many years before Christ, treating on this passage of the evangelical prophecy, is said to have interpreted this threefold exclamation as a revelation of the mystery of the Trinity. For thus he expounds it—“Holy is the Father, holy is the Son, “ holy is the Spirit.” We have a revelation of it also in Isa. lxi. 1. where our divine Redeemer speaks thus—*The SPIRIT of the LORD GOD is upon ME, because the LORD hath anointed ME, &c.* One divine person is the speaker. He speaks of another divine person, whom he styles the *Spirit*; and of a third divine person, whom he calls the *Lord God*. One proof more I shall adduce from the Old Testament. *I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed upon*

*upon us.* Isa. lxiii. 7. May not the recital of the divine name here, three several times, intimate the three divine subsistences in the all-glorious Godhead? But, even supposing that the first of the sacred Three is intended in this verse, in the sequel of the chapter we have mention of the other two divine persons. The second person, stiled the *ANGEL of his presence*, is mentioned in the 9th verse; and the third person, called *his Holy Spirit*, is mentioned in verse 10th.

Have I not now sufficiently evinced what I advanced in the entry on this mysterious subject, that the doctrine of the holy Trinity is a capital part of the revelations which God has all along granted to the church, in the earlier, as well as the later ages of it? and that, therefore, it must have been an article of the creed of Jews, as really as it now is of Christians?

But the revelations of this supernatural mystery, which we have in the New Testament, are still more copious and explicit. Let me select a few of the many glorious testimonies, which it gives to this capital article of revealed religion. I begin with the words of the angel to the virgin-mother—*The HOLY GHOST shall come upon thee, and the power of the HIGHEST shall overshadow thee; therefore also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the SON of GOD.* We have here the HOLY GHOST, the third person in the order of subsistence; the *highest*, the first person, whose power the Holy Ghost is said to be, inasmuch as it was by his special agency that the divine power was now exerted in the formation of the humanity of Jesus Christ; and then the second person, called *the Son of God*. In the history of the baptism of Jesus Christ, it is said—*He saw the SPIRIT OF GOD descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, this is MY beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased.* Matth. iii. 16, 17. What a glorious declaration of the mystery of the Trinity is here? Here is the  
third

third person descending after the manner, or in the form, of a dove. Here is the second person on whom the third descended. And here is the first person, who, by an audible voice from the excellent glory, gave this high testimony to the incarnate Redeemer. Plainly is the Trinity intimated in John xiv. 26.; in which our divine Redeemer speaks thus—*But the Comforter, which is the HOLY GHOST, whom the FATHER will send in MY name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance.* In these words we have all the divine Three; the second person the speaker, and the first and the third, of whom he speaks. The former he stiles the Father, and the latter the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. The same words are repeated almost without variation in chap. xv. 26. A revelation of the mystery of the Trinity no less express and full we have in the Apostle's words—*If the SPIRIT of HIM that raised up JESUS from the dead dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Rom. viii. 2. where we have the Spirit the third person; Him, who by his Spirit raised up Jesus from the dead, the first person; and Christ, who was raised from the dead, the second person.

An enunciation of the sacred Trinity, equally full and clear, occurs in 1 Cor. vi. 11.; in which the Apostle bespeaks the Corinthian converts thus—*Ye are washed. ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD.* Take notice of the Lord Jesus, the second of the sacred Three; of the Spirit, the third; and our God, the first. In chap. xii. of this same epistle, verses 4, 5, 6. the Apostle furnishes us with another enumeration of the sacred Three, no less copious than the former. For thus he speaks—*There are diversities of gifts, but the same SPIRIT, the third person. And there are differences of administration, but the same LORD, the*  
second

second person. *And there are diversities of operations, but the same GOD, the first person.* I may add the Apostle's prayer for the believing Thessalonians—*GOD himself, even our Father, or the first of the co-eternal Three, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the second person, direct our way unto you. And the LORD, the Spirit, the third person, make you to increase and abound in love one towards another—*1 Thess. iii. 11, 12. *THE LORD, the Spirit, direct your hearts into the love of GOD the Father, and into the patient waiting for CHRIST, his Son and our Saviour.* 2 Thess. iii. 5.

With the Apostle of the Gentiles, all the other Apostles coincide on this subject. So does the Apostle Peter. For thus he describes the Christians of the dispersion—*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ—* 1. Pet. i. 2. Here we have mention, in the most explicit terms, of the Father, the first person; of the Spirit, the third person; and of Jesus Christ, the second person. On this point the Apostle John is not, in perspicuity and fulness, inferior either to Paul or Peter. In behalf of the Asiatic churches, he prays thus—*Grace be unto you and peace from him, which was, and which is, and which is to come, that is God the Father, the first of the sacred Three; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, or God the Holy Ghost, the third person; and from Jesus Christ, the second.* Rev. i. 4, 5. To all which I shall only subjoin the apostolical benediction, and the form of baptism prescribed by the Head of the church to be used in it to the end of the world. The former, in 2 Cor. xiii. 14, is—*The grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, the second person; and the love of God, the FATHER, and the communion of the HOLY GHOST, the third person, as distinguished from the first and second, be with you all.* The latter, in Matth. xxviii. 19, runs thus—*Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the*

*Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; a plain arrangement of all the three glorious persons, according as they subsist in the mysterious Godhead.

Thus, that there are three distinct persons in the one undivided Godhead, is the constant and uniform doctrine of all the inspired writers. Our faith in this radical, this fundamental article has the fullest warrant, and the firmest foundation. Now that the plurality, the *Trinity*, of which the scripture so often speaks, must be understood not of different characters sustained by one person, but of different persons, is sufficiently manifest from what I have said already. Do they not sustain peculiar *personal* characters, not merely different characters, but *peculiar personal* characters? By these they are distinguished one from another. Are not distinct personal acts attributed to them? How often in the scriptures, do we find the Father and the Son speaking one *to* another, as well as one *of* another? The inspired writer of the second Psalm introduces the eternal Father speaking to his co-eternal Son before all worlds thus—*Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* Does a person ask a thing of himself? or can he, with any propriety, be said to give any thing to himself? How often do we find the eternal Son, the second person, speaking of his eternal Father and co-eternal Spirit as different persons from himself? Thus he bespeaks his disciples—*I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father.* John xvi. 26. Does any person call himself his own father? Can he possibly be his own father? Does any person pray to himself? The Father is expressly said to send the Son to purchase redemption for sinners of mankind; and the Father and the Son to send the Spirit to apply it to them. Of the Father's sending him, the Son often speaks. Of the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, the Son himself also informs us. John xiv. 26. and xvi. 7. Now, can the  
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the same person be at once the *sender* and the *sent*? Is a person ever said to send himself?

There is to be observed here the mysterious order in which the divine persons subsist. In respect of it, one is the first; another the second; and another the third. To this order of subsistence, the order in which they act, both in the works of nature and grace, ever corresponds. Never is the Son said to send, or to work by the Father; or the Spirit, to send or work either by the Father or the Son. The Father, on the contrary, is said to send and to work by the Son; and the Father and the Son to send, and to act by the Spirit. By the Son, the Father is affirmed to have *made the worlds*. Heb. i. 2. By his Spirit, he is said to have *garnished the heavens*. Job xxvi. 13. It does not at all besit the order of subsistence for the Son, on any occasion, to work by the Father; or for the Spirit to send or work by the Father or the Son.

But, when I speak of an order in which the divine Three subsist, I do not mean that one is, in duration or in dignity, superior and another inferior. As they are all in essence one, they are, as persons, equal one to another. Their essential Oneness, and their personal equality, the scripture most expressly affirms. *I and my Father*, says our Lord, *are one*. John x. 30. The equality of the Son to the Father, an Apostle of the New Testament expressly asserts. Phil. ii. 6. I am now,

III. To consider the particular personal characters by which the three divine subsistences, in the one individual Godhead, are distinguished one from another; and most intimately related one to another. I call them *personal* properties or characters, to distinguish them from the *essential* perfections or attributes of Deity. Perfections of the latter kind belong to all the divine Three in common. They pertain to that infinite Godhead, which is not peculiar to any one of the

three, but common to them all. Properties of the former kind, on the contrary, belong to them as persons; one personal property to one; and another to another of them. Paternity is peculiar to the first; filiation to the second; and procession to the third. The first person neither is begotten nor proceeds, but begets. The second person neither begets nor proceeds, but is begotten. The third person neither begets nor is begotten, but proceeds. Of the first person, as a Father, begetting the second as a Son, we read in Psal. ii. 7. *I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I BLDGOTTEN thee.* Regenerated persons are, indeed, said to be *begotten and born of God.* Jam. i. 18. 1 John. iii. 9. But infinitely does the eternal generation of the second person of the Trinity, as the Son of God, transcend every other kind of generation. Accordingly, he is stiled *God's only begotten Son.* John i. 18. Of the procession of the third person from the first, our Lord speaks expressly in John xv. 26. *When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which PROCEEDETH from the Father, he shall testify of me.* Though the Spirit is not expressly said to proceed from the Son, as he, in the mysterious order of substance, is the intermediate person, the Spirit is understood to proceed from him no less than from the Father. His procession from the Son, as well as the Father, has also been supposed to be intimated to us, when in the scriptures he is stiled the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father. Gal. iv. 6. *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the SPIRIT of his SON into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.* This point long divided the eastern and the western churches. The former held, that the Spirit proceeds from the Father only; the latter, that he proceeds from the Father and the Son. In the enumeration of the sacred Three in the text which introduces this Lecture, the second person



son is, in the usual stile of the Apostle John, denominated the *Word*. But even in that text the first person is expressly called the Father; and the paternal character of the first person must ever imply the filial character of the second. For there can no more be a father without a son, than a son without a father. The nature of this eternal generation of the Son of God, no creature can pretend to unfold or explain. Far is human generation from being the proper criterion or standard of divine. Never is the one to be accommodated to the other. From such a sublime subject, all carnal, gross conceptions and ideas must ever be banished.

The procession of the Spirit is no less mysterious and inexplicable than the generation of the Son. Neither is it necessary for us to enquire or to know, in what the generation of the one and the procession of the other differ. Differ, however, they must. No where is the Father said to be begotten or to proceed. No where is the Son said either to beget or to proceed. No where is the Spirit said to beget or to be begotten. Do not these different characters manifestly demonstrate two things?

*First*, That they are, in fact, different persons. Must not the person that begets be different from the person begotten by him? Must not the person that proceeds from the Father and the Son be different from both?

*Secondly*, That they are necessarily and intimately related one to another. Vain is it to plead, that the Son who is begotten depends upon the Father by whom he is begotten. For the first could no more be without the second, than the second could be without the first. No more, as I said already, can a father be without a son, than a son without a father. Infinitely near and dear are they one to another. Near and dear are a human father and a son. But infinitely nearer and dearer are

are the eternal Father and his co-eternal Son. The Father and the Son could no more be without the Spirit proceeding from them, than the Spirit could be without the Father and the Son.

All these modes of personal subsistence in the undivided Godhead are no less natural and necessary than the Godhead itself. Is it any wonder that the eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal procession of the Spirit, are to us unknown? The wisest of men, even in his old age, after all the improvements in knowledge which he had made, did not pretend to understand the manner and progress of human generation. Eccl. xi. 5. Far less can any man on earth pretend to explain the eternal generation of the Son of God. All that I need to say on this mysterious and sublime subject, for preventing mistakes, may be comprised in the following hints.

When I say that the first person begets the second, and that the third proceeds from the first and the second, I do not mean that the first divine person existed prior to the second, or that either the first or the second existed prior to the third. A human father necessarily exists prior to his son; but between human and divine generation, there is an infinite, an incomprehensible, disparity.

When we say that the Father, in the mysterious order of subsistence, is the first person, the Son the second, and the Spirit the third, we do not mean that the second is inferior in dignity to the first, or the third to the first or the second. That there is such a mysterious order in which they subsist is manifest. But the second person is equal, not *inferior*, but *equal*, to the first; and the third not inferior, but equal to the first and the second.

Moreover, the paternity, the filiation, and the procession, by which the three divine subsistences are known and distinguished, are not *essential*, but *personal* acts.

acts. It is not in point of essence that the Father is said to beget the Son, the Son is said to be begotten of the Father; or the Spirit is said to proceed from the Father and the Son. The essence is one; and belongs to all the three *necessarily, originally, and equally*.

I must add, that all these different modes of personal subsistence in the Godhead, and intrinsic relations among the co-eternal Three, are natural and necessary—as natural and necessary as the Godhead itself. It never did, it never can exist without all these different modes of personal subsistence. An individual human nature can subsist in one person only. The divine nature no less necessarily subsists in three persons. Can the former admit of only one personality? The latter, no less requires three different modes of personal subsistence. It originally and necessarily subsists in the first person as a Father. It no less naturally and necessarily subsists in the second as a Son. And it no less originally and necessarily subsists in the third person as proceeding from both. Thus, I say, the different modes of personal subsistence, of which the divine nature admits, and the intrinsic relations in which the co-eternal Three stand to one another, are as natural and necessary as the divine nature itself.

Admirably is this mysterious order, in which the divine Three subsist, exemplified and illustrated by the different parts which they perform in the œconomy of our redemption. The contrivance of the great plan is, in a peculiar manner, attributed to the Father; and the execution of it to the Son and the Spirit; the impetration of it to the Son, and the application to the Spirit. In this work especially have they an opportunity of displaying their *personal* as well as their *essential* glory. This probably has led some theological writers of eminence, in other instances agreed with the orthodox, to consider the paternal character of the first person, the filial of the second, and the procession of the third, as

*œconomical*

*œconomical* or *efficial*, rather than proper *personal* characters. Such writers, though they hold the Trinity of persons in the undivided Godhead, apprehend that the characters *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, are not original, natural, and necessary to the sacred Three, but rather result from the *œconomy* of redemption. Their meaning, in short, is this—That there are naturally and necessarily three persons in the Godhead; but, had it not been for the *œconomy* of grace, they never would have been known to us by such characters and names. One obvious objection, among others, to this opinion is the following. It only is by the different personal characters which the co-eternal Three have assumed, and by which they are revealed to us, that we know that they are different persons. If, therefore, we resign the common personal properties, one of two things must follow. Either we must find other characters by which we are to distinguish them, or resign this fundamental article of the Trinity altogether. If the co-eternal Three were not, as persons, originally distinguished by *paternity*, *filiation*, and *procession*; if these be not the personal characters by which they were originally, independent of the *œconomy* of redemption, distinguished from one another, what are the different personal characters which belong to them as different subsistences in the Godhead, and by which they were originally distinguished one from another? I shall proceed to the

IV. Thing in the answer. It is affirmed, that *these three persons are ONE GOD*. Each of them is God. Must there not be then three Gods? No. It only is in respect of their different personalities that they are three. In Godhead they are ONE. Not only does Deity belong to each of them; but one individual Godhead belongs to them all in common. Two things are here asserted—That each of them is God—and that they all are one God. That the Father is God, is admitted on

all hands. That the Son, no less than the Father, is God; and that the Spirit, no less than the Father and the Son, is God, the Compilers of the Catechism here affirm. Accordingly, in proof of the Deity of the second and third persons, I shall adduce a number of the many testimonies with which the scriptures of both Testaments amply furnish us.

I begin, *first*, with the Deity of the Son, the second person. This is an article of capital importance in the Christian system. At an early period of the Christian church, however, was it controverted and denied. The sect of the ancient Arians are well known in ecclesiastical history. They are denominated from Arius a presbyter of Alexandria. He broached his errors in the beginning of the fourth century. What he held in the general was—That the Son had a beginning, and is a creature, though in antiquity and excellency superior to all other creatures. The modern sect of Socinians have gone a step farther than the ancient Arians. They are denominated from Faustus Socinus, a native of Italy. They hold, that the second person had no existence till he was formed in the womb of the Virgin. But, in opposition to adversaries earlier and later, it is here affirmed, that the second person, equally with the first, is God—in personality equal to the Father, and in Godhead one with him.

Now that the Son, no less than the Father, is God, I might evince by a great variety of arguments. In the

*First place*, The same divine names, which on one occasion are applied to the Father, are, on another, in terms no less explicit, ascribed to the Son. How do we know that the FATHER is God? He is in express terms, and in a sense infinitely too high for any of the creatures, affirmed to be God. In terms equally express, and in a sense equally high, is the SON said to

be God. In places almost innumerable is the latter affirmed to be God. To show that the title *God*, when applied to the Son, is to be understood in the very highest sense, epithets are prefixed to it, which are utterly inapplicable to the most exalted creature in heaven, as well as on earth. He is stiled **THE MIGHTY GOD**. Isa. ix. 6. **THE SUPREME GOD**, or **GOD OVER ALL**. Rom. ix. 5. **THE GREAT GOD**. Tit. ii. 13. An Apostle tells us, that *being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be EQUAL with God*. Phil. ii. 6. He who, to the astonishment of heaven as well as of earth, voluntarily took upon him the form of a servant, as verse 7th speaks, was originally in the form of God. What is it to be in the form of a servant, but, in fact, to be a servant? What then can it be to be in the form of God, but to be truly God? Irrefragably to prove the Deity of the Son, the scripture applies to him, no less than to the Father, the incommunicable name **JEHOVAH**. In order to evade the force of this argument, adversaries have alledged, that this name, though called incommunicable, is in the scriptures applied both to persons and things of the created kind. In support of this allegation, they remind us of several inscriptions and titles extant in the Old Testament. Such was the name given to the place in which Abraham sacrificed—*Abraham called the name of that place JEHOVAH-JIREH*, the Lord will provide. Gen. xxii. 14. Such was the inscription on the altar which Moses built—*Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH-NISSI*, the Lord is my banner. Exod. xvii. 15. Such also was the name of the altar which Gideon erected—*Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it JEHOVAH-SHALOM*, the Lord will perfect. Judg. vi. 24. Such, in a word, is the name of the spiritual city, or New Testament church—*The name of the city, from that day, shall be JEHOVAH-SHAMMA*, the Lord is there. Ezek. xlvi. 35. But, to every

every unprejudiced person, it must be sufficiently manifest, that the application of this ineffable name to such places and altars, was only intended to intimate, that *He*, who was worshipped in those places, and at those altars, was that self-existent, all-sufficient, and independent God, to whom alone the ineffable name JEHOVAH belongs. It was not properly to the altars or places themselves, but to Him who appeared and was worshipped in them, that the incommunicable name was given.

I shall only take notice of another place, on which the adversaries of our Lord's divinity have laid no small stress. In order to invalidate the argument which we take from the application of the ineffable name to him, they affirm, that it is applied to the church as expressly as to him, in Jer. xxxiii. 16. *In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith She shall be called, JEHOVAH-TZIDKENU, the Lord our righteousness.* But, to every impartial reader, it must be apparent, that the passage now quoted is exactly parallel to chap. xxiii. 6. which reads thus—*In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name wherewith He shall be called, JEHOVAH-TZIDKENU.* Any shadow of ground there is for the supposition or the pretence, that in chap. xxxiii. 16. the ineffable name is applied to the church, seems to be owing to a mis-translation. The words might, and probably ought to be, translated otherwise; either thus—*This is his name who shall call her*, that is the church; or thus—*This is the name wherewith she shall call him, Jehovah our righteousness.* Thus Jehovah appears to be the incommunicable name of God. Now, that this great name, of which God only is worthy, is applied to the Son as well as to the Father, is so manifest, that adversaries themselves are constrained to admit it. So it is in Isa. xl. 3. *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of*  
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JEHOVAH.

JEHOVAH. That the Son, our glorious Mediator, is here intended by Jehovah. is infallibly certain, from the application of this passage to him in the New Testament. Matth. iii. 3. It is so in Isa. viii. 13. *Sanctify JEHOVAH-TZEBAOOTH, the Lord of hosts; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; and for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, &c.* That these words must be interpreted and understood of God the Son, our glorious Mediator, an inspired writer of the New Testament shows. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 8. To the Son the incommunicable name is applied in Numb. xxi. 6, 7. JEHOVAH *sent fiery serpents among the people. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against JEHOVAH, and against thee; pray unto JEHOVAH—* That the Son is intended here, an Apostle of the New Testament affirms. 1 Cor. x. 9. Once more, in Isa. xlv. 23, 24. *I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, in JEHOVAH have I righteousness and strength.* In interpreting these words of the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, we have an inspired Apostle for our director and pattern. Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 12.

Thus our adorable Saviour is the self-existent, the independent, the everlasting God. Hence, in the

*Second place, Divine attributes, as well as divine appellations, are, in the scriptures, ascribed to the Son no less than to the Father. That perfections which belong to no creature in heaven or on earth, but are peculiar to the infinite God, in contradistinction to all other beings, are, in the scriptures, attributed to the Son no less than the Father, I might show in a great multiplicity of instances. Eternity, unbeginning as well as unending eternity, belongs and is ascribed to him. Thus he speaks—I was set up from EVERLASTING, from*  
*the*



the beginning, ere ever the earth was. When there were no depths I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. Prov. viii. 23,—26. What a magnificent description of an unbeginning eternity! Accordingly, he is stiled the EVERLASTING FATHER; or, as the phrase is, *the Father of eternity*. His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Mic. v. 2. I am, says he, ALPHA and OMEGA, the beginning and the ending; which is, and which was, and which is to come—He is the first, as well as the last. Rev. i. 8, 11, 17. Immensity, as well as eternity, is ascribed to him. Is not this necessarily implied in his own words—*WHEREVER two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*. Matth. xviii. 20. And, in chap. xxviii. 20. he bespeaks his Apostles and other ministers in all ages and places of the world thus—*Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*. When he was on earth, in respect of his humanity, in relation to his divinity, he was in heaven as well as upon earth. This is the manifest import of his own words in John iii. 13. *Omniscience*, no less than immensity, belongs to him—*Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he KNEW all men; and needed not that any should testify of man: for he KNEW what was in man*. John ii. 24. 25. *Now are we sure, say the disciples, that thou KNOWEST ALL THINGS, and needest not that any man should ask thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God*. chap. xvi. 30. *Peter said unto him, Lord, thou KNOWEST ALL THINGS, thou knowest that I love thee*. John xxi. 17. *And, says he himself to the Angel of the church in Thyatira, I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which SEARCHETH the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your*

*your works.* Rev. ii. 23. Omnipotence, as well as omniscience, is attributed to him. Having said, as in Rev. i. 8. quoted already, *I am he which is, and which was, and which is to come*; he adds, *I am the ALMIGHTY.* Immutability, no less than omnipotence, belongs to him. *The heavens and the earth shall perish, but thou shalt EN-DURE; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment: but thou art the SAME, and thy years shall have no end.* Psal. cii. 25, 26, 27. That these words are to be interpreted of the Son of God, the inspired writer to the Hebrews shows in chap. i. 10, 11, 12. *He is the SAME yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* chap. xiii. 7. In the

*Third place, Divine operations,* as well as divine attributes, are, in the scriptures, ascribed to the Son no less than to the Father. There are three kinds of works peculiar to God, or which he only can accomplish; which the scripture uniformly ascribes to the Son, equally with the Father. There is the creation of the heavens and the earth. Now, that the production of all things out of nothing is a work which Almighty God alone could accomplish, the nature of the work itself evinces. And scripture, as well as reason, declares it. Is it not necessarily implied in Isa. xliv. 24? Thus he himself speaks—*I am JEHOVAH that maketh all things, that stretched forth the heavens ALONE.* In this great work he had no assistant. He only existed previous to it. If, therefore, this work was effected by the Son, he must be God. That it was his work, no less than the Father's, the scripture often and loudly proclaims. He himself tells us, that *when the Father prepared the heavens, HE was there.* Prov. viii. 27. Was he there only as a spectator of the great and glorious work? No. He was there as a co-worker with the Father. *For all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* John i. 3. *By HIM were all things created that are in heaven, and*  
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that are on earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him. Col. i. 16. The preservation of the great universe is his work no less than the Father's. As he was a co-worker with the Father in creation, he still is so in the works of providence. So he declares—*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* John v. 17. As he was before all worlds, and created them; by him all things still consist. Col. i. 17. He upholds all things by the word of his power. Heb. i. 2.

The extraordinary works of providence, as well as the ordinary, the scripture ascribes to the Son. Such works, indeed, the Prophets and Apostles accomplished; but in a very different manner. *In his name and by his power,* did they perform such works. This an Apostle avows in the presence of the Jewish rulers—*Be it known unto you all, and unto all the people of Israel, that by the name of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him, and by his power, doth this man stand before you whole.* Acts iv. 10. Eneas the paralytic the Apostle addresseth thus—*Eneas, JESUS CHRIST maketh thee whole.* Acts ix. 34. But when the Saviour himself performed miracles, it was in his own name, and by the exertion of power inherent in him as the proper subject of it. In him resided, and from him proceeded, the power, the virtue, by which they were accomplished. Luke vi. 19. and viii. 46.

Gracious, as well as providential, works, which the omnipotent God only can do, the scripture, in instances innumerable and obvious to all, attributes to the Son. Of all the divine works known to us, the redemption of the church, the salvation of sinners of mankind, is the most arduous. In it Almighty power is most illustriously displayed. This is, in a peculiar manner, the work of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Is it not the proper act of God to forgive sin? Did not the scribes, in so far, say right? *Who can forgive sins but God*

God ONLY? Mark ii. 7. Is it not the peculiar work of God to quicken the dead? *God, and God only, quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things which be not as though they were.* Rom. iv. 18. The Son, equally with the Father, forgiveth sin, and quickens both spiritually and naturally dead sinners. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Sovereign as well as a Saviour, to grant both repentance to impenitent sinners, and the pardon of all their sins.* Acts v. 31. Thus he himself speaks—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their GRAVES shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.* John v. 25, 28. In the

*Fourth place, Divine worship, as well as divine works, the scriptures ascribe to the Son as well as the Father. That religious worship belongs to God alone is a dictate of reason, as well as a doctrine of revelation. To himself, to the exclusion of all creatures in heaven and on earth, the great God claims and appropriates it. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.* Isa. xlii. 3. To the Son, no less than to the Father, is it every where ascribed. In heaven and on earth, to angels and to men, is he the object of religious adoration. Internal worship, as well as external, do the scriptures attribute to him. He is the object of saving faith. So he speaks of himself—*Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in ME.* Often has it been observed, that both clauses may be read one way; either indicatively, thus—*Ye believe in God, and ye believe also in me;* or imperatively, thus—*Believe ye in God, believe also in me.* He is the object of supreme love, as well as of saving faith. This, no doubt, is implied in the trying question, with which he, three several times, poseth Peter—*Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son*

son of Jonas, lovest thou ME more than these? John xxi. 15, 16, 17. Even when he was in a state of the deepest humiliation in our world, as he was God as well as man, he was the object of religious worship, the worship of angels as well as of men. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews, for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to WORSHIP him. Matth. ii. 1, 2. When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God WORSHIP HIM. Heb. i. 6. The call is—*Kiss the Son.* Psal. ii. 12. A kiss sometimes was a sign of religious veneration. *Let the men that sacrifice KISS the calves.* Heb. xiii. 2. The Son no less than the Father, is the object of prayer. *They stoned Stephen calling upon God, and saying, LORD JESUS, receive my spirit.* Acts vii. 59. To say no more, the solemn ordinance of baptism is administered in his name, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Spirit. The prescribed form, from which his ministering servants never are to depart, is this—*Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the SON, and of the Holy Ghost.* Matth. xxviii. 19. In the

*Fifth place,* As an additional proof, and a decisive evidence, that the Son, no less than the Father, is the supreme God, he is, in terms the most express. affirmed to be equal; not inferior, but *equal* to the Father. To obviate mistakes, and to set this argument in its proper light, it is to be observed, that there is a twofold consideration of the Son. If he is viewed in the character of Mediator, he appears inferior to the Father. As Mediator, he sustains the character of the Father's servant, and acts in virtue of a commission from him. This accounts for his declaration—*My Father is GREATER than I.* John xiv. 28.

But, if we view him in his original personal character; as the second subsistence in the undivided Trinity, he

appears in no respect inferior, but, in all respects, equal to his divine Father. Even when, in respect of his humanity, he was *found in fashion as a man, and made himself of no reputation*, in respect of his divinity, he was still *in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God*. Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8. His eternal Father himself acknowledges him in the high character of his *fellow and equal*. Zech. xiii. 7. Let Arians and Socinians blush and be ashamed. A creature *equal to God!* What an absurdity! To all which I may add, in the

*Sixth place*, That, as the highest demonstration of the supreme Deity of the Son of God, he is affirmed to be not merely *equal* to the Father, but *ONE* with him. So speaks the text that introduces this Lecture. There are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are *ONE*. As persons the co-eternal Three are equal; and in Deity they are one. One numerical Godhead is common to them all. With this express declaration of the Apostle, the testimony of our Lord himself to this great truth exactly coincides. *I and my Father, says he, are ONE*. John x. 30. Having, I hope to the satisfaction of every unprejudiced person, demonstrated that the Son, no less than the Father, is God, I proceed,

*Secondly*, To make it appear, that the Holy Ghost, as really as the Father and the Son, is the *supreme God*. The same arguments which prove the supreme Deity of the Son, evince, with equal force, the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Having stated and illustrated them largely, in proof of the former, it must be unnecessary for me to enlarge upon them in proof of the latter. Let me, therefore, resume them as briefly as possible. And in the

*1st place*, Divine names are, in the scriptures, attributed to the Spirit equally with the Father and the Son; and, therefore, the Spirit, no less than the Father or the Son, must be God. The title God, in the most proper  
acceptation

acceptation of the word, is oftener than once directly applied to him. He, who, in Acts v. 3, is stiled the Holy Ghost, is, in the following verse, expressly called God. But this is not all. The ineffable name JEHOVAH, which, as we have shown already, is peculiar to the great God, in contradistinction to all created beings, is expressly ascribed to him in Isa. vi. 8. *I heard the voice of JEHOVAH, saying, Whom shall I send? and who will go for us? Then said I, here am I, send me. And he said, verse 9th, Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not.*—Is it asked, How does it appear, that the Holy Ghost, the third of the sacred Three, is intended here? An apostolical interpreter determines the point; for thus he speaks—*Well spake the HOLY GHOST by Esaias the Prophet, unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand*—Acts xxviii. 25, 26. In the

1<sup>st</sup> place, Divine *perfections*, are, in the scriptures, predicated of the Spirit equally with the Father and the Son. His eternity is necessarily supposed and implied in the Mosaic account of the heavens and the earth. Gen. i. 2. His immensity is most elegantly described by the Psalmist—*Whither shall I go from thy SPIRIT? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; and if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there!* Psal. cxxxix. 7, 8. His omniscience is evidently implied in our Lord's words to the disciples—*He shall teach you ALL things.* John xiv. 26. And in the words of the Apostle—*God hath revealed them unto us by his SPIRIT; for the Spirit searcheth ALL THINGS, yea, the DEEP THINGS of God—The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. Omnipotence, as well as omniscience, belongs to the Spirit equally with the Father and the Son. May he not for this reason be stiled *the POWER of the highest?* In the

3<sup>d</sup> place, Works peculiar to God are attributed to the Spirit equally with the Father and the Son.

The creation of all worlds was the work of the third person, no less than of the first and second. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the BREATH of his mouth, or by his Spirit.* Psal xxxiii. 6. *By his SPIRIT he hath garnished the heavens.* Job xxvi. 13. The preservation of all things is the work of the Spirit, as much as of the Father and the Son. *Thou sendest forth thy SPIRIT, they are CREATED, and thou RENEWEST the face of the earth.* Psal. civ. 30. Works of the miraculous kind are accomplished by the Spirit. *If I cast out devils by the SPIRIT of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.* Matth. xii. 28, Redemption, the most arduous, as well as important, of all works, is effected by the Spirit, no less than by the Father and the Son. The applicatory part of it is peculiarly ascribed to the third person. *Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST.* Tit. iii. 5. The supernatural work of the regeneration of sinners is performed by the special agency of the Holy Ghost. Thus saith the Lord—*I will put my SPIRIT within you, thus will I cause you to walk in my statutes.* Ezek. xxxvi. 27. The justification of guilty sinners is attributed to the Spirit, as well as the Father and the Son. *Ye are JUSTIFIED in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the SPIRIT of our God.* 1 Cor. vi 11. The saving illumination of the minds of sinners in spiritual darkness, is the special work of the Spirit. For this reason is he stiled *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ*; and by him the eyes of their understandings are supernaturally enlightened. Eph. i. 17, 18. The great and good work of the sanctification of unholy sinners is, in an especial manner, ascribed to the Spirit. The apostle bespeaks the believing Thessalonians thus—*God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT.* 2 Thess. ii. 13. To add



add no more on this particular, the glorious work of the resurrection of the dead in Christ is to be effected by the special agency of the Holy Ghost. Hence the Apostle's consolatory words to the believing Romans—*If the SPIRIT of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also QUICKEN your mortal bodies by his SPIRIT that dwelleth in you.* Rom. viii. 11. Such are the great and glorious works, especially of the saving kind, which this blessed agent performs. Are not these glorious works worthy of God, and calculated to reflect the highest honour upon him? In the

*4th place*, Religious worship, which belongs to God alone, is, in the scriptures, ascribed to the Spirit equally with the Father and the Son. Prayer, one of the most solemn parts of the worship of the militant church, is performed to the Spirit, no less than the Father and the Son. The apostolical benediction, quoted already, is most explicit and full—*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the HOLY GHOST, be with you all.* 2 Cor. xiii. 14. To which I might add the Apostle John's prayer in behalf of the Asiatic churches—Rev. i. 4, 5. Baptism, the initiatory seal of the everlasting covenant, is administered in the name of the Holy Ghost, no less than of the Father and the Son. Matth. xxviii. 19. In the

*5th place*, As an irrefragable proof of the divinity of the Holy Ghost, he is affirmed to be not merely equal to the Father and the Son, but one with them. So the text prefixed to this Lecture speaks—*There are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are ONE.* How manifest is the difference between the three witnesses in heaven, of whom the text speaks, and the three witnesses on earth, to which the following verse refers! As for the latter, it is said, *they agree in ONE.* They are one in design. But the three celestial witnesses are one in

in nature; as well as design. One individual nature is common to them all. If, therefore, any one of them be God, each of them must be God.

It is, in the answer, asserted, that the three persons in the Godhead are not only God, but *ONE* God. That God is *one* we saw on a former occasion. The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Ghost is God. And all the Three are one God. For though, as persons, they be different, one undivided Godhead belongs to them all. That God is one, reason teaches, and revelation declares. Accordingly, as a further illustration of this important point, it is

V. Affirmed, that the three persons in the Godhead are *THE SAME IN SUBSTANCE, EQUAL IN POWER AND GLORY*. It is not merely affirmed that they are equal. Equal, no doubt, they are. But this is not all. Might not a mere equality comport with Tritheism itself? Three human persons may be equal. They possess three natures similar; even specifically the same. But, though they may be specifically, they cannot be numerically the same. The substance of any one of them is in reality different from that of another of them. But, as for the Three divine, they are not merely similar, but the *SAME* in substance. With great precision do the Compilers of the Catechism express themselves on this sublime subject. Against the heresies of earlier, as well as later times, do they guard us. In two instances especially has this fundamental article been attacked.

At an early period was it impugned in relation to the distinction of persons in the Godhead. The heresy of the Sabellians of the third century, so denominated from Sabellius, an Egyptian philosopher, the founder of the sect, every reader of church history knows. What they held, in general, as I hinted already, is—That in the Godhead there is only one person, who sustains and  
acts

acts in three different characters. The Arians of the fourth century allowed that there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But, that these persons are ONE God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, they deny.

Accordingly, the Compilers of this judicious compend of the Christian religion, having, in the preceding part of the answer, asserted, in opposition to the ancient Sabellians and their followers, that in the undivided Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, they, in the latter part of it, affirm, in opposition to Arianism and all the abettors of it, that these three persons are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. That the Son and the Holy Ghost, no less than the Father, are God, I have, I hope, sufficiently proved already. Now, if the second and third persons, equally with the first, be God, he and they must be one God; and the same in substance, as well as equal in power and glory. A diversity of divine essences there cannot be. Such a supposition is absurd in the extreme. Reason, no less than revelation, remonstrates against it.

These divine persons, it is added, are equal in *power* and *glory*. The preceding part of the particular relates to their oneness in essence. One essence or substance, nature or Godhead, belongs to them all. This refers to their personal equality. As persons they are not inferior, but equal one to another. Two instances are here mentioned, in which they appear to be equal—in *power* and *glory*.

1. *Power*. Of power, as an essential perfection of the Godhead, I have spoken already. I called it an *essential* perfection. It is not peculiar to any one of the sacred Three, but common to them all. In power, according to this view of it, they may be said to be not only equal, but the same. The expression, however, is varied here. They are affirmed to be the same in substance,

substance, and *equal* in power. The reason, probably, is this. Power here may be intended to signify not so much the divine perfection itself, as the effects of it; the great and glorious works, which God, by his *power*, has produced. In relation to such glorious works, it may be proper to say that they are *equal*. Though such works be the effects of that power which is essential and common to them all, in the accomplishment of them they act, in a manner calculated for the manifestation of their distinct personal characters, and the mysterious order in which they subsist. The Father works by the Son, not the Son by the Father; the Father and the Son by the Spirit, not the Spirit by the Father and the Son. This is the case in the works of creation, as well as redemption. By his Son, God the Father is said to have *made the worlds*; not the Son by the Father, but the Father by the Son. Heb. i. 2. By his Spirit, *he garnished the heavens*; not the Spirit by Him, but He by the Spirit. Job xxvi. 13. Was the Father the principal agent in creation, the Son an inferior? No. In it all the persons of the Godhead were equally concerned. It was the work of the Father *equally* with the Son; and as really the work of the Spirit as of the Father and the Son. Accordingly, it has all along been a maxim among theological writers, that the external works of God are undivided. In what things soever God does without himself, all the persons in the Godhead are concerned. Such works are called *external*, to distinguish them from the internal acts by which the persons in the Godhead are known one from another. Such acts are peculiar to the persons to whom they are ascribed. The first person only begets; the second is begotten; and the third, not the first or the second, but the *third* person, proceeds. In all external works they concur. So they did in creation. This, as I had occasion to observe formerly, may be intimated in the plural word, by which the Creator of all worlds.

worlds is expressed. Gen. i. 1. ELOHIM created the heavens and the earth. It was the undivided work of the co-eternal Three. Especially do they display their personal glory, and mysterious order of subsistence, in the work of our redemption. A particular part of it, indeed, is attributed to the Father, another to the Son, and another to the Holy Ghost. But in the contrivance of it, the Son and the Spirit concur with the Father. *The counsel of peace was between the Father, the infinite contriver, and the Son and the Spirit, by whom especially the grand plan was to be, in time, carried into actual execution.* Zech. vi. 13. The impetration of it is peculiarly ascribed to the Son. But was the Son alone in this part of the work? What saith the Son himself on this head? *Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because THE FATHER IS WITH ME.* John xvi. 32. Was the Spirit as well as the Father with the Son in this work? Yes. The Spirit was in him superabundantly. *Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Judea, and was led by the SPIRIT into the wilderness.* Luke. iv. 1.

The effectual application of our redemption is attributed to the Holy Ghost. But is this divine person alone in the applicatory part of the work? No. The Father and the Son concur with him in it. To exemplify this in one instance—our regeneration is, on one occasion, ascribed to the Father, on another to the Son, and on a third to the Holy Ghost. To the Father, in Eph. ii. 1. *You hath he, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the FATHER of glory, who raised Christ from the dead, and set him on his own right hand in the heavenly places, and gave him to be head over all things to the church—You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.* To the Son, it is likewise ascribed in John v. 21. *As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the SON quickeneth*

*whom he will.* And to the Holy Ghost, it is attributed in John iii. 5. *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and, or even, of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

The Son, the second person, having assumed the character of our Mediator or Redeemer, performs a peculiar part in the œconomy of our redemption. But the answer speaks rather of the co-eternal Three in their original characters. As such they are all equally concerned in those wonderful works, which are especially the effects of power. Wisdom and goodness, indeed, no less than power, appear in all those works. But, though goodness prompts God to work in both the world and the church, and though all his works bespeak deep design, the result of the most consummate wisdom; *power*, in an especial manner, is immediately exerted and displayed in the accomplishment of all the works of God. For this obvious reason may *power* be expressly mentioned here.

The divine Three are said to be equal in *glory*, as well as in power. Equal in the performance of such great works, as necessarily indicate power peculiar to God, they are, of course, equal in the glory that accrues from them. Though, according to the mysterious order in which they subsist, the Father may be said to precede the Son, and the Son the Spirit; the Son is not, either in power or in glory, inferior to the Father; nor is the Spirit, in the one respect or the other, inferior, either to the Father or the Son. Is creation the joint work of the undivided Three? The glory of it never is to be ascribed to the Father to the exclusion of the Son; or to the Father and the Son to the exclusion of the Spirit. As it is a work in which they were all equally concerned, equal glory results from it to them all. The glory of redemption, no less than of creation, is due, and ascribed in heaven and on earth, by angels and men, to the undivided THREE; to the Son no less than

than to the Father, and to the Spirit equally with the Father and the Son. From what has been said on the sublime mystery of the Trinity, I might make several

*Reflections.* And, *first* of all, What has been said suggests to us one of the many instances, in which *revealed* religion is superior to *natural*. How deficient is the latter! What glorious discoveries does the former make! Not only does it teach that there is a God; but that in one undivided Godhead there are three distinct persons; the FATHER, the SON, and the SPIRIT, not inferior, but equal one to another. Mysteries innumerable, indeed, have we in nature. But what superior mysteries have we in religion! May not this of the Trinity be said to be the chief of them? Let us admire and adore what we never can comprehend.

*2dly*, Here is one of the numberless instances, in which we may see the absurdity of making our comprehension the standard of our belief; and the importance of distinguishing between what transcends reason and what is contrary to it. Infinitely, indeed, does the mystery of the sacred Trinity transcend our comprehension and reason. But contrary to *sound* reason it is not. Fully and clearly is it revealed in the sacred oracles. Indispensably are we bound, therefore, to believe it. That it is we certainly know; though to comprehend and explain it we never will pretend.

*3dly*, The sublime mystery of the sacred Trinity is such, that universal nature cannot furnish any thing similar to it; and, therefore, to pretend to represent it by any similitude is, in my apprehension, absurd and dangerous. That many excellent writers, solicitous to instruct their readers, have borrowed from creation different similitudes to assist them in forming some faint idea or conception of this sublime mystery, is well known. From the heavens above, from the earth below, and even from themselves, have they taken their similitudes.

tudes. That glorious luminary which we call our sun, has been supposed to furnish us with a fit emblem of the mystery of the Trinity. The body of the sun has been understood to represent the Father, the light which proceeds from it the Son, and its heat the Holy Ghost. A fountain of water, it has been pretended, is a representation of the Trinity; the origin of the fountain in the bowels of the earth, of the Father; the springing of it, of the Son; and the rivulet which is constantly supplied by it, of the Spirit. It has been accommodated to three different kinds of life, *vegetative, sensitive, and rational*, in man. A variety of other similitudes have been used to enable us to form a distinct conception of the great mystery of one Godhead in three persons, and three persons in one Godhead. But how unfit and unworthy are all such representations! Such a method of explaining and accounting for the Trinity is, in my opinion, most unjustifiable. That it is well intended, I know. But it is most derogatory to the sublime subject; and calculated to produce in us conceptions most unworthy of it. Between the TRINITY and every thing in creation there is an infinite disproportion. *To whom will ye LIKEN me, saith God, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? Isa. xlv. 5.*

4thly, What reason have we to admire and adore the wisdom and the grace manifested in the œconomy of our redemption? Apt are we to reason thus—"Might not God have confirmed man in his original state of felicity and dignity? Why did he not prevent his fall? Could he not easily have done it? Why did he not do it?" *But, O man! who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay? For every thing that the ALL-WISE God does, or permits to be done, he has reasons worthy of himself. The fall of man, he, no doubt, permitted; otherwise it could not have happened. But did he not permit*



permit it for the most important reasons; and with the most merciful views? From it he has taken occasion to manifest his perfections; and, in an especial manner, the different persons in his mysterious essence, in such a conspicuous manner as he has not done in his other works. In creation, his goodness, and his wisdom, and his power, are manifested. But in redemption, the undivided **THREE** display their personal glory, and the mysterious order in which they subsist, in a way for which there would have been no occasion, had not the fall of man been permitted.

*In fine,* Let us endeavour to improve the revelation of the mysterious **TRINITY**, in a manner corresponding to the designs and views which God had in favouring us with it. With ineffable delight and unutterable wonder, let us contemplate it. Is not this employment worthy of angelic as well as human intelligences? Will not this be an essential part of the incessant and unwearied employment of the blissful inhabitants of the higher world **FOR EVER AND EVER**? Let us especially contemplate and adore the undivided **THREE**, concurring and performing their respective parts in redemption. What security have we here for the completion of the arduous work! Is it possible for a work to miscarry in which the **CO-ETERNAL THREE** are engaged? Was the eternal **SON** all-sufficient to purchase our redemption? No less sufficient is the eternal **SPIRIT** to apply it. What strong consolation then may they have, who by faith have fled for refuge to lay hold on Christ offered to them in the gospel! Let us claim the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for our God and our Father. Let us claim his **SON** as our Saviour, as our kinsman-Redeemer, as our elder brother. Not only as the second person, but as our Redeemer, is he the **SON** of God, and heir of all things. That, in the latter view, as well as the former, the filial character is applied to him in the scriptures, and that it is in his right,

as the first-born of the family of God, and the primary heir of the heavenly inheritance, we become children and heirs of God, I will have occasion to show when I explain the account of our adoption in the sequel of the Catechism. Let us employ the Spirit in that important and salutary work; for the accomplishment of which he has been sent into the church, and is to continue in it till the end of the world. Let us daily apply to him, for instruction, for sanctifying influence, and for spiritual consolation. For, *if we have not the Spirit of Christ*, notwithstanding the profession we have made, and all the external privileges of which we are partakers, *we are none of his.*

Unto the eternal Father, unto his eternal Son, and unto the co-eternal Spirit, ONE GOD, be ascribed equal and undivided honours, in heaven and on earth, FOR EVER AND EVER! Amen.

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## The Divine Decrees.

ACTS xv. 18.

*Known unto God are ALL his works from the beginning of the world.*

A DISPUTE had arisen in the Christian church, which now flourished in the city of Antioch, in relation to the necessity of circumcision. Antioch was the name of two cities mentioned in scripture; the one the capital of Syria; the other of Pisidia. It is of the former I now speak. This is known to have been one of the most flourishing, opulent, trading cities in the world. It stood on both sides of the river Orontes, about twelve miles from the Mediterranean sea; and is said to have been about ten miles in circuit. Of the preaching of the gospel in this great city, and the success that attended it, we have the history in the preceding part of this book. But soon was the tranquillity of this church disturbed. Certain designing men, coming down from Jerusalem with pretended apostolical authority, insisted on the necessity of the continued observation of circumcision. In order that this doubtful point might be determined, and the tranquillity of the

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the Antiochian church restored, it was agreed to dispatch commissioners to Jerusalem, that the Apostles and others in that city might be consulted on the subject. The deputies having arrived at Jerusalem, a convention was immediately called. The cause being fairly stated, and parties fully heard, an unequivocal and plain decision was given. The text, which I have now read, is part of a speech delivered by a venerable member of that synod. The interesting point of the vocation of the Gentiles, in virtue of the abolition of the ceremonial law, which had so long stood, as a wall of separation between the Jews and all other nations, is here ascertained. The apostolical member shows, that every thing which comes to pass in time, in the world, and especially the church, is in pursuance and the fulfilment of designs which the infinite God had in his all-comprehending mind from eternity. For, as saith the text, *Known unto God are all his works FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD.* What works soever, natural or supernatural, providential or gracious, he performs in time, he foreknew and appointed from everlasting.

So speaks our Shorter Catechism in the answer to the question, *What are the decrees of God?* which is—*The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.* Having considered the being and perfections of God, the unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of persons in it, I am now, according to the most natural order, led to explain the purposes and designs, which this omniscient Being, from a beginningless eternity, formed in his all-foreseeing mind; and which he executes in his works of creation, providence, and redemption. We are now entering on another abstruse subject. With the utmost caution are we ever to think and speak of it. How imperfect our apprehensions and views of the divine purposes,

poses, as well as of the perfections and the persons in the Godhead? Who can pretend to read the annals of eternity? Who can comprehend the designs of Deity? *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?* Rom. xi. 33, 34. Does the great God act at random? Does he things without previous designs? Such a supposition is unworthy of God.

Often do we act at random. For our conduct we can assign no proper reason. Our former purposes we alter. New resolutions and measures do we adopt. Does not our behaviour, in all these instances, bespeak imperfection? But, as God is in all respects perfect, his purposes ever must be permanent and unalterable. Now, that he had in his infinite mind from everlasting the whole plan of his conduct from first to last in time, the scripture often and clearly intimates. Is not this the plain purport of a variety of expressions which occur in the scriptures both of the Old Testament and the New? We read of his THOUGHTS, his COUNSELS, his PURPOSES, his DECREES, and the like. *The COUNSEL of the Lord standeth for ever; the THOUGHTS of his heart to all generations.* Psal. xxxiii. 11. *My COUNSEL,* says he, *shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.* Isa. xlvi. 10.

The divine decrees I am, in the sequel, to consider especially in a twofold view; as they relate to the creatures, all the creatures, and all their actions; and as they refer to the *rational*, in distinction from the inferior, creatures. The former I may call a *general*, the latter a *particular*, account of the decrees. In order to give you a general view of the decrees, I may, in a plain manner, consider the several parts of the answer in order. And,

I. The *nature* of the divine decrees. This is expressed in the answer by two words, PURPOSE, and FORE-

ORDINATION. For thus the answer runs—*The decrees of God are his eternal PURPOSE, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath FOREORDAINED whatsoever comes to pass.* The design and meaning of both expressions are sufficiently manifest and plain. A critical explanation of them is altogether unnecessary. It is, however, to be observed, that the word is, with an obvious design, put in the *singular* number, rather than the *plural*. The answer is not thus—The decrees of God are his eternal *purposes*; but thus—The decrees of God are his eternal *purpose*. This purpose, indeed, extends to a vast variety of creatures, and of actions. But in itself it is one simple act of the understanding and the will of God. Infinitely different are his designs and ours. When we project any great undertaking, we form the plan, and concert means for carrying it into execution, in a gradual manner. We have not a full view or idea of it at once. The design, when fully formed, is the result of long deliberation and much thought. Far otherwise is it, however, with the infinite God. His designs are as perfect at once as ever they can be. He cannot possibly be in hesitation or suspense about any thing. Never can he have a fuller knowledge or clearer idea of any thing within the reach of his unbounded power, than he has this moment and ever had. His knowledge is just now what it ever has been. Nor can it undergo any enlargement. It can never be greater than it now is.

The question speaks of *decrees* in the plural number, and the answer of *purpose* in the singular. The latter, as I hinted already, may signify that act of the divine will, which foreordained every thing that has, and every thing that is to come to pass throughout all futurity. The former may have been intended to denote the variety of the creatures and of their actions; about all which the decrees of God are versant. Most pertinent  
and

and expressive is the word *purpose* here used by the Compilers of the Catechism. They probably borrowed it from Ephes. i. ii. where the Apostle speaks of *the PURPOSE of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*. The expression may especially bespeak *three* things. It may bespeak the sovereignty and perfect freedom with which the great God ever acts. It may indicate the most consummate wisdom and deep design. And it shows the permanency and stability of his designs.

The great God ever is his own director; and designs and performs whatsoever he pleaseth without control. One thing he performs; another, equally within the compass of his unlimited power, he does not. The reason is obvious. It pleased him from eternity to purpose within himself to do the one and not the other. For, as the Babylonian monarch speaks—*He does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* Dan. iv. 35. Far are the purposes of the great God from being rash or hasty. For deliberation, indeed, he has no occasion. But his designs are all as wisely and well concerted as they could possibly have been. Foolish and rash projects and schemes do we often form. But his designs all are the result of unerring wisdom. Infallibly certain is the accomplishment of his designs. Delayed it may be; but obstructed it cannot possibly be. *There are many devices in a man's heart, which he is unable to accomplish; nevertheless, the COUNSEL of the Lord that shall stand.* Prov. xix. 21. There is

II. The *date* of the divine decrees. They are ETERNAL. They are no less ancient and beginningless than God himself. Our schemes and designs are formed in time. We ourselves began to exist in time. But as God himself is without beginning, so are all his purposes and decrees. Conformably to the scriptures, and in

opposition to Arminians and others, it is here affirmed, that his purposes are absolute and eternal. It has been pretended, that the divine decrees, especially as they relate to man, were from eternity, in a great part, indeterminate, and suspended upon his good or bad conduct in time. That the righteous are to be, in a gracious manner, rewarded for ever for their good works on earth, and the wicked justly punished for their sins, is certain. But was not every thing relating both to good and bad men, to their conduct in this world, and to their state in that which is to come, known to God from the beginningless ages of eternity? That every thing which has happened, and every thing which is to happen, was known to him from EVERLASTING, may be infallibly inferred from the perfection of his infinite nature, and is, in the most express terms, declared in the sacred scriptures. No farther need I go for a proof of his universal prescience, and preordination of all things from eternity, than the text which is prefixed to this Lecture. For thus it speaks—KNOWN unto God were all his works from the BEGINNING; from the commencement of time, even from the unbeginning ages of eternity.

That the word *beginning* in the scriptures is sometimes equivalent to eternity, as prior to time, I might show in several instances. One may suffice. *I was*, says our divine Redeemer, *set up from everlasting, from the BEGINNING, ere ever the earth was.* Prov. viii. 23. To the most unlearned and superficial reader, it must be obvious, that the terms *everlasting* and *from the beginning*, are here used as synonymous. That God from all eternity foreknew and foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, is evident from the nature of things as well as the express declarations of the word. Whence is it that such and such things come to pass in time? Is it because such things come within the compass of the Almighty power of God? This certainly cannot be  
the



the reason; for many other things equally within the compass of the divine power never do come to pass. Has God in creation, or has he ever in the works of providence, acted according to the full extent of his power? Certainly not. To Almighty power, who can prescribe limits? No boundaries or limits does it know. But the reason why one thing happens, and another thing does not happen, is plain. The one God has, and the other he has not, foreordained to come to pass. This leads me to consider

III. The *origin* of the divine decrees—THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF GOD. To the sovereign and uncontrollable will of God, as the proper spring of all the important designs which he formed in his omniscient mind from *everlasting*, and all the glorious works which, in pursuance of his eternal purpose, he performs from first to last in time, does an Apostle of the New Testament trace them. For other Christians as well as himself, he speaks thus—*Being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh ALL things after the counsel of his OWN WILL.* Eph. i. 2.

Might not the great God, had he pleased, have remained for ever alone? As he is self-existent, he is, of consequence, self-sufficient. His design to produce, out of nothing, this great universe, with its numerous and various inhabitants, could not originate in any natural necessity, or in the prospect of any addition to his essential glory and felicity, from the creatures or their actions. It must, therefore, have been an act of his sovereign will, as well as his unerring understanding. And his will can be under no control, but what arises from his sovereignty, wisdom, and other perfections. As he is independent, he can be under no external constraint; and, as he is self-sufficient, he can be under no internal necessity. All his purposes, therefore, must be voluntary. The eternal purpose, however, is said to be *according*

to the COUNSEL of his will. This is intended to show, that, though his will be arbitrary and uncontrolable, he ever acts in a manner the most rational and consummately wise. Self-sufficient and independent, he wills and he works when and what he pleases. Infinitely good and wise, he ever does what is most fit to be done; and does it in the best manner. There is in the

IV. *place*, The *ultimate end* of God's decrees—HIS OWN GLORY. This, as we have seen already, is the principal part of man's chief end; and it is the chief end of all the creatures and all their actions. It is what God had ultimately in view in all the important and worthy designs which he formed in his great mind from eternity. It is what he ultimately intends in all his works of creation and providence, nature and grace, in time. His motives and views; his designs and dispensations are ever worthy of himself. Such is the supereminent excellency of his nature, that his own glory is the highest end he can possibly propose to himself. And, therefore, as he ever acts with the highest propriety, he ever gives the preference to it. As he is the first cause, he is the last end of all things—*For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Rom. xi. 36. The

V. Article in the division of the answer, is the *object* of the divine decrees—WHATSOEVER COMES TO PASS. What a vast prospect opens here! The objects of the divine decrees I might consider under two general heads; the *creatures*, and the *actions* of the creatures; for to each of the creatures, and to each of their actions, do the divine decrees extend. Here all creation, the *mineral*, the *vegetable*, the *animal* parts of it; unnumbered orders and ranks of creatures; the church, both Jewish and Christian; a long series of interesting events,

vents, which have already been accomplished in the world and in the church, to recount which is a work fitter for eternity than time ; open to our view. For to all those creatures, and to all these events, do the divine decrees extend ; and in them are they executed. The work of creation, the works of providence, the work of redemption, in all their several parts and circumstances, did the ALL-WISE God, by a decree, which nothing can alter, fore-appoint from the earliest ages.

I might consider the divine decrees as they relate to angels ; their creation ; their station ; their employment ; and a variety of other things. I might also consider the divine decrees as versant about mankind in this world ; the time and other circumstances of their birth ; their station and condition ; the time and other circumstances of their death. I might consider the divine decrees as they refer to families, to churches, and to nations ; to the erection, the duration, the extinction of societies, civil and religious. I might, in a word, consider them as they relate to the creatures, high and low, from the celestial seraph, to the serpent that licks the dust of the earth.

But what I might say in relation to the divine decrees, I shall, for brevity, and to prevent unnecessary repetitions, reserve till I have occasion to consider them as executed in the great work of creation, and especially in the mysterious dispensations of that ALL-SUPERINTENDING Providence, which extends to all parts of the great universe, and has the disposal of the creatures from the highest to the lowest, and all their actions, good and bad. Though the decree itself ever is understood to precede the execution of it, till it be executed, or otherwise revealed to us, it is to us unknown. And, therefore, the best method we can take to obtain a distinct view of the eternal decrees, is to review the works of time in which they are accomplished.

I might

I might proceed to what I proposed farther on this subject, to consider the decrees as they relate to the eternal state of angels and men.

That branch of the divine decrees, which relates to the everlasting state of angels and of men, is known, in the scriptures, and in theological writings, by the name of *PREDESTINATION*. This word is frequently used in the New Testament. The meaning of it, without any critical or particular explication, is obvious. What, in the general, is intended by it, as applied to angels and men, I cannot express better than in the words of the Larger Catechism, in the answer to the following question.—“What hath God especially decreed concerning angels and men?” “God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in time, hath elected some angels to glory, and, in Christ, hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof; and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will, (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favour as he pleaseth) hath passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonour and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice.” This is at once a most consolatory and a most awful subject. With the most profound reverence and caution, are we to enter on the consideration of it.

Long has it been the subject of controversy in the church. In earlier as well as later times has it been impugned and opposed. What opposition was made to it by the ancient Pelagians and Semi-pelagians is well known. The sect of the Pelagians appeared about the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century. It is denominated from the founder of it, Pelagius; who is said to have been a native of Britain; but travelled and propagated his errors in Asia and Africa, as well as Europe.

The scriptural doctrine of predestination has been, in later times, corrupted and perverted by Jesuits, Arminians, and others. The Jesuits are well known to be a religious order in the Roman church, founded in the sixteenth century by Ignatius Loyola, a native of Spain. This society evidently borrowed its name from Jesus. It has of late years been abolished with the consent of all the Catholic powers. The Arminians are denominated from their leader, Arminius, a famous minister of Amsterdam. He flourished in the sixteenth century. The instances in which he differed from the Calvinists I need not now enumerate. The great doctrine of *predestination* is well known to have been one of them.

Predestination, as it relates to both angels and men, consists of two branches generally distinguished by the names of *election* and *reprobation*.

I may say a few things on it as it relates to angels. That part of the angels were elected, and part of them passed by, is certain. Of the former the scripture makes express mention. *I charge thee*, says the Apostle Paul to his son Timothy, *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the ELECT ANGELS, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.* 1 Tim. v. 21. Of the non elect, and now fallen angels, two other Apostles make no less express mention. *God spared not the ANGELS that SINNED, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.* 2 Pet. ii. 4. *The ANGELS which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.* Thus the election of a part of the angels is mentioned in the scriptures; and the non-election of others is necessarily implied. Election, as the word literally signifies, denotes the choice of a part out from among the whole. Had all the angels been appointed to be confirmed in their original state of purity and

felicity,

felicity, they might have been said to be *predestinated*; but could, with no propriety, have been said to be *elect*. In election a part is pitched upon; others are passed by. Whether the greater part of the angels were chosen, or not chosen, we are not told. The number of the standing, and also of the fallen, is to us unknown. But that the number of both the former and the latter is very great is certain. The design of the election of a great part of the angels is obvious. It was to confirm them in their first estate, and prevent their fall.

It is natural to ask here, whether there be any difference between the election of angels and that of men; and, if there be, in what it consists. That there is a wide difference between the two is evident. It may consist especially in three things.

1<sup>st</sup>, In election the angels were foreseen and considered as holy and happy beings. They were chosen, as I said already, to be confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness. In election men were foreseen and considered as sinful and fallen creatures.

2<sup>dly</sup>, The angels are no where said to have been elected *in Christ*. It has, indeed, been the opinion of great and good men, that, though the angels never sinned, and consequently never needed Christ as a Redeemer, he is to them a confirming head. But sinners of mankind are expressly said to have been elected in Christ. For others as well as himself the Apostle speaks thus—*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us IN HIM before the foundation of the world.* Eph. i. 3, 4.

3<sup>dly</sup>, Sinners of mankind are said to have been chosen to salvation. Thus the Apostle bespeaks the believing Thessalonians—*We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you TO SALVATION, through sanctification*

*sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* 2 Theff. ii. 13. But no where are angels said to have been chosen to salvation. To it they could not be chosen. They never sinned to need a Saviour.

The election of a part of the angels implies the non-election of others. This is usually called REPROBATION. According to the definition of it, in the answer which I have quoted from the Larger Catechism, it implies in it two things; *preterition* and *preordination* of the objects of it to that punishment which they, in time, incur by their sins. But what I have to say on this tremendous subject, I shall postpone till I consider it in relation to men. I should, therefore, proceed to the great subject of the predestination of mankind, including both the election of a part of them, and the non-election of others. Sublime, mysterious subject! It has been pled that this subject is of such a nature, that to introduce it into the pulpit, and discuss it before a popular audience, is improper, if not dangerous. That it ought to be treated with peculiar caution and delicacy is certain. But that it is a part of the revealed will of God, and that revealed things belong unto us and to our children, who can deny? However, as it is expressly mentioned in the answer to a subsequent question of the Catechism, I have resolved to delay the consideration of it till I come to that place.

Having postponed the solution of several difficulties in relation to the divine decrees, as they refer to the creatures in general, till I have an opportunity to explain the works of providence; and the consideration of the election and non-election of men, till I enter on the elucidation of the answer to the following question—“Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?” I shall, for the present, dismiss the subject of the decrees with a few reflections.

How derogatory to the sovereignty, the prescience, the perfection, the immutability of God, is the Socinian

notion that the decrees of God are not eternal! Some of them the Socinians can allow to be, in a qualified sense, eternal. Others they will not admit to be in any respect eternal. But that God from eternity infallibly foreknew, and foreappointed every thing which comes to pass in time, may be inferred from the perfection of his nature; and is often intimated to us in the scriptures.

How unworthy of God is the notion of the Pelagians and Semi-pelagians, whether ancient or modern, that many things are decreed in a conditional and uncertain manner! Did not the omniscient Being, from everlasting, foreknow all the circumstances in which his creatures can possibly be placed in time, and how they act severally in these circumstances? Are things past and to come with God as they are with us? Is his knowledge imperfect and progressive as ours is? Can he be in hesitation or suspense about any of his creatures or any of their actions?

The divine decree, foreordaining whatsoever comes to pass, ever must be understood in a consistency with that freedom with which rational and accountable creatures are supposed to act; and with the essential distinction between actions natural and necessary, and actions which are fortuitous and contingent. The fatality or destiny of the ancient Stoics the scripture knows not. The actual futurity and accomplishment of every thing decreed from eternity is, indeed, infallibly certain. It cannot but happen. And that evil actions, no less than good, are determined to be, I am in the sequel, to evince from the scriptures. But the foreappointment of an evil action does not influence or prompt the rational agent to commit it. He acts with as full freedom as if no such preordination had obtained from eternity. The inclination, the propensity, to evil does not originate in God or his purposes. It originates in the depravation of the sinful person that



that commits it. God cannot be the author of sin. He, no doubt, permits it, otherwise it could not happen; but he cannot possibly excite to the commission of it.

What hath been said accounts for the futurition of one thing, and the non-futurition of another no less possible, or even likely, than the former. To the eternal decrees, as their proper source, may all the works of time be traced; and into divine sovereignty may the decrees be resolved. How conspicuous is sovereignty in the purposes of God, and in the accomplishment of them! Might not the self-sufficient God, had he pleased, have existed for ever alone? Let us look back into the ages which preceded the commencement of time. We find the infinite God existing alone; and infinitely happy in the fruition of his all-sufficient Self. But we, at the same time, find him in sovereignty purposing within himself to produce a vast variety of other beings. He is the fountain of being and felicity. How delightful an employment for us to travel back beyond the boundaries of time, and the limits of creation; to contemplate the divine Being forming designs for bringing into existence and imparting felicity to millions of millions of other beings; who, had it not been for his sovereignty and benignity, must have lain for ever in the womb of non-entity! Great God, what are the creatures, that thou shouldest, from eternal ages, have concerted measures for bringing them into being, and making them happy! Lord, what is man! *As the heavens are high above the earth, so are thy thoughts above our thoughts, and thy ways above our ways.*

Is it so? Is every thing that happens in time determined from eternity? Then let us, without repining, submit to our lot on earth. Whether we be in prosperity or in adversity, afflicted or comforted, each of us may adopt Job's words—*He performeth the thing that is appointed*, which he himself, from beginningless ages,  
appointed

appointed for me: and many such things are with him. Job xxiii. 14. Often, indeed, have we a sinful hand in procuring evil things to ourselves, and provoking the Lord to withhold good things from us. But, if we be the children of God, he will over-rule all things, the very worst that can possibly befall us, for our good in a subserviency to his glory. *We know, on the ground of the faithful promise of God, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose.* Rom. viii. 28.

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## The Execution of the Decrees.

ISA. XLVI. 10.

*Declaring the end from the beginning, and from the ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*

**L**OW as religion was when Isaiah lived and prophesied, a godly remnant still remained. To the important truth, that the God of Israel was the only living and true God, they gave the most explicit and faithful testimony. On this account he styles them *his witnesses*. *I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you; therefore ye are MY WITNESSES, saith the Lord, that I am God.* Of his supreme Deity, the words, which I have read, contain two indisputable proofs. Omniscience is here attributed to him. All things to come, as well as past, are known to him. From the commencement of time, nay, from the beginningless ages of eternity, he knew every thing that has happened, and every thing that is to happen. Many things past, and especially many things to come, are to us altogether unknown. Things  
past

past and things to come, however, are equally known to God. Omnipotence, as well as omniscience, is here ascribed to him. Every thing consonant to his nature, and that does not imply a contradiction, he can do. All his purposes and designs he is able to accomplish. The accomplishment of them nothing can defeat. This he declares in the words of the text—*My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*

Most naturally does this text introduce the answer to the following question in the Catechism—*How doth God execute his decrees? God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence.* As this answer is sufficiently plain, and introductory to a number of subsequent answers, it does not require much explanation. It goes upon a supposition, that what purposes or designs soever God has formed, he either has already accomplished, or he will infallibly accomplish them. Two things especially occasion the non-fulfilment of our designs, our *mutability* and our *impotency*. We form resolutions, and we alter them, or we are unable to fulfil them. Obstacles, which we neither could see nor prevent, come in the way. But, as for God, he is at once omnipotent and immutable. Were any particular explanation of the answer necessary, I might divide it into three particulars; and speak of the infinite worker, *God*; of the important work attributed to him, *the execution of his decrees*; and of the particular instances in which he fulfils his designs, *the works of creation and providence.*

1st. The infinite worker, *GOD.* The three-one God is intended. He, and he only, was fit to form such designs, and he only is able to accomplish them. What cannot his wisdom contrive? What cannot his power perform?

2dly, The important work ascribed to this infinite agent, *THE EXECUTION OF HIS OWN ETERNAL DECREES.* Often are our schemes unproductive. Our designs and expectations

expectations are abortive and unsuccessful. Far otherwise is it with God. What he hath determined he either hath done, or he will infallibly do. A superior among the creatures decrees a certain thing, and an inferior executes it. But the great God executes his own decrees. There is not another being superior, or even equal, to him. He executes all his decrees. The non-execution of an undertaking necessarily implies imperfection. But God, in every view, is infinitely perfect. With the most evident propriety does Job address him thus—*I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.* chap. xlii. 2.

3dly, The particular instances in which he executes his decrees, THE WORKS OF CREATION AND PROVIDENCE. Of the glorious work of creation, and also of the mysterious works of providence, I will have occasion to speak in the sequel. The works in which the divine decrees are accomplished are some times distributed into creation, providence, and redemption. Redemption is, in the answer, manifestly included in providence. It is here understood, that there is a certain established order in which God executes his eternal decrees. Creation preceded the works of providence, and paved the way for them. Was not this earth created that it might be the theatre on which the great work of our redemption was to be acted? Did not the all-wise God permit sin to enter, that from it he might take occasion to glorify himself in the salvation of sinners? One link in the great chain of the divine designs and dispensations hangs upon another. Events are accomplished in a manner, and by means, of which we never could have thought. Trials, the most unexpected, befall us. Deliverances, in a manner no less unexpected, are wrought for us. In relation to all which diversified incidents each of us may say in words already quoted—*He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him.*

Does God accomplish all his purposes and designs? What reason have his enemies to be afraid, and his friends to rejoice? What reason has every unbelieving, impenitent sinner to say—*My flesh trembleth for fear of thee. and I am afraid of thy judgments. Who knoweth the power of thine anger, O Lord? According to thy fear so is thy wrath* It is, truly, a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; when, as a God of judgment, he comes to execute his fearful threatenings, and to perform his strange work in the earth. But let the friends of God and religion be animated and comforted. His gracious and faithful word he has not forgotten. For a season, the accomplishment of his promises and the answer of the prayers of his people may be delayed. The delay, however, is only for a limited time. The period is at hand when, to their ineffable joy, they will have occasion to say—*Lo. this is our God, we have waited for him. and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.*

## Creation.

JOB xxxviii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

*Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?  
 Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the  
 measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretch-  
 ed the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations there-  
 of fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof, when  
 the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God  
 shouted for joy?*

**W**HAT a stupendous work is creation! What a magnificent description does the all-powerful Creator give us of it in the passage which I have selected and read to you! It is at once one of the most delightful and the most profitable employments to contemplate it and the perfections of Deity so illustriously displayed in it.

Of this great work, in conformity to the scriptures, our Shorter Catechism gives us an account, at once concise and comprehensive. *The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.* The Compilers of this well devised summary, having spoken of the eternal purposes of God, proceed to inform us of the execution of them. The preceding answer speci-

fies two instances in which he executes them, the works of creation, and the works of providence. Accordingly, of creation they give us a description in the answer under review.

To revelation are we indebted for authentic information concerning the origin of the universe. That, among the most sagacious and learned in the Pagan world, there is no small diversity of sentiment on this subject, is well known. The Mosaic account of creation in the first chapter of the first of all the sacred books, is most explicit and particular. To it agree all the after intimations of creation, in its origin and matter, form and end, with which the inspired writers furnish us. In the scripture-account of creation, two things are affirmed.

*1st* It is asserted, that the world had a beginning. This is necessarily implied in the Catechism, in opposition to the irrational as well as antisciptural notion, that the world existed from eternity. Concerning the supposed eternity of the world, indeed, Pagan philosophers are far from being agreed. In relation to it, a number of opinions have been formed and propagated. Some have only held the possibility of it; pretending that there is nothing inconsistent or absurd in the supposition that the universe might have existed from eternity. Others have held, that it actually did exist from everlasting. The abettors of this opinion are not a little divided among themselves. One holds that the world was formally, as well as materially, from eternity. In other words, not only did the matter, of which the world is made, exist from eternity, but it subsisted in that beautiful form in which we now behold it. Another holds, that the world was not from eternity such as we now behold it; but that the matter ever existed of which it was formed, when, in due time, it assumed that figure, in which we now see it. A third, though he admits that the world was from eternity, denies that  
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it was self-existent; and pleads that the creation of it, at that early period, must have been the work of an omnipotent agent, or Almighty God. All these different hypotheses have been invented and defended in the Heathen world. To such uncertainty and inconsistency are the unhappy inhabitants of our world exposed in periods and places unenlightened by the gospel.

The eternity of the world was held by the Peripatetics. They were the followers of Aristotle. This famous philosopher was born about 350 years before the Christian æra. He was a disciple of Plato; and afterwards tutor to Alexander the Great. The Peripatetics held, that the world existed from everlasting ages in the shape in which we now see it; and that from beginningless ages there has been a regular succession of men and other creatures. They are said, however, to have held the being of God, and that, though he and the world are co-eternal, he existed prior to it in order, though not in duration. The connection between the supreme Being and the world in point of co-eternity, they have illustrated by the similitude of the sun and its light; the sun being prior to the light in order, not in time. The moment the sun exists he emits light.

Another hypothesis was maintained by that sect of philosophers known by the name of Epicureans. They are denominated from Epicurus, by birth an Athenian, and cotemporary with Aristotle. He is said to have been one of the greatest philosophers of his age. What his followers hold in relation to the eternity and origin of the world is this—That, as the matter of the universe is self-existent, it must have been eternal; that from all eternity there was an unbounded space, in which an infinite number of particles of matter, called Atoms, were in incessant irregular motion; and that at a certain period, without design, or any superior hand to direct them, these particles or atoms, by accident, met and formed that great and beautiful world in which we dwell.

dwelt. What! A world of such magnitude and such beauty, in every part of which design and regularity are so conspicuous, formed by a fortuitous concurrence, or accidental combination of atoms of unanimated, undesigning matter! Who can believe it?

With the Epicureans the Cartesians agree in part; and in other instances differ from them. They coincide with the Epicureans in the opinion that matter and motion, which existed from everlasting produced this beautiful world. But they hold that there is a supreme Being, who from everlasting created that matter, and imparted motion to it; and, having produced and put it in motion, he left it to itself; that, as a great machine, it might move by the laws of mechanism; which mechanical motion, without any immediate agency of the original Creator, produced all things, both celestial and terrestrial.

Such are the principal hypotheses which have been invented and held in the Heathen world, in relation to the origin of the universe. Is it not a pity that the wild romantic dreams of Heathen philosophers on this subject, should ever have had encouragement from any who have pretensions to Christianity?

In proof of the pretended eternity of the world, it has been pled, that, as God ever has existed and is infinitely good, he must ever have manifested his being and benignity to his creatures. But persons, who reason thus, do not recollect, that, in all his manifestations and communications to his creatures, he is not impelled by any natural necessity, but acts according to the determinations of his sovereign will. In opposition, therefore, to all the fabulous hypotheses concerning the origin of the world which have been broached, the account of it in the answer goes upon the supposition, that the world once was not. God once existed alone. But at a certain period he caused numberless other beings to exist. That God once was alone, and, at a certain period, brought

brought the world into being, according to the determination of his own sovereign will, is the constant and uniform doctrine of the scriptures—*BEFORE the mountains were brought forth ere ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.* Psal. xc. 2. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way. before his works of old* Prov. viii. 22. That our divine Redeemer here refers to a period prior to the production of the worlds, appears from what follows. For he adds—*I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, ere ever the earth was. When there were no depths, when there were no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.* verses 23,—26. That the world was not from eternity, but had a beginning, is necessarily implied in our Lord's words—*Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD* Matth. xxv. 34. No less necessarily is it implied in the words of the Apostle Paul—*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN.* 2 Tim. i. 9.

It has been a prevailing opinion among several nations, particularly the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Chinese, that, though the world did not exist from eternity, it is of very great antiquity. In relation to the long duration of it, very extraordinary things are to be found in history. But such accounts are unsupported, and manifestly fabulous. As a strong presumption that the Mosaic account of the commencement and creation of the world is just, and that it cannot have subsisted so long as the romantic accounts of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and others, pretend, it has often been observed, that

that the invention of the most ancient arts, and the erection of the earliest empires, are of no very great antiquity. According to scripture-chronology, the world has not existed 6000 years. How long it is yet to continue in its present state we know not. *It is not for us to know the times or the seasons which God hath put in his own power.*

2dly, It is here understood, that creation is the peculiar work of God; that he has reserved creative power to himself, and has not communicated it to any of his creatures. Now, that it is the peculiar prerogative of the infinite God, in contradistinction to all his creatures, to create, the scripture often intimates—*Which ALONE spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waters of the sea.* Job ix. 8. *Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens above, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.* This is one of the many things which distinguish the true God from the idols of the nations. By it the Deity of the former is irrefragably proved. *For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.* Psal. xcvi. 5. *But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting king—Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens. He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom; and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.* Jer. x. 10, 11, 12.

Having made these preliminary observations, I am now to explain the account which the answer gives of creation. And it may be necessary

I. To ascertain the proper meaning of the word CREATION. This is the more necessary, that it is far from having one determinate signification in the scriptures. It sometimes denotes a supernatural work of the Holy Ghost;

Ghost; by which sinners, spiritually dead and unholy, are regenerated and sanctified—*If any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE*, or, as the word might be translated, a *new creation*. 2 Cor. v. 17. By it may be intended the creatures formed, rather than the formation of them. *Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the CREATION*. 2 Pet. iii. 4. It signifies the preservation, as well as the production, of the world. *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were CREATED*. Rev. iv. 11. Here is a *present*, as well as a *past*, creation. Often has the preservation of the world been called a continued creation. That power which produced all things out of nothing, and it only, is sufficient to support and uphold all things.

But the word in the answer evidently denotes the production and formation of all things at first. I purposely use two words; for creation is twofold, *primary* and *secondary*, or immediate and mediate. The former signifies the production of a thing out of nothing, the latter the formation of a material being out of pre-existent matter; but matter so indisposed and unfit, that he only who produced the matter can form such a creature out of it. For an exemplification of this twofold creation, I refer you to the first chapter of Genesis. On the first of the six days, the Almighty Creator produced out of nothing that vast mass of matter, out of which all the several species of material creatures were formed; and on the subsequent days, he actually formed out of it all the various species of creatures, of which the Mosaic account of the creation informs us. We have

II. The *extent* of the work of creation, ALL THINGS. The introduction to the account, which Moses gives us of it, divides it into two great parts, the *heavens* and the *earth*.

It speaks of heavens in the plural number. Different astronomers have spoken of different numbers of hea-

vens. Some have reckoned no fewer than seventy. But the most common distribution of them is into three. The first is called the *Aerial* heaven. This is otherwise called the *Air*, or that atmosphere which surrounds our earth. The second is called the *Ætherial*, or stary heaven. The third is called the *Empyrean* heaven. Solomon designs this *the heaven of heavens*. 2 Chron. vi. 18. There is the earth as well as the heavens. This, indeed, is a very small part of creation. It is commonly called the *Terraqueous Globe*; a *globe*, on account of its oval figure; and *terraqueous*, to intimate that it consists partly of earth, and partly of water.

What the answer intends by *all things*, the inspired writer to the Hebrews expresses by *worlds*. Heb. i. 2. The one great universe consists of a vast multiplicity of parts. The phrase *all things*, which the Compilers of the Catechism use, may be borrowed from John i. 3. or Col. i. 16. or Rev. iv. 11.; in all which places the phrase occurs. Of the all things included in creation, I intend to give a more particular account in the sequel.

III. By *what* God made all things, THE WORD OF HIS POWER. This phrase, the word of his power, has, indeed, been differently interpreted. It has been understood of the *personal* Word, the Son of God, who is not inferior, but equal to his divine Father; for, as saith the Apostle, *By HIM God made the worlds*. Heb. i. 2. From this text the adversaries of our Lord's divinity have inferred his inferiority to the Father; pretending that he was only an instrument which the Father used in creation. But that creation was his proper work, no less than the Father's, we have seen already. The phrase *by him*, which, in this account of creation, is applied to the Son, is, in another place, applied to the Father. Rom. xi. 36. It cannot, therefore, be pled, that in the one place it means an inferior

rior agent, and in the other a superior. The same phrase, in different accounts of creation, is applied to the Father and the Son, to intimate, that in that work, the different divine persons had an equal concern.

By the phrase in the answer, *the word of his power*, may rather be understood an act of his irresistible will. It may be borrowed from the Apostle's account of our divine Redeemer in Heb. i. 3. *Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the WORD OF HIS POWER.* May it not be expressed by the *word* of his power, to intimate the facility with which God effected the work of creation? He has only to speak, and it is done. His word has in it power which nothing can resist. How eminently was his resistless power exemplified in the instantaneous production of light! *He said, LET THERE BE LIGHT, and there was light!* Independently of him we cannot think, speak, or act. But in being and in operation he is equally independent. It is said, indeed, that in *Six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he RESTED and was REFRESHED.* EXOD. xxxi. 17. But does this mean that he was wearied with his work? No. *The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, NEITHER IS WEARY.* Isa. xl. 28. He *rested*; that is, he ceased to produce any new species of creatures. The individuals of the different species are multiplied still, but not the species themselves. He was *refreshed*; that is, on a review of his works, which exactly corresponded to the model and plan he had in his infinite mind from eternity, he was satisfied and pleased with them. This leads me

IV. To consider the *time* and *order* in which God made all things. For my directory here, I take the Mosaic account of creation in the first chapter of Genesis. The absurdity of the supposition that the world existed from eternity, and the improbability of the

chronology of certain eastern nations, according to which, though it had a beginning, it must have subsisted millions of years, we have seen already.

That by the creation of the heavens, Gen. i. 1. we are to understand the production of them out of nothing, I also take for granted. That certain interpreters, even among Christians, have understood the words of Moses otherwise, I am aware. It has been apprehended, that the world existed long before the period to which the first of Genesis refers; and that by the creation, of which that chapter gives us an account, we are by no means to understand the first production of it out of nothing. The abettors of this opinion, however, are somewhat divided among themselves. One fancies that this earth had been for a long series of ages, previous to the Mosaic account, inhabited by generations of human beings; but had fallen into a decayed and ruinous condition. The Mosaic creation, according to this hypothesis, denotes only the reparation and renovation of the earth. Another imagines that the chaos subsisted long before the creation of which Moses speaks, in an unformed and confused state. All that is intended by the Mosaic creation, according to *this* hypothesis, is an arrangement and proper formation of the several parts of the world, that it might be a commodious habitation for mankind. How fruitful is human invention! How precarious and unsafe a guide in religion is a luxuriant fancy!

One of the many questions in relation to the Mosaic creation, which have been agitated among interpreters, is in what extent it is to be understood. One restricts it to that part of the great universe which has been allotted for the temporary residence of mankind, which Moses calls the earth, as contradistinguished from the heavens. Another holds a middle opinion. He neither confines it to our earth, nor extends it to the whole universe; but by it understands what among Astronomers is usually



ally called our Solar System. But the opinion generally received among the orthodox is, that, by the heavens and the earth, Moses intends the great universe, the higher as well as the lower parts of it, the worlds which we know, and the worlds which we know not.

Another question relating to the creation is, at what season of the year, time and the world commenced. As to this, there are especially two opinions. One imagines it was in the spring. Another apprehends it was in the autumn. The perfection in which every thing was produced at first has been supposed to favour the latter opinion. But on this circumstance how small stress is to be laid! Do not spring and autumn vary exceedingly in different situations and climates? In support of this opinion, however, another circumstance has been pled, which perhaps has some weight in it. In the early ages of the world, the year is said to have commenced, not only among the Jews, but also among the other nations of the world in the autumn. That it was so among the Jews is certain. In the ages posterior to their coming out of Egypt, they had a twofold reckoning of their years, the one *sacred*, and the other *civil*. The former, which was instituted on that important occasion, and, in all time coming, regulated their religious festivals and solemnities, commenced in the spring. The latter, according to which, they calculated their time in preceding ages, is known to have begun in the autumn.

But, passing these and similar questions as unnecessary and immaterial, I shall, in a cursory manner, review the several parts of creation according to the order in which Moses has arranged them. These works are said to have been accomplished in SIX DAYS. By these six days some have understood six years. But, for this supposition, there does not seem to be so much as the shadow of foundation. That *days* are sometimes in the prophetic writings put for *years* is admitted. But to  
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argue from obscure prophecies to plain historical narrations, is very unjust and unfair. That God could have accomplished the works of creation in a *moment* as easily as in six days, who, that acknowledges his omnipotence, can doubt. It pleased him, however, to perform them one after another, in a gradual manner, that we may survey them in an orderly manner, and be furnished with a pattern for dispatching our secular work in six days, and that we may in a religious manner rest on the seventh. Let us now review the works of the *first* day. On this day, the omnipotent Creator made the *heavens*, the *earth*, and the *light*. Gen. i. 1,—5.

*First*, The HEAVENS. The heavens, as I said formerly, are usually understood to be three. These I may consider, according to their situation with regard to us. There is the *lowest*, the *first*, or the *aereal* heaven. By this we understand, that vast collection of air which encircles the earth which we inhabit, to a great height; the principal properties of which are *fluidity*, *gravity*, and *elasticity*. We commonly call it the *air*. In it we breathe, alternately drawing it in and forcing it out by the action of the lungs. It is known among Geographers by the name of the *Atmosphere*. The real altitude or height of it cannot be ascertained. It is, however, generally supposed to extend about 50 miles from the surface of our earth.

There is the second, the *middle*, the *ætherial*, or the *starry* heaven; called the second in contradistinction to the first; the middle, because it occupies an intermediate place between the lowest and the highest heavens; the ætherial to distinguish it from the aerial; and the starry heaven, because it comprehends that vast region in which the heavenly luminaries are ranged, and perform their periodical revolutions. And there is the *third*, the *highest*, or *empyrean* heaven. This to us, indeed, is an unseen and an unknown world. One of the greatest and best of men that ever lived, and who had been  
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in that world, tells us, that what he saw, and what he heard in it, it is impossible for any in the state of mortality to utter. 2 Cor. xii. It is understood to be the glorious residence of the Sovereign of the universe; and the scene of the beatific vision, with which angelic souls, and the spirits of just men made perfect, are favoured.

When it is affirmed, that, on the first of the six days, God created the heavens, the *third* heaven, I apprehend, includes the inhabitants of it. The angels, as is well known, are the original inhabitants of heaven. It has, indeed, been supposed by some, that the angels were created many ages prior to that creation of the heavens of which Moses speaks. Others have thought, that they were not created till the sixth day, and even posterior to the creation of man. But, considering what Moses has said of the creation of the hosts of heaven, in connection with the creation of heaven itself, in Gen. ii. 1. and comparing with it what we read in Job xxxviii. 4,—11. of the song of the holy angels, stiled the *morning stars*, and *the sons of God*, when they witnessed the works of creation, of which that lofty passage speaks, it appears in the highest degree probable, that they were created on the first of the six days, neither prior nor posterior to it.

That there are such spiritual celestial intelligences, I hope, I need not prove. Their existence, indeed, has been, and is denied. That the sect of the Sadducees among the Jews denied it, the inspired writer of the Book of the Acts informs us. Considering that they acknowledged the scriptures of the Old Testament, at least the five Books of Moses, in which there is very frequent mention of angels, this must, no doubt, seem surprising. The supposition of their existence runs through the whole scriptures. There are especially two names by which these celestial intelligences are known, *spirits*, and *angels*, the former a name of *nature*; denoting an immaterial and immortal being, the latter a name

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of office ; intimating the orders which they occasionally receive from the Sovereign of the world, and execute in all parts of his vast empire. The number of the angels is to us a secret. But, from a variety of hints sufficiently plain, both in the Old Testament and the New, we may learn that it is very great. Among the angels there is supposed to be a certain subordination and order. They have been divided into two great classes. The first comprehends those who are supposed to be the constant attendants and residents in the Court of heaven. The second consists of those who are occasionally employed as the missionaries of heaven in other parts of the universe, particularly in our lower world. But this distinction seems to have been unknown to the Apostle Paul ; for, writing to the Hebrews, he speaks of the angels thus—*Are they not ALL ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation.* chap. i. 14.

Others have divided the angels into four orders ; comprehended under four illustrious heads, *Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael.* They have also been distributed into nine orders ; and these nine orders have been subdivided into three hierarchies.

As for the hosts of the middle heaven, or celestial luminaries, I will have occasion to speak of them in the sequel.

*Secondly, The EARTH.* This is that part of the universe which is destined to be the temporary residence of mankind. It is an opaque body, deriving its light from that great luminary the sun, of the creation of which the subsequent part of the Mosaic history speaks. Our globe, as its name indicates, is of a round, or rather an oval form. It consists of different materials, especially earth and water. Of the internal parts or bowels of it, we have only a very imperfect and superficial knowledge. Of its surface, so far as it has been discovered, about three fourths are covered with water. The habitable

bitable part of it consists of two great continents, the one on this side, and the other on the opposite side of it; and an almost infinite number of islands. Our side of it is subdivided into *Asia*, on the east; *Africa*, on the south-west; and *Europe*, on the north-west quarter of it. The other side contains that vast country which we call *America*. This is by far the largest and last discovered of the four great quarters of the world. Its extent is so great, that, notwithstanding the centuries which have elapsed since the first discovery of it, its boundaries have never yet been fully ascertained.

Our earth is one of the primary planets; and is found to move round its own axis once in twenty-four hours, and round the sun in twelve months. This is the earth, of the creation of which, and its condition previous to the accomplishment of the works of the subsequent days, Moses speaks in Gen. i. 1, 2.

*Thirdly*, LIGHT. What we call the heavenly luminaries were not created till the fourth day. It may, therefore, be queried, what is here intended by light. By it many have understood the infinite number and variety of luminous particles which, on the fourth day, were collected, and formed those vast bodies of light and heat which we now call our heavenly luminaries. What a comfortless world must this have been previous to the production of light! What an agreeable and useful thing is light! No less amazing is it for its velocity than its other properties. It is by Naturalists generally supposed to fly no less than ten millions of miles in a minute. Wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty!

The works of the *second* day were two, the *firmament*, and the *division* of the waters under the firmament from the waters above it. Gen. i. 6, 7, 8.

*First*, The FIRMAMENT; or, as the word signifies, the *expanse*. By this may be intended what I called the *aerial* heaven; or, according to others, both the aerial and the *atherial* heavens. Nor is this an un-

necessary repetition. Either the heaven or heavens, mentioned among the works of the first day, may denote the highest heaven, or what Solomon calls *the heaven of heavens*; or, if the lower heavens be included, the materials of them might be produced on the first day, and on this second day might be arranged as we now behold them. The

*Second Work* of this day was the DIVISION of the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above it. What is intended by the waters *under* the firmament, is manifest; namely, the waters contained in our *seas, lakes, rivers, and caverns* of the earth. As for the waters above the firmament, there are especially two opinions concerning them. Either Moses intends the great bodies of the waters which are supposed to be contained in the other planets. In the moon, for instance, many think they discover seas and islands. This opinion goes on the supposition, that, previous to this division, all the waters of the different planets were undistinguished and jumbled together; and that on this day, the portion of water belonging to each of the worlds, which consists of earth and water, was assigned to it. Or the meaning is, on this day the air, which surrounds our earth, was so adjusted and attempered, that a proper distinction was made between the water on the surface of our globe as well as in the bowels of it, and the waters contained in the aqueous particles which are carried about in the meteors and clouds which swim in the higher regions of the atmosphere.

The works of the *third day* are two, the *collection* of the waters under the firmament, and the *infusion* of a power of vegetation into the earth. Gen. i. 9,—13.

*First*, On this day, the Almighty Creator COLLECTED the waters under the firmament into the hollow places, which he had allotted and prepared as proper receptacles for them; and thus separated between the sea and the dry land. *He shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth*

forth as if it had issued out of the womb. He made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, and brake up for it his decreed places, and set bars and doors, and said, HITHERTO SHALT THOU COME, BUT NO FARTHER: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. Job xxxviii. 8,—11. It has been supposed, that, previous to this third day, the surface of the earth was smooth, without hills and vallies; and that the omnipotent Creator, either immediately, or, by internal convulsions of the earth, similar to the earthquakes of later times, which have been called subterraneous thunder, agitated the earth so, as to raise one part of its surface and to sink another. Thus were the waters under the firmament collected into their proper places, confined within their proper boundaries, and the sea and the dry land duly distinguished one from another. The

*Second Work* of this day, was the INFUSION into the earth of a power of vegetation, in virtue of which, it began to produce various species of plants and flowers, shrubs and trees. The waters were intended for the habitation of a vast variety of animals of the aqueous kind; and the dry land was intended to be the habitation of a variety of terrestrial animals. Both were intended for such animals as are commonly called *Amphibious*; that is, animals which can live either on land or in water. It behoved the earth, therefore, to yield sufficient sustenance for these numerous living creatures.

On the *fourth* day, the GREAT CREATOR made the heavenly bodies, the *sun, moon, and stars*. Gen. i. 14, —19.

*First*, The SUN. This vast body is the source of light to our part of the great universe. The sun, as well as each of the fixed stars, is understood to be an immense collection of inflamed matter; the heat of which is preserved by its amazing magnitude, and the mutual action and re-action between it and the rays which are emitted from it. It remains undiminished; and the parts of it are preserved from fuming away, not

only by their fixity, but also by the vast weight and density of the atmosphere incumbent upon them. The astonishing distance between it and our earth is supposed to be no less than eighty millions of miles. The sun, according to the lowest reckoning, is a hundred thousand times bigger than our earth. The

*Second Work* of this day was the MOON. This is one of the dark bodies called planets, which revolve round the sun, and derive light and heat from him. It is a *secondary* planet, and is a constant attendant on our earth. The distance between the moon and our earth, is supposed to be no less than two hundred and forty thousand miles. By reflecting the light of the sun upon our world, the moon enlightens it during the night; and our earth in like manner, probably, enlightens the moon by reflecting the light of the sun upon it.

*Thirdly*, On this day the GLORIOUS CREATOR made the STARS. The stars in general are of two kinds, *fixed* and *wandering*. The former are usually, by way of eminence, called the *stars*. They may be called *fixed*, because they continually keep the same distance with regard to each other. The apparent different magnitudes of the stars are owing to their different distances from us. The number of the stars must be very great. An ordinary telescope is said to discover, in several places of the heavens, ten times as many stars as are visible to the naked eye. Each of the stars is supposed to be a sun, that enlightens and enlivens a number of planetary bodies which move round it; as our earth, and the other opaque bodies, belonging to our part of the universe, are illuminated by our sun. At such immense distances are the stars from us, that it is supposed a ball shot from a loaded cannon, and flying with undiminished velocity, would travel several hundred thousand years before it would reach the nearest of them. Several stars having become visible only in later years, it is supposed that, though light flies ten millions of miles in a minute, there must be stars at  
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such immense distances from us, that, notwithstanding they have been in the heavens for almost six thousand years, their light has not yet reached our world. Could we, to borrow the words of a beautiful and pious writer, soar beyond the moon, and pass through all the planetary choir; could we wing our way to the highest apparent star, and take our stand on one of these loftiest pinnacles of heaven; we would there see other skies expanded,—another sun—other stars—and other, perhaps, nobler systems established through the boundless dimensions of space. Even at the end of this vast tour, we would find ourselves advanced no farther than the suburbs of creation, and arrived only at the frontiers of the great JEHOVAH'S kingdom. What magnificent views, what grand ideas, of the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Deity do modern discoveries in astronomy give us! What insignificant creatures, what nothings are we! *When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; then say I, Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?* Psal. viii. 3, 4.

The *wandering* stars are usually called planets. They are called wandering, not only because they revolve round that sun or star which is the center of the system, or part of the universe to which they belong, but because they change their position with respect to the fixed stars. The planets are usually distributed into *primary* and *secondary*.

The comets are a kind of eccentric, roving luminaries; which, in some respects, are similar to the planets, and, in others, differ from them. Like the planets they are opaque, spherical, solid bodies. But their motions are quite eccentric and irregular.

On the *fifth* day, the GLORIOUS CREATOR did two things; he created the *fowls* of the air, and the *fishes* of the sea. Gen. i. 20,—23.

*First*, The FOWLS of the air. What a beautiful graduation

dation is there in the production of the inhabitants of this lower world! The great Creator first produced creatures without life, then creatures endowed with the lowest kind of life. Now, on the fifth day, he produced creatures furnished with a higher species of life. On the sixth day, as we will see, he produced beings endowed with the highest kind of life, of which creatures are capable. The fowls are of various species, of which I need not now speak particularly.

*Secondly*, The FISHES of the sea. The fishes have been distributed into various kinds. Various species of them we know; and of them there, no doubt, are many species which to us are altogether unknown. What striking proofs of the wisdom, as well as the power and the goodness, of the beneficent Creator, have we in the works of creation!

The works of the *sixth* and last day are two; the *production* of the beasts of the earth, and the *creation* of man. Gen. i. 24,—28.

*First*, The BEASTS of the earth. Having on the preceding day created the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, he now produced the beasts of the earth. Beasts, in the usual acceptation of the term, comprehend a variety of species—Beasts fit for food, for labour, and for sport. There are beasts tame and wild, great and small.

*Secondly*, The creation of MAN. This, truly, is the chief of the works of God in our lower world. Wonderfully is man made. How fit was it, that, as there was intended a gradation in the works of creation, man should be reserved for the last of them? Happily was this intended for man. As this earth was designed to be his temporary residence, it was fit that it should be prepared for him before he was created to enter on the possession of it. Of the creation of man, the answer to the following question gives us a particular account. To insist on it in this place would be improper. I go forward, therefore, to the

V. Particular in the division of the answer, the *condition* in which God made all things, VERY GOOD. Gen. i. 31. Goodness here might be considered in different views, according to the nature of the different subjects to which it is applied. Of moral goodness the inanimate and irrational creatures are incapable. But even creatures of this kind may be said to have been made physically good. The rational creatures were made morally good. Every part of the great work, in short, exactly answered to the model which the great Architect of the universe had formed in his infinite mind from everlasting ages. Accordingly, upon a survey and review of his works, he pronounces them all *very good*. To the brief account I have given of the stupendously glorious work of creation, I shall now subjoin a few of the many reflections which might be suggested for improvement.

In the *first place*, Though we are, in an especial manner, to express our obligations and gratitude to God for the great work of our redemption, the work of creation is by no means to be overlooked or forgotten. The latter as well as the former do we find the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, celebrating in the most joyful accents. *When he*, the Lamb who was slain, but now is in the midst of the throne, *had taken the mysterious book*, in order to disclose the important contents of it, *the four beasts*, or rather the four living creatures, *and the four and twenty elders*, fell down before the Lamb, *having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints, and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, not of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation—*Rev. v. 8, 9. Thus they celebrate the great and glorious work of redemption. And in the most elevated strains do we find these same living creatures and elders celebrating the great works of creation and providence—*When these beasts,*

or rather living creatures, give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast CREATED all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. chap. iv. 9, 10, 11. How do the works of creation enhance the wonders of redemption! How endearing the thought, that he who made such a variety of worlds, and worlds of such an astonishing extent, suffered, and bled, and died, for us.

In the *second place*, How admirably are the works of creation calculated for the manifestation of the perfections and the advancement of the glory of God! Could we travel over creation, to review the numberless worlds which it contains, and the unknown variety of beings which inhabit them, what astonishing traces of wisdom, what glorious effects of power, what a boundless profusion of goodness, would we discover! If the works of the Almighty Creator be such, what must he himself be! O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches. Plal. civ. 24. Lo! these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him. Job. xxvi. 14.

In the *third place*, Let us bewail the woful effects of sin on our world; and, with pleasure, look forward to that happy period, at which the direful consequences and effects of sin will be removed, and our earth restored to its original state—For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Rom. viii. 19,—21. We according to his promise, look for NEW heavens and a NEW earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

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## The Creation of Man.

GEN. i. 26, 27.

*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

WITH special solemnity is the account of man's creation introduced here. It was the joint work of the co-eternal Three. With what unanimity do they concur in it! In relation to it they speak thus—*Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness.*—Having considered creation in general, I am now to explain the description of the creation of man in particular, which we have in the following answer of the Catechism.—*God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; with dominion over the creatures.*

Self-knowledge ever has been esteemed most necessary, not only among Jews and Christians, but even

among Pagans. Most necessary is it that we know what man was, and what he now is. Let us go as far as Eden, and view man coming out of his divine Maker's hand. Happy man! But how precarious is sub-lunary blifs! *The crown is fallen from man's head. He has sinned.*

The answer goes upon the supposition that the creation of man was the peculiar work of God. The notion, that a human being could be produced by the influence of the heavenly bodies, or by the accidental combination of atoms, is absurd in the extreme. It is also understood here, that Adam was the first man, and the original progenitor of the human race. The supposition of pre-Adamites, or a race of human beings existing prior to Adam, is not only without foundation in the sacred scriptures, but contrary to them. That there could not be an unbeginning and infinite succession of generations of mankind, might be demonstrated from reason itself. That Adam was the first man, from whom all the other individuals of the human family descend, the scripture plainly declares. It has, indeed, been pretended, that the common opinion that Adam was the first man, goes upon a false interpretation of the Mosaic history. Gen. i. and ii. chapters. It is alledged, that the design of that history is not to inform us of the origin of mankind in general, but of the progenitors of the Jews. Accordingly it has been pretended, that Moses mentions a twofold creation, one of mankind in general, chap. i. 27. and another of the sacred race in particular, chap. ii. 7. That, in both places, there is mention of the creation of man is certain. But may not the same thing be intended in both? Such repetitions in the scriptures are not either unnecessary or improper. Is it not, to every unprejudiced person, manifest, that, till the sixth and last day of the creation, not one human being existed? Does not the beginning of the Mosaic history plainly inform us of the origin

origin of all mankind? Is it not in the sequel of that history, that the father of the sacred race makes his first appearance?

The supposition of a race of human beings prior to Adam has been thought to have countenance from the great number of the inhabitants of the world at the time of the martyrdom of Abel, in Gen. iv. 14, 16, 17.—But the supposition, that mankind were multiplied and numerous when that unnatural murder was committed, is not at all incompatible with the received doctrine, that Adam was the common parent of all mankind. For Seth, who was given in place of Abel, whom Cain slew, was not born till the hundred and thirtieth year of the world; and, as he was given in lieu of Abel, it is natural to think, that the death of that martyr might happen in the year immediately preceding. Now, as it is highly probable, that, in the first ages of the world, mankind were uncommonly fruitful, it is reasonable to suppose, that they then might be multiplied to many thousands. It is a prevailing opinion, that, at that period, there were not fewer than a hundred thousand of Adam's descendants in the world. Is it any wonder then, though, at that early period, we find human beings in distant places; and unknown to one another?

The opinion of the existence of the pre-Adamites has also been supposed to receive strength from the knowledge and cultivation of the arts, in the days of Adam, of which we have intimations in Gen. iv. 20, 21. But, when we recollect, that the world had existed for about an hundred and thirty years at the period to which the quotation from Genesis refers, we cannot be surpris'd to find, that such inventions and arts, as are more essential and necessary to human society, in the several stages of it, were, even at so early a period, known, and, to a considerable degree, cultivated.

In opposition to the received doctrine, that all the nations and individuals of mankind spread over the face

of the whole earth are the descendants of one man, as their common parent, certain writers have pled the visible diversity between one part of them and another. One circumstance especially has been pled; the great diversity of complexion by which one part of mankind is distinguished from another. That mankind are visibly distinguished by their white and black complexion is well known. But, will this prove that they are two different species of beings, or that they must have descended from different original parents? Can we not trace the diversity of complexion to other causes, and account for it in a full consistency with our received principles? To trace the history of that part of mankind called *Negroes*, and to account for their peculiar complexion, would lead into disquisitions and speculations foreign to my present design. How whimsical and ludicrous is the reason which the Mahometans assign for the diversity of complexion among mankind! They pretend, that the first man, after the manner of certain irrational animals, was made spotted, partly white and partly black; and that this is the cause of the different colours which obtain among his posterity! But, may not the different complexions of the human species be accounted for, in a manner far more rational and satisfactory? Now, there are, in the general, two ways in which writers have explained this point. It has been pretended, that the black complexion of part of the human species is *preternatural*, and that the reason of it is this—It was inflicted as a signal judgment on HAM, for the undutiful act of uncovering his father's nakedness; all the *Negroes* are the posterity of that unnatural son; and their black complexion is communicated from him to them. But it has been accounted for from natural causes, and in a way still more rational. The complexions of mankind are known to differ according to the climates which they inhabit. Every person acquainted with the world knows, that the *Negroes* are  
natives



natives of *Africa*. They inhabit a vast continent, not cooled by refreshing breezes from the sea. Their air is incessantly heated by sweeping along vast fiery sands. They have the sun *vertically* over their heads, and his beams reflected with great violence from their high mountains. —But the discussion of this subject I leave to others.

The time of man's creation I had occasion to mention already. The heavenly bodies had been properly adjusted and arranged; the sea and the dry land separated the one from the other; the sea stocked with fish; the earth with a variety of vegetables and animals for the benefit and comfort of man; and now he was created, and had assigned to him in the world a place that rendered him far superior to all the other inhabitants of it. He was appointed the vicegerent of the great God in this part of his vast universe. Accordingly, as I hinted already, his creation was attended with peculiar solemnity. The CO-ETERNAL THREE speak as if they had held a consultation on the important occasion. Far, indeed, is the infinite Creator above the need of deliberation, concerning any thing how mysterious, and how difficult soever. As for the notion, that, on this important occasion, he assumed the angels as co-adjutors to him, and consulted with them concerning this important part of his work, it is as devoid of foundation in the sacred oracles as unworthy of the perfections of Deity.

I shall now consider the several parts of the description of man's creation in the order of the answer. And I begin

I. With MAN. Now, as man is a compound being, I may take notice of the two constituent parts of his nature, and the order in which they were created. The *First* Constituent part of his nature, in the order in which they were created, is his BODY. This truly is a piece of the most exquisite workmanship. In the construction

struction and formation of it, how conspicuous is the wisdom of God! Let us recollect of what materials it is composed. The Lord God *formed* man's body *of the dust of the ground*. Formed of dust! humiliating thought! Why should any man be proud? proud dust! what a contradiction! We saw on a former occasion, that creation is twofold; *immediate*, or the production of something out of nothing; and *mediate*, which is the formation of a material being out of pre-existent matter so unfit, that he who produced the matter, and he only, can form such a being out of it. On the first of the six days was the whole mass of matter produced out of nothing, and on the last was man's body formed of a part of it. What a mysterious process is there in the conception and formation, organization and growth of the human body in the womb of her that is with child! Eccl. xi. 5. How apposite and proper the Psalmist's words—*Thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.* Psal. cxxxix. 13,—16. The

*Second* Constituent part of man is his SOUL. The scripture, indeed, seems sometimes to speak as if man consisted of three parts, a *spirit*, a *soul*, and a *body*; for, in behalf of the Thessalonian converts, the Apostle speaks thus—*The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole SPIRIT, and SOUL, and BODY, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thess. v. 23. *Spirit* has been understood to denote the *understanding* and *conscience*; *Soul* the *will* and *affections*. By the different expressions which he

here

here uses, the Apostle has been understood to refer to the notions of the Pythagorean, Platonic, and Stoic philosophers; who considered man as consisting of three parts, a rational soul intended by *spirit*, an animal or sensitive part expressed by *soul*, and a *body*. This notion, it has been imagined, is countenanced by the Mosaic account of the creation of man. It is said, *God formed man's body of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*; or, as it is in the original text, *lives*. But, it may suffice to say, that what we call the *animal* or sensitive life, is the result of the union between the soul and the body in the present state of mortality.

The rational soul, not only is one of the constituent parts of our nature, but the *superior* part. It may, however, be affirmed, that there is not perhaps any being whereof we have read or heard, the nature, the powers, the operations of which are less known to us. Mysterious, indeed, is the soul! Mysterious is the union which now subsists between soul and body! That each of us has a soul we know; but what the soul is we know not. A variety of questions in relation to it have been agitated. It is asked—What is the soul? It is easier to tell what it is not, than what it is. Accordingly, it is said to be an immaterial and immortal being. It is not compounded of parts; and, therefore, it cannot be resolved into them. It has no dimensions of length, breadth, or thickness. It is not the object of our external senses. We can neither see nor feel it.

It has again been asked—Whether all human souls were created at once, or are still created one after another, according as their respective bodies are prepared for the reception of them. Vain is it to plead in support of the former opinion, and in opposition to the latter, that God is said to have created ALL things on the first six days, and to have rested on the seventh; for, as I hinted already, when he is said to have rested on the seventh, it only means, that he then ceased to produce  
any

any new species of creatures, and not that he ceased to multiply the individuals of the species already produced. It is most probable, that the soul of each individual of mankind is produced at the moment of its infusion into the body.

It is further asked—Whether human souls be produced immediately by God, or come, in the way of transduction or propagation, from parents to children. In opposition to their coming in this way from parents to children, it is pled, that, if the soul be propagated by the parents, it must come either from the father or the mother, or both. The supposition of its coming from both seems to imply in it composition, and, therefore, cannot comport with the simplicity of the soul. If it comes from the father, our Saviour could have no human soul, for he had no human father. The supposition that it comes from the mother is no less improbable than any of the former. That our souls are not propagated by our parents, but immediately produced by God, and by him infused into our bodies, is manifest from the nature of them, and implied in the following texts and the like. *And they, Moses and Aaron, fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the GOD OF THE SPIRITS OF ALL FLESH, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?* Numb. xvi. 22. *The Lord stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and FORMETH THE SPIRIT OF MAN WITHIN HIM.* Zech. xii. 1. And one of the titles by which the great God is known, is, *THE FATHER OF SPIRITS.* Heb. xii. 9.

The order in which God proceeded in the creation of the two constituent parts of the first man is plainly pointed out to us in *Gen. ii. 7.* *The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.* Having first formed the body, he created and infused the soul into it. The body was intended to be the habitation, the  
soul

soul the inhabitant; and, therefore, it was fit that the former should be produced before the latter. Expressly does the Apostle call the human body a *house*; and, because it is taken from the dust, supported from it, and returns to it, an *earthly* house; and to intimate, that it only is for a season that the body, in its present state, is to be the residence of the soul, *the earthly house of this tabernacle*. 2 Cor. v. 1. In like manner does God still proceed in the formation of the bodies of mankind, and the infusion of their respective souls into them. The body is first formed in the womb, and, when it is properly organized, so as to be fit for the reception of the soul, the soul is produced, infused into it, and actuates it. Let us

II. Attend to the *diversity* of sex among mankind—God created man MALE and FEMALE. Man was now a holy, and consequently a happy person. He was placed in most advantageous and comfortable circumstances. But, even in paradise, he could not be happy without a companion fit for him. He is a being of the social kind. It is not *good* for him *to be alone*. That Eve was created on the same day with Adam, is, I think, in the highest degree, probable. Accordingly; Moses mentions the creation of the man and the woman, as if they had been both produced almost instantaneously. For thus he speaks—*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them*. Gen. i. 27.

Of the several circumstances of the creation of the woman, and the commencement of the conjugal relation between the man and her, we have an explicit account in the second chapter of Genesis. Does any ask—Why did God make the woman's body not immediately out of the dust, as he did Adam's, but of a part of his body? I might say, God in many instances gives no account of his matters to us. I can say further—Con-

sidering the near relation which was to subsist between the man and the woman, it was exceedingly fit that she should be made of such materials. The man existed prior to the woman; and, in this respect, was superior to her. But the woman, in the formation of her body, was superior to the man. His body was made immediately of the earth; her's of a part of his. Accordingly, it has been observed by an incomparable writer, from whom I reckon it an honour to borrow, that the word applied to the formation of the woman in Gen. ii. 22. which we translate *made*, literally signifies *built*. The body of the man was *made*, but the body of the woman, as a beautiful and stately palace, was *built*. This beautiful habitation is the first dwelling of all mankind.

The deep sleep into which Adam was cast, on this important occasion, is by some understood to have been an *ecstasy*, in which he had represented to his mind what was now done, and the mystical meaning of it. Immediately, therefore, on his awaking out of sleep, and seeing the woman, *Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.* Gen. ii. 23, 24. Woman was taken from man's *side*, not either from a higher or a lower part of him, to teach the woman not to usurp dominion over the man; and to teach the man to treat the woman, not as his *inferior*, but as his *equal*.

Different questions have been started in relation to the creation of the woman as related by Moses. It is asked—whether Adam at first had a *supernumerary* rib; and if he had not, how the place of that which was taken from his side, and of which the body of the woman was formed, was supplied. How easily are all such questions answered? Easy was it for God to cause part of Adam's flesh to grow into the consistence and solidity of a rib, or to create a new rib in place of that which was taken away.

It is asked, how a rib could furnish matter sufficient for the formation of the body of the woman. But how preposterous are such questions? What cannot God Almighty do? Can he of a small seed produce a great tree? And could he not of a rib form a human body?

It has been suggested, that in the history of the creation of the woman, there is not so much as a hint of the production of her soul, or the infusion of it into her body. But for making express mention of the creation or infusion of her soul, there was no necessity or occasion. For the manifest design of the sacred historian, was to relate, not what was *common* in the creation of both man and woman, but what was *peculiar* in the creation of the latter. In the account of man's creation in the answer, it is affirmed,

III. That God created him, both the man and also the woman, AFTER HIS OWN IMAGE—and in what this image of God consisted, the remaining part of the answer informs us. Though all the creatures were intended for the manifestation and advancement of the glory of God, one creature glorifies God in a manner of which another is incapable. And, though between God and all his creatures there is an infinite disproportion, certain creatures in intellectual and moral endowments resemble him as others do not. Both angelic beings and human, in their original-state, resembled their divine Maker in a manner somewhat analogous to the similarity there is between a father and his children. On this account, the angels may be stiled *the sons of God*. Job xxxviii. 7. For this reason, innocent Adam might be called *the son of God*. Luke iii. 38.

The phrase, THE IMAGE OF GOD, in the answer, which is evidently taken from the Mosaic account of man's creation, is used differently in the sacred scriptures. As we are now in an embodied state, and daily conversant among corporeal objects, we are apt to affix a gross idea

to it. But we must understand it in a view that comports with the immateriality of the being to whom it is applied. Of Jesus Christ, it is affirmed, that in a sense peculiar to himself, and infinitely too high for the creatures, he is *the image of the invisible God*. Col. i. 15. and *the express image of his person*. Heb. i. 3. Of such a conformity and likeness as the eternal Son bears to his eternal Father, man must ever be incapable.

When it is affirmed in the answer, that God created man after his image, Eve as well as Adam is intended. Thus the answer runs—*God created man MALE and FEMALE*, the female as well as the male, or the woman as well as the man, *after his image*. So speaks Gen. i. 27. forecited.—The woman an Apostle calls the *weaker vessel*. 1 Pet. iii. 7. Another Apostle calls the man *the image and glory of God*, and the woman *the glory of the man*. 1 Cor. xi. 7. On account of a sort of pre-eminence, which the man has over the woman, he may be stiled the image of God. But the woman, as well as the man, was made in the likeness and after the image of God. The former, no less than the latter, bore a moral, as well as a physical likeness of their divine Maker. The woman, equally with the man, had a rational soul, and universal rectitude of nature. To intimate this important truth, the account of their creation is in the answer well arranged thus—*God created man, male and female, AFTER HIS OWN IMAGE, &c.*

The mention of the female, as well as of the male, intervenes between man and the image of God after which he was created. On the woman particular marks of favour have all along been conferred. In the first revelation of a Saviour, Gen. iii. 15. there is express mention of the woman, not of the man. Of a woman was the Saviour of the world born; and this sex he honoured with the first manifestations of himself after his resurrection. All versant in the history of the world and the church know, that there are not wanting instances of  
women,



women, who have distinguished themselves by their piety; and women who have even excelled in learning. As for the notion which a few, and, indeed, only a very few, have embraced, that women have not rational souls, and consequently cannot be the subjects of everlasting felicity—it ever has been held in deserved contempt; and is altogether unworthy of a serious refutation.

In order to see what is intended by the image of God in which man was originally created, it is to be recollected, that there is a two-fold image of God, which rational creatures may bear, a *physical*, and a *moral*.

*First*, A PHYSICAL. God is a *Spirit*; an immaterial and immortal being. The soul of man also is a spirit; though infinitely inferior to the Father of spirits. Thus in immateriality and immortality, the human soul bears a resemblance to God; of which material beings are incapable. This physical image of God, man, even in the now fallen state, retains. On this account, man is said to be still made *after the similitude of God*. Jam. iii. 9. From this consideration is the atrocious nature of murder inferred. *Who so sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for IN THE IMAGE OF GOD MADE HE MAN*. Gen. ix. 6.

*Secondly*, A MORAL. This consists in the conformity of man to the moral perfections of God; of which the moral law is a bright copy. This is the image of God; of which especially the answer speaks, and of which the after-part of it gives us a fuller account. In three things especially does it consist, *knowledge*, *righteousness*, and *holiness*. To these is superadded, that *dominion* over the inferior creatures in this lower world, which the proprietor of all worlds granted to man in his original state.

All these three, *knowledge*, *righteousness*, and *holiness*, the answer to a following question comprehends under *righteousness*; for thus it speaks—*The sinfulness of that estate wherinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, and the want of ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS,—*  
that

that is, that *conformity* to the righteous law, which man possessed in his original state. It is not here intended, that either in knowledge, in righteousness, or in holiness, man was originally *equal* to God. In knowledge, in righteousness, and in holiness, is God infinite. In no respect was man, or can he be, infinite. The *moral* image of God included in it,

(I.) KNOWLEDGE. The extent of the knowledge which man had in his first state we cannot ascertain. It certainly was very great. He knew himself; and he knew God, in a manner and to a degree adapted to the state and circumstances in which he was then placed. He must have been conscious of the duty incumbent upon him, and of the felicity inseparably connected with it. His knowledge, however, was far from being universal and unlimited. He was ignorant of many things which God has revealed in consequence of his fall. His knowledge must have been far inferior to what it would afterwards have been, had he fulfilled the condition of the covenant, and obtained the completion and perpetuity of bliss insured to him in it. A vast increase of knowledge is an essential part of that glory promised to man both in his original and fallen state, in the covenant of works and also in the covenant of grace. It is a part of the glory which the humanity of the second Adam himself now possesses. The probationary state of Adam, in comparison of that confirmed state of which he had the prospect, may be said to have been a state of imperfection. His knowledge, however, must have been very extensive. Often has his giving names to the various species of creatures, corresponding to their respective natures, been mentioned as a striking proof of the knowledge which he then had. Gen. ii. 19, 20.

Of the fabulous stories which the Jewish doctors have told of the extraordinary knowledge of Adam, it is unnecessary to take notice. They tell us, that the angels, having spoken contemptibly of Adam's knowledge, God,

in order to convince them that it was superior to theirs, brought all the creatures to them, desiring them to give proper names to the several kinds of creatures; and, when they could not do it, he brought them to Adam, and he named them severally. They talk of two books composed by Adam, the one on creation, the other on the nature of God. As to the knowledge of innocent Adam—I shall only add, that his understanding or mind was the proper subject of it. This is the leading faculty or power of the human soul, and ever is the proper seat of knowledge. Accordingly, when an after answer speaks of the effectual calling of sinners, in which the moral image of God is restored, it mentions the *illumination* of the mind or understanding, as well as the renovation of the will.

(2.) **RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Righteousness, though, as I said already, it sometimes includes knowledge and holiness, is here distinguished from both. As *knowledge* is seated in the understanding, *righteousness* may denote the conformity of the will to God. Thus, innocent man not only knew his duty, but was inclined to it, having a will as well as a power to do it. What an opposition, alas, is there in the will of sinful man to the holy will of God! his will of grace, his will of precept, and his will of providence. Accordingly, in the account of our effectual calling, the renovation of the will is introduced immediately after the illumination of the understanding. When our Lord furnishes us with a directory for prayer, the matter of it as well as the manner, he teaches us to pray especially for the renovation of our will. This is necessarily included in the petition which he directs us to present to God—*THY WILL be done.* Matth. vi. 10. Happy, indeed, was innocent Adam. Whatever was the will of God was his will. Every duty incumbent upon him he was ever ready to perform. The reverse, alas! is the case with us in our now fallen state. Happy now is that person only, who is the subject of that re-  
newing

newing work of the Holy Ghost, by which the moral image of God is restored to the human soul; for, *if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: he has put on that new man, which is renewed in knowledge and is created in RIGHTEOUSNESS and true holiness, after the image of God.*

(3.) HOLINESS. As innocent Adam had knowledge in his understanding, and righteousness in his will, he had holiness in his affections. They were placed upon proper objects, and exercised in a regular manner. He duly loved himself, and his fellow-creatures in a manner corresponding to their nature, and their relation to God. Far, indeed, was he from loving the supreme Being in a manner adequate to his supereminent excellencies. He loved him, however, as he did not either himself, or any of his fellow-creatures. He delighted in God as his all-sufficient portion, and served him as his highest Lord.

As to the *knowledge*, the *righteousness*, and the *holiness* in which the moral image of God, after which man was created, did consist, it may be observed, that they were *natural* to innocent Adam, rather than supernatural. They were concreated with him. As soon as he was a man, he was an upright man. So the scripture speaks—*God made man UPRIGHT*—Eccl. vii. 29. The notion that man was created with a nature neither conform nor contrary to the holy law of God, neither holy nor unholy, neither inclined to good nor to evil, has no foundation in the scriptures—nay, it is repugnant to them. From what has been said, it appears, that the soul rather than the body was the subject of that likeness to God, with which man was created. It is not, however, said, that God created the *soul* of man after his image. It is affirmed, that he created *man*, who consists of both soul and body. The body was most intimately, and in a mysterious manner, connected with the soul. Accordingly, though the latter was the principal subject, and proper

proper seat of the image of God, the former, as far as its nature admitted, was a partaker with it, both in purity and felicity. The body, as well as the soul, was instrumental in the duties of universal holiness, which the law of God required, and to which man was, by an inbred natural propensity, inclined. The whole man, in the now fallen state, is the subject of depravity. The outward man, therefore, as well as the inward, must be the subject of a regenerating and sanctifying work of the Spirit. When the heart of a sinner is *sprinkled from an evil conscience, the body is washed as with pure water.* Heb. x. 22.

It is not at all improbable, that man in his innocent state had much external as well as internal beauty. An external visible lustre and glory, perhaps, attended him. It was, perhaps, when this was withdrawn, and in consequence of the departure of it, that our original ancestors first saw themselves *naked*, and were ashamed. Gen. iii. 7. When the second Adam was transfigured on the holy mount, as an anticipation, and in token of the glory, of which his body and the bodies of all his mystical members are, in due time, partakers, he was attended with an external splendor and lustre. It is said, that, as he prayed, *the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became WHITE and GLISTERING.* Luke ix. 29. For all saints, as well as himself, could the Apostle John say—*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that, when he shall appear, we shall be LIKE him*, in our outward man as well as our inward; *for we shall see him as he is.* 1 John iii. 2. *For he shall CHANGE our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his GLORIOUS body, according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.* Phil. iii. 21.

It is, in the end of the answer, added, that to man, thus created after the image of his Maker, was granted DOMINION OVER THE CREATURES. With the most ob-

vious propriety is the dominion, which man originally had over the inferior creatures, introduced *here*. In it he resembled that great Being who is Governor of all worlds. In his nature superior to the other creatures below, he had assigned to him dominion over them. Of this Moses informs us—*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have DOMINION over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man IN HIS OWN IMAGE, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have DOMINION over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and OVER EVERY LIVING THING that moveth upon the earth:*

The subjection of the other creatures to Adam lasted while he continued in allegiance to God, as his rightful Sovereign. But, when he revolted from his Maker, the creatures rebelled against him. Were they not restrained by an all-powerful Providence, many of them, instead of being serviceable, would be fatal to him. What disorder has sin introduced into the world! But, what we have forfeited by the disobedience of the first Adam, we recover through the meritorious obedience of the second. In the person of the latter, humanity is advanced to dignity incomparably superior to what belonged to it in the former. Accordingly, that description of the dignity and authority of man in the eighth Psalm, which might primarily refer to the primeval state, is, by an inspired writer of the new Testament, expressly applied to our glorious Mediator. Heb. ii. chapter. And, as all the members of his mystical body are for ever to share with him in dignity, as well as felicity, so far as is consistent with the necessary disparity between him and them, they all are, in due time, to be advanced to great honour as well as happiness. What

an honourable person is the second Adam! Of what honour, and of what happiness are militant saints the heirs and expectants? Honourable and happy are they now. But incomparably more honourable and happy will they be in the celestial world. Each of them might I bespeak in the words of Eliphaz—*At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh, neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.* Job v. 22, 23. *As for the wicked, LIKE SHEEP they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them: and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning.* Psal. xlix. 14. Often do the wicked now domineer over the righteous. But, in the morning of the resurrection, the righteous shall have dominion over the wicked. For thus saith the Redeemer—*He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.* Rev. ii. 26, 27. Royal honours await all the saints. A kingdom, celestial in its nature, and of endless duration, is prepared for them. *To him that overcometh, saith the Redeemer, will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father on his throne.* Rev. iii. 21.

From the account I have given of man's creation, a great variety of useful instructions might be inferred.

How unnatural, as well as disgraceful and contrary to religion, is it for mankind to hate and devour one another! Are they not all children of one common father? *Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why then do we deal treacherously one against another, by profaning the covenant of our fathers.* Mal. ii. 10. *Hath not God made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth?* Acts xvii. 28.

What reason has every individual of mankind, of all stations and conditions, to be humble! What a hum-

bling consideration to the father of the faithful was his low earthly original! *Abraham answered and said, Behold, now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but DUST and ASHES.* Especially is it a confounding consideration, that we are sinful dust!

Vastly superior is the soul to the body. What egregious folly must it be to prefer the latter to the former! *For what can a man be profited, were he to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?* Matth. xvi. 26.

How beneficial is society! Manifold and great are the advantages which result from it. Great are the comforts, as well as the duties, of domestic life. How honourable is marriage! Even in the primeval state was it necessary, and did it obtain. For all sorts of men, and in all stations of life, is it honourable and advantageous. Intimate is the conjugal relation. The most tender affection ought the persons between whom it obtains, ever to cultivate and express one toward another.

Great is the disparity between man's first and fallen state. Was the former a state of great knowledge? The latter is a state of gross ignorance. The one was a righteous and a holy state. The other is a state of guilt and corruption.

How sufficient and how suitable to our malady is the remedy which God, in sovereignty and grace, has provided for us! Are we ignorant, guilty, and impure? *Jesus Christ is made of God to us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification.* Happy, indeed, is the person, and the person only, that has a saving interest in Jesus Christ, and is a partaker of his saving benefits, purity as well as pardon, sanctification as well as justification. Holy, and, therefore, happy person!



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 Providence.

JOHN V. 7.

*But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto;  
and I work.*

**I**N the preceding part of this chapter we find our Lord curing, in a miraculous manner, a man who had laboured under an infirmity thirty-eight years. With this part of his conduct the Sadducees find great fault. Accordingly, the words, which I have now read, contain a vindication of it. In order to see the propriety and strength of the argument which our Lord uses, we must recollect, that the thing for which the Sadducees condemn him, is a pretended profanation of the Sabbath by the merciful cure which he had wrought on that holy day. To silence this groundless cavil, our divine Redeemer reminds the Sadducees, that, though the Sabbath be a day of holy rest, it ever admits the performance of *works of necessity and mercy*. On that day the great Creator, indeed, is said to have rested. But on it, as well as other days, does he all along work as the Preserver and Governor of the world; and herein the Son ever is a co-worker with the Father. So he speaks in the text — *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*; that is, all along

along hitherto from the creation has he wrought, in the preservation and government of all the creatures and their actions, and I ever am a joint-worker with him. He does not speak in the past time, but the present. Creation is a past work. But providence, which includes the conservation and government of the creatures, is a present work. Therefore,

I am now come to what I had in view in the choice of this text; to explain that definition of Providence which we have in our Shorter Catechism. *God's works of PROVIDENCE, are his most holy, wise, and powerful PRESERVING and GOVERNING ALL HIS CREATURES, and ALL THEIR ACTIONS.*

The accomplishment of the decrees and designs which God had from eternity, we have seen begun already in the work of creation. Let us now attend to the continuation of it in the wonderful works of holy providence. Only once does the word *providence* occur in our translation of the scriptures. Acts xxiv. 2. In the sense the Compilers of the Catechism use it, it is not, indeed, to be found in holy writ. But the thing intended by it we find in many places, and expressed various ways. The proofs of a divine Providence are so numerous and so strong, that it has been almost universally acknowledged by mankind of every age and denomination. The belief of it has such a necessary connection with the belief of a supreme Being, that any, who have adventured to deny it, have ever been accounted the Atheists of the age, and the country in which they have lived, among Heathens, as well as among Jews and Christians. That it was denied by that sect of ancient philosophers we call Epicureans, which I had occasion to mention in a preceding Lecture, is well known. The supposition of a divine Providence has been reckoned inconsistent with the seemingly unequal and unjust distribution of good and evil in the world. It has also been supposed to be incompatible with the  
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tranquillity and repose of the divine Being. But if God could be supposed not to intermeddle in the affairs of this lower world, must it not be for one of two reasons; either because he cannot, or because he will not, do it? Now, how absurd is it to suppose either the one or the other? Can it be difficult for him that made the world, to uphold and govern it? Did he create the world, and shall he not govern it? Will he neglect the works of his own hands? Do good and evil now befall the righteous and the wicked indiscriminately? Are the righteous in adversity, and the wicked in prosperity? For such distributions the sovereign Ruler of the universe has reasons best known to himself.

How comes it to pass, that ancient predictions of events the most contingent, are fulfilled with the utmost punctuality? The cause is manifest. All such events are at the disposal, and under the direction of an omniscient and omnipotent God. Of the numberless instances in which an all-disposing Providence is manifest in all parts of the world, and among the creatures of every kind, I will give a specimen in the sequel.

On this important and useful subject, I intend to do two things; *first*, to explain, in a brief and plain manner, the several parts of the answer; and, *secondly*, to attempt a more particular consideration of *providence*, as it is versant about the different species of creatures which are known to us, and their actions, both good and bad.

I. I am to explain the several parts of the answer.—Now, it contains especially three things relating to providence, the *parts*, the *properties*, and the *objects* of it.

*First*, The *parts* of providence; which are two, the PRESERVATION and the GOVERNMENT of the creatures.

1. *Preservation*. Now, as both parts of providence extend to the creatures and also their actions, preservation here must denote the upholding of the creatures in operation, as well as in being; for, *in him we live, and move,*  
and

and have our being. Acts xvii. 28. What the answer intends by preservation, an Apostle expresses, by his *upholding all things by the word of his power*; and in another place, the same Apostle expresses it thus—*He is before all things, and by him all things* CONSIST. Col. i. 17. And once more it is called a *continued creation*. So the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders speak—*Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they ARE and were* CREATED. Rev. iv. 11. As all things were by him brought into being, they are by him continued in it.

2. *Government*. Having produced the creatures out of nothing, he not only upholds them in being and operation, but over-rules, and disposes of them for the fulfilment of his designs, and the advancement of his glory. His government is usually considered in a twofold view; as *natural* and as *moral*. This twofold consideration of his government arises from the two general classes of creatures, which are the objects of it. The *irrational* creatures are understood to be the subjects of his natural government; and the *rational* of his moral. That his providence extends to the lowest of his creatures as well as the highest, to the actions of the former as well as of the latter, and in what manner it is versant about them, I will have occasion to show afterwards. We have

*Secondly, The properties of providence.*

1. It is MOST HOLY. God himself is holy, and all his works are holy. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*. Psal. cxlv. 17. He preserves, and he governs the sinful, as well as the sinless creatures. He even preserves and governs them in their sinful actions; and yet he, their Preserver and their Governor, is himself without sin.

2. It is MOST WISE. Wisdom was illustriously displayed in the production of the creatures; and no less conspicuous is it in the preservation and government of them. The instances in which it is manifested in the preservation,

preservation, and also the government of the creatures, are innumerable. Are they not all preserved by means, and governed in a manner, worthy of God. In how unexpected a way, and by what unlikely means, are providential events often accomplished! What an agreeable mixture of astonishment and joy does every conscientious and careful observer feel in the contemplation of them! *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.*

3. It is MOST POWERFUL. The creation of all things was a work of power; and in the continued preservation and government of all things is Almighty power incessantly exerted. All the creatures, from the very lowest to the highest, does he without intermission uphold by the word of his power.

*Thirdly*, The *objects* of providence, the CREATURES, and the ACTIONS of the creatures, even ALL the creatures, and ALL their actions.

All the creatures, and all their actions. He made all the creatures, and, therefore, he preserves and governs them all. This world, indeed, has been compared to a great machine, which an artist makes, and puts in motion, leaving it to go of itself. But that Almighty hand, which made, and it only, can uphold and govern the world. It cannot be for a moment withdrawn; for no one of the creatures can for a moment subsist without it. This led our Lord to affirm in the text which introduces this Lecture—*My Father worketh every hour, every moment; and every hour, every moment am I a co-worker with him, in the preservation and government of all worlds, and all creatures.* Of the various species of creatures, and of the different kinds of actions, about which providence is versant, I will have occasion to speak under the second head.

Having given a general account of the definition of providence in the answer, I am now, as I promised,

II. To take a *more particular* view of it, as employed both about the CREATURES and their ACTIONS. And I shall

*First*, Take a view of it as *versant* about the inhabitants of the unseen world, so far as God has discovered them, and the disposals of his providence concerning them to us. Of the creation of angels, I had occasion to take notice in a former Lecture. The existence of angels is acknowledged not only by Jews and Christians, but even by Mahometans and Pagans. What Pagan writers have related of their *Demons* is well known. Often does the Alcoran of Mahomet speak of angels, of their various orders and ranks, and the different employments assigned to them both in heaven and on earth.

Mysterious, indeed, are the dispensations of holy providence concerning the angels. At an early period were a great part of them permitted to fall from their primeval state of holiness and happiness into a state of sin and misery. The precise period at which this awful catastrophe happened in heaven is not known. Between their creation and their fall there must have been some interval. At a very early period, however, did their fall happen. It must have been prior to the fall of man; for one of them was the unhappy instrument of his seduction and ruin. It has been queried, whether they all fell at once; or whether one fell first, and then was joined by others in his unprovoked and unhappy revolt from his rightful Sovereign, and generous Benefactor. One thing is certain. One of them is every where pointed out as the head of the apostacy. He is, for this reason, designed, *the prince of the power of the air*. Eph. ii. 2.; *the king of the bottomless pit*. Rev. ix. 11.; and *the god of this world*. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Accordingly, we read of *his angels*. Matth. xxv. 41. It has been asked—what was the sin of the angels by which they fell from their original state of felicity and dignity? Now,

as to this, there are especially two opinions. The one is, that it was *envy*. This is supposed to have been occasioned by a revelation granted to them, that, at an after period, the Son of God was to become man; and that in his divine person, the human nature was to be advanced and dignified above the angelic.

According to the other opinion, it was *pride*. This opinion is understood to have a foundation in the Apostle's words. Speaking of the qualifications requisite in a Christian bishop, or minister of the New Testament, he observes, among other things, that he must not be *a novice, lest, being lifted up with PRIDE, he fall into THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DEVIL.* 1 Tim. iii. 6. Now, supposing it to be pride, another question is—what was the occasion of it? and in what manner did it operate? In answer to this question, various conjectures have been formed. The head of the apostacy in heaven is supposed to have had the audacity to affect *equality* with God himself. He has been imagined to have been required to submit to some particular positive law, relating to the manner in which he and the other celestial inhabitants were to worship God, or to the order and station of the angelic hosts; and, through an absurd opinion of his own superior excellency, to have haughtily refused submission and obedience to it. His pride has been supposed to be occasioned by some ministry assigned to him in our lower world, which he imagined did not besit his dignity; or, in short, by a discovery of the future subjection of all creatures, angels as well as others, to the Son of God in human nature. But this is all conjecture.

Vain is it to ask, what number of angels stood, or what number fell. Neither the number of the former, nor of the latter do we know. But that the number both of the fallen and the standing angels must be very great is infallibly certain. As a striking proof of the vast number of the latter, we find, in the days of our Lord's

humiliation, an unhappy man possessed by thousands of them. The Saviour, having *asked him what is thy name?* He answered, saying, *My name is LEGION, for we are many.* Mark v. 9. Of the number of which a legion consisted, we have, indeed, different accounts. That it was upwards of six thousand seems to be certain. Were there six thousand fallen angels in one unhappy man! What amazing numbers of them must there be in the world! Inexplicable, indeed, is the conduct of providence. One of the greatest mysteries is the origin of moral evil. This mystery, who of all the creatures in heaven or on earth can unravel? How creatures, holy as well as happy, disinclined to evil, and *all* evil. inclined to good, and to *all* good. came to be disinclined to good and inclined to evil, is indeed, a profound mystery.

The difference between the fall of angels and the fall of men is obvious. The fall of angels preceded that of men. A part of the angels only fell. All mankind fell at once. The angels who fell were permitted to perish without remedy. Fallen man, God, in his unlimited sovereignty and mercy, has pitied. In relation to fallen men, as distinguished from fallen angels, he said—*Deliver them from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom.* Job xxxiii. 24.

Let us now review the conduct of holy providence in relation to sinning angels posterior to the fall. Their natures being changed, they are now known by other names. Angels have been converted into devils. Instantly were they cast down from heaven to hell. *God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.* 2 Pet. ii. 4. Their just punishment is represented in similar terms by another Apostle—*The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.* Jude verse 6th. Most odious to God is sin, all sin, the sin of angels



angels as well as of men. He that dispossessed man of the earthly paradise, had, previous to that event, ejected millions of angels from the heavenly. The fallen angels he not only expelled from heaven, but loaded them, as criminals, with chains and fetters till the arrival of the tremendous period, at which the awful sentence against them is to be fully executed. They are said to be *cast down to hell*. This is an unknown place of misery. It is mentioned in the scriptures under different names. In the ninth and eleventh chapters of the Revelation, it is called the *bottomless pit*.

The sinning angels were not, however, immediately, nor are they even yet, confined to hell; but, for sovereign purposes, permitted to rove and wander in other places, particularly in that atmosphere which surrounds our earth. What a humiliating circumstance is this to them! Once the inhabitants of the highest heaven, and the attendants of the throne of the great God, they are now constrained, as fugitives and vagabonds, to ramble through the lower regions of the universe, seeking rest, and finding none. What an alarming thought is it to us, the inhabitants of this earth! What unknown millions of evil spirits incessantly swarm in that air in which we live and breathe! How near to us are they! What immediate access have they to our immaterial part by day and by night. Wherever we be, or whithersoever we go, we are surrounded with them. Is it not for this reason that the unhappy leader of these unseen hosts is stiled the *Prince of the power of the air*? Ever since the commencement of the war between the King of Kings, and the king of the bottomless pit, have those numerous and malicious hosts, which are headed by the latter, infested the environs of our world. Numerous are the instances recorded in the scriptures, of the mischief which a mysterious providence has permitted those apostate spirits to do to the inhabitants of our world. Such is the malignity and the cruelty of their fallen nature,  
that,

that, though every sin they commit, and mischief they do, must aggravate their condemnation and misery, in doing evil they are restless and unwearied. To their malice and cruelty, however, the Sovereign of the universe, by his over-ruling providential power, sets bounds and limits which they cannot possibly pass; saying to each of them, as to the raging sea, HITHERTO THOU MAYEST COME, BUT NO FARTHER.

Various are the respects in which they, by providential permission, do hurt to the inhabitants of our world. Often are they in the mouths of the ungodly world *lying spirits*, raising and propagating cruel slanders and foul reproaches against the saints of the most High. Often do they, by cruel secret suggestions, harass and distress the minds of poor weak Christians. Satan suggested to David the cruel design of numbering Israel, which proved so fatal to them, and so very afflicting to him. 1 Chron. xxi. 1. It is said, indeed, in 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. that God himself did it; but he did it only, in so far as he, in righteous judgment, permitted Satan to do it. Was it not this cruel enemy that instigated the robbers who spoiled Job of all his flocks and herds? Is it not he, who, as the prince of the power of the air, often raises storms and tempests, which spread desolation among the inhabitants of our world, that raised the extraordinary wind which overthrew the house in which all Job's children were at an entertainment, and buried them in its ruins? Job i. chapter. How he, in his unrelenting cruelty, afterwards, by divine permission, afflicted and tormented that holy man, chapter ii. informs us. To what racking pains and cruel distortions he put the unhappy Demoniacs, in the days of our Lord's humiliation, the writers of the New Testament tell us. Especially did this unhappy being discover his malignity and audacity, when, on the head of his numerous infernal forces, he attacked the prince of the kings of the earth in person. This he did not only in the wilderness, but in the garden

den of Gethsemane, and on mount Calvary. But for him the King of Kings was infinitely more than a match. On the cross *he spoiled principalities and powers*, and obtained a glorious victory and triumph over them. Col. ii. 15.

Thus, is an over-ruling and all-disposing providence employed about the fallen angels. By it are they, *as angels*, upheld in being and operation; and by it are they, *as sinning angels*, restrained and over-ruled in their designs and operations.

Let us now take a view of providence as it relates to the confirmed and standing angels. Of the manner in which God makes known his will to them, and in which they communicate their ideas to one another, I do not pretend to give any particular account. But of the blessed society, which obtains among them, and that holy intercourse they have one with another, we have frequent intimations in the scriptures. *One of the seraphim CRIED UNTO ANOTHER, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* Isa. vi. 3. *The angel that TALKED with me, says the Prophet, went forth, and ANOTHER ANGEL went out to meet him, and SAID UNTO HIM, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle therein.* Zech. iii. 2. *I saw another angel, says the Apostle John, ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; AND HE CRIED WITH A LOUD VOICE TO THE FOUR ANGELS, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea.* Rev. vii. 2.

That God imparts his designs to the holy angels in a manner which we cannot explain, and that they know many events unknown to us, we have every reason to believe. The instances in which they have been employed, as the instruments of providence, in our lower world, especially the church in it, are almost innumerable. That there are certain tutelar angels stationed in  
particular

particular places of the world, and certain guardian angels appointed to attend particular saints, the scripture does not seem to say. It rather represents *all* the holy angels, as occasionally employed by God in our world, particularly in defending, and, in various other instances, ministering unto the militant saints. In the celestial, as well as in the sub-celestial world, do they minister to God. It is their felicity and their honour, as well as their duty to do so. What a glorious vision does the evangelical Prophet relate! *I saw the Lord, says he, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the Seraphim, each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.* They cover both their faces and their feet, conscious that they themselves and all their services are insignificant and unworthy. They fly, to intimate the alacrity with which they undertake, and the speed with which they perform, the services assigned to them.

It is not of necessity that the Almighty uses the ministry of angels in our world. He may do it, however, for various and important reasons. It may be on their own account. It is to them a special honour. It is on account of the saints, to whom they minister. Great honour, indeed, does he confer upon them when he employs, as their ministering servants, beings of a species superior to themselves. It bespeaks the renewal of friendship between angels and saints. They originally belonged to one family. When man sinned, he left it. But, in virtue of the interposition of the Mediator, reconciliation is effected, not only between God and men, but between angels and them. In virtue of the near relation in which the saints stand to the Redeemer, angels account it their honour to minister unto them.

All along has God used the ministry of angels in this lower world, especially since sin entered into it. In many instances have the angels, in the hand of Providence, been  
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the ministers of justice in inflicting temporal judgments upon persons and families, churches and nations. By them were the Sodomites smitten with blindness. Gen. xix. 1, 2. When, on account of the sin of Israel, God, in awful judgment, permitted David to number Israel, an *angel* slew of them in one day, no less a number than *seventy thousand*. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16. When a great army of the Assyrians lay before the city of Jerusalem, an *angel* of the Lord slew no less a number than an *hundred fourscore and five thousand of them*. Isa. xxxvii. 36. When Herod had the audacity to aspire after divine honours, the *angel* of the Lord smote him, and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. Acts xii. 23.

But especially are the holy angels, in the hand of providence, ministers of mercy to our world, and the church in it; in protecting the godly, providing for them, and delivering them in their manifold straits and dangers. While the spirit of prophecy was in the church, the ministry of angels was used, and holy men of God had communication with them, in a manner unknown in ordinary times and circumstances. Two of them appeared to Abraham; and, in the most friendly and familiar manner, ate and drank with him. Gen. xviii. chapter. Two, perhaps, the same who were entertained by Abraham, having received an invitation from Lot, lodged with him. chapter xix. Two troops or companies of them escorted Jacob in his return from Padanaram. Gen. xxxii. chapter. Numerous troops and hosts of them attended Elisha, when shut up by his enemies in Dothan. 2 Kings vi. 17. An *angel* fed the Prophet Elijah. 1 Kings xix. chapter. An *angel* warned Joseph and Mary to flee into Egypt, when Herod sought the life of the divine Babe committed to their care. Matth. ii. 13. An *angel* liberated the Apostles when they were in prison. Acts v. 19. and xii. 7. An *angel* comforted the Apostle Paul in a most dangerous voyage, assuring him of his own safety, and the preservation of all in the ship with him. Acts xxvii. 23.

Such instances of the extraordinary ministry of angels, are not, indeed, to be expected in our times. But still do they minister to the church on earth, and the elect unconverted, as well as converted. As the natural life of the several individuals belonging to the election of grace, which often is in the most imminent danger, by a variety of distempers and accidents, must be preserved till the arrival of the happy period of their conversion, he uses the ministry of angels for the preservation of it. In various ways may those angelic guardians be instrumental in their preservation. No less subservient may the ministry of angels be to their actual conversion. Might it not be by the ministry of angels that it was suggested to Zaccheus, and that he conceived the design of going out to see Jesus on the occasion, to which the xix. chapter of Luke refers? Even in the case of ordinary saints, may not angels often be instrumental in providing for them in necessitous circumstances, by putting it in the hearts of those who have it in their power, to contribute for their relief? *The ANGEL of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Psal. xxxiv. 7,—10. He shall give his ANGELS charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Psal. xci. 11, 12.*

Alarming is the thought of our being on all occasions surrounded and haunted by legions of evil spirits. But encouraging is the thought of our being, at all times, and in all places, attended and protected by myriads of good angels. Especially is the dying saint attended by them, ready to receive his departing spirit, and to convey it into that happy world, in which sin and Satan, pain and death, are for ever removed far from them. What a glorious exemplification of this delightful truth have

have we in the history of the pious beggar! Luke xvi. chapter. It is said the *beggar die*, and WAS CARRIED BY THE ANGELS *into Abraham's bosom* verse 22. That the angels are to be employed in collecting the saints from all quarters and out of all corners. and in separating between them and the unfaved part of mankind in the end of the world, our Lord himself, explaining the parable of the sower, informs us—*The harvest is the end of the world, and THE REAPERS ARE THE ANGELS. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.* Matth. xiii. 39.—41. I shall

Secondly, Take a brief view of the conduct of holy providence about MAN. Of the particular manner in which providence was exercised about man in his original state, the answer to the following question informs us. Of several particular steps of providence is the great work of the recovery of fallen man, I will have occasion to speak in explaining the subsequent part of the Catechism. I shall, therefore, endeavour to abridge what I have to say on this part of the subject as much as possible.

Were we to take a view of mankind in their origin and progress, in the several ages of the world, earlier and later, and in all parts of it, we would see providence exercised about them in instances innumerable, in the way of mercy, and in the way of judgment, and in a manner which would both astonish and instruct us. The birth, the death, and all the several instances of the intervening life, of each individual of the human species, providence regulates and over-rules. A careful observation of the conduct of divine Providence is one of the most delightful, and of the most instructive employments. How important is the concluding observation of the cvii. Psalm, the subject of the preceding part of which is that mysterious providence of which I now speak!—*Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.*

Far is it from being accidental that one comes into the world at an earlier period, another at a later; that one is born in the east, another in the west; one in the south, and another in the north; that one descends from gracious parents, another from graceless; that one occupies a higher place, another a lower. *Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south; God is the judge: he putteth down one and setteth up another.* Psal. lxxv. 6, 7. Various are the relations and distinctions which obtain among mankind, as husbands and wives, as parents and children, as masters and servants, magistrates and subjects. Such are the various allotments of that unerring Providence which has the universal disposal of all persons and all things.

Mysterious are the disposals of divine Providence concerning *families*. One family is advanced and increased; another debased and diminished. We read of one Ephraim, who named a son born to him *Beriah*; *because it went evil with his house.* 1 Chron. vii. 23. Dying David could not but lament both the irreligion and adversity of his family. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Wonderful is the procedure of providence in the case of *greater societies*, sacred and civil, churches and nations. In how unexpected a manner, and by what unthought of means, have great kingdoms and commonwealths been erected! And in how surprising a way, and by what unexpected occurrences, have they been overthrown! To whatever quarter of our globe we turn our eyes, numberless instances present themselves to our view. In how circumstantial a manner do the Prophets of the Old Testament, and the Apostles of the New, foretel the most interesting revolutions, which have been, and are to be accomplished! And in how punctual a manner does an all-disposing Providence effect the accomplishment of them!

But in an especial manner is holy Providence versant about the church, which, though not of the world, is in  
it.



it. Were we to review the history of the church, from her first erection to the present period, and trace the various interpositions of providence in her behalf, what a diversified scene would exhibit itself, and what a variegated prospect would open to us! Often, indeed, has providence worn a frowning aspect upon the church. Sometimes she has almost vanished and disappeared. Once was she, and religion in her, in such a low state, that a Prophet of the Lord imagined that he was the only witness God had on earth. 1 Kings xix. 10. Once was the church of the New Testament in such a low situation, that the witnesses were reduced to two, and even these two were slain. Rev. xi. 7. The enemy, no doubt, thought he had accomplished his design, and obtained his wish. But, had the church become extinct? Was religion totally banished from the world? No. What the Apostle of the Gentiles said with regard to the period in which he lived, the friends of religion in every age can say, *even at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Rom. xi. 5. By a wonderful train of providential occurrences has the church been brought into great distress; and by a series of providential events no less surprising, has deliverance been wrought for her. Often has this *bush burned*, but never has been *consumed*. The very means which the enemy has used for the destruction and ruin of the church, has an over-ruling Providence rendered subservient to her edification and enlargement. At a very early period of the Christian church was this signally exemplified. Almost as soon as the mother church of Jerusalem was constituted, a cruel persecution was raised against her. Her members fled into different parts for their preservation and safety. This was agreeable to the instructions which they had received from our Lord—*When they persecute you in one city, says he, flee ye to another.* But did the dispersion of the members of the first Christian church terminate in her overthrow, and put a final

stop

stop to the spread of the Christian religion? Far from it. It, on the contrary, tended greatly to the propagation of it. The persecuted members of that church, were, by an all-wise Providence, made the happy instruments of introducing Christianity into places in which, till then, it had been unknown.

To follow the conduct of providence, as it has attended the church in all ages, and in all places; to review the numberless instances in which it has been employed about her, preserving her in midst of enemies and dangers, delivering and enlarging her, notwithstanding the designs and attempts of her enemies; is a task at once profitable and delightful, but a work of far too great extent as well as importance, for me to undertake at present. It leads us back into the remotest ages of antiquity. It obliges us to travel over the whole inhabited earth; Asia and Africa, Europe and America. But do not the profit and the pleasure, which attend the journey, sufficiently compensate and reward the length and all the difficulties of it. Let us, therefore, as we have opportunity and capacity, in our meditations and thoughts, *walk about our Zion, go round about her, tell her towers, mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces*; that, as our pious ancestors were careful observers of the wonderful appearances of providence for the church in their times, and have informed us of them, we also may tell our children and successors, and transmit to posterity a faithful account of the great things accomplished in our days. Psal. xlviii. 12, 13. Let the resolution of the Old Testament church be ours—*What we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us, we will not hide from their children, showing unto the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make known to their children. That the generation to come might know them,*

*them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children.* Psal. lxxviii. 4, 5, 6.

Eminently is providence exercised about *particular elect sinners*. Wonderfully does it over-rule the several incidents of their temporal lot, in a subserviency to the commencement, the progress, and the consummation of the good work in them. In the grateful remembrance of the redeemed of the Lord, it will be for ever written; what he did for them at their coming out of spiritual Egypt, during their perigrinations in the wilderness of this world, and at the Jordan of death, when they entered on the everlasting possession of the heavenly country. In how mysterious a manner is the good work begun; is it carried on; and is it completed! Great opposition ever is made to it. It is opposed from within and from without. But all machinations and attempts to obstruct it must be ineffectual and vain. The very methods used to oppose it are often over-ruled for the advancement of the good work. For *we know, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* Rom. viii. 28.

Before I leave this part of the subject, it may not be improper to take a cursory view of providence as it relates to the *actions* of mankind both good and bad.

That providence, both in the *preserving* and *governing* acts of it, extends to the actions of the creatures, as well as the creatures themselves, the answer expressly affirms. Could a creature or creatures, in any one action or actions, be either upheld or ungoverned by divine Providence, they would in so far be independent beings. Now, an independent creature is a contradiction in terms. In the idea of the Creator, independence is necessarily included, and dependence in the idea of the creature. That providence is concerned in good actions is manifest. Of them both as *actions*, and as *good actions*, God is the author. The effect corresponds to the cause; and, therefore, as God is good, he doeth good.

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That divine Providence extends to evil actions, is no less certain. This is a principal part of the mystery of providence. In this respect, indeed, it is very mysterious. That it is employed about sinful actions, I might show in a multiplicity of instances, with which the scriptures plentifully furnish us. There is the unnatural action of Joseph's brethren, who sold him to the Midianites. Infamous trade must the buying and selling of human beings ever be. The instance in question, especially, was most unnatural and cruel. The pious youth was sold by his *own* brethren. But, was providence altogether unconcerned in it? No. God is expressly said to have sent him into Egypt; for thus he bespeaks his brethren—*Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life.* Gen. xlv. 5. To the same effect speaks the Psalmist—*He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant, or a slave.* Psal. cv. 17. David's numbering the people was a sin, and a great sin; for which, as we saw already, they were punished most severely. But, had providence no concern in it? It is not expressly affirmed, that God *moved* David to do it. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. forecited.

Let us review the most enormous crime that ever was perpetrated by human hands, *the crucifixion of the Lord of glory*, even the murder of the Lord of life. Had divine Providence no hand in this extraordinary event? Is it not, in terms most express and full, affirmed, that, into these very barbarous hands which were embued in his sacred blood, God, according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge from everlasting, did deliver him.—*Him, being DELIVERED BY THE DETERMINATE COUNSEL AND FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD, saith the Apostle to the Jews, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.* Acts ii. 23.

Thus, by a providential permission of the most impious and atrocious crimes, which are committed in time,  
God

God fulfils the designs and decrees which he formed from eternity; for, from everlasting, he not only foreknew, but “foreordained whatsoever comes to pass” in time. One thing necessary for understanding this part of the mystery of providence, is to distinguish between the action itself and the evil of it. Though the action materially considered be of God, the evil of it is not, cannot be of God. *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for GOD CANNOT BE TEMPTED WITH EVIL, NEITHER TEMPTETH HE ANY MAN* But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Jam. i. 13, 14. It is, indeed, said, in Gen. xxii. 1, that *God tempted Abraham*. But the word, unhappily rendered *t mpted*, literally signifies, and ought to be translated, *tried*.

Now, as to the mysterious manner in which holy providence is exercised about sinful actions, for understanding it, three things must be considered.

(1.) He in holy providence PERMITS them. Accordingly, he is said to have *suffered the nations* for many ages *to walk in their own ways*. Acts xiv. 16. His holy law, which prohibits all sin, he did not repeal or suspend. Neither did he *prompt* or incline, but only permitted, the nations to walk in their own ways. The objects from which the corruption of nature takes occasion to work, present themselves to view; and, though he cannot excite the inward inclination to evil neither does he irresistibly restrain it; but, in sovereignty, and for important purposes, he leaves persons to follow their own wicked inclinations. This abstruse and alarming subject, I might illustrate by a variety of scriptural examples. Matters were so ordered by an all-disposing Providence, that, at the very time when Joseph's brethren had conceived the cruel design of selling him, the Midianitish merchants appeared and furnished them with an opportunity of accomplishing it. Gen. xxxvii. 23.—28. It was from the appearance of the Babylonish gar-

ment, that the covetousness of Achan's heart took occasion to work, and led him to the act which proved so fatal to him. Josh. vii. chapter. Circumstances were so adjusted by an over-ruling Providence, that, when David went up to walk on the roof of his house, Bathsheba went out to wash herself; and, seeing her, he conceived the unlawful desire and design, of the gratification and fatal consequences of which the sequel of the history informs us. 2 Sam. xi. chapter.

God, in righteous judgment, sometimes permits persons to fall into one sin as the punishment of another, even into a greater, as the just punishment of a lesser. It is said, that on an occasion mentioned already, *the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel; that is, for their former sins; and therefore, he moved David against them, to say. Go number Israel in Judah. My people would not hearken to my voice, saith God; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts; and they walked in their own counsels.* Psal. lxxxii. 11, 12. What a moving consideration is it, that the Lord sometimes deals in this way with his own dear, but undutiful children! He does it on one occasion for their trial, and on another for their correction. Thus did he try good king Hezekiah—*In the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God LEFT HIM to try him, that he might know, or make known, all that was in his heart.* 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.

(2.) God RESTRAINS and LIMITS sinful actions. Without the permission and observation of God, nothing can happen. If he permits Satan or sin to work, he fixes certain boundaries and limits, which neither the one nor the other can possibly pass. For an illustration of this important truth, I refer you to the first and second chapters of Job. Satan, strong and malicious as he is, could not touch either that holy man's person, or any thing that pertained to him, till he had an express permission from

from God. To sin, as well as to Satan, he may be understood to say—*Hitherto thou mayest come, but no farther.*

(3.) God OVER-RULES sinful actions for the most important, and often the most salutary purposes. From the entrance of sin into our world, as I had occasion to say in a former Lecture, he has manifested himself in a manner far more glorious than he would have done, had not that event, in itself dismal, been permitted to happen. It was with this view, no doubt, that it was permitted to happen. The crucifixion of our Redeemer, which I had occasion to mention already, in respect of the hand sinful men had in it, was the most enormous crime that ever was committed in our world. But from it results the highest glory to God; and, in a subserviency to his glory, the highest dignity and felicity to sinful men. Thus is holy Providence versant, in a sinless manner, about the most sinful actions. The designs and views God has in permitting such actions, are exceedingly different from those of the persons who commit them. By the Assyrians, as instruments, did God punish Israel of old. But how different were his designs from the views of the Assyrians! They intended the total extirpation and ruin of the church and nation of the Jews; he their correction and reformation. *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation; and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so.* Very different are his intentions and views from mine; for, *it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few.* Isa. x. 5, 6, 7.

Actions contingent and casual, as well as actions natural and necessary, does Providence superintend and regulate. Actions of the former kind, as well as the latter, did God from everlasting fore-ordain, and in them does he fulfil his own designs. What can be more ac-

cidental and casual, than the manslaughter, in relation to which Moses writes—*This is the case of the slayer, which shall flee thither, that he may live, who killeth his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not in time past; as when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the ax to cut down the tree, and the head slippereth from the helve and lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die; he shall flee into one of those cities, and live: lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and slay him; whereas he was not worthy of death, in as much as he hated him not in time past.* Deut. xix. 4. 5. 6. It is here understood, that the two men go to their work in friendship. The one intends no manner of hurt to the other. He takes his hatchet into his hand in order to strike the wood. But, contrary to his intention, and without his knowledge, the head, starting from the helve, strikes his fellow instead of the tree. Is providence altogether unconcerned in this accidental action? Is the fatal stroke, unintended by him that gives it, also undesigned on the part of Heaven? Far from it. For thus the same inspired writer speaks in another place—*He that smiteth a man, that is intentionally and out of malice, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. But if a man lie not in wait, BUT* G D DELIVER HIM INTO HIS HAND, and he smite him accidentally; *then I will appoint thee a place whither ye shall flee for safety.* Exod. xxi. 12. 13. What can be more fortuitous and casual than lots. But even to them does providence extend, and of them it has the disposal. So speaks the royal Preacher—*The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is OF THE LORD.* Prov. xvi. 33. All voluntary, as well as natural, actions, does providence regulate and over-rule—*A man's heart deviseth his way, and what can be more fluctuating and uncertain than the purposes and devices of the human heart? but the Lord directeth all his steps.* I might, in the



*Third place.* Review the conduct of divine Providence about the IRRATIONAL and INANIMATE creatures. and their actions. Here a vast field opens to view ; a field in which I might travel for years and ages. I can, however, glean in it only for a few minutes. What an astonishing variety do we find here ! Were we to take an excursion into the celestial regions, what astonishing proofs of a wise and a powerful Providence might we discover ? Let us recollect the amazing magnitude of the heavenly bodies, the vast number of them, and the regularity with which they perform their periodical revolutions. In the preservation and government of such worlds, extended and diversified almost beyond imagination, what a glorious display have we of the power, the wisdom, the benignity, of God, the supreme Ruler of the universe ! With what precision can astronomers calculate for years and ages to come, eclipses both solar and lunar, and the ebbings and flowings of the sea, which are supposed to be occasioned by the influence of the moon ! Is not this a certain proof, that all those things depend upon certain established laws, and are under the direction of an unerring Providence ?

Let us descend from the higher parts of the universe to this terraqueous globe which we inhabit. How conspicuous is the power, which at first brought it into being in the continued conservation and government of it ! *He hangeth the earth upon nothing.* How gloriously does he manifest his wisdom and his goodness in the several parts of it ! No one part of the world has all conveniences and advantages. Each has both its conveniences and inconveniences, advantages and disadvantages. What one wants another has. One country is extremely cold. Such are the northern parts of Europe, which lie towards the Arctic pole. Those countries, as might be expected. are generally very barren. But, as has been observed. they produce vast woods, not only for fuel to the inhabitants, but for lodging  
numbers

numbers of wild beasts, which produce warm furs of special use in such cold countries; and, by exporting their timber and furs to other places, the inhabitants obtain, in return, other commodities in which their own country is deficient.

As to the countries which lie within the torrid zone, whose inhabitants live under the scorching rays of the sun, it has been observed, that the excessive heat is, in a great measure, abated by the dews, which, in those places, fall in great abundance, and the cooling breezes which usually begin to blow as the sun rises; and, which indicates the singular bounty of Providence, the breezes are observed to increase as the sun ascends and his heat increases. In the sultry deserts and scorching plains of Arabia, water is scarcely to be seen, and consequently travelling must be exceedingly difficult, how remarkable is the care and the kindness of Providence in furnishing the inhabitants of those parts with animals called Camels and Dromedaries; creatures which can travel an hundred miles in a day on a very little food, and without supply of water? These animals are said to take at once a quantity of water, on which they can live for several days. It is said, that travellers at the point of death for want of water, in those parts, have sometimes been necessitated to kill one of them, and drink the water found in its stomach.

It has been observed, that the more savage animals are less numerous, live in solitary places, and usually go singly, not in herds, as the more harmless and useful creatures do. Thus are they less formidable and dangerous to mankind than they otherwise would be. Certain noxious animals can run swiftly; but when they turn, they do it so slowly that a person pursued by them can easily escape them by turning either to the right hand or the left. The rattle-snake, one of the most dangerous animals on the face of the earth, gives timely warning to persons, by the noise it makes when it sees

sees any approaching it. That instinct which directs birds to migrate from a hotter to a colder climate at the approach of summer, and from a colder to a hotter at the approach of winter, is truly astonishing. The fact, however, is indisputable. Without compass or pilot they undertake voyages over oceans; steering a straight course to their desired haven. Certain fishes leave the ocean, sail several hundred miles up our rivers, lodge their spawn in the sand, return to the wide ocean, and, after traversing it for a season, come straight back again to the same rivers.

In these and a thousand similar instances, which I might have mentioned, how conspicuous is a superintending Providence! Even the minutest of all the creatures are under the direction, and at the disposal of it. About the most insignificant insects and reptiles, and the vilest vermine, is Providence versant, disposing of them in such a manner, and for such purposes, as the great Creator has appointed. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become LICE throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became LICE in man and in beast; all the dust of the land became LICE, throughout all the land of Egypt. THIS IS THE FINGER OF THE LORD. Exod. viii. 16,—19.*

Thus Providence is universal, extending to all the creatures, and all their actions. To what I have said, I shall only subjoin a few obvious distinctions of providence.

It has been considered as *internal*, and as *external*. The former denotes the foreknowledge and pre-ordination of all things. It has been observed, that the word, both in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and in the Greek of the New, to which providence, in our language answers, in point of etymology, signifies *pre-cognition*,

nition, or foresight. The latter is what we properly call providence, and denotes the actual administration of all things in time, in conformity to the divine fore-knowledge and fore-ordination from eternity.

Providence has been considered as *general*, and as *special*. It is, indeed, employed about all the creatures and all their actions, particularly in our lower world. In a particular manner, however, is it exercised about the church, which, though not of the world, is in it. This twofold view of providence the Apostle suggests to us; for thus he speaks—*God is the Saviour of ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY OF THEM THAT BELIEVE.* 1 Tim. iv. 10. The word translated *Saviour*, I would rather render *Preserver*. He is, indeed, the preserver of men. But, in an especial manner, he preserves the heirs of salvation. His providence is peculiarly employed about them, for their preservation and safety.

It may be viewed as *common* and *uncommon*, as *ordinary* and *extraordinary*. In the former way it is to be seen in a thousand instances every day. But such common incidents we are apt to overlook. In the latter way, we have access to contemplate it in numerous instances both of mercy and judgment. Both in heaven above, and the earth below, has providence, in a preternatural way, manifested itself. The sun and the moon, on a particular occasion, stood still. The sun has even been known to go backward. From heaven bread has descended on the earth. Fire and brimstone have been rained from heaven. The earth has been, in a preternatural manner, overflowed with water. Water has been brought from a flint. A fish has swallowed up, and then spewed out, a prophet of the Lord. The fire had no power to burn the three children, whom the king of Babylon, in wrath, ordered to be thrown into it. The lions, notwithstanding their fierceness and their strength, had no power to hurt Daniel. He that made the creatures, restrains and governs them as he pleaseth.

feth. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places.* Psal. cxxxv. 6.

To what hath been said on this interesting subject, I might subjoin a variety of reflections.

Let us all study to be well established in the belief of a divine Providence. The proofs of it, with which we are furnished, are many and strong. Our atheistical and sceptical hearts, however, are apt to suggest difficulties and doubts. Is the impracticability of a constant superintendency and inspection of such an infinite multitude of beings and occurrences suggested? Let us, with abhorrence, reject such a surmise. How unworthy is it of the infinite God! Is it insinuated by Satan or by our own depraved and deceitful hearts, that it is below the supreme Being to take notice of the most grovelling creature, and most trifling occurrence which happens in this lower world? Let us remember, that the smallest, as well as the greatest, creature, is the workmanship of his divine Hand; and can it be unworthy of God to preserve or govern creatures which he himself has made? Are we startled at the seemingly unequal and improper distributions of good and evil, the prosperity of the ungodly and the adversity of the godly? Let us reflect, that this is far from being a relevant objection against providence; it rather is a proof of it. Is not this a fulfilment of the scriptures? Are there not obvious and important reasons for it? Now the wicked have their good things, and the righteous their evil things. In the world to come, the latter are to be comforted, the former tormented. Luke xvi.

Let us be careful observers and admirers of the providential wonders which God every day performs in the world and in the church. This truly is one of the most pleasing and profitable employments for a rational being and devout mind. *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them who have pleasure in them.* Psal. cxi. 2.

Whether we look to the heavens above, or to the earth below; whether we dig into the bowels of the earth, or dive into the bottom of the sea; whether we ransack the mineral, the vegetable, or the animal world, what wonders do we see!

Let us especially attend to the procedure of providence in our own case. Wonderfully was it exercised about us in the womb, in our childhood, youth, and riper years; in all the vicissitudes which have passed over us. How manifest is the divine Hand in our trials and deliverances! What deep design does God discover in relation to us! In how surprising a manner does he bring about events of which we never could have so much as once thought!

Let us more especially review the conduct of providence about the church and her particular ministers and other members. In how providential a way are sinners, concerning whom God has gracious designs, brought to the means of grace, or the means of grace sent to them! In order to bring Naaman, the general of the army of Benhadad, the Syrian, to the knowledge and worship of the God of Israel, a silly maid is sent by providence to serve in his family. Providence, that has the disposal of our tongues, as well as our hands and hearts, puts it into her heart one day to mention to her mistress the Prophet Elisha, as one that could cure her master of an inveterate leprosy, under which he laboured. He takes the hint, applies to the Prophet of the Lord accordingly; and obtains at once a cure of his outward and inward leprosy. What! A silly captive maid the mean of the conversion of a great general! Unlikely instrument! But in the hand of Providence, every instrument, every mean, is sufficient and effectual. Consult the history itself. 2 Kings v. chapter. Once was the only professing people of God on earth, consisting of many myriads, in a barren desert that could furnish them with neither bread nor water. What was the consequence?

consequence? did they all die? and was religion extirpated from the earth? No. There is nothing too hard for an all-powerful Providence. Rather than that the people of God should want, it would work a miracle altogether unprecedented in the world. If the earth could not furnish them with bread, heaven could do it. If the rivers could not yield them water, the rocks could do it. To their astonishment and their joy, they were suddenly supplied with bread from heaven, and with water from a rock.

Let us ever beware of murmuring against providence. Are our trials complicated and many? Do they come from unexpected quarters? Are we afflicted by persons by whom we expected to be comforted? Let us look above all instruments and means. Neither pretended friends or avowed enemies can hurt us except they be permitted. Neither will providence permit them except it has good reasons for it, and great designs to be accomplished by it. Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt. But he saw a higher hand in the dispensation. They could not have done it unless God had permitted.

Let us exercise universal and constant dependence on an all-wise, an unerring Providence. Unknown to us, indeed, are the future occurrences of our temporal lot. But how encouraging to reflect, that our times and circumstances are entirely in the providential hand, and at the sovereign disposal, of God! Though we do not, he foresees and foreknows every coming incident in our temporal lot; and, when it happens, he can fit us for it, and support us under it. How necessary and how useful is it to recollect former trials and deliverances! From what God has done for us in former straits and dangers, let us encourage ourselves in the expectation and prospect of support and deliverance in all time coming. How well does the Apostle's faith reason on this head? *At my first answer, says he, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. Nevertheless, the Lord stood with*

*me and strengthened me, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* Now, what improvement does the Apostle make of this singular instance of the care of providence about him? What inference does he draw from it? *The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, says he, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.* 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.

Of what happy consequences has the mediation of Jesus Christ been productive? By it has the communication between heaven and earth been opened on the most honourable terms, and to the mutual satisfaction of God and men. This is that mysterious ladder, that the Patriarch saw in vision, on which the angels of God ascend and descend. Gen. xxviii. chap. John v. 51. What an honour is conferred on the saints! the angels who ministered to their Head, while on earth, continue to minister to them. Heb. i. 14. With what merciful views is the actual administration of the kingdom of Providence committed to the Mediator! Is it not, that all the events of time may be over-ruled, and all things in the world employed, in a subserviency to the advancement of the Redeemer's interests, and the welfare of his militant members? For *God hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* Eph. i. 22, 23. Accordingly, he addresses his heavenly Father thus—*Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.* John xvii. 2. Do we labour and also suffer reproach? Let us trust in the living God, who is the preserver of all men, especially of them who believe. To conclude,

How admirably are the works of providence calculated for the fulfilment of the designs which God had from eternity? Every event that happens was fore-ordained from eternity. But, in the divine purpose, the end and the means are connected. When, therefore,  
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the end is to be accomplished, means are used and rendered subservient to it. Often, for instance, has it been objected, that if there be a precise time appointed at which each individual of mankind is to die, then must physicians and medicines be unnecessary; even self-murder cannot be a sin, it only is the fulfilment of the divine decree. It has also been pled, that according to our doctrine, all cautions and warnings against intemperance, which often has the mean of shortening the lives of many, are unprofitable and vain. It has been said, in fine, that such doctrine supercedes all our prayers to God for our recovery from sickness, or the preservation of our health and life. For all such objections, one answer suffices. Physicians and medicines, temperance and prayer, are means, and by such means does God fulfil his designs. Such is the connection between the means and the end, that, except we use the former, we cannot expect to obtain the end. Let us, therefore, neither neglect the means nor depend upon them. Let us use them, and depend on him that appointed them to render them effectual. Let us in all cases acknowledge him, and observe the operations of his gracious and providential hand.

Are all the creatures, and all the actions of the creatures, under the direction and government of an all-superintending Providence? Are they all upheld in being and operation by God? Let all the creatures, angelic and human, rational and irrational, praise their divine Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor. Let universal nature, especially let the redeemed of the Lord, adore him, in consideration of his works of creation, of providence, and of redemption. Let them praise him *who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.*

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*The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates: He hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes: he casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow. He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. PRAISE YE THE LORD.*

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## The Covenant of Works.

GEN. ii. 16, 17.

*And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat ; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it ; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

**T**HE preceding context informs us of the creation of man in the most material circumstances of it. The words which I have now read, have all along been understood to refer to a federal transaction between God and Adam, now created by him. They contain especially two things ; a PERMISSION ; the Lord God commanded the man, saying, *Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat ;* and a PROHIBITION ; *but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it ; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* Accordingly, we are here informed *negatively* what man was not, and *positively* what he was to do and to enjoy. These are the two essential parts of the covenant which God, at that early period, entered into with man ; and in which we are as particularly

cularly concerned as if we had been on the spot, and in our own persons entered formally into a covenant with our Maker.

From this text, therefore, I will take occasion to introduce and explain to you the account of the covenant of works, which the Compilers of our Shorter Catechism give us in the following answer—*When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil upon the pain of death.*

Providence, as versant about the creatures in general, we have considered already. We now enter on the consideration of it, as exercised, in a peculiar manner, about man. Him hath God singled out from among his other creatures; and with him, both in his first and fallen state, has he dealt in a manner calculated to excite wonder as well as joy. Can we recollect either the covenant of works or the covenant of grace, and forbear to say, *Lord, what is man, that thou art, in such an astonishing manner, mindful of him?* All along has he dealt with man in a federal way, or through the intervention of a covenant.

In order to the explanation of this answer, and to set this important subject in a full light, let us attend to the following particulars;

I. To the period at which this important transaction, between God and the father of the human family, happened. *WHEN GOD HAD CREATED MAN, he entered into a covenant with him, &c.* A necessary relation subsisted between the one as the Creator, and the other as his creature. Now a *federal* relation commenced between them. Man was now holy and happy, accommodated and furnished with every thing necessary and conducive to his felicity and comfort, both in soul and body. Placed in that delightful place, distinguished  
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by the name of Paradise, he had variety and plenty, all the necessaries and all the comforts of life.

Is it asked, what was paradise, and where was it? This is a question on which writers are much divided. Of both the celestial and the terrestrial paradise does the scripture speak. Concerning the latter, however, there is no small diversity of opinion. It has been imagined that the Mosaic account of the earthly paradise is an *allegory*. But, if this part of sacred history is to be interpreted as an allegory, why may not every other part of it be explained in a similar manner? It has been supposed, that, previous to the entrance of sin, the whole earth was a paradise. That the primeval state of the earth was very different from what it now is under the baneful influence of the curse, we have sufficient reason to believe; and, that there is a period coming, in which it will be restored to its first and best state, the scripture gives us ground also to expect. But, on supposition, that by paradise we are to understand a particular place, the question recurs, Where was it situated? This question it is not easy to answer. For paradise persons have searched almost every corner of the universe. It has been supposed to have been placed in the third heaven. But does not the scripture plainly distinguish between the celestial and the terrestrial paradise? It has been supposed to have been situated in the moon. It has been found in the middle region of the air. In all the four great quarters of our world, and almost every country in the east and the west, the south and the north, in the place now possessed by the Caspian sea, even under the Arctic pole; nay, not only on the earth, but under the earth, has paradise been found.

The opinion most probable, and adopted by the best interpreters, is, that it was situated in *Mesopotamia* or *Chaldea*. This is a famous country of Asia, situated north-east of Canaan. Here we find, at least, two of the rivers mentioned in the Mosaic account of paradise,

the *Euphrates*, and the *Tigris*, called, in the second of *Genesis*, *Hiddekel*. The great stream which is formed by the conflux of these two rivers divides again into two branches; the eastern of which is supposed to have been the *Gibon*, and the western the *Pison*, of which *Moses* speaks.

It may be queried, whether there was any interval between man's creation and God's entering into covenant with him, and of what duration it was. Of an interval we naturally think, but of what duration it was we know not. It may again be asked, in what situation man was from his creation till God entered into covenant with him. Was he under no law? He must have been under the moral law, which is of universal and perpetual obligation; and, therefore, man ever has been and ever will be under it in one form or another. Accordingly, another question here occurs, as to the difference between a *law* and a *proper covenant*. The terms *law* and *covenant* are sometimes used promiscuously. Thus, the law of works, in *Rom. iii. 27*, evidently denotes the covenant of works. But, between a law, as such, and a proper covenant, there is an obvious difference. A law bespeaks the authority of a sovereign, demands obedience from the subject, and, if it be violated, binds over to punishment proportioned to it. Thus, all that a law, as such, warrants us to expect, in the event of the non-violation of it, is impunity, or exemption from punishment. But the covenant made with Adam, encouraged him, in the event of fulfilling its condition, to expect a great and glorious reward. Accordingly, had Adam only remained under the moral law, and had no proper covenant been made with him, he would, in that case, so long as he obeyed, have been exempted from punishment; but no superadded felicity or dignity could he have procured to himself. The supposition that a creature, in any condition or circumstance, can merit at the hand of the Creator is most absurd.

But,

But, when the covenant of works was made with Adam, he was encouraged to expect, in the event of performing the condition of it, not merely the continuation of the felicity which he then possessed on earth, but a translation from a probationary state on earth, to a state of permanent felicity and dignity in heaven. While we obey the laws of our earthly sovereign, we consider ourselves as entitled to impunity. But, if he shall be pleased to stipulate to us, that, if we be dutiful subjects, he will at a certain period advance us to great honour, we consider this as a covenant between him and us; and expect future advancement, not in virtue of our obedience to his laws, but as the fulfilment of the covenant he has condescended to enter into with us. The application is obvious. God, having entered into a covenant with man, insured to him, in the event of his fulfilling the condition of it, perpetual felicity. It may, indeed, be asked here, Had man remained under a *law* only, could God have conferred upon him such superadded felicity and dignity? The answer is easy. What cannot God in sovereignty do? Greater felicity he might, no doubt, have conferred upon man; but man, in that case, could not have been entitled to ask it. Accordingly, in order to a proper investigation of this subject, it is necessary in the

II. *place*, To ascertain the TRUE NATURE of a proper covenant. Covenanting, even between man and man, especially between God and man, ever has been accounted a most solemn action. It was usual, in ancient times, for persons covenanting, to slay certain animals, divide them asunder, and pass between the parts of them thus divided, with awful imprecations, that, if they violated the covenant, they might in like manner be cut asunder. Gen. xv. 9,—18. Jer. xxxiv. 18. Of vast importance and everlasting consequence are both the covenants which God has made with man. The covenant of works, as now violated, entails misery on all who are under it.

The covenant of grace as fulfilled by the second Adam, entails felicity on all who are instated in it. The solemn ceremony which attended covenanting of old, manifestly pointed out the manner in which the everlasting covenant was first typically, and afterwards actually, ratified and confirmed. This was done when the surety died; for the two essential and constituent parts of his humanity, his human soul and his human body, were divided asunder; and for a season separated one from another.

As for the true nature of a proper covenant, it may be necessary to observe, that it has two essential and constituent parts; a *conditional*, and a *promissory*; and sometimes it has in it an adventitious or accidental part, called a sanction or threatening. In a covenant, there are understood to be two parties, and, therefore, two parts; one to be performed by the one party, and another to be accomplished by the other. The condition of a covenant, is that part of it, the actual performance of which gives a title to the reward promised. The promise is that part which insures the reward in the event of the fulfilment of the condition.

In the covenant of works, there was a certain condition to be fulfilled by Adam; and in the event of his performing it, God was, on that account, to confer a certain reward upon him. Accordingly, his fulfilment of the condition was to give him a *federal* or *pactional*, though by no means a *meritorious*, title to all the felicity promised in that covenant. Thus, every proper covenant has both a conditional and a promissory part. If there be a possibility of the failure of the party, with whom it is made, a sanction or threatening is added. In the covenant of work, though Adam, when it was made with him, was an upright man, yet, as he was only a man, there was a possibility of failure. An express sanction, therefore, was annexed to it. IN THE DAY THOU EATEST THEREOF, said God to Adam, THOU SHALT SURELY DIE. In this, as well as in other respects, do the two covenants



covenants of works and of grace differ. As the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, with whom the better covenant was made, was infallible, there was no room for a penalty. The supposition of a penalty in it is preposterous and absurd. I am in the

III. *place*, To show, from the sacred scriptures, that a PROPER COVENANT was actually made with the first Adam in innocency, in which he represented his posterity, consisting of all the numerous individuals of mankind descending from him by *ordinary* generation. That there is a law requiring duty, and forbidding sin; that men of all ages and descriptions are bound to do the former and forbear the latter, is a necessary dictate of reason. But that there was a proper covenant made with the first man, promising life as the reward of his obedience, and threatening death as the punishment of his disobedience, the promise, on the one hand, and the threatening on the other, extending to his posterity as well as himself, reason cannot possibly discover. To revelation, therefore, are we indebted for the discovery and knowledge both of the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. By the light of nature, mankind have discovered that there is *moral*, as well as *penal* evil, *sin*, as well as *pain*, in the world. But how sin entered the world, and has overspread the whole human species, revelation only can inform us. Is it a question then, Was there, or was there not, a proper covenant made with the first Adam, as the representative of his whole natural posterity? To the *law* and to the *testimony* let us submit the decision. What saith the scripture on this point? That there actually was such a transaction between God and Adam, after his creation, the scripture often intimates. Of the many proofs, with which it furnishes us, let us select a few. And,

*First*, We may attend to the passage read in the entry. The Mosaic history of the origin of mankind is short.

short. It contains sparing hints and intimations which are enlarged and amplified in the sequel of the sacred writings. But, if we examine the passage before us, we will find a sufficient intimation of the important matter in question. Here are the two parties transacting in this covenant, *the Lord God* on the one hand, and *man* on the other. Here are the terms of the covenant partly expressed, and partly understood. Of the precepts of the moral law, indeed, there is no express mention; nor was there any necessity for it. It was imprinted on the fleshy table of the human heart. Man knew both what duties it required, and what sins it forbade. But here is the positive prohibition of the use of the fruit on a certain tree. This man could not have known without an express intimation of it; and it was intimated to him accordingly. Thus the conditional part of the covenant, consisting in the universal performance of duty, and the universal abstinence from sin, is intimated with sufficient evidence. The accidental part of the covenant, the sanction, is most express and full. Now, an express threatening in the event of non-obedience, must imply a promise of life in the event of obedience. Thus, as the conditional part of the covenant is, at least, in so far express, the promissory part is necessarily implied. Thus, the essential parts of it, as a proper covenant, are partly expressed and partly understood; and the accidental part, the threatening, which was the only part of it that was foreseen to take effect, is revealed in terms the most explicit and plain.

*Secondly,* In several other places of the sacred oracles we have a revelation of the covenant of works, and the terms of it fully, and, with sufficient perspicuity, propounded. Both covenants are at first discovered in the scriptures by sparing hints; but afterwards revealed and unfolded in a fuller and clearer manner; the first covenant, as we have seen already, in the words prefixed to this Lecture; the second in the 15th verse of the subsequent

subsequent chapter. Of this better covenant especially does the scripture often speak. But the other covenant does it also reveal in terms sufficiently express and plain. I shall, on this occasion, quote only two places; the one from our Lord's own mouth; the other from the pen of his Apostle.

A certain person having come to our Lord, and addressed him thus, *Good Master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life?* The Lord said unto him, *If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.* Matth. xix. 17. It is, as if he had said, Art thou solicitous to know the terms of the old covenant, and to obtain everlasting felicity in the way which it prescribes? The general tenor of it is this, DO, and LIVE. Here are the two essential parts of the covenant; the *condition* expressed by *keeping* the commandments; and the promised *reward, life*. The accidental part is necessarily implied and understood. When the connection between the observation of the commandments and life is expressed, the connection between the non-observation of them and death is implied. Does our Lord propound the terms of the covenant of works to encourage any of us to expect the life promised in it? No. From that quarter no life is now to be expected. Life, as promised in it, is irrecoverably lost. To all mankind it now is a covenant of death rather than of life. The terms of it he purposely states, in order to convince us all of the utter impossibility of our obtaining felicity from that quarter.

The words of the Apostle which I had in view are no less explicit and plain concerning the tenor of the old covenant; for thus he writes, *The law is not of faith; BUT THE MAN THAT DOETH THEM SHALL LIVE IN THEM.* Gal. iii. 12. Here again are the two constituent parts of the covenant of works; the *condition* in these words, *the man that doeth them*, that is, the works of the law of which the preceding context speaks; the *reward* in these words, *he shall live*. In this, as well as the preceding

ceding instance, the minatory part is implied and understood. The thing expressed is, *He that doeth these things shall live.* The thing implied is, *He that doeth them not shall die.*

*Thirdly,* The first Adam, as the head of the covenant of works, and the second, as the head of the covenant of grace, as public persons, or federal representatives, are expressly compared one to another. Is it not for this reason that the one is stiled *the first man*, and the other *the last*? THE FIRST man, ADAM, was made a living soul, THE LAST ADAM was made a quickening Spirit. 1 Cor. xv. 45. Why speaks the Apostle of the one as the first man, and of the other as the last? Were there only two men? Have there not been, are there not millions of other men? But they are the only public persons and *federal* heads, under whom all mankind are comprehended. No other such person or federal head has appeared, or ever is to appear, in our world. The former was the type, the latter the antitype. Rom. v. 14. In what view, and for what reason, is the first Adam in the place referred to, affirmed to have been a type of the second? In what did the similarity and resemblance between the former and the latter mainly lie? The answer has been suggested already. The first Adam in a respect peculiar to himself, and that distinguishes him from all his natural descendents, typified the second. The former was a federal head, and so is the latter. As an additional and irrefragable proof, that, as really as the covenant of grace was made with the second Adam, the covenant of works was made with the first, let us

*Fourthly,* Attend to the parallel which the Apostle draws between the consequences of the federal representation of all mankind by the first Adam in his covenant, and the consequences of the federal representation of the chosen part of mankind by the second Adam in his covenant. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all*

all men, for that all have sinned. For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's first transgression, WHO IS THE FIGURE OF HIM THAT WAS TO COME. But not as the offence so also is the free gift. For if, through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man. Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Rom. v. 12,—19.

All along here does the Apostle speak of *two* men as public persons, or federal heads; the first Adam, with whom the covenant of works was made; and the second, with whom the better covenant was made; their two respective seeds; and the conveyances from each of them as a representative to the persons represented by him in his covenant. There is, on the one hand, the one man by whom sin and death entered into the world, verse 12; by whose offence many are dead, verse 15; by whom judgment was to condemnation, verse 16; by whose offence death reigned by one, verse 17; judgment came upon all men to condemnation, verse 18; and by whose disobedience many are made sinners, verse 19. On the other hand, there is the one man by whom the grace of God and the gift by grace hath abounded unto many, verse 15; by whom the free gift is of many offences unto justification, verse 16; by whom they who receive abundance

dance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life, verse 17; by the righteousness of whom the free gift comes upon all men unto justification of life, verse 18; by the obedience of whom many shall be made righteous, verse 19.

Each of these federal representatives has a numerous seed, called *the many*, and *the all*, whom he represents in his covenant. The first man has his natural seed: the second his spiritual. We have, in short, the different conveyances from those federal heads to their respective seeds. From the first Adam sin, condemnation, and death are conveyed to his natural seed; from the second grace, righteousness, and life to his spiritual seed. Now, how comes it to pass, that in Jesus Christ many obtain righteousness and life? The reason is plain. He represented them in his covenant. He fulfilled the condition of it in their stead. And, therefore, that righteousness, which he wrought out, is imputed to them as truly as if they had accomplished it in their own persons, and they obtain the eternal life promised in it, no less fully than if they had purchased it for themselves. How comes it to pass, on the other hand, that sin and death descend from the first Adam to his whole natural posterity? The reason is obvious. He represented them in his covenant; and, therefore, what he did when he violated it, is imputed to them, no less than if they had done it in their own persons. As their representative did he violate it; and, therefore, as a following part of the Catechism speaks, *they sinned in him, and fell with him when he sinned and fell*. Thus are they guilty and obnoxious to death. Long before they can contract guilt and incur death in their own persons, the guilt of Adam's first sin is imputed to them; and exposes them to death from their very conception and nativity. So the Apostle teacheth—*Death reigned in the world during the long interval from Adam to Moses, even over THEM that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;*

gression; that is, who had not committed actual sin. Let us observe,

*Fifthly*, That the whole scriptures go upon the supposition, that there was a proper covenant made with the first Adam, as the representative of his natural posterity; and in them we find repeated references to it. I shall only mention two places, which plainly refer to it. *If I, said Job, covered my transgressions AS ADAM, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom—* Job xxxi. 33. It is here understood, that Adam transgressed the law, and violated the covenant, and that he endeavoured to cover or conceal his sin. That he did so, the account of his fall informs us.—*They, Adam and Eve, heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife HID themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.* How natural is it for us to follow our first father's footsteps? But in vain do we attempt to hide ourselves from the omniscient God. To Adam's covenant and his violation of it there is an allusion no less plain in the following words—*They, LIKE MEN, have transgressed the covenant; they have dealt treacherously against me.* Hos. vi. 7. The expression, *like men*, in the Hebrew text, is *like Adam*. Is it not necessarily implied here, that a covenant was made with Adam, and that he violated it? That he did so, the scriptures and our own experience tell us. To all which I shall only add,

*Sixthly*, That the denial of a covenant of works made with Adam is attended with inextricable difficulties, is even big with absurdities. If no covenant was made with Adam, as our representative we can have no concern in what he did when he violated it; what he did can be placed to his own account only, not to ours; there can be no transmission of guilt and punishment from him to us; in short, there can be no original sin in the world; and, if there is no original sin, how can there be any actual? Is not the former the root, the

latter the branches? Is not the one the fountain, the other the streams? Can there be branches without a root, streams without a fountain? According to this hypothesis, infants, at least, can have no sin. Is not sin the cause? and death the effect? But, that infants, as well as adults, die we all know. Infants, therefore, must have sinned. In their own persons they cannot have sinned. There must, therefore, be a federal head, in whom they federally subsisted, and in whom they have sinned.

Apt are we to find fault with this part of the divine conduct; and in the ingratitude and pride of our hearts, to say, Why should we be accountable for the consequences of an action which happened thousands of years before we had a being. Was it fit either for God to propose, or for Adam to agree that he should represent us in a covenant, to which we had not an opportunity to give our consent? Is it not cruel and unjust for God to punish us for a crime which we did not commit? But shall the creature presume to arraign the conduct of the Creator? *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* The propriety and fitness of this part of the providential conduct of God, I will have occasion to point out in the sequel. I am

IV. To take notice of the *general* TENOR of this federal transaction between God and our first father. All that I need to say on this article, is to remind you of the appellations and epithets, by which it is usually distinguished. It has been designed, A COVENANT OF INNOCENCY. The reason is manifest. It was made with Adam in a state of innocency, and in it he represented his then innocent posterity. The second Adam, with whom the better covenant was made, was innocent and holy. But in his covenant he represents guilty persons. This accounts for the difference there is between the conditions of the two covenants. The covenant of works re-  
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quired only perfect obedience to the law ; no satisfaction for sin. That all-perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is the sole proper condition of the covenant of grace, includes in it not only perfect obedience, but full satisfaction for sin.

This transaction between God and innocent Adam, is commonly known by the name of THE COVENANT OF WORKS. This name it evidently has from its conditional part ; for it required a series of good works, or, in other words, perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience, as the condition on which man was to obtain the felicity promised in it. The better covenant, to the surety of it, was, in the highest sense of the word, a covenant of works ; but to us it is, from first to last, a covenant of grace. According to the tenor of the old covenant, man was to do and to live. But, according to the new covenant, *he lives by faith* ; not by his own doings, but in virtue of the doing and dying of the Surety and Saviour.

This important transaction is in the answer stiled A COVENANT OF LIFE. This epithet, the Compilers of the Catechism have assumed from the promissory part of it. All the evil which it threatened is included in the word *death*. All the good it promised is comprehended under the term *life*. The fearful threatening is expressed in the words prefixed to this Lecture. The great promise is implied rather than expressed. Had the conditions of it been fulfilled, it had been eventually to Adam and his posterity a covenant of life. But, in virtue of the violation of its precept, the penalty of it has been incurred ; and it has been, in fact, both to him and to them a covenant of death. What a comfort to us all is it, that there is a better covenant which has a rich promise of everlasting life, and no proper penalty or threatening of death ? *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Rom. vi. 23. Here is an epitome of the whole scriptures, a compend of law  
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and gospel, the sum of both covenants. What saith the old covenant? *The wages of sin is death.* What saith the new covenant? *The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* I am

V. To take a view of the *parties* transacting in this covenant, GOD and MAN. In every proper covenant, as we have found already, there are two essential parts, a conditional, and a promissory. There must, therefore, be two parties, the *maker* of the covenant, and the *party* with whom it is made. On the one it is incumbent to perform the condition. To the other the fulfilment of the promise belongs.

The maker of the covenant of works is God. He, as was most fit, concerted and proposed the terms of it. He is the supreme Lord and Lawgiver. To him all creatures are necessarily subject. As he is the Creator and proprietor, he is the Governor and disposer of all worlds and creatures. He is a God of unbounded sovereignty; doing according to his sovereign and uncontrollable will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of our lower world. One of his creatures he dignifies and advances; another he debases and casts down. This is the THREE-ONE-GOD that made man, and now in great condescension entered into covenant with him.

Man, with whom he made the covenant, was his own creature; not a creature of the first, but of a secondary rank and order. Far, indeed, were the parties contracting in this covenant from being on a level. Infinite is the disparity which naturally and necessarily subsisted between them. To God was man indebted for all that he was, and all that he possessed. In no instance could he, strictly speaking, deserve any thing at the hand of God. This was the first man, the natural root, and, therefore, exceedingly fit to be the federal representative of all the nations and individuals of the human species, who in the several ages of time proceed from him. They were

were in his loins when this covenant was made with him. Adam was now an innocent and upright person; conformed in both soul and body to the holy will and law of God.

The only thing to which I need to attend on this part of the subject, is the question, whether the covenant of works was made with Adam only, or with Adam and Eve conjunctly? That by man in scripture we are sometimes to understand both the man and the woman, the former comprehending the latter, cannot well be denied. Gen. i. 27. But this will by no means prove, that, either in fact, or in the judgment of the Compilers of the Catechism, the covenant of works was made equally with the man and the woman. Does not the scripture uniformly speak of the head of that covenant as one *individual*? Is it not the first man, not the first human pair, but the man as contradistinguished from the woman, that is affirmed to have been a type of the second Adam? Rom. v. 14. Does not the Apostle mean two individuals, the one the head of the old covenant, the other of the new, when he speaks of the first Adam and the last Adam! One circumstance especially merits consideration here. The order of the Mosaic history warrants us to conclude, that the covenant of works was made with Adam before Eve had a being. Of the making of the covenant the two verses read in the entry inform us. But of the creation of Eve we hear nothing till we come to the 18th verse of the chapter. That facts are not always narrated in the sacred history according to the order in which they are accomplished, I know. But that the two facts in question are not related according to the order in which they happened, I can see no reason to think. That the covenant was made, not with the man and the woman, but with the man only, as the representative of his posterity, seems to have been the opinion of the Compilers of the Catechism; for thus a following answer speaks—*The covenant being made with ADAM not only for HIMSELF, &c.*

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But methinks I hear different persons saying, How can these things be? Had Eve no concern, was she not at all included in the covenant? I can only think of three ways, in one or another of which she could be included in the covenant; either as a *representative*, or as *represented*. or as a sort of *third party*. that was to stand or fall by herself. That Adam and she were co-representatives in the covenant I can see no reason to think. Neither does she seem to have been represented by him in it. It is said to have been made with Adam not only for himself, but *for his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation*. But she did not descend from him by generation, either *ordinary* or *extraordinary*. Was she then a third party that stood and fell for herself? If she was, why should we find fault with God for chusing Adam to represent us in the covenant? Here is a person that neither was represented by another, nor represented others, but acted only for herself, and she was the very first that sinned and fell.

It is natural to ask here, Had the woman only sinned and not the man, what would have been the consequence? would the covenant have been broken? or would the woman only have perished, and another have been created in her place, from whom mankind would have sprung? Of suppositions, conjectures, and questions here, there is no end. We neither have information, nor are we under any obligation, to account for them. Why should we perplex ourselves with the supposition of events, which we know could not happen? Let us consider

VI. The *parts* of the covenant, the *conditionary*, the *promissory*, and the *minatory*. The first two are the essential parts of a covenant. The third is an accidental and adventitious part. Of these parts, severally, I may give a brief account. There is

*First*, The *CONDITIONARY* part of the covenant of works. To the important question, What is the condition

tion of the covenant of works? Some pious writers and useful Catechisms give this very inaccurate answer, *Do and live*. I call it *inaccurate*, because it comprehends the whole of the covenant rather than a part of it. In it the two constituent parts of the covenant are expressed, and the adventitious part implied. The thing required of man in it was *to do*, and the thing promised in it was *life*. What God required of Adam, as the proper condition of the covenant, the actual performance of which was to entitle him and his posterity to the eternal life promised in it, was *perfect, personal, and perpetual* conformity and obedience to the revealed will of God. The general standard of this obedience was the *moral law*. The special test of it was a positive prohibition relating to the fruit of a particular tree in the garden, with regard to which, God said to him, *Thou shalt not eat of it*. It is here understood, that he had both the knowledge of the will and law of God, and ability to fulfil it. The law was not yet written either on tables of stone or on paper. He had it, however, imprinted on the fleshly table of his heart; and was in his whole man, soul and body, conform to it. He was, and he did universally what the holy law required him to be and to do. From his creation, Adam had habitual conformity to the holy law; and habitual conformity is productive of actual. A holy nature ever is accompanied with a holy life; or, as our Lord himself expresses it, *a good tree BRINGETH FORTH GOOD FRUIT*. It behoved the obedience, which Adam was required to perform as the condition of the covenant of works, to be

(1.) *Perfect*. It behoved it to be perfect in every respect and view; in respect of its *subject*. A perfect man only could perform perfect obedience. The law extends to the man himself as well as his actions. It behoved him to be, as well as to do, what the law required. It behoved his obedience to be perfect in respect of *parts*. It was incumbent upon him to obey all the precepts of

the law; to perform all the duties internal and external, which each of them required; and to abstain from all the sins in thought, word, and deed, which each of them forbade. It behoved his obedience to be perfect in *degrees*, as well as in parts. It was incumbent upon him not only to perform every duty, which the holy law enjoined, but to do it in a perfect manner; not only the number of the duties, but each of them in perfection.

(2.) *Personal.* The covenant of works admitted of no Mediator or Surety. Had Adam fulfilled the condition of it, his obedience, indeed, would have entitled not only himself but his posterity to the eternal life promised in it. Each of them in that event would have been conformed in his own person to the holy law. The obedience of his federal head, however, rather than his own personal obedience, would have been sustained as the ground of his title to life. But on supposition that Adam failed in fulfilling the condition, and a substitute both able and willing to do it had offered, the covenant of works could not have accepted of him. How thankful may we all be that there is a better covenant, in which a surety is provided for us; an exchange of persons is admitted; obedience and satisfaction received from a substitute in place of sinners themselves? For *he who knew no sin, was made sin, or a sin-offering, for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; Christ hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, in their stead, as well as for their good, that he might bring us unto God.*

(3.) *Perpetual.* *Cursed is every one, saith the law of works, that CONTINUETH not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* Gal. iii. 10. It is not said, Cursed is every one that *doeth* not, but cursed is every one that *continueth* not to do all things. Adam, indeed, was now in a probationary state. That state was only to continue for a limited time. Had Adam continued obedient till the expiration of it, the condition of the covenant would then have been fulfilled; and his  
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own everlasting felicity and that of his numerous posterity insured. But would he in that case have ceased to be conformed and obedient to the law? No. He would have been confirmed in a state of perfect and perpetual purity, as well as felicity and dignity. The law, under which he was, is of universal, and of endless obligation. Universal conformity to it is the felicity and the dignity of the rational creature.

Such was the tenor, and such the demands of the law of works. High, but just, demands! Such demands, however, innocent Adam was able to answer. God required nothing of him but what he was able to do. Let us

*Secondly*, Attend to the PROMISSORY part of the covenant of works. This, though not expressed, is necessarily implied in the Mosaic account of it. The threatening of death in the event of disobedience, expressed in the verses prefixed to this Lecture, necessarily implies a promise of life in case of obedience. The promissory part of the covenant is to be considered as it relates to Adam himself, and as it extends to his posterity. The threatening on the one hand, and the promise on the other, extend to them as well as him. Had he obeyed, not only he, but also his posterity, would have lived. But, having disobeyed, he exposed them, as well as himself, to death. The life promised in this covenant is usually considered as threefold, natural, spiritual, and eternal.

(1.) *Natural*. This included in it not merely the continuation of the union between soul and body, but the felicity and comfort of both in a united state. Now, that natural life in the promissory part of the covenant comprehended not only the continued union of soul and body, but the felicity and comfort of both in a united state, is manifest from the opposition which the scripture states between life and death, and the extent in which it understands the latter. Death denotes not only the actual dissolution of the union between soul and body,

but the forerunners of it. Accordingly, the moment man sinned, he began, agreeably to the letter of the threatening, to die. Not only did he fall under the power of spiritual death as the forerunner of eternal, but he began to die naturally; that is, he was exposed to the miseries of this life as the beginning of the actual dissolution of the mortal frame; which is, what we commonly understand by natural death. Now, if natural death includes not only the actual separation of soul and body, but the infelicity and misery incident to man during the present state, life, as opposed to death, denotes the continued union of soul and body, and also the felicity and comfort of both during their united state. It is here understood, that man would never have been subjected to natural death, had he not sinned. It has, indeed, been pretended, that his mortality arises from his constitution; and that, therefore, though he never had sinned, he would have been mortal. But what saith the scripture? Does it not every where represent death as the consequence of sin? Is not the threatening, *In the day that thou eatest, and sinnest, thou shalt surely die*, sufficiently express and plain? Is it not necessarily implied, that if he did not eat and sin, he should not die? No less explicit and peremptory are the Apostle's words, *By one man sin entered into the world, and DEATH BY SIN.* Rom. v. 12. When it is affirmed that death entered by sin, must it not mean, that, if sin had not entered, death would not have entered. Death natural, spiritual, and eternal, is intended here. Persons may understand it in a restricted view; but what reason can they assign for such an interpretation? Is not death of every species, death in its utmost extent, the consequence of sin? Is not this what the Apostle affirms?

(2.) *Spiritual.* As natural life denotes the continued union of soul and body, and the felicity and comfort of both in an united state, spiritual life includes continued union and communion between God and man,  
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in which the felicity of the latter consists. That soul and body may be united, and neither the one nor the other be happy, scripture and experience testify. Though they be united one to another, if they be not related to God, it is impossible for them to be happy. Spiritual life admits of a twofold consideration, as *relative*, and as *real*. So long as Adam obeyed the law he was approved and accepted of God. He was also conformed and like to his Maker. He had both a will and a capacity to serve him. As he lived by God, he lived to him. What sweet intercourse and fellowship he then had with God, it is not easy for us, fallen creatures, to conceive.

(3.) *Eternal*. This comprehends the perfection and perpetuity of natural and of spiritual life. Different as the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, in many respects, are one from another, between the two there is a similarity. There is a twofold state of man under the covenant of grace; a state of imperfection on earth, and a state of perfection in heaven. The covenant of works also supposed a twofold state of man; a probationary, and a confirmed state; the former on earth, the latter in heaven. The former was an inferior and temporary state; the latter a superior and an everlasting state. Though he was both a holy and a happy man when the covenant of works was made with him, we are not to imagine that the state in which he was then placed, was equal to that confirmed and celestial state of which he had the prospect, and on which he was to enter in the event of his fulfilment of the condition of the covenant. I go here upon the supposition, that there was a certain period at which man's state of probation was to end, and he was to be removed from the terrestrial to the celestial paradise. It has, indeed, been pretended, that the promissory part of the covenant of works warranted Adam to expect only the continuation of a happy life in the earthly paradise for a season.

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But from the scriptures it is sufficiently manifest, that the promissory part of the covenant insured to man, provided he fulfilled the conditional part, life in its fullest extent; not only natural and spiritual, but eternal life. In proof of this important truth it may suffice to suggest the following considerations. That the covenant of works promised eternal life appears

1. From the terms of it, as stated by our divine Redeemer himself; who, in words quoted on a preceding part of the subject, bespeaks a certain person thus, *If thou wilt enter into LIFE, keep the commandments.* That the life of glory is, at least, ultimately intended here every impartial person perceives. That it is of entering into life, according to the tenor and terms of the old covenant, our Lord here speaks is no less evident. That eternal life was promised in the first covenant will appear if we consider

2. That it is promised in the new covenant. Very different, indeed, are the two covenants. Vastly superior is the new to the old. But do we not recover, in virtue of the fulfilment of the one, what we forfeited by the violation of the other? Does not the second Adam restore what not he but the first Adam took away? Now, what does he restore? Two things especially, glory to God, and felicity to fallen man. What felicity does he restore to fallen man? Is it natural, spiritual, or eternal life? It is life natural, spiritual, and eternal; and all these kinds of life are restored according to the order in which they were lost. Man first died spiritually; and became obnoxious to death natural and eternal. Elect sinners first recover spiritual life; and, in due time, a resurrection to a life of eternal glory, in which soul and body are to be partners and sharers for ever. Now, does the second Adam only restore to fallen man what he forfeited by sin? And does he give the life of glory in heaven as well as of grace on earth? Then the former no less than the latter must have been promised in the

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the covenant of works; and man must have forfeited the one, as well as the other, by his violation of that covenant.

3. Not only natural and spiritual, but also *eternal* death was threatened in the covenant of works; and, therefore, eternal, as well as natural and spiritual life, must have been promised. That eternal death was threatened in it is manifest both from scripture and experience. Now, the life promised, and the death threatened in it are, every where in the scriptures, contrasted. Are the death threatened and the life promised of equal extent? Does the former include eternal, as well as natural and spiritual death? The latter, by unavoidable consequence, includes eternal, as well as natural and spiritual, life. With great propriety, therefore, does the Apostle oppose the life promised in the new covenant to the death threatened in the old, in words which I introduced already—*The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

That man, in the event of his fulfilment of the conditional part of the covenant, was, at a particular period unknown to us, not only to be confirmed in a state of perpetual purity and dignity, but translated, in both soul and body, from earth to heaven, seems, from various considerations, evident. This earth certainly never was intended to be the perpetual dwelling of the countless millions of the human species born already, and to be born. From his constitution and superior nature might we infer, that man was intended for the higher world. The form and aspect of the irrational creatures may be understood to be an indication of their low end as well as original; man's form and aspect, on the contrary, as an indication of his high end as well as original. *Who knoweth the spirit of man THAT GOETH UPWARD, SAYS SOLOMON, AND THE SPIRIT OF THE BEASTS THAT GOETH DOWNWARD TO THE EARTH? Eccl. iii. 21.* But the great principle which seems to run through the whole

whole scriptures, and on which especially we go here, is this—We recover by the obedience of the second Adam what we lost by the disobedience of the first. Now, by the obedience of the second Adam we are not only delivered from that state of sin and misery, to which the disobedience of the first Adam had reduced us, and introduced into a state of grace on earth, a state in some respects similar, though in other views dissimilar and superior, to that state from which he fell; but, in due time, obtain an actual entrance, in both soul and body, into the celestial world, and the everlasting possession of it. Thus the felicity promised in the covenant of works, which Adam by his disobedience forfeited for his posterity as well as himself, and the felicity promised in the new covenant, which the second Adam has obtained and insured to all whom he represents in it, are in substance the same. The same in substance, I say; for they differ only in circumstances. The celestial glory, of which the weakest believer on earth is an expectant, is in several respects superior to the glory of which the first Adam had the prospect in the covenant of works. How does it recommend and endear the celestial glory of which militant saints have the prospect, and triumphant saints the possession, that it was purchased, and is now possessed, by the Son of God in our nature, as the primary heir of it! In virtue of the new covenant our nature is now advanced, and we ourselves related to God, in a manner unknown to Adam previous to his fall.

In the celestial world, we have now not only the throne of God, but also the throne of the Lamb. Had not the covenant of works been violated, and the superior covenant been introduced in virtue of the breach of it, no individual of the human race ever could have seen what the Apostle John saw. *I beheld, says he, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a LAMB as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits*

*Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.* Rev. v. 6. I  
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Thirdly, To consider the MINATORY part of the covenant. This I called an *adventitious* and *accidental* part. It is not essential to a covenant, but always implies the possibility of a failure on the part of the person or persons with whom it is made. Innocent and upright as Adam was, when God entered into covenant with him, there was, at least, a possibility of a failure on his part. It was fit, therefore, that a proper penalty should be annexed to the covenant. Of this part of it Moses gives us an explicit account; for he introduces God bespeaking Adam, when he covenanted with him, thus—*In the day thou eatest, THOU SHALT SURELY DIE.* After a particular account of the life promised in that covenant, I need not insist on the death threatened in it. Whatever the one be, the other is the reverse.

The particular instance on which especially man's obedience, or disobedience, was to turn, is expressly mentioned. Accordingly, I may here speak of the *tree* itself, of the fruit of which Adam was forbidden to eat; of the *reasons* of the prohibition; and of the *consequence* of transgressing it.

(1.) The TREE itself. It is known in the scriptures, and in the answer under consideration, by the distinguishing name, *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.* In the earthly paradise there were two famous trees, of both which Moses has given us an account—*Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; THE TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE of good and evil.* The tree of life referred to the promissory part of the covenant; and might be intended to be an emblem of the life promised in it. The tree of knowledge of good and evil related to the sanction of it, and might be intended to remind man of the death threatened in that covenant.

As for this last tree, it has been queried what kind of tree it was. It has accordingly been thought to be the *fig-tree*. This opinion probably has been inferred from the account which Moses gives us of the first garments of our fallen parents. *The eyes of them both were opened, says he, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed FIG-LEAVES together, and made themselves aprons.* Gen. iii. 7. It has been by others understood to be the *apple-tree*. This opinion has been taken from these words—*I raised thee up under the APPLE-TREE.* Song viii. 5. But all these things are the creatures of a fruitful fancy. What particular tree is intended it is unnecessary and impossible for us to know. It is more natural to enquire why it is designed *the tree of knowledge of good and evil*. It certainly is not intended to intimate, that the tree itself was endued with the knowledge either of good or evil. Neither can it mean, that the tree had any intrinsic power or virtue to communicate the knowledge of good and evil to any. It may be designed the tree of knowledge of good and evil *sacramentally* and *eventually*. It was intended to admonish and forewarn our first parents of the *experimental* knowledge of the good forfeited and the evil incurred, which they would acquire in the event of eating the fruit of it.

(2.) The REASONS of the prohibition of the use of this tree. There was an express allowance to eat of all the other trees in the garden. This tree as much as any other was at God's disposal; but he, in sovereignty and wisdom, had chosen it to be the test of man's fidelity and obedience; and, in prohibiting the use of it, he might have different things in view.

It might be intended to remind man of his dependence upon God, and subjection to him. Man had dominion over all the creatures in this lower world. He had the full and free use of the beasts of the earth, of the fowls of the air, and of the fishes of the sea. But by this prohibition he was reminded, that he, who allowed him the full  
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and free use of all the other creatures, had he pleased, might have withheld them from him. For all the other creatures, no less than this tree, were in his providential hand, and at his sovereign disposal.

It certainly was designed to teach man the necessity of universal and unreserved submission and obedience to the will of God, in what instances, and by what means soever, he may be pleased to notify it to him. Here was a tree of the fruit of which man was by no means to eat. But for forbidding him to eat of it no imaginary reason can be assigned, but *only* that it was the pleasure of Jehovah, who doth *according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of our earth.*

*In fine,* It might be intended as a daily monitor to man, to remind him, that it was not in the fruition of earthly things his felicity consisted, or was to consist. Here was a tree which appeared good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and in every respect much to be desired; and yet man, even in his paradisaical state, was not allowed to eat of it. No creature, how desirable soever it may be, is ever to be substituted in place of the Creator. It is not in the former, but only the latter, that felicity and satisfaction can be found. I may consider

(3.) The direful CONSEQUENCE of eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, *death.* *In the day thou eatest thereof,* said God to Adam, *thou shalt surely DIE.* Death here may be viewed in a twofold sense, as *relative* and as *real*, or as *legal* and as *moral.* The very day man sinned he died *legally*, that is, he was capitally convicted and condemned to die. That very day he died *really* and *morally.* The death threatened in the covenant, as I mentioned formerly, ever is opposed to the life promised in it. The life I have already considered as threefold, *natural, spiritual, and eternal.* I may, therefore, consider death

1. As natural. That natural death was a part of the punishment threatened in the covenant of works is manifest.

nifest. This part of the punishment comprehends, as I said already, not only the actual separation of soul and body, but the numerous forerunners of it. Does natural death include not only the dissolution of the union between the two constituent parts of our nature, but the many temporal maladies which precede and forebode it? Then man may be said to have died naturally the very day, the very moment, he sinned. No sooner did he sin than he began to feel the consequences of it in both soul and body; he saw himself naked; he was filled with shame, remorse, and dread.

2. As spiritual. The very moment man ate he fell into a state, in various respects, similar to that of the dead. He was deprived of his former spiritual beauty and comeliness. God now saw him with dislike and dissatisfaction. He was totally deprived of a principle of spiritual motion and action. This is the unhappy situation to which he reduced his numerous posterity; and in which accordingly we all now descend from him. We come into the world spiritually blind, deaf, and dumb, insensible and unfeeling, incapable of spiritual motion and action. In this unhappy condition we lie till the compassionate eye of him that made us pity us, and his omnipotent hand help us. Were all the saints in heaven and on earth now assembled before me, I might address them in the Apostle's words to the Ephesian converts—*You hath he quickened who were DEAD in trespasses and sins—You were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were DEAD in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* Eph. ii. 1, 3,—6.

3. As eternal. This includes the everlasting separation of the whole man from God; and the punishment of both soul and body in that separated state for ever. Accordingly, it is usually considered in a twofold view; as



a punishment of *loss*, and as a punishment of *sense*. By the former we understand the privation and want of all good; by the latter the actual infliction of all *penal* evil. Is not this, indeed, a punishment greater than we can bear? In what tremendous terms does the Apostle describe it! *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in FLAMING FIRE, taking VENGEANCE on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* 2 Thess. i. 7,—9. This is a punishment at once most exquisite in degree, and of endless duration. It is called *vengeance* and *destruction*, even *everlasting* destruction. But of this tremendous subject the answer to a following question will lead me to speak more particularly.

Such were the parts, *conditional*, *promissory*, and *minatory*, of the covenant of works.—I may now, therefore, in the

VII. *and last place*, Take notice of what many writers have called the SEALS of the covenant of works. The external administration of the superior covenant, both prior and posterior to the coming of Christ, has had sacred seals annexed to it. The covenant of works has also been understood to have had its seals. Concerning the number of the latter, writers are not agreed. But, as both the Jewish and Christian administrations of the better covenant each of them has two seals, the best writers speak of two seals of the covenant of works. These were the two famous trees in the earthly paradise of which I had occasion to take notice already. Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil I have spoken under a preceding head. It was to Adam, as I said already, a daily monitor and indication of the danger and the death he was to incur, if he transgressed. Especially is the tree of life understood to have been a seal of the covenant

nant of works, and a pledge to Adam of that complete and everlasting felicity which he was to insure to himself and his numerous posterity, by fulfilling the conditional part of the covenant. What particular kind of tree this was, we are not informed, and therefore cannot know. It has been queried, why it was called *the tree of life*. This appellation has been supposed to arise from a particular virtue in it, and which was not in any of the other trees of paradise.

It has been supposed, that, though man was made immortal, his nature was subject to decays which the peculiar efficacy of this tree only could repair. Nay, it has been thought to have had such a wonderful virtue, that, had man eaten of it, even though he sinned, he could not have died; and, even after he had sinned, and exposed himself to death, had he ate of it previous to his expulsion from the garden, his death would have been prevented. This notion probably arises from a mis-interpretation of Jehovah's words—*The Lord God said, now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever—So he drove out the man: and he placed, at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.* Gen. iii. 22, 24. Was not the expulsion of our first parents from paradise, and consequently from all access to the tree of life, a certain indication not only that paradise itself was now lost, but the life, both terrestrial and celestial, promised in the covenant of works, was now irrecoverably and for ever forfeited? When it is said, that Adam was driven out that he might not eat of the tree of life and live, it is not to be understood as an intimation of what would have eventually happened, but only as an intimation of the intention and view with which he would have eaten of it. Now, he was to know that all expectation and views of life in the way of that covenant were foolish and delusory. It only is in the way of a superior covenant, of  
which

which till now our first parents had been altogether ignorant, that any fallen man can expect and obtain life. Far were the two trees already mentioned, as seals of the covenant of works, from being unnecessary and unprofitable. In them Adam had every day, every hour, before his eyes visible and sensible monuments of both the felicity promised and the misery threatened in the covenant of works; in order that he might be excited and warned to insure to himself the one and avoid the other.

The account which I have given of the covenant of works suggests a variety of reflections.

Great condescension and goodness did God discover to man in the covenant of works. How unequal are the parties contracting in it! Infinitely superior was he that made it to him with whom it was made. Shall the great Creator covenant with any of his own creatures! Did he ever treat in such a manner with angels? *Lord, what is man!* Manifold are the instances in which God appears good to man in the covenant of works. Nothing was required of him in it but what might have been required of him though no such covenant had been made. Felicity was promised to him in it far greater than otherwise he could have expected; even felicity which his obedience, though it had been perfected, could not have deserved. If Eve acted for herself, was it not wisely and mercifully ordered that she was permitted to sin and fall first, to teach us that we need not murmur at God for making a covenant with Adam, his violation of which was to involve us all in ruin; for had each of us been left to act, and to stand or fall for himself, we might all have done as our mother Eve did.

Manifest is the validity of scripture-consequences. The doctrine of the covenant of works is of capital importance in the Christian system. It is a doctrine not only most important in itself, but most interesting to us. In many places of scripture, however, it is not delivered in such express terms, as we may think the importance

of it requires, but it is manifestly implied in them ; and, by the most necessary and natural consequence. deducible from them. How necessary and useful is it for us to compare spiritual things with spiritual ? Is not the scripture its own best interpreter ? Let us attend to the sense rather than the sound. The latter without the former is unprofitable. Firm, indeed, is the foundation we have for our faith in the scriptures. Copious and clear is the revelation they contain of both law and gospel, of both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace.

How different is the covenant of works posterior to the violation of it from what it was prior to it ! No longer is it to any of us a covenant of life. It now is a covenant of death to us all. For *we have all sinned*, and we all have died spiritually, and exposed ourselves to eternal death. *Blessed and holy then is he that bath part in the first resurrection, for over him the second death shall have no power.*

Unhappy and dangerous is the situation of every person under the broken covenant of works. Unhappy must it be. All the good, temporal and spiritual, promised in that covenant, has that person forfeited. Dangerous must it be. All the penal evil threatened in it has he incurred. He is under the malediction of heaven. He is obnoxious to the wrath of an angry, an incensed God. But how secure and fearless are many in this state ! They are fast asleep, and, therefore, see not their danger. They are asleep on the top of a most tremendous precipice, at the foot of which is a bottomless gulph, into which they are apt every moment to tumble. May I not bespeak such a person in the words of the ship-master to the Prophet fast asleep in the midst of a great tempest. *What meanest thou, O SLEEPER ! Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.* Jon. i. 6.

Foolish and preposterous must it be for any of the posterity of fallen Adam to expect life in the way of the covenant of works. From that quarter no life is now

to be expected. Though we could do all that Adam was bound to do, when the covenant was made with him, even this would be ineffectual and unavailing. Adam carved out new work for himself; work which neither angel nor man can accomplish. He has sinned, and, therefore, for sin satisfaction must be made. But satisfaction adequate to the dignity of the offended party, a finite being cannot possibly accomplish. What an arduous task, what an impracticable undertaking is an attempt to obtain life in the way of the covenant of works! Who of all mankind can *continue* in all the things required in the holy and just law of God? Who of us all can suffer the penalty and bear the punishment of our sin? What a foolish and absurd part do they act, who, as the Apostle expresses it, *go about to establish their own righteousness*, or the righteousness of the law, in opposition to the righteousness of Christ; preferring the covenant of works to the covenant of grace; the former, in fact, a covenant of death; the latter, in the fullest sense of the word, a covenant of life?

Most apparent is the necessity of another and superior covenant. Is death incurred, and is life forfeited, by the violation of the covenant of works? Then there must be another and a better covenant by which fallen man may escape the death threatened, and recover the life forfeited, in that first covenant; otherwise man is lost for ever. But glory to God in the highest, that, before the covenant of works was violated, nay, long before it was made, even from unbeginning ages, another federal Head was found out, and a superior covenant was transacted with him. How superior is this covenant! How admirably adapted to the state of fallen man! The covenant of works was calculated for the meridian of the innocent state. But the covenant of grace only can besit the fallen state. Safe and happy, indeed, is the person, and only the person, that is instated in this better covenant. He is delivered from spiritual death, from

natural death as *penal*, and from eternal death. He lives both relatively and really. He has the life of grace in present possession, and the prospect of the possession of the life of glory through an endless futurity. The great question then, my friends, is, whether *we* be personally, in a saving manner, and for ever, instated in this covenant. Necessary, interesting question!

*Finally*, Let me entreat each of you, my dear brethren, who hitherto have remained under this broken covenant, and are exposed to the misery which it entails on all who are under it; let me entreat you to flee speedily, without a moment's delay, into that better covenant now opened to you for this very end, that you may by faith enter into it; sitting down. for time and eternity, under that purple-covering of the all-atoning blood of Christ, which will infallibly insure everlasting safety and felicity to you. May he who has the hearts of all men in his hand determine and enable you to do so! Amen.

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## The Fall of Man:

Eccl. vii. 29.

*Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*

**I**MMUTABILITY is one of the incommunicable perfections by which the divine Being is distinguished from every being of the created kind. Holy and happy was man in his original state. But mutability belongs to all the creatures. *God made man upright; but he soon unmade himself.* So speaks the text. God made man upright; *but he found out many inventions*, by which he dishonoured God, and destroyed himself. Sudden is the transition in the text from man's first to his fallen state. Sudden was man's fall from a state of holiness and happiness into a state of sin and misery. This is that unhappy change of state that man at an early period underwent; of which we have a description in the following answer of the Catechism, which I am now to introduce and explain—*Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.*

Of the creation of our first parents, and of the holy and happy state in which they were at first placed, we have heard already. Of the unhappy change of state which they suddenly underwent, commonly known by the name of the *fall*, I am now to speak.

In the answer which I have repeated, and am now to explain, we find the following particulars.

I. The persons immediately concerned in this dreadful catastrophe, OUR FIRST PARENTS. They were the first human pair, and the common parents of the numerous individuals of mankind who have been born in the ages which are past, and are to be born in the ages which are to come. They were our parents. We are their children. The genealogy of mankind, in all parts of our world, may be traced back from son to father, through all the past ages of the world, till we reach that early period at which only two human beings actually existed, and we all lay in their loins. Why then should one of mankind hate or despise another? We are all brethren. The high and the rich need not look down with contempt on the mean and the low. One specific nature is common to them all. They all have one common father. *OF ONE BLOOD God hath made all nations of men that dwell on all the face of the earth.* A federal, as well as a natural, relation subsists between Adam and us. He represented us in that covenant of which I gave you an account in the preceding Lecture. Therefore, when he sinned and fell, we sinned in him and fell with him.

II. How our first parents fell from their original state of dignity, as well as purity and felicity—BEING LEFT TO THE FREEDOM OF THEIR OWN WILL they FELL. This truly is a mysterious subject. That our first parents fell, and that we fell in and with them, experience, as well as scripture, tells us. But how they fell, it is far from being



being easy to explain. This is, indeed, one of the most abstruse points in revealed religion. It is attended with difficulties, the solution of which is truly hard. Vain and unnecessary is it to ask whether man has actually fallen or not. That he now is a fallen creature is a truth no less mournful than certain. He once was a holy and a happy man. How could a holy and a happy man become unholy and unhappy? In him, at his creation, there was a universal inclination to good. Whence then had he a propensity to evil? Whence did it originate?

This mystery has been explained and accounted for in a manner most derogatory to God, and subversive of the most capital doctrines of revelation. It has been pretended, that this propensity or inclination to evil was concreated with man. But could it possibly be concreated with him? Could it be of God? No. He is not, he cannot be, the author of sin, or of any sinful inclination. Had it been concreated with Adam, he must have had it even prior to his fall; nay, from the very earliest moments of his existence. But the supposition of a propensity to evil, or inclination leading to the actual commission of sin, is utterly incompatible with a state of perfect purity and felicity, and repugnant to the views the scripture gives us, and all the ideas we entertain of man's primeval state. The supposition that there was in man from his creation such an inbred inclination to evil, that man was a sinner from his creation, or rather that sin was concreated with him, is a monstrous absurdity. An inclination to evil is evil. A sinful habit, no less than a sinful act, is sin. The holy law requires conformity to it in the heart as well as in the practice, in the inward dispositions as well as in the external actions. A want of conformity to it, as really as a transgression of it, is sin.

The supposition, I say, that an inclination to evil was concreated with man is most antisciptural and big with absurdity. Accordingly, the answer accounts for his

sin and fall in quite a different manner. He was, indeed, a holy and a happy man. But he was only a man; and, therefore, capable of change. Many creatures, indeed, both angelic and human, are unalterably confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness. But the permanency of their state does not arise from the immutability of their natures. It arises from the stability of the divine purposes. God, no doubt, could immediately have confirmed our first parents in a state of purity and felicity. But it pleased him to place them, for a season, in a state of probation and trial. As he ever is sovereign in the distribution of all his favours to the creatures, he could either give to our original progenitors, or withhold from them, that superadded grace and strength by which they might have been for ever confirmed in their original state, and not so much as a possibility left of their falling from it. It does not appear that he withdrew from Adam the grace which he had formerly given him. Easily, no doubt, could he have bestowed upon him confirming grace, by which his fall might have been absolutely prevented. But this, as I said, he might either give or withhold. And he, in sovereignty, withheld it accordingly; leaving man to his own FREEDOM in the improvement of what he had already received. He did not in the least *prompt*, but only permitted, man to sin. He had given him a stock of strength sufficient for doing his duty; and left him TO THE FREEDOM OF HIS OWN WILL in the use of it.

Thus was he to stand or to fall, as he used or abused that *freedom* of will and choice to which he was now left; or as he made a good or bad use of that stock he had now in his hand, the improvement of which God had left to himself. He was under the most inviolable obligations to obey. He was allured to obedience from the encouraging prospect of the endless felicity which he was to obtain for himself and his posterity. He was deterred from disobedience by the most express and faithful warn-  
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ing of the fatal consequences of it to himself and his offspring. Far was it from being equal to him, in point of duty and of interest, whether he obeyed or disobeyed. Thus encouraged to obedience and deterred from disobedience, however, he was left to his own free choice. Inclined and encouraged as he was to good, it might have been expected that no allurements or temptations could have caused him to deviate from his duty. But, alas! mutable and uncertain are all the creatures when left to themselves.

In a mind directed and bent toward good, all good, and good only, who could have expected any evil inclination or motion ever to arise? When the choice, the competition was between God and the Devil, sin and duty, felicity and misery, who could have thought the preference ever would have been given to the latter? Mysterious and unaccountable as the origin of moral evil in the world, or the entrance of sin into it, must certainly be, from the nature of God, and from what he has discovered to us, we know that neither can man, on the one hand, be excused, nor can God, on the other, be accused. Sin, as we have repeatedly observed, he may *permit*. But he cannot *prompt* to the commission of it. *God tempteth no man; neither can he be tempted of evil.* Jam. i. 13.

But of the manner in which our first parents were seduced and fell, the answer to a following question gives us a more particular account. Accordingly

III. We may take notice of the unhappy change of state which our first parents experienced—*They FELL FROM THE ESTATE WHEREIN THEY WERE CREATED.* With the most obvious propriety is it called the *fall*. It supposes a former state of dignity, as well as of felicity. It bespeaks a present state of infelicity and misery. High was man previous to this direful event. High was he in point of *relation*. He was *the son of God*. Luke iii. 38.  
High

High character! High was he in point of *state*. He was in covenant with his Maker; and his vicegerent on earth. All the other creatures in our world were subject to him. High did he stand in his Maker's *estimation* and *favour*. High was he in point of *employment*. He glorified God in a manner of which all the other creatures in our lower world are incapable. He had high *attainments* and enjoyments. He enjoyed, as well as glorified, his Maker in a peculiar manner. Honourable, happy man!

But, alas! *man, being in honour, abode not*. Low is man posterior to the fall. An alien and outcast is fallen man; quite disabled for glorifying God, and disqualified for enjoying him, as well as without a title to it. Let us review him in his first state, and in his now fallen state. Let us compare, rather contrast, the one with the other. What a striking proof and humbling monument of human mutability do we behold! To what was this dismal change owing? What cause could produce such a woful effect? This question reminds me of

IV. And *last* particular in the answer. *Our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created* BY SINNING AGAINST GOD. *Sin*, we see, was the cause. Our first parents fell from the holy and happy estate in which they were created, of which we have a fuller account in the preceding part of the Catechism, into that state of sin and misery, of which we have a particular account in the sequel, by *sinning*. SIN! evil and accursed thing! Nay. *sin* is the only evil thing in the universe. We speak of *moral* and *penal* evil; but strictly speaking, there is only one evil thing, *sin*. It only is in a qualified sense that we can call punishment *evil*. Accordingly, it is said to be of God. Thus he speaks — *I form the light, and create darkness. I make peace and create EVIL, penal evil, I the Lord do all these things.* Isa. xlv. 7. VENGEANCE is mine, I will repay it saith the Lord. Rom. xii. 19.

What

What an evil thing in itself is sin! and what bitter fruits does it produce! *This truly is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; its grapes are grapes of gall, its clusters are bitter.* Deut. xxxii. 32. What brought angels down from the celestial mansions which they originally inhabited, and consigned them over to the infernal regions? What brought our first parents out of the terrestrial paradise, and exposed them to woe and wretchedness in time and through eternity? Were I to put ten thousand such questions, one answer would suffice for them all. Sin, that evil thing, sin, is the cause of all the woes of the wretched creatures.

But to speak of either the intrinsic evil, or the awful demerit, the odious nature, or the direful effects, of sin; is only to anticipate what will come under consideration in the answers to some subsequent questions. What I have farther to say upon this subject I shall, therefore, postpone at present. To conclude—

(1.) What has been said accounts for that similarity and semblance which we all bear to the first Adam. Children are supposed to resemble their father. Adam was the common parent of all mankind. They all, as his children, resemble and imitate him. Various, indeed, are the nations and individuals of the human race distinguished from one another. But they all bear a semblance to their original progenitor. What is affirmed of one of his immediate sons may be said of each of his remotest posterity—*He is begotten in HIS OWN likeness, and after HIS image*; his image and likeness as fallen man, in opposition to that image and likeness of God after which he was at first created. Gen. v. 3. compared with chapter i. 26, 27.

(2.) Most dangerous must it be for any of us to be left to ourselves. Whence was it that part of the angels fell while others stood? Were not the standing and the fallen angels originally in the same situation? They, no doubt, were. How then can we account for the fall of

Some of them, and the continuation of others in their primeval state of holiness and happiness? The account I have given of the fall of man answers the question. God confirmed part of the angels in their original state, and left others, as he also did man, *to the freedom of their own will*; withholding confirming grace from them, which he was not bound to give to any; and, therefore, might grant or withhold it as he pleased. Now, if it was so dangerous for holy and happy angels, for our first parents in paradise, to be left to themselves, how very dangerous must it be for us to be left to ourselves? *Let him that thinketh he standeth then take heed lest he fall.* 1 Cor. x. 12. O how encouraging is it to think that no believer, however weak, can fall totally or finally away! That believers may be left for their correction and their trial; and that they may fall often and grievously we know from both scripture and experience. 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. But they cannot fall *totally or finally*. Their final perseverance in a gracious state is infallibly insured. *I will make an EVERLASTING covenant with them, saith God, 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.* Jer. xxxii. 40.

(3.) How very different is man's fallen state from his original state! Often review the scripture-account of both. Compare the one with the other. *The crown is fallen from our head. Wo unto us that we have sinned.*

(4.) How suitable to our malady is the remedy which God in rich sovereignty has provided for us! Are we fallen creatures? Here is a wonderful expedient by which fallen man is exalted to dignity as well as felicity, superior to what he ever would have obtained had he never fallen. *For when men are cast down, then thou shalt say, there is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.* Job xxii. 29. Unknown is the depth, and unknown is the height, of redeeming love.

## Sin.

I JOHN iii. 4.

*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law : for sin is the transgression of the law.*

THE high privileges, of which all true believers are partakers, this inspired Apostle traces to their origin and spring. He furnishes us with a certain criterion, by which we may discern whether we be partakers of them or not. That discriminating and efficacious grace, from which they originally flow, incites every person that obtains it to study universal purity both internal and external. In order to excite us all to this useful study, the Apostle reminds us of *sin*, both as a hateful and a hurtful thing. Of sin he gives us a concise and a comprehensive definition in the words which I have chosen to introduce this Lecture. *Whosoever committeth sin*, says he, *transgresseth also the law ; for sin is the transgression of the law.*

To the Apostle's account of sin the description, which the Compilers of the Shorter Catechism have given us of it, agrees. *Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.* \*

Formerly we saw man exalted almost to heaven. Last occasion we beheld him falling as a star from heaven; and we found that his unhappy fall was occasioned by SIN. Is it not, therefore, most natural to ask now, What is sin? If its fatal effects be such, what must itself be? The answer, which I have now repeated, informs us. This answer naturally resolves itself into two parts; the subject spoken of, *sin*; and what is affirmed of it, it is *any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God*. These two parts of the subject, however, I shall consider, not separately, but together.

To intimate the vast number of sins in the world, the great complication of evils which sin has in it, and its manifold direful effects, the scripture uses a multiplicity of synonymous expressions, which I am not now to enumerate, far less canvass. As for the word translated *sin*, if we attend to the etymology and proper signification of it, it will, perhaps, be found to be borrowed from Archers, who, in hunting or fighting, shoot with bows and arrows, but miss their mark. This method of shooting in ancient times, while fire-arms were not invented, was almost universal; and to it the scripture appears often to allude. Is there not here a plain intimation, that there is a certain mark, to which all our aims and actions ought to be ultimately directed? *Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the glory of God*.

Accordingly, in the answer, there is mention of a law, in the *want of conformity* to which, or a *transgression* of it, sin ever consists. Under this law man ever has been. The design of it is to regulate every part of his conduct outward and inward. Conformity to it ever is his duty; and disconformity to it ever is his sin. This is the test by which sin and duty are known and distinguished the one from the other. I am not now to give you an account of the various acceptations of the word *law* in the scriptures, or of the several laws which God has



has imposed upon man.—A summary view of the law, however, I am obliged to introduce here, in order to pave the way for what I am to say in relation to sin. Sin ever supposes a law; *for*, as the Apostle speaks, *where no law is, there is no transgression.* Rom. iv. 15.

Now the law, in a want of conformity to which, or a transgression of it, sin consists, comes under a twofold consideration, as *natural* and as *revealed*. The *natural* law consists in certain inbred notions of right and wrong, good and evil, which belong to us as rational beings; which, therefore, we bring into the world with us, and which accordingly obtain among mankind in all parts of our world. This is the law, for disconformity to which the nations of the world, without the boundaries of the visible church, are to be punished. *For*, as the Apostle speaks, *there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. For not the bearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the law written on their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.* Rom. ii. 11,—16.

There is the *revealed* law: This is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. For, as I said in a former Lecture, the scriptures contain especially two things; the *law*, which discovers sin, and the woful effects of it; and the *gospel*, which reveals the Saviour and his salvation. The revealed law admits of a twofold consideration. It may be understood in a larger, or in a more limited sense. By the former I understand what is commonly called the Mosaic law. This includes

includes not only the moral law, which is of universal and endless obligation; but the *ceremonial* and *judicial* laws, which were of only limited and temporary use. The ceremonial law respected the Jews in their ecclesiastical capacity, or as a church; and regulated the numerous rites and ceremonies of their peculiar worship. The judicial law considered them in their political capacity, or as a nation. The former is now totally abrogated. *Christ is the end of the law*; not only of the moral law in point of *perfection*, but of the ceremonial in point of *abolition*. The latter, so far as the Jewish polity was peculiar and different from every other model of civil government, has also ceased.

The Mosaic law included also the *moral*, as contradistinguished from the ceremonial and judicial laws. This is what I understand by the revealed law in the limited acceptation of it. It is, I said, of endless as well as universal obligation. It binds Christians now no less than it did the Jews of old. This is the law, by a want of conformity to which, or a transgression of it, we sin. It shows what is conform, and what is contrary, to the will of God. The former it enjoins. The latter it prohibits. Various duties does it require; and various sins does it forbid. It extends to the springs and motives of our actions, as well as our external actions themselves. In the former as well as the latter, may there be a want of conformity to it.

This universal law admits of different forms. Accordingly it has different epithets given to it. It is on one occasion denominated *the law of works*; and on another *the law of Christ*. Rom. iii. 27. Gal. vi. 2. The law of works is the scriptural name of the covenant of works. All unbelievers are under it in this form. They are under it both in its *precept* and in its *penalty*; or, in other words, in both its commanding and condemning power. From it, as a *covenant* of works, or, in the language of the New Testament, as the *law* of works, all true believers

Believers are totally and for ever delivered. In its federal form it was, both in its precept and its penalty, fulfilled and satisfied by their great Surety in their stead, for this very end that they might be delivered from it. Has the moral law, therefore, no power over them? Is its obligation as to them totally relaxed? Far from it. They are under it in all its precepts and parts. They are under special obligations to study universal conformity in nature and practice to it. But they are under it in a new form; not as a proper covenant, only as a law, and under the endearing consideration of *the law of Christ*.

It is natural to ask here, what does the Apostle intend by the law of Christ? or, in other words, what is the difference between the moral law as the law of works, under which the unbeliever is; and as the law of Christ, under which the believer is? All that I shall say in answer to this question is, that, as the law of works, it promises life as the reward of obedience, and threatens death as the punishment of disobedience; but, as the law of Christ, it neither confers life upon believers for their obedience, nor punishes their disobedience with death. Those who are under it in the latter sense are exempted from death and entitled to life, in virtue of the vicarious obedience and satisfaction of their Surety, who fulfilled the precept and endured the penalty of the law of works, in their room and stead. *Christ*, says the Apostle for other believers as well as himself, *hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. For when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* Gal. iii. 13. and iv. 4, 5.

Thus are all true believers, Gentile as well as Jewish, the weak as well as the strong, delivered as fully and effectually from the precept, as well as from the penalty, of the law of works, as if they had never been under it. To be under it, as the law of Christ, they ac-

count no slavery, but the most excellent liberty. Universal conformity in heart and life to it under this endearing consideration is their unfeigned wish and aim. All the duties which it requires are they solicitous to perform; and from all the sins which it forbids are they careful to abstain. From evangelical principles and motives, with the most generous aims and views, do they wish to perform every known duty, and to avoid every known sin. From faith in Christ, for both assistance and acceptance, and from love to him as their *Sovereign*, as well as their Saviour, do they act. How different is the evangelical obedience of believers under the law of Christ, from the legal, mercenary performances of self-righteous professors who are still attached to the law of works! The religious services of believers are *a work of faith and a labour of love*. 1 Thess. i. 3. *The love of Christ*, no less than his authority, powerfully and sweetly *constrains* them.—But on these things, how important and interesting soever, I must not now enlarge. They will come under review in the sequel.

The definition of sin in the answer consists of two branches, and includes in it two things: *a want of conformity to the law*, and *a transgression of it*. The word transgression, indeed, sometimes denotes all sin. The Compilers of the Catechism, however, seem to distinguish between a want of conformity to the law and a transgression of it. Natural, therefore, is it to ask, Do these two expressions signify two different things? And, if they do, what is intended by the one and what by the other? I answer in two particulars.

*First*, By a want of conformity to the law, as distinguished from a transgression of it, has been understood original sin in opposition to actual. But to the accuracy of this distinction it has been objected, that original sin has in it a transgression of the law, as well as non-conformity to it. Original sin, as we will see in the sequel, has a *positive* as well as a *negative* part. It comprehends

prehends in it not only *the want of original righteousness*, but *the guilt of Adam's first sin* imputed to us, and the universal *corruption of nature* which is inherent in us. Is Adam's first sin placed to our account? Is this an ingredient in that original sin which we bring into the world with us? Then original sin includes not only a want of conformity to the law, but a *transgression* of it.

That Adam's first sin, which, though not committed by us, is imputed to us, includes a transgression of the law, as well as a want of conformity to it, cannot be doubted.—Hence

*Secondly*, By a want of conformity to the law, as distinguished from a transgression of it, may be intended any sin of *omission*, in contradistinction to sins of commission. Though we refrain from all the sins the law forbids, if we omit any one of the duties it requires, we sin. This the answer evidently intimates—*Sin is ANY want, &c.* Manifold are the respects in which there may be a want of conformity to it. It may suffice to mention two particulars here.

(1.) It may be in the person himself by whom the obedience is performed. The law demands conformity in the man, as well as in his actions. He must be what it requires him to be, as well as do what it requires him to do. All the powers of his soul must be disposed, and all the members of his body employed, in the manner which it prescribes. Knowledge in his understanding, rectitude in his will, regularity and purity in his affections, does the law indispensably require. With his bodily organs, as well as his intellectual powers, does it require him to glorify God. Now, if in any of all these instances there be a want of conformity to the law, or if any or all these things be lacking, the person is not what the law requires him to be; and, therefore, is a sinner. Thus the unregenerated and un sanctified sinner, in whom the good work has not yet been begun, is in all these respects deficient; and, therefore, universally sinful.

(2.) I might consider this want of conformity in relation to the two tables of the holy law; the different precepts which belong to them severally; and the numerous duties which each of its commandments requires. Were we conformed to the first table, but not the second; in other words, were we disposed, as we should be, toward God, but not toward our neighbour, we would be found deficient and wanting. Were we to obey all its precepts and perform all the duties which they enjoin, one precept or one duty only excepted, we would still be deficient and lacking. Numerous are its precepts, and numerous are the duties, which each of them inculcates. It only is SUMMARILY comprehended in the ten commandments. Each of the ten comprehends a great number of particular precepts. Were we to review the whole sacred writings, and to select from them the numerous commandments which they contain, to what a great number would they amount! Under one or another of the ten precepts of the decalogue is each of them, however, comprehended. To one or another of the precepts of that comprehensive summary may they be reduced. Now, if any one of these many commandments be neglected, or any one of the many duties, which they enjoin, be omitted, there is a want of conformity to the holy law. What reason then have we to say, Who among us can comprehend the nature or the number of his *errors* and offences? What occasion has each of us to adopt the Psalmist's humble acknowledgment—*Innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me; so that I am not able to look up. They are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me.* Psal. xl. 12. Well may each of us exclaim with holy Job, *Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.* Job xl. 4.

What I have already advanced might suffice for a brief explanation of the answer. But, that I may impress upon your minds the intrinsic evil, and the fatal effects;

effects, of sin; that I may excite every careless person among you to consider his sin and his danger; that I may show you your need of the Saviour and his salvation, I will subjoin two additional observations, tending to the farther elucidation of this grave subject.

*First*, SIN admits of various divisions. It is usually divided into

(1.) ORIGINAL and ACTUAL. Of original sin, and its several ingredients, a subsequent answer gives us a particular account. This is the sin which we, as the descendents of fallen Adam, bring into the world with us. In it each of us was conceived. This is the sin which especially the Psalmist confesses in the fifty-first Psalm. This may be called *original* sin, especially for two reasons. It is communicated to us from Adam, the origin and the common parent of the numerous individuals of the human species. And it is the spring of all actual transgressions. It is the foul fountain; they the streams which flow from it. It is the corrupt root; they the branches which spring from it. *Actual* sin, in contradistinction to *original*, is that which we commit in our own persons. Original sin is as real as actual. But that sin, the guilt of which is imputed to us, and in which all our other sins originate, was not our personal act. It was committed long before we existed. But so soon as we come into the world, and are capable of doing evil in our own persons, we begin to commit sin. So the scripture teaches; and the universal experience of mankind evinces it—*The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.* Psal. lviii. 3. There are sins of

(2.) COMMISSION and of COMMISSION. The law to which sin ever has a relation, and without which there can be no sin, requires one thing and forbids another. The former, for this very reason, is a duty to be performed by us; the latter, for the same reason, a sin from which we are to abstain. Each of the precepts of

the divine law has both a *positive* and a *negative* part; the one expressed, and the other implied. The precept which explicitly requires a particular duty, implicitly, and by necessary consequence, forbids the contrary sin. The precept, on the other hand, which expressly inhibits a particular sin, implicitly, and by necessary consequence, requires the duty to which that sin is immediately opposed.—There are,

(3.) TRANSGRESSIONS, of the *first* and of the *second* table of the divine law. The distribution of the ten commandments into two classes or tables, the first containing four, and the second six precepts, is here presupposed. The former relates to the duty which we owe immediately to God; the latter to the duty which we owe immediately to our neighbour. Now, as God is the Author of the whole law, a violation of the one table, no less than of the other, is sin. In what relates to the worship of God, as well as in what relates to equity between man and man, may we sin. Error, no less than immorality, is sin. The former is contrary to the first table, or what our Lord calls *the first great commandment*, no less than the latter is contrary to the second. Does not the first great commandment enjoin an explicit profession of all the sacred truths, and a conscientious observation of all the holy institutions which the Head of the church has delivered to her in the scriptures, to be preserved, in her, unadulterated and uncorrupted to the end of the world? Must not the denial of any of those sacred truths, or the non observation of any of these holy ordinances, therefore, be a transgression of the first great commandment, no less than injustice, or oppression, or any other immorality, is a violation of the second? There are

(4.) SECRET and PUBLIC, *known* and *unknown*, sins; sins of *heart* and of *life*. Daily do we break the commandments in thought, as well as in word and deed. The heart, as the principal part of the man, is the chief seat of both  
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good and evil. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?* Jer. xvii. 9. *O Jerusalem! wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall vain thoughts lodge within you?* Chap. iv. 14. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man.* Matth. xv. 19, 20. *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.* Jam. iv. 8.—The impurity which has its chief seat in the heart, diffuses itself, as a noxious leaven, through the whole man, all the members of his body, as well as all the powers of his soul; and all his actions, natural, civil, and religious. Accordingly, the Apostle speaks of a twofold filthiness; the filthiness of *the flesh*, and the filthiness of *the spirit*. For thus he bespeaks the Corinthian converts, *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all FILTHINESS OF THE FLESH and SPIRIT, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* 2 Cor. vii. 1. And, writing to the Hebrew Christians, he speaks of *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* Heb. x. 22. The different expressions here may refer both to the constituent parts of our nature infected with sin, and the two ingredients of sin, *guilt* and *defilement*; as also the two capital blessings of *justification* and *sanctification*. During the typical dispensation, various sprinklings and washings obtained; both blood and water were used; both the priests and the people were washed. When the great High Priest of our profession was offered, and his sacred side was pierced, both blood and water proceeded from it. Guilty sinners he justifies; and the unholy he sanctifies. Thus sin is, at once, a dangerous and a defiling, a hateful and a hurtful, thing.—To all which I shall only add, in a word, that sins are distinguished by

(5.) The AGGRAVATIONS which attend them. One is attended

attended with lesser, another with greater aggravations. Of the various ways in which sin may be aggravated and rendered heinous, the after part of the Catechism speaks. That sin ever is a great evil, the scripture every where teaches. What Joseph said with regard to the sin which he was solicited to commit, applies to every other sin. *Shall I do this great wickedness*, says he, *and sin against God?* Gen. xxxix. 9. Was it a great wickedness because it was against God? Then every sin must be great wickedness; for every sin is against God. Such was the view David had of his sin. *Against thee*, says he, *thee ONLY have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* Psal. li. 4. Often are sins committed with a high hand. Often does the presumptuous offender seem to defy Omnipotence itself. Evil is sin in itself. Bitter are the fruits which it produces.

*Secondly*, Sin is attended with GUILT, and with FILTH. Often do you read and hear of the guilt and of the filth of sin. The question is, whether you understand what is intended by these expressions. In order that I may give you some idea of the guilt and of the filth of sin, you must recollect that sin ever has a relation to a law, in the want of *conformity* to which, or a *transgression* of it, it ever consists; and in these two ingredients, or adjuncts of it, it relates to the law in different views. The supreme Legislator is the infinite God. Upon the law his authority is instamped. A violation of it, therefore, includes a contempt of the highest authority. Thus is guilt contracted, and the sinner incurs condign punishment. Guilt, therefore, is that which renders persons obnoxious to punishment. Accordingly, when a culprit is tried in a human judicature, whether it be for an arbitrary or a capital punishment, the question is, *Guilty*, or *not guilty*? And according as there is evidence or not evidence of his guilt, or, in other words, as he is found guilty, or not guilty, he is punished or not punished.—Thus a guilty person only can be justly punishable.

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Vain is it to object here, that the Son of God, though most innocent and holy, was subjected to punishment. For, though he never contracted guilt in his own person, there was a real translation of guilt and punishment from sinners to him, as their engaged and fulfilling Surety. *Jehovah laid on him the iniquity of us all.* In-supportable load!

Again the law may be viewed as a transcript of the moral perfections of the Deity. Accordingly sin, which implies disconformity to that law, or a transgression of it, bespeaks contrariety to the divine purity. Thus it has in it filth and impurity. The stain of it is indelible for any thing which creatures can do in order to wash it out. In vain do sinners apply *nitre* and much *soap* that they may remove it. *For though thou shouldest wash thee with NITRE, and take thee much SOAP, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.* Jer. ii. 22. *If I wash myself with SNOW-WATER, saith Job, and make my hands ever so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own works shall abhor me.* Job ix. 30, 31. Is it any wonder then that this holy man adds, *I ABHOR myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* Nay, such is the stain of sin, that one thing only can wash it out, THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God; and his blood only cleanseth from sin, and all sin. 1 John i. 7. This is the full and the free fountain which, according to Old Testament prophecy, is now by the gospel opened to the household of our antitypical David, and to the numerous inhabitants of our spiritual Jerusalem, for SIN, even for UNCLEANNES. Zech. xiii. 1. Each of us our condescending Redeemer may be understood to bespeak now, as he once did an eminent Apostle, *If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.* John xiii. 8.

From these few hints you may form some idea of sin in both its guilt and filth; of the tendency it has both to the dishonour of God and the destruction of sinners. —To this short account of sin I shall subjoin a few reflections for improvement. And,

I may, in the *1st place*, Take notice of the vast extent of that law, in a disconformity to which, or a transgression of it, sin consists. It extends to men in all ages of the world, earlier and later; to Adam himself, and to the last of his numerous posterity; to men in all quarters and corners of the earth, the east and the west, the south and the north; to men of all descriptions, high and low, rich and poor, superiors, inferiors; and equals. It extends to the whole of the man; his person and his actions. What an unknown variety of duties does it enjoin! What an unknown variety of sins does it inhibit! Is the law of such extent? How foolish, not to say *vain*, must it be for any of mankind fallen to expect eternal felicity according to the tenor and terms of it!

In the *2d place*, Most essential is the difference between the law and the gospel; and most necessary is it for both preachers and hearers to attend to it. The law discovers sin and misery. But of a Saviour, or of salvation, it says nothing. But what the law cannot do the gospel does. It reveals an all-sufficient, and ever-ready Saviour; and a salvation, in all respects, such as our necessitous case requires. The law, in short, is a collection of divine precepts. The gospel, properly so called, has no precepts belonging to it. It is an assemblage of promises, to us, most gratuitous and unconditional; for they belong to that superior covenant, which, though to the great Surety, strictly *conditional*, and, in the highest sense of the words, a covenant of works, is to us altogether unconditional; and, in the fullest sense of the word, a covenant of grace.

In the *3d place*, The necessity of the knowledge of the law, in order to the knowledge of sin. Are we, in particular circumstances, at a loss to know what is sin? Let us attend to the law, to what it enjoins and to what it inhibits. Duty it ever requires. Sin it ever forbids. If the thing in question, therefore, be required, it must be a duty; if forbidden, it must be a sin.

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Are we solicitous to know what the law enjoins, and what it inhibits? Let us conscientiously, and with assiduity, search the scriptures. They contain a revelation of the law, as well as of the gospel. Do they contain such a full and clear revelation of our duty? Are we, after all, ignorant of it, or of any part of it? How inexcusable is our ignorance? What excuse can we plead? Let us remember the words of our Lord—*If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.*

In the 4th place, Numerous, as well as heinous, must our sins be. What a variety of commandments belong to the law! What a multiplicity of duties do they enjoin! What numberless sins do they forbid! Now, which of all the duties required have we not neglected? Of which of all the sins forbidden are we totally innocent? Innumerable, therefore, as well as aggravated, must our sins be. Were we offered a full and final pardon of them all, on condition of our giving a full enumeration and detail of them, on this condition, easy as it may seem, we never could obtain it.

In the 5th place, We see the necessity of that convincing work which the Redeemer has promised to send his Spirit to perform in the church on earth. Solicitous to satisfy his disconsolate followers, concerning the propriety and happy consequences of his departure from them, the Redeemer bespeaks them in this endearing manner—*It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you; and when he is come, he will REPROVE THE WORLD OF SIN, of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not in me.* John xvi. 7, 8, 9. How ignorant of sin are multitudes! How small account do they make of it! To them, indeed, it is a light thing. But to the convinced and awakened sinner it is no such light thing. His guilt stares him in the face. Hell is un-

vered and naked before him. His heart smites him. He is his own accuser and his own judge. He has the most fearful apprehensions. His heart fails. *A wounded spirit who can bear?* The effects of his inward anxiety and distress are, perhaps, visible on his outward man. *His life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen, stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life unto the destroyers.* Doleful case! What an accursed thing is sin? To what misery, temporal and eternal, does it expose sinners? What alarming words from a sin-punishing God are these—*If ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times more for your sins.* Lev. xxvi. 23, 24. The thing is certain, and therefore, the vision is doubled; the threatening is repeated. *If ye will not, for all this, hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary unto you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.* Verses 27, 28.

In the 6th place, We see the indispensable necessity, and the admirable fitness of the remedy which God, in rich grace, has provided for our lost world. Sinners are we all by nature. Sinners are we by practice. Great is the guilt, and great is the danger, which we all have incurred. We have *defiled*, as well as destroyed, ourselves. But Jesus saves from sin, and he delivers from wrath. From the power and the practice of sin, as well as its punishment, does he free. He who is made of God to us righteousness, is also made of God to us *sanctification*.

*In sine*, How blissful and happy are the inhabitants of the heavenly world! From sin, as well as from misery, are they completely and for ever delivered. The inhabitant of that land *shall not say I am sick*. The reason is, *The people that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquity*.

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## Man's First Sin.

GEN. iii. 1,—7.

*Now the serpent was more subtiler than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened; and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

**T**HIS part of ancient history informs us of an event, not only most important in itself, but attended with consequences most interesting to us all.

It gives us an authentic, as well as a circumstantial, account of the seduction and ruin of the original parents of mankind. Accordingly, I shall take occasion from the words read, to introduce the account which our Shorter Catechism gives us of the unhappy action by which our original ancestors fell. In this event we all were concerned; and the consequences of it we all feel. Had our first parents stood, we all would have stood. But they fell, and we all fell with them. Let us, therefore, attend to the inspired Writer's account of the manner in which they fell. To it agrees the description which the following Answer in the Catechism gives us of that particular sin by which their fall was originally occasioned. *The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created was their eating the forbidden fruit.*

Of the fall of man we have already had an affecting view. As it was owing to sin, the Compilers of the Catechism, as was most proper, took occasion to introduce a definition of sin in general. But as it was immediately occasioned by a sin, the commission of which was attended with peculiar circumstances, we have, in the answer which I have now repeated, an account of that sin in particular.—Of the manner in which the cruel enemy of mankind attacked the happy pair in paradise, and effected their ruin, the text gives us an explicit, as well as authentic, history. This tragical story I shall review in a cursory manner.

It is proper here, first of all, to take notice of that unhappy being who was the cruel instrument of the ruin of the human species. As to the SERPENT, of which the inspired Historian speaks, writers have been divided in their sentiments. It has been queried whether a real serpent is intended. One thinks that no such animal was concerned in the matter. According to this hypothesis the seduction of our first parents was effected *immediately* by Satan, without the instrumentality of any  
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real serpent. When we ask the abettors of this opinion, why the serpent is mentioned at all in the Mosaic history, they tell us, it is because on this occasion Satan signally displayed his subtilty; a quality for which serpents have ever been accounted famous. Another runs into the opposite extreme, affirming that Satan had no concern in the temptation, by which our first parents were ruined. According to this hypothesis, their ruin was effected solely by a material serpent. But the opinion which is commonly received steers a middle course between these two opposite extremes. According to it, Satan was the chief agent, a *real* serpent the instrument by which he accomplished his purpose. The particular kind and figure of the serpent which he used we know not. Of serpents there are many species. Of the size and the subtilty of many of them extraordinary instances are to be found in history. We read of serpents no less than a hundred and twenty feet long. We have an instance of a serpent of such an enormous size, that, shocking to relate! it swallowed a woman big with child; and of another that swallowed a large buffalo, or wild ox. Serpents have been divided into *poisonous* and *harmless*. It is by discharging a particular liquor into the wound made with their teeth, which mixes with the blood, that they do mischief. Mortally was man bitten by the old serpent. Fatal was the wound which he received. Deadly is the poison which it communicated. This poison has diffused itself through the whole human species. This is the mischievous source of death and all our woes.

From the material serpent which the adversary of mankind chose to be the unhappy instrument of their original ruin, and the subtilty which he discovered on this fatal occasion, is he, in the scriptures, denominated a *serpent* and an *old* serpent. Rev. xii. 9. and xx. 2. Of the subtilty of the serpent extraordinary things are related in history. As his heart is situated near his head, he is said, in order to his preservation and safety, to wrap up his head in the rest of his body. To the situation of his

his heart that early intimation which carries in it a rich promise to us, but a fearful threatening against the old serpent, may allude. *It, or he, shall bruise thy head; that is thy vital part; and thou shalt bruise his heel.* Gen. iii. 15. It is said, that he vomits up his poison when he goes to drink, lest it should go down with the water and hurt him. It is said, that the serpent, called Ceraustes, hides himself in the sand, in order that he may bite the horse's foot, and cause him throw his rider. To this circumstance the Patriarch has been supposed to allude. *Dan shall be a SERPENT by the way, an adder in the path; that BITETH THE HORSE-HEELS, so that his rider shall fall backward.* Gen. xlix. 17. It is said, that in order to shut his ears against enchantments, the serpent lays the one close to the ground, and stops the other with his tail. To this the Psalmist has been understood to refer—*Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that STOPPETH HER EAR: which WILL NOT HEARKEN TO THE VOICE OF CHARMERS, charming never so wisely.* Psal. lviii. 4, 5.

It has been imagined, from the conversation between the woman and the serpent mentioned in the words of the text, that serpents were at first endued with the faculty of speech. But it certainly was the enemy that spake out of the serpent. It has also been supposed, that serpents then had feet, or rather went on the hinder-part of their body, with their head and breast upright. This opinion is evidently taken from what is denounced against the serpent—*And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: UPON THY BELLY SHALT THOU GO, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.* Gen. iii. 14.

Very different, in appearance and in other respects, are animals of the same species in different parts of the world. Very different from what it is now was the state of the earth, and, we have reason to believe, of its inhabitants  
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both inanimate and irrational, previous to the entrance of sin. The serpent which appeared to Eve, and which the enemy chose to be the instrument of her seduction, is supposed to have been a very beautiful creature; and, on account of its wisdom, or rather *craft*, a fit tool to be employed in such a work.—Of the address with which the adversary managed the temptation by which he seduced Eve, many writers have taken notice. Innocent and undesigning Eve probably suspected no harm from creatures of any species. She was, perhaps, ignorant of the rebellion that had happened in heaven. The enemy probably made up to her in view of the tree of knowledge, and represented it to her in the most advantageous and engaging light. This seems to be implied in Moses' words—*When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.* The enemy chose, as has often been observed, to make the attempt when she was alone, and had not access to take the advice of her husband. There is reason also to think, that he allowed her as little time as possible for deliberation.

In the temptation itself there is a manifest gradation, which indicates much of the subtilty of the old serpent. He does not adventure all at once to contradict the divine word; but only with an air of modesty insinuates a suspicion concerning it; and speaks as if he wished to receive information.—For thus he addresses the woman—*Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* To which the woman replies, *We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.* It has been observed, that she here adds to the divine prohibition; for of *touching* or *not touching* that tree, the threatening speaks nothing. It has also been observed, that there seems to be a degree of unbelief

unbelief in her words. The threatening is most peremptory and express. *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou SHALT SURELY die.* But her words have been understood to imply uncertainty and doubt. Soon does the enemy advance a step farther, and directly contradicts the threatening—*And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall NOT surely die.* In order farther to entice her, he reminds her that, notwithstanding her superiority in knowledge, as well as other things, to the irrational creatures, there were other beings superior to her and her husband; and, by eating of the fruit of this tree, they might acquire such knowledge as would render them equal to those angelic beings. *For God doth know, says he, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as GODS, knowing good and evil.*

It has been imagined, that, in order more effectually to induce the woman to eat of the fruit of this tree, for the acquisition of superior degrees of knowledge, he himself did eat of it, and pretended that in this way he, formerly on a level with the other beasts of his species, had now acquired the faculty of speech and ratiocination, which advanced him to an equality with man. By such machinations and stratagems did the enemy succeed. The woman first and then the man were seduced and ruined. *For, says the former, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* Of the order in which the seduced pair sinned the Apostle takes particular notice. *Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, that is, he was not deceived first, or immediately by Satan, but by the woman; the woman being deceived was in the transgression; that is, first in it.* 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14.

To a superficial reader this action is apt to appear, if not altogether innocent and harmless, at most but a very frivolous offence. But, upon proper examination, it will be found to be a most aggravated crime,

or rather a complication of crimes. It was the mother-sin. What a numerous offspring has it produced! Peculiar circumstances attended it. Let us recollect the person by whom it was committed, and the advantageous circumstances in which he was placed. Highly was he honoured in his creation. Happy was he in both body and mind. A federal relation subsisted between his Maker and him. This honour, so far as we can learn, never has been conferred upon angels. That great and generous being, to whom Adam was indebted for what he was and what he possessed, had, in terms the most express and peremptory, forbidden him to eat of the fruit of this tree. A creature, and a fallen creature, presumes to bid him eat of it. Now the competition was between the great Creator and a most unworthy creature. And, be astonished ye heavens! the creature is preferred to the Creator. The devil is obeyed; God is disobeyed. Ungrateful man!

The criminal act was immediately the transgression of a positive prohibition. This God had chosen to be the particular criterion by which man's fidelity was to be tried. Different writers have endeavoured to show, however, that it carried in it a virtual violation of all the commandments of the moral law. Let us exemplify this observation. Was it not a violation of the

*First* Commandment? Does not this precept require an avowal of God, both as the chief good, in the fruition of which only we can be happy; and as our highest Lord, whom we are under every obligation to serve? Were not our first parents duly apprized that, if they ate of the forbidden fruit, they were to forfeit the favour and fruition of God? Did the enjoyment of the all-sufficient God, and a temporary sensual gratification come into competition? Were these two laid in the balance? And did the latter preponderate? The empty creature was preferred to the infinite Creator! Man committed at once *two* capital evils. He foretook *the fountain of living*

waters, and brewed out to himself broken cisterns that can hold no water. Did God forbid, did the Devil bid, them to eat? Did they in such circumstances actually eat? Was the former disobeyed? the latter obeyed? Was not this a virtual relinquishment of their first and best Master? Was it not a practical acknowledgment of another master? Unhappy exchange!—Was it not a virtual violation of the

*Second* Commandment? Does not this precept enjoin the observance of all the ordinances and appointments which God is pleased to grant to us? Now, was not abstinence from the fruit of the tree of knowledge one of the appointments of God to our first parents? Such an appointment became the sovereignty of the proprietor of the world. Easy, as well as reasonable, appointment! This appointment, however, our original ancestors did not keep. It has been considered as a transgression of the

*Third* Precept of the moral law. This commandment, as the Compilers of the Catechism explain it, requires a due acknowledgment and glorification of all the attributes of the Deity. But by eating of the forbidden fruit, man dishonoured different perfections of God. For instance, the veracity of God, interposed in the threatening, was dishonoured. God had, in the most express manner, said, *In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt surely die.* But, in defiance of the threatening and the divine veracity engaged for the execution of it, our first parents did eat. Was not this act a public affront to the divine Omniscience? Did not man act as if he thought that God did not see him, to call him to an account for this part of his conduct? Was there not atheism, as well as unbelief, in this sin? Accordingly, no sooner did Adam and Eve commit it than they attempted to conceal both themselves and their sin from God. Was not this sin, in a word, a high affront to divine justice? Did not the perpetrators of it, in effect, say, that, notwithstanding

ing the peremptory threatening, God either could not, or at least would not, punish it? This commandment requires the proper observation and use of the word and the works, as well as the attributes, of God? But, by eating of the forbidden fruit, our common parents dishonoured his word; for he had expressly said, *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, &c.* He was dishonoured in his works, as well as in his word; for the fruit of this tree, which was a part of his works, was now used in a manner, and for a purpose diametrically opposite to that for which it was given to man, and he required to use it.—This sin has been considered as a virtual violation of the

*Fourth* Commandment. That it was committed on the very day on which man was created, and consequently prior to the commencement of the first Sabbath, I do not say, far less will I undertake to prove. Had it been so, it must have been a very bad preparative for the observation of the ensuing day. Was it not incompatible with a due regard to the monitory word which ushers in this commandment, REMEMBER, &c.? Is not this intended to admonish man to endeavour preparation for the Sabbath, previous to its approach; that, when it comes, he may be in some tolerable degree disposed for the sacred exercises of it? But by this sin man was totally incapacitated for the observation of the Sabbath.—Was it not a violation of the

*Fifth* Precept of the moral law? God now sustained the character of a Father; and Adam stood in the correspondent relation of his son. If the undutiful behaviour of children toward their earthly father be a sin, especially must undutiful behaviour toward the heavenly Father be a most aggravated sin.

Did not Eve fail in her duty to Adam in adventuring to eat of the forbidden fruit in his absence, and without his consent? Was not Adam undutiful to Eve in indulging her in sin, and even concurring with her in

it? Were they not both, as our common parents, un- dutiful and cruel to us all in doing what has been so pernicious and fatal to us, as well as to themselves?— This sin was a gross violation of the

*Sixth Commandment.* Every sin has a murderous tendency. Every sinner God bespeaks thus—O sinner! *thou hast DESTROYED thyself.* Shocking is every species of self-murder. Every sinner, however, is a *self-murderer*. Our first parents, by one fatal act, murdered themselves, and the countless millions of mankind born and to be born. Such another massacre, in respect of the number of the murdered, never has been perpetrated by human hands. Not only the bodies, but the souls, no less than the bodies, of all mankind were murdered. Universal, as well as fatal catastrophe!— This sin has been considered as a virtual violation of the

*Seventh Precept* of the moral law. On account of it our first parents were deprived of that external lustre which attended their bodies during the innocent state; and which, probably, was intended to guard them against such irregular desires toward one another, as are inconsistent with that purity in thought, speech, and behaviour, which this precept of the holy law enjoins. How their modesty was hurt by this criminal act the history of it and its consequences informs us. *The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.* That it has been the unhappy source of numberless gross violations of this precept is well known.—Was it not a palpable breach of the

*Eighth Commandment?* The tree of knowledge God had reserved to himself. Man could not reckon it his own as he could the other trees of paradise. If, therefore, he intermeddled with it, was he not guilty of sacrilegious robbery? Did he not rob himself, as well as God? Along with life itself, he forfeited the riches, the honours,



honours, and the comforts of it.—Was it not a virtual transgression of the

*Ninth* Precept of the moral law? Is the violation of truth between man and man a sin? Is a man of veracity and honour, when we give him the lie, affronted? Had God interposed his veracity in the threatening; pledging his honour for the execution of it? Did man after all adventure to contradict it? Was not this in effect to make the God of truth a liar? Did not God threaten most severely to punish this sin? Was not the commission of it, therefore, after such warnings and threatenings, the grossest insult to truth?—This sin was also a notorious breach of the

*Tenth* Commandment. The forbidden tree was the only thing in paradise, nay, in the world itself, which God had withheld from man. He had the richest variety and plenty; a profusion of the comforts, as well as the necessaries of life. Had he the disposal and use of the fowls of the air, of the fishes of the sea, and of the numerous beasts and various fruits of the earth, one tree only excepted? and was he not contented? One thing *only* was withheld from him, and this one thing he coveted!

Thus the sin, whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was far from being a small offence. It was, on the contrary, an enormous evil, and was attended with a variety of the most aggravating circumstances. He that committed it was under special obligations to God. It was committed in paradise. Sin having previously entered the celestial paradise, now had insinuated itself into the terrestrial. Almost as soon as man was created did he grievously offend his Creator. Almost as soon as he had the honour of covenanting with his Maker, notwithstanding the flattering prospects which he had, he violated the covenant. Was he not now guilty of the basest ingratitude to his most bountiful benefactor? Was not this sin the most criminal and shameful

shameful disobedience? The most abandoned and infamous of the creatures was obeyed; the great God disobeyed. Was it not the most unnatural and unprovoked rebellion? The rightful proprietor of all worlds was man's rightful sovereign. Had not man solemnly promised fealty and allegiance to him?—From what hath been said we may infer

(1.) How ready we are to be mistaken about sin. How many call darkness light, and light darkness! Were our innocent parents deceived? No wonder though we be deceived. Of the *deceitfulness of sin*, the Apostle speaks, Heb. iii. 13. Of the *strength* of it he speaks on another occasion. Is it strong? and is it deceitful? A formidable enemy must it be. If upright Adam fell before it, no wonder though we fall. Our most dangerous enemy is within us.—For *the human heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.*

(2.) We see whence the evil, as well as the danger, of sin arises. Is the thing, in itself innocent, forbidden? Does it seem harmless? It cannot, however, be either innocent or harmless. What the law forbids we must forbear. It is our interest, as well as our duty, to do so. For, if we either omit duty or commit sin, God is offended; and the offence shall not pass with impunity. *He will by no means clear the guilty.*

(3.) What an aggravated condemnation and punishment have we all incurred! If Adam's first sin had such a complication of evils in it, how guilty must we all be from our earliest infancy! What a complicated and aggravated sin is imputed to us from the earliest moments of our existence! If there is so much evil in one sin, what must the demerit and the punishment of our innumerable and aggravated iniquities be!

(4.) How dangerous must it be to parley with the tempter or with his temptations! He may assume the form of a friend; but he is our determined foe. Friendship

ship he may profess; but the most unrelenting enmity lurks in his heart. What specious professions did he make to our first mother! In the snare which he spread for her was she caught. If he deceived her, notwithstanding her innocence and her knowledge, no wonder though he deceive us. Deceiving he destroys souls. How necessary then the Apostle's caution! *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* 1 Pet. v. 8. *Watch and pray, says our Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.*

*In fine,* Great, precious, must be the salvation of which Jesus is the Author. Great is the evil of sin; great the danger to which it exposes us. Is sin so great a evil? Does it expose to so great a punishment? Is a salvation, in all respects great, provided for us? Is it fully and freely offered to us? Let us take heed what reception we give to it. *How shall we escape if we neglect so GREAT a salvation?* In manifold respects is this salvation great. Great is the Saviour himself, and great is his salvation. From the greatest sins does he save. Great is the number he saves. Great is the glory that accrues to God from this salvation. With what alacrity, and how gratefully, should we accept of such a Saviour and such a salvation! Have we all been bitten, mortally wounded, by the old serpent? A sovereign Physician and Healer is provided. An expedient, in all respects, worthy of the wisdom as well as of the grace of God, has been found out. How unexpected was the method which Moses was directed to use for healing the Israelites bitten by the fiery serpents in the wilderness? Fit emblem of the still more surprising expedient which Heaven has invented, and uses, for the salvation of our sinful world! Into the mysteries of redeeming love and wisdom angels desire to look. With incessant wonder, and endless joy, do they pry into these things. Have fallen angels been permitted

to perish? Are fallen men pitied? Is a salvation purchased by blood, blood divine, now offered to you? See then, I say, again, see that you do not *neglect* it. May he that has the human heart in his hand determine us all to accept of it! *Amen.*

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## The Extent of the Fall.

ROM. v. 14.

*Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.*

**O**F whom speaks the Apostle here? He speaks of two extraordinary persons; the one the type, the other the antitype,—the latter at once similar and superior to the former. In what sense the first Adam was a type of the second, it is easy to see. The one was a federal head no less than the other. The covenant of redemption was made with the last Adam. The covenant of works was made with the first. This accounts for the universality of death, of which the Apostle speaks in the words prefixed to this Lecture. Death is the consequence of sin; and, therefore, as all have sinned, all die. Infants, indeed, cannot sin in their own persons. But they were represented by Adam in the covenant of works; and, therefore, sinned in him, and fell with him when he sinned and fell.

This text reminds me of the Answer to the following Question in the Catechism—*Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?* The Answer runs thus—*The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.*

Having already considered the fall of man, sin in general, and that particular sin to which this fall was immediately owing, I am now to ascertain the extent of the fall.

Of the covenant to which this answer refers, I have given you an account in a preceding Lecture. It is commonly known by the name of the covenant of works. It is here said to have been made with ADAM. On this account is he, in the text which introduces this Lecture, affirmed to have been a type of him that was to come; that is of Jesus Christ, stiled the second Adam, and, to intimate his high original, *the Lord from heaven*. It is said, as I observed on a former occasion, to have been made with Adam, not with the man and the woman conjunctly, but with the man as contradistinguished from the woman. It was made with Adam as a public person. So the answer speaks—*The covenant was made with Adam not for himself ONLY, but for his POSTERITY, &c.* We are informed here both negatively and positively, for whom it was made with Adam;

*Negatively*, It was *not for himself only*. Here are two things; it was for himself, but not for himself *only*.

*First*, It was made for HIMSELF. He himself was included in it. The consequences of the fulfilment or non-fulfilment were to affect himself, as well as his posterity. In other words, the life promised in it, on the one hand, and the death threatened in it, on the other, respected him as well as them. If the condition of the covenant was fulfilled, he was to live. If it was not fulfilled, he was to die.

*Secondly*, It was not made for himself ONLY. Both  
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the life promised and the death threatened in the covenant extended to others as well as to Adam himself. Whether he stood or fell, he was neither to stand nor fall alone. If he stood, his posterity were to stand with him. If, on the other hand, he fell, they were to fall with him. —We are told

*Positively* for whom the covenant was made with Adam. It was made with him, not only for himself, but for HIS POSTERITY; and the remaining part of the answer ascertains the extent in which we are to understand his posterity here. On a former occasion I hinted, that the adversaries of our holy religion, of whose cavils and exceptions there is no end, have often arraigned this part of the divine conduct. The supposition that God entered into a covenant with Adam, as our representative, without our knowledge and consent, they say, is inconsistent with the just ideas and notions of God and his perfections. But was it, in fact, unjust, or, in any respect, unworthy of God to call Adam to represent us in a covenant, into which he entered with him long before we had a being; and to the making of which we could not, in our own persons, consent? A candid examination of the matter must satisfy every unprejudiced person, that it was not only consistent with the justice of God to enter into such a covenant with Adam, as the representative of his posterity, but manifested much of his goodness. Let us attend to the following things.

(1.) GOD in sovereignty condescended far when he entered into a covenant with man, especially a covenant of such a gracious tenor. Great was the disparity between the parties contracting in this covenant; the one the CREATOR, the other his *creature*. Whatever the former was pleased to command, the latter was indispensably bound to do. The one could not command any thing unjust or unreasonable. The other, therefore, could not lawfully decline any thing which the former might enjoin upon him.

Most just and equitable were the terms of this covenant. Nothing was required of Adam in it, but what he was naturally and necessarily bound to do, except what related to the tree of knowledge. Now might not this tree have been withheld from him, though no covenant had been made with him? Might not the rightful proprietor and Sovereign of the world do with his own as he pleased; granting to man one thing, and withholding from him another, as he in sovereignty might think most fit? Might not man, though no covenant had been made with him, have sinned; forfeiting all the felicity which he possessed, and incurring all the misery threatened in the covenant? No covenant, as we have often observed, so far as we have heard, was made with the angels; and yet that a great part of them fell, depriving themselves of their original dignity, and subjecting themselves to endless misery, we all know.

Naturally and necessarily was man under the moral law. That law, though it never had been reduced to the form of a proper covenant, man might have violated. Now, would not the violation of it, as a law, have subjected man to the whole punishment which he incurred by the breach of it as a covenant? Must not *the wages of sin* ever be *death*? Might not man, therefore, have been in a situation no less ticklish and critical, on the supposition that no covenant had been made with him? Did not the covenant place him on a ground, and in circumstances more advantageous and favourable than he ever otherwise could have been? Did not the fulfilment of it entitle him to higher degrees of dignity than perfect obedience to the law, as such, ever could have entitled him? Can a creature in any situation or circumstances merit any thing at the hand of the Creator? No. All that man without such a covenant could have claimed as his due, in the event of perfect and perpetual obedience, was impunity or exemption from punishment. On the supposition that no such covenant had been made with  
Adam,



Adam, must not the felicity of each individual of his numerous posterity have depended on his own personal conduct. In how precarious and dangerous a situation would this have placed us all! If Adam, notwithstanding the adult state in which he was created, and his many other singular advantages, sinned and fell, what reason is there to fear that each of us in our own persons might have sinned and fallen? How precarious and uncertain on such a hypothesis must the obedience and felicity of mankind, to the latest ages of time, have been! But, in virtue of the covenant, the obedience of one man was to insure the final felicity of all mankind. To yourselves, therefore, I appeal. Had you been on the spot, and had it in your option to have been represented by Adam, and your final felicity insured by his obedience, or to have stood or fallen for yourselves severally, whether, all circumstances considered, would you have preferred the former or the latter?—For,

(2.) Was not the person, chosen to be our representative in the covenant of works, in all respects most fit for such an important station? Was he not, in every view, equal to the great task? Was he not at once able and inclined to do all that was required of him in the covenant? He who made him, and entered into covenant with him, furnished him with every thing necessary to fulfil the condition of that covenant. What the second Adam, at an after period, said, the first Adam, during his original state, could say, *I delight to do thy will, O my God! thy law is within my heart.*

Was not the representative most intimately related to the persons represented by him, and had he not the most endearing affection for them? He was their father. They are his children. He was their natural root; and, therefore, he was the most proper person to be their federal head. Conformed to the holy law in the one table, as well as the other, he loved God supremely; and he loved others of the human kind as he did himself. Their felicity,

city, as well as his own, lay very near his heart. His own felicity, no less than ours, was at stake. If he obeyed, he obeyed for himself, as well as for us. If, on the other hand, he disobeyed, the consequences of his disobedience were to affect himself, no less than us.

Adam's probationary state, in all probability, was intended to be but short. How soon, therefore, in the event of his obedience, would the perpetual happiness of all mankind have been insured, and not so much as a possibility of their ruin left! But, had no covenant been made with Adam, the felicity of many of them must have been for many ages doubtful and uncertain. May not Satan be supposed to have been, at that early period, a less dangerous enemy than now? Must he not then have been less experienced and versant in the various arts of seduction?

Upon the whole, considering Adam's peculiar advantages, must we not allow, that, had we been present at the federal transaction between God and him, we would most readily have agreed, that it was more eligible and safe for us to have our everlasting felicity insured by the obedience of our first father, as our federal head, than that it should depend on our own personal behaviour.

(3.) If we find fault with this part of the divine conduct, must it not be for one or another of the reasons following,—either on account of the person whom the Creator chose to represent us in the covenant of works,—or of the terms of the covenant itself,—or, in a word, of the pretended injustice of every federal representation, by which the consequences of the behaviour of an individual extend to others as well as to himself.

On the first account we certainly cannot find fault with the covenant of works. Our first father, no doubt, was in every view the most eligible person in the universe to be our federal head.—Nor can it be for the second reason. Were not the terms of the covenant

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nant most advantageous and favourable for us? How condescending and gracious was God in treating with his own creature in the way of a proper covenant, in which there were stipulations, and re-stipulations! Did God solemnly bind man to fulfil the condition of the covenant? No less solemnly did he oblige himself that, in the event of the fulfilment of the condition by man, he would infallibly perform the promissory part of it in its fullest extent to him. How good, as well as just, does God appear in the covenant! Not only was a reward offered and insured in the covenant, but a reward to which, in point of worth and duration, man's obedience, though perfected, could bear no proportion.—Neither can we object to the covenant on the last account; for, if every federal representation be unjust and unfair, then the covenant of redemption made with the second Adam, no less than the covenant of works made with the first, must be incompatible with justice. If it be a just thing for the one federal head to represent a part of mankind in his covenant, must it not have been fully consistent with justice for the other to represent all mankind in *his* covenant? Far, indeed, are the two federal heads from being on a level. Infinitely is the second Adam superior to the first. But was not the first Adam, though in all respects inferior to the second, a fit person to represent mankind in the covenant of works?

The remaining part of the answer informs us of the extent in which we are to understand Adam's posterity here. By his posterity, whom he represented in the covenant of works, we must understand *all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, &c.* To a superficial reader, the restriction in these words, *descending from him by ORDINARY GENERATION*, may seem unnecessary. But the design and view with which it is inserted is obvious. It is to exclude the second Adam; who, as man, was one of the posterity of the first

first Adam,—but did not descend from him *by ordinary generation*. That, in respect of his manhood, he was a descendent of Adam, the inspired writers, in the account they give of his genealogy, expressly inform us. Matth. i. Luke iii. That he descended from Adam in an *extraordinary* way is, in the chapters referred to, in terms sufficiently plain, intimated to us. The reason of the preternatural conception of the Man Christ Jesus, and his extraordinary birth, is manifest. Natural generation, as we will see in the sequel, is the channel in which the universal corruption of nature is transmitted from Adam to his posterity. In order, therefore, that the humanity of Jesus Christ might be exempted from it, it was conceived in a manner till then unknown and unprecedented in the world. Thus was he in his birth, as well as his life and death, *holy and harmless, undefiled and separated from sinners*. But more of this afterwards.

Did the first Adam represent in the covenant of works such as *descend from him by ordinary generation*? Did the second Adam, as man, descend from him by a generation wholly *preternatural* and extraordinary? It follows, of course, that the humanity of the second Adam could not be represented by the first in his covenant. If he was not represented by Adam in the covenant of works, he could not *sin in him, and fall with him in his first transgression*. These words in the end of the answer, *sinned in him, and fell with him*, must, therefore, be restricted to his natural posterity; that is, *all mankind descending from him by ORDINARY GENERATION*. Accordingly, on this part of the subject, I mean to do *three* things; to shew that all mankind, descending from Adam by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression; to shew how it came to pass that multitudes sinned in him, and fell with him, by a transgression which was committed before they were actually in being; and to point out the channel

channel in which sin is conveyed from the first man to the numerous individuals of his posterity.

I. I shall endeavour to show, that *all mankind, descending from Adam by ordinary generation, SINNED IN HIM, AND FELL WITH HIM, IN HIS FIRST TRANSGRESSION.* Now, that all mankind sinned in Adam, and consequently, as his natural descendents, come into the world sinners, will appear from the following considerations.

*First, The express declarations of the word of God.* To introduce a multiplicity of proofs here is unnecessary. A passage or two may suffice. *By one man, says the Apostle, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon ALL men, for that ALL have sinned.* Rom. v. 12. In what extent are the Apostle's words here to be understood? Whom does he intend by the ALL that have sinned? Is it to be understood of a part of mankind only? No. Sin is of equal extent with death. The universality, therefore, of the latter, evinces the universality of the former. That all die, experience, no less than scripture, evinces. Do not infants, as well as adults, die? If death be the effect of sin, and if infants die, infants must be sinners. Sin they cannot commit in their own persons. How then come they to be sinners? The Apostle accounts for it. In the last clause of the verse he speaks thus—*for that, or as the phrase has often been rendered, in whom, that is, in Adam, the one man, by whom sin entered first into the world, ALL have sinned.* And, agreeably to the Apostle, the Compilers of the Catechism account for it thus—*ALL mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression—For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are ALL under sin. For ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* Rom. iii. 9, 23. Nothing can be more explicit and full than the Apostolic assertion.

assertion. That infants, as well as adult persons, are included is manifest; for, as I said already, the former, no less than the latter, die. The former, therefore, as has also been observed, no less than the latter, have sinned. Now, the only way in which they can be supposed to have sinned is expressed in the answer. And is not this the only way in which it can be accounted for?

*Secondly*, The universal *practical* corruption of mankind. That men of all ages, the young as well as the old, and of all stations and conditions, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, are *sinners*, the scripture declares, and daily experience shows. How comes it to pass that the contagion is so universal? Is it not from an inbred propensity to evil in all the descendants of fallen Adam? Is not original sin the spring of all actual sins? Do not the latter flow from the former as streams from the fountain? Vain is it to alledge that the universal practical depravation of the human race, which none can deny, and which every good man observes with deep regret, is the effect of bad example. This method of accounting for it does not comport with well known facts. It is easy to produce instances of children brought up under the immediate inspection of godly parents, removed from bad examples of every kind, and yet discovering an invention to find out, and an inclination to practise, vices which they never saw practised by others; nay, of which they never had access to hear or read. Is not this a certain proof of a natural propensity and inclination to evil, and all evil; as well as an aversion and disinclination to good, and all good? Is it not a demonstration of the dismal truth of which I am now attempting a short illustration? *ALL mankind, descending from the first Adam by ORDINARY GENERATION, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression; and, therefore, they come into the world sinners; not only obnoxious to punishment for their original father's first sin, but naturally*

rally inclined to commit sin in their *own* persons. This inbred inclination they begin at an early period to discover. Even before they can distinguish between the right hand and the left, or discern what is good and what is evil, they discover an aversion to the former, and a propension to the latter. This is that over-flowing fountain, from which proceeds that universal deluge of wickedness which has long overspread the face of the whole earth. What a black picture of mankind in the fallen state does the Apostle exhibit to us! *They are ALL gone out of the way, they are TOGETHER become unprofitable; there is none that doth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.* Rom. iii. 12.—18.

Thirdly, From the *universality* of the effects of sin among the descendents of fallen Adam. That death is the effect of sin, or that man could not have been subjected to it, had he not sinned, we endeavoured to prove in a preceding Lecture. That sin is the cause, death the effect, the Apostle affirms in the most express manner in the already quoted Rom. v. 12. That death passes upon infants incapable of committing sin, of which we have repeatedly taken notice, as well as adults who have committed it, the Apostle teaches in the words prefixed to this Lecture. Is death the effect of sin? Does death befall infants, who cannot have committed sin in their own persons? Then they must have sinned in another, or the sin of another must be imputed to them, and it must be on account of it that they are exposed to death.

This point, otherwise inexplicable, the answer explains on principles the most consistent and satisfactory. *ALL mankind, descending from Adam by ordinary generation, sinned in him in his first transgression; and, there-*

fore, by that sin, though they be guilty of no other, are they obnoxious to death.—I am

II. To show how it comes to pass that Adam's first sin extends to ALL his natural descendents, and they come to be accountable for it. How come they to be accountable for a sin, to the commission of which they could not be accessory? The question has been obviated. The preceding part of the answer sufficiently explains and accounts for it. *The covenant was made with Adam for HIS POSTERITY*, as well as *for himself*; and consequently they, as really as he, are amenable for the violation of it. That it was made with Adam for his natural posterity, as well as for himself; that he was the most proper person to represent us in it; that we could have had no objection to his representing us in it, had we been present at the making of it, and our personal consent been asked,—we saw already. Now, if the covenant was made with him as our representative, what he, in that capacity, did must be in *equity* placed to our account, and we must be concerned in it, no less than if we had done it in our own persons. Whether he obeyed or disobeyed, stood or fell, he did so for us then in his loins, as our first father, and represented by him, as our federal head. While he obeyed we obeyed. When he disobeyed we disobeyed. While he stood we stood. When he fell we fell. The sin he committed, the guilt he contracted, is placed to our account, no less than if we ourselves had committed the former, and contracted the latter. A nobleman or gentleman is convicted of high treason against his earthly sovereign. What is the consequence? He forfeits his estate, as well as his life. Does he forfeit his estate for himself only? No. The forfeiture extends to his posterity, as well as himself.—Was not Adam guilty of the most unnatural, as well as inexcusable and aggravated rebellion against his great sovereign? Are not we, his children, like our unhappy



happy father, most daring rebels against Heaven? How just, as well as doleful, the complaint! *Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, but they have REBELLED against me.* Isa. i. 2. I am

III. To consider the *way* in which sin is conveyed from Adam to the numerous individuals of *his posterity descending from him* by ORDINARY GENERATION. The answer is conceived in terms calculated not only to restrict the transmission of sin from Adam to his *natural* posterity, or ordinary descendents, but to intimate the mysterious channel and mode of communication from him to them. Now, that natural generation is the channel by which sin descends from Adam to his posterity, which the answer evidently intimates, is necessarily implied in a number of places of holy writ. I shall only remind you of the following. *Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and he called his name Seth.* Gen. v. 3. Adam himself had been created an upright and holy man. Now, he was a sinful and corrupt man. Accordingly, *his own likeness*, or *image*, after which he begat Seth, is here apposed to the image and likeness of God, after which he himself had been created. Gen. i. 26, 27. Is there not a plain intimation here of the mysterious channel, through which the universal depravity of human nature, in the now lapsed state, is communicated by father to son, from Adam to the latest posterity? Was Seth a corrupt and sinful man? Whence did his depravity spring? In what did it originate? Was it owing to the influence of bad example? No. It was of an earlier original. He had it from his very conception in the womb. His father begat, and his mother conceived, him a *sinful* man. His father was a corrupt person; and, therefore, the son also was corrupt. For, saith the text, *Adam begat a son IN HIS OWN LIKENESS, and AFTER HIS OWN IMAGE; that*  
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is, in the very act of begetting, he communicated that impurity and depravity of nature, in which the son resembled the father.—In similar terms speaks the Psalmist—*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.* Psal. li. 5. The occasion on which this penitential Psalm was composed is well known. David had been permitted not only to commit the foul sin of adultery, but to perpetrate the barbarous crime of murder. These sins he considers as streams, and traces them to the fountain; the impurity, and corruption of nature, with which he was conceived and born. For, says he, *I WAS SHAPEN in iniquity, and in sin did my mother CONCEIVE me.* My parents were sinners, and, in virtue of my descent from them, I am a sinner. It was not by imitating their bad example that I first became a sinner. My sin is of a much earlier date. It is of equal duration with my existence. I was begotten of a sinful father, and born of a sinful mother; and from them sin was communicated to me.

Accordingly, as a strong proof that natural generation is the mysterious channel by which the moral impurity of our nature is conveyed from parents to children, our blessed Redeemer, as man, in order that his humanity might escape that moral pollution which is common to all other men, was conceived and born in a preternatural and miraculous manner. For, as the evangelical prophet speaks, in a passage expressly applied to the Messiah in the New Testament, *A VIRGIN shall conceive, and, still remaining a virgin, shall bring forth a son.* That it was in order to his escaping the moral impurity of nature that he was conceived in this extraordinary and unparalleled manner the scripture oftener than once intimates to us. For, said the angel unto the virgin-mother, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God;* that is, thou shalt be found with  
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child in a manner altogether unprecedented and miraculous; and, therefore, that which shall be born of thee, shall be a holy thing.

Mysterious, indeed, is the manner in which sin is communicated and conveyed from Adam to his posterity. A profound mystery, no doubt, it is. Many mysteries are there in the natural as well as the moral world. What a mystery is human generation itself! As to the corruption of our nature, which in this mysterious manner is propagated from generation to generation, it certainly cannot be of God. Carefully, therefore, must we distinguish between our nature and the depravity of it. The former is the workmanship of God, not the latter. The case, so far as we can conceive it, stands thus. At a particular period, posterior to our conception, when the body is properly organized and fitted for the reception of the soul, the latter is created and infused into the former. Thus both the constituent parts of our nature, in respect of their substance, are of God. He is the Creator and former of both. But in the formation of them he withholds what a subsequent answer calls *original righteousness*; that is, that conformity to the holy law, with which human nature was endued in its original state. Hence it only is in respect of its substance that the soul comes from God. He withholds original righteousness from it; and, in its union to the body, it is infected with moral corruption, in a manner which no man on earth can pretend fully to understand.

There is only one thing farther in the answer to which we need to attend. *All mankind, descending from Adam by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his FIRST transgression.* His first transgression was not his last. Innumerable other sins did he afterwards commit. But, by his *first* transgression, he violated the covenant of works; and, therefore, immediately ceased to stand and act in the capacity of our representative,  
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and federal head. Afterwards he acted only in a private capacity; and, therefore, he *only* was amenable for his after conduct. Accordingly, when the Compilers of the Catechism give us an account of original sin, and mention, as a branch of it, the guilt of Adam's sin imputed to us, they expressly restrict it to his *first* sin.

Having finished what I intended as an exposition of this answer, I shall conclude with a reflection or two for improvement. And

*First*, Truly God was good to man in his first state. Though the covenant, made with the first Adam, was not, in such a manner as the covenant made with the second, a covenant of grace, yet gracious and good was God to man in the former, as well as in the latter. Eminently is wisdom manifested in the choice of so fit a person to represent us in that covenant. Signally did God display his goodness in insuring to Adam and to us such a rich and glorious reward, in the event of the fulfilment of its condition.

*Secondly*, We see on the one hand the analogy, and on the other the disparity, between the manner in which God dealt with man in his first, and the manner in which he deals with him in his now fallen state. It hath pleased God all along to deal with man through the intervention of a covenant. Well did the covenant of works besit man in his original state. Admirably is the covenant with the second Adam adapted to the situation of the persons whom he represents in it. What reason had Adam to be thankful, and to wonder when his great Creator proposed a covenant of such a gracious tenor! Especially have we reason to be thankful for the revelation of a covenant so much adapted to our fallen state. Thanks be to God for all his favours. Thanks, in an especial manner, be to him for Jesus Christ.

*Thirdly*,

*Thirdly*, How unreasonably, as well as unlawfully, do we often impeach and quarrel with the divine conduct! How ready are we to blame God for permitting sin to enter into the world, and especially for making us responsible for a sin which we did not commit? But in great wisdom and goodness, as well as justice and equity, as I observed already, did God enter into a covenant with Adam as our representative; and for permitting him to violate it, and by the violation of it to introduce both moral and penal evil into the world, he had the most important and worthy reasons. What ignorance and what prejudice do we discover when we presume to find fault with God, or with any of his works and ways! Often does that which is straight appear to us crooked. Apt are the best of men in the state of imperfection; through the remainder of indwelling corruption, to be mistaken about God and his mysterious conduct. What he intends for their good, may appear to them to tend to their hurt.

*Fourthly*, We all evince ourselves to be fallen creatures. At a very early period do we discover this. What an epidemical disease is sin! How universal a contagion is it! Long ago did *the Lord look down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside. They are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one.*

*Fifthly*, We see whence the wickedness, which, as a universal deluge, has overspread the face of our earth, originally flows. All the crimes and sins which have been committed in our own times, and in the days of our fathers, may be traced back to the first sin of our first federal head; all the sins which we have committed in the several past periods and stages of our life, to the corruption and depravity of nature in which we were conceived. What an infathomable depth of depravity and deceit in the human heart!

*Lastly, If we ever enter into eternal life, it must be in the way of a covenant very different from that made with the first Adam, and in all respects superior to it. But how encouraging to think, that, as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive ; and that, as sin hath reigned unto death, even so grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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## Sin and Misery Connected.

ROM. v. 12.

*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

**T**HE words which I have now read lead our thoughts back to a very early period of the world; and to an event, in which, though it happened thousands of years before we were born, we all had a particular concern. They relate to the first man, from whom we all descend; and to an action, which he, as our representative in the covenant of works, committed; by which he was ruined for ever, and we were ruined in him. Sin having entered our world, death entered along with it. Till sin entered, death was unknown. But when the one entered, the other immediately followed. Between the two there is a necessary connection.

Accordingly, from this text, I may take occasion to remind you, my brethren, of the connection which the

Compilers of our Shorter Catechism state between sin and misery in the following answer. *The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.*

Of the fall, its extent, the immediate occasion and other circumstances of it, I have spoken already on several preceding answers. Obvious to all is the propriety with which that unhappy change, that man underwent when he sinned, is called the FALL. It was the fall of MANKIND. Not only did the first father of the human race fall, but, as saith the answer to the preceding question, *all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.* Accordingly, in the short answer now before us, we have a description of the state into which mankind have fallen. It is a state of sin, and a state of misery. I am not, however, on this occasion, to consider particularly either the sinfulness or the misery of it. Of sin in general, and of that sin in particular, by which our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, we have heard already. In what the sinfulness of this state consists, and what the misery of it is, the answers to the two following questions, to which this is intended only for an introduction, will inform us.

The only thing that comes to be considered on this occasion, is the necessary connection between sin and misery. Necessarily are they connected. So the answer intimates. *The fall brought mankind into an estate of SIN and MISERY.* A state of sin must be a state of misery. Distinguished sin and misery are; but divided they are not.

*First,* They are DISTINGUISHED. Sin and the punishment of it are two things very different. The former is of ourselves. It cannot be of God. Sin, as we found on a former occasion, he *permits*. But to it he cannot incline; of it he cannot approve. The punishment of sin, however, is his work. He claims it. *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it, saith the Lord!* Rom.



xii. 19. *Shall there be evil in a city, penal evil, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos iii. 6.

Secondly, Though sin and punishment be distinguished, they cannot be DIVIDED. The one accompanies the other. Such is the connection between sin and the punishment of it, that, even when the former is only imputed, not inherent, the latter attends it. Remarkably was this exemplified in the case of the second Adam, the Surety of the better covenant. No inherent personal sin had he. In his humanity he was *holy, harmless, and undefiled*. But, in virtue of the imputation of our guilt to him, he was subjected to the full punishment of our sins, and endured it. For *Christ hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* 1 Pet. iii. 18. Now, if sin when only imputed be accompanied with punishment, no wonder though, when, as in our case, it is both imputed and inherent, it be attended with misery. Accordingly, were we to review the scripture-account of our fallen state, we would, in instances innumerable, find the sinfulness and the misery of it inseparably connected.

In the text prefixed to this short Lecture, sin and misery are conjoined. For thus it speaks, *By one man sin entered into the world, and DEATH BY SIN.* Had not the one entered, the other would not have entered. The one is the cause; the other the effect. The latter, therefore, necessarily followed the former. No less necessarily are they connected in the following words. *Wherein, that is, the trespasses and sins mentioned in the end of the preceding verse, in time past, says the Apostle to the Ephesian converts, ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.* Affecting representation of the sinfulness of our natural state! Of the misery

fery of it we have a short, but comprehensive description in what immediately follows. *And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* Eph. ii. 2, 3. Most closely are these two parts of our natural state connected in the Apostolical account of it here. A similar representation does this Apostle give of it in the following passage. *For the sake of which things, that is, the things enumerated in the foregoing verse, the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.* Col. iii. 6. The order here, indeed, is somewhat inverted. The misery of our natural state is expressed by the wrath of God which cometh upon us. The sinfulness of it is couched in the phrase, the children of disobedience. Things are not always narrated, in the scriptures, in their natural order. On one occasion the cause is prefixed to the effect; on another the effect to the cause. Similar is the order of the Prophet's words. *The crown is fallen from our head; wo unto us that we have sinned.* Lam. v. 16. The effect is put first, in these words, *the crown is fallen from our head*; the cause last, in the following clause, *we have sinned*.

Conjoined in scripture-declaration, sin and misery ever, in fact, accompany one another. Every sinner that remains in the state, into which the fall brought all mankind, ever has attending him both sin and misery. If in infancy, he has original sin. If in a more advanced state of life, he has both original and actual sin. That infants, as well as adult persons, are exposed to the miseries of this life, as well as death itself, and the eternal consequences of it, the experience of mankind in all ages and places of the world testifies. Our natural state, therefore, on one occasion, is represented as a state of sin, and denominated from the sinfulness of it; on another as a state of misery, and described from the misery of it. Often in the scriptures, as we have heard already, are the sinfulness and the misery of it conjoined. Such is the necessary connection  
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between sin and its woful effects, that they are of equal duration. The moment a person becomes a sinner, by imputation or inhesion, he is subject to misery. No instance is to be found, either in our times or in former ages, of a person freed from sin, and not, at the same time, delivered from misery; or of one delivered from misery, and not freed from sin. Freedom from the one and deliverance from the other ever go together. Militant saints, freed from sin, only in part, are only in part delivered from the painful effects of it. Of it, and of its unhappy effects, do we find the most eminent of them complaining. *O wretched man that I am!* saith the Apostle, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. vii. 24. For others, as well as himself, he speaks thus—*We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened.* 2 Cor. v. 4. Triumphant saints, on the other hand, perfectly freed from sin, are also totally delivered from its painful effects. *The blisful inhabitant of the heavenly land shall not say I am sick: the people that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquity.* Isa. xxxiii. 24. The reason why they are not sick, is, they have no sin. Freed from sin, they are for ever exempted from misery. In their happy experience, that most rich and consolatory promise has its full accomplishment. *They shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, in whose blood they have washed their robes and made them white, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* Rev. vii. 16, 17.

Easy is it to account for the necessary connection between sin and misery; and the absolute necessity of deliverance from sin itself, in order to exemption from misery. By sin was the image of God on the human soul obliterated and effaced. By it man not only forfeited the fruition of God, in which only he can be happy, but introduced such deformity and disorder into his  
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frame, especially his intellectual and moral powers, as quite disqualified and unfitted him for it. By sin, in short, he at once incapacitated himself for both glorifying and enjoying God; in which his happiness, and his honour, ever must consist. An unholy man, therefore, must always be an unhappy man.

From the few hints which I have now suggested, we may infer,

(1.) What reason each of us has to be of a lowly disposition. Low, indeed, is the condition into which the fall has brought us. In every view is it a low condition. What a mercy is it that we are not in the lowest hell! Thankful, on this account, ought we all to be. Shall fallen creatures be elated? Shall dust, sinful dust and ashes, be proud? Does not a low condition require a lowly disposition? *God resisteth the proud, but giveth more grace unto the humble.* Jam. iv. 6. *Before destruction, the heart of man is haughty; but before honour, is humility.* Prov. xviii. 12. For, as Hannah sings, *The Lord killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.* 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7, 8.

(2.) We may learn what sin is from its effects. The tree is known by its fruit; the cause from its effects. What devastation has sin made in the world! How changed is the world now from what it once was! What a difference is there between man's first, and his fallen state! Far, indeed, has he fallen. Let us lament and bewail his fall. Heaven is offended. Man is ruined. What an evil, what an accursed thing is sin!

(3.) We see the awful infatuation of sinners in a natural state. Dangerous is their situation. But they are  
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are unfeeling and fearless. They are under the malediction of Heaven. A load of guilt lies upon them. The wrath of the Almighty, as a tremendous tempest, is suspended, and hovers on their guilty heads. But methinks I hear a person interrupting me. If the state of nature be such, I am not in it; for I feel no such weight; I fear, I foresee no such danger. But unfair and inconclusive, O sinner! is thy reasoning. Thy unfeeling and fearless frame, far from being an infallible evidence that thou art not in the state of nature, is a strong presumption that thou art in it. Naturally are we all in a state of moral or spiritual death; and the dead, we know, are incapable of sensation and feeling.

(4.) How suitable and fit for us, and our malady, is the sovereign cure which Heaven has prepared for us! The original dignity, as well as purity, of human nature have we all forfeited. To extreme misery have we reduced ourselves. But the divine Saviour, in the unfathomable depths, and unmeasurable heights, of his redeeming love, condescended to pass through a state of the deepest abasement in our world, and in our stead, that he might advance us to the highest dignity and glory of which our nature is capable. *For, saith the Apostle to the believing Corinthians, 2 Epist. viii. 9. ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor; that ye, through his poverty, might be rich.*

(5.) What inadequate and mistaken views of salvation do many hearers of the gospel entertain? The only thing for which they are at all solicitous, is to be in the end delivered from going down to the pit. Sin itself they love; though they fear the consequences of it. But a salvation *in sin* is a fiction, a vain dream with which many amuse themselves. What! Deliverance from misery without deliverance from sin; in other words, happiness without holiness! But how consistent, and

how full, is the salvation of which God has given us a revelation in the gospel? It includes salvation from sin itself; and, therefore, deliverance from wrath. *She*, said the angel to Joseph, in relation to the virgin, *shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their SINS.* Matth i. 21. And, as the Apostle affirms, 1 Theff. i. 10. *Jesus delivers us from the wrath to come.*

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## The Sinfulness of the Fallen State.

ROM. iii. 23.

*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

**I**N manifold respects were Jews and Gentiles distinguished under the Old Testament. Sovereign and discriminating is the grace which is manifested in the redemption of sinners of every age and nation. Very different is the situation of saints in heaven, and sinners in hell. Greatly does one of mankind differ from another, even in this world. Whence is there such a difference between one and another? Is it natural? No. It is supernatural. It is not at all of nature, but wholly of grace. All are naturally on a level. *For, as saith our text, ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

To the Apostle's assertion agrees the definition of the sinfulness of our natural condition, which the Compilers of our Shorter Catechism have given us in the following answer. *The sinfulness of that estate whereinto*

man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

The state into which the fall brought mankind is, in the preceding answer, represented in a twofold view; as a state of sin, and a state of misery. Accordingly, in the answer, on the consideration of which I am now entering, we have a more particular account of the sinfulness of it. As sin is the cause, and misery the effect, the Compilers of the Catechism, with great propriety, prefix their account of the former to their account of the latter. The one we have in this, the other we have in the following answer. Sin, as we saw in a preceding Lecture, is in general twofold, *original* and *actual*. Of both, the account, which this answer gives us of the sinfulness of the fallen state, speaks.

With what propriety, and for what reasons, the sin, which we bring into the world with us, is called ORIGINAL, to distinguish it from the sin, which we commit in our own persons, called ACTUAL sin, I had occasion to show in a former Lecture. I shall, therefore, consider the sinfulness of our natural condition under two heads; what is commonly called *original* sin, and what is usually distinguished by the name of *actual* sin. The

I. Part of the sinfulness of our fallen state is comprehended in these words of the answer. *The guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of the whole nature, which is commonly called original sin.* This sin, in all its parts and branches, we bring into the world with us. From our earliest infancy we have the guilt of Adam's first sin imputed to us, we want original righteousness, and our whole nature is corrupted. Original sin may be divided and viewed variously.



It may be considered as *imputed*, and as *inherent*. It comprehends the guilt of Adam's first sin, which, in a manner, and for reasons explained on a former occasion, is imputed to us. It includes in it the inherent corruption and depravity of nature; of the mysterious transmission and communication of which, from Adam to us, I have also had occasion to speak in my exposition of a foregoing answer.

It may again be considered as *privative* and as *positive*. It has in it the privation and want of that universal conformity of nature to the holy law, which man had in his original state. It includes both privatively a want of original righteousness, and positively, an actual imputation of guilt, and the inherision of universal corruption and depravity.

According to the definition of it in the answer, it comprehends three things, which I shall, in a very cursory manner, review in order.

*First*, THE GUILT OF ADAM'S FIRST SIN. Who Adam was; what sin in general is, and its guilt; what Adam's first sin in particular was, we have heard on former occasions. How the guilt of that sin comes to be imputed to us, and why his *first* sin only is mentioned, we have seen already. Is the guilt of Adam's first sin imputed to us from our earliest moments? Then the infant that has not, in its own person, contracted either guilt or defilement, is in a state of condemnation, as well as corruption; and, therefore, needs the Saviour, in his atoning blood, as well as in his sanctifying spirit; needs him for justification, as well as sanctification. That the infant is equally guilty with the person come to manhood, or that the former deserves the same severe punishment that the latter does, I do not say. But that the one, as really as the other, is guilty, and guilty of death, the scripture, often affirms; and experience, as well as scripture, teaches. This sin includes,

*Secondly*;

Secondly, THE WANT OF ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS. Of the righteousness which Adam once had, and which each of us, as we descend from him, now wants, I have given an account already. On what accounts it is designed *original* righteousness it is easy to understand. Adam, the *origin* and father of all mankind, was endued with it. It may be denominated from the state in which he then was. It was his *original* state. When he passed out of his first into his fallen state, he was totally deprived of it. The term *righteousness*, in the account which a preceding answer gives of man's creation is used in a restricted sense, and distinguished from knowledge and holiness. In this answer, it is intended to be understood in a more extensive view. For by the want of righteousness of which it speaks, we must understand a privation of all the three things, in which especially that likeness to God, which man originally bore, consisted; that is, a want of knowledge, of righteousness, and of holiness. Righteousness in the answer admits of a twofold consideration, as *imputed* and as *inherent*. Had Adam retained his original integrity, and performed universal and perpetual obedience, his righteousness would have been imputed to us; and it, rather than our own personal obedience, would have entitled us to that eternal life promised in the covenant of works. Not only would the obedience, which he, as our representative, on this supposition, would have performed, been imputed to us, but universal purity of nature would have been conveyed from him to us. Is not the transmission of guilt and depravity from him to us, in virtue of his disobedience, a sufficient proof, that, if he had obeyed, righteousness and holiness would have been transmitted from him to his posterity?—Having given an account of man's original state, and of the knowledge, the righteousness, and the holiness, concreated with him in a former Lecture, it is unnecessary to insist upon this part of the answer. It evidently means

a want of knowledge in the understanding, and holiness in the affections, as well as righteousness in the will. This reminds me of the

*Third* And principal thing to be considered in this definition of original sin; THE CORRUPTION OF THE WHOLE NATURE, *which is commonly called original sin.* The manner in which upright and holy Adam was not only deprived of his original righteousness, but became universally corrupt and depraved, it is not easy to understand and explain. To account for the origin and entrance of moral evil into our world. as I said on a former occasion, is one of the most difficult tasks ever undertaken by either philosopher or divine. To follow curious enquirers through all their conjectures and speculations on this subject would be tedious, and after all afford but small information or satisfaction.

That the first Adam was the representative of his whole natural posterity; that sin descends from him to them; I have, on a former occasion, endeavoured to show. I have also pointed out natural generation as the channel, by which the moral impurity of our nature is conveyed from him to us.

In a very different manner have others accounted for the corruption of mankind. Some have had recourse to the old *heretical* notion of two first principles or causes of all things; the one the cause of all good; and the other the cause of all evil. Others have impiously imagined, that God himself implants in the human soul that propensity to sin, with which we all are conceived, and which, at a very early period of our existence, operates and discovers itself. When, however, we ask the abettors of this unworthy opinion to reconcile it with the divine perfections, we find them divided among themselves, and accounting for it in a different manner. One tells us, that in a *judicial* manner, that is, as a just punishment of the first Adam's transgression, God infuses this sinful propensity into his unhappy posterity. Another informs

forms us, that this propensity or inclination to sin is not sinful; and, therefore, there is no difficulty or inconsistency in supposing God to be the author of it.—A bare repetition of such hypotheses is to me, and, I hope, will be to my hearers, a sufficient refutation of them. Others have accounted for the universal depravity of the human race by another hypothesis. In imitation of the doctrine of certain ancient philosophers, they say, that all the souls of mankind were created in the beginning, and sinned in their then unembodied state. According to this hypothesis the sinfulness of each individual of mankind, posterior to the union of soul and body, originates *in* the sin which was committed by the former long before the first formation of the latter. But is not this, to say no worse of it, a conjecture in the highest degree improbable? As to the Arminian supposition, namely, that the universal practical corruption of mankind is owing to the unhappy influence of bad example, I have already shown, that it is no less incompatible with indisputable facts than with the express testimony of holy writ.

The manner, therefore, in which I endeavoured, in a former Lecture, to account for the universality of sin, and the conveyance of it from parents to children, in all generations, earlier and later, even from Adam to the last of his posterity, how inexplicable soever it may seem, and though questions may be started concerning it, which we are unable to answer, appears upon the whole to be scriptural, and to comport best with the known attributes of Deity. That mankind are universally addicted to evil, the experience of all ages, and of all countries, proves. That they are naturally inclined to evil, scripture, in places too numerous to be mentioned, testifies. In addition to the few texts which I formerly adduced, to prove the universal depravity of the human species in the present state, and the mysterious transmission of it from Adam to all his natural descendents by ordinary generation, let me now recommend to your  
serious

serious consideration, for a farther illustration of this mournful but important truth, the following texts. The affecting account which God gives of the inhabitants of the world previous to the flood, is no less applicable to its present inhabitants. *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts was only evil continually.* Gen. vi. 5. Most expressive is Job's question. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.* Job xiv. 4. Similar is the question proposed by Eliphaz. *What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?* Chapter xv. 14. In similar terms speaks the Psalmist. *The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.* Psal. lviii. 3. For, as the teacher come from God affirms, *that which is born of the flesh is flesh.* John iii. 6. What a picture of corrupt nature, as it subsists in all mankind in the fallen state, does the inspired Apostle draw in the verses preceding the text which introduces this Lecture! Is it not in the places quoted, and many others, which I do not stay to repeat, in the clearest manner intimated, that, in all ages, earlier and later, from the fall of Adam to the present day, there is a continued communication of sin from parents to children, and a constant succession of sinful men in the world? Is it not plain, that, though evil example has an unhappy tendency to the increase and spread of sin, yet the depravity of mankind is not wholly owing to the infection and imitation of it?

Let us now review this corruption and depravity of human nature in the lapsed state. It is affirmed to be *the corruption of the WHOLE nature.* Human nature, as we found formerly, consists of two parts, the *soul* and the *body*. The soul, as the principal part, was the proper seat of that original righteousness which man once had, and has now lost. It is also the chief seat of the corruption, of which I am now to speak; and, as the

image of God was impressed on the several powers of the human soul in its original state, in a manner corresponding to their nature, and the operations which they perform, the corruption of nature has infected and operates in them in a similar manner. This observation might also be extended and applied to the body, and the several members of it. Let us, therefore, in the

*1st place*, Take a short view of the SOUL, and the several *faculties* of it.

In the UNDERSTANDING, instead of knowledge, there is now gross ignorance. Ignorant are we all by nature of God, and of ourselves; of our duty, and of our danger; of our interest, and our honour. Not only are we naturally without knowledge, but incapacitated and disqualified for receiving it. What stupidity and infatuation, with regard to our best interests, do we discover! How just, though grievous, the complaint! *The very ox knoweth his owner, even the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, saith God, my people doth not consider.* Isa. i. 3. Far, indeed, must human nature be degraded, when the ox, one of the dullest of animals, and the ass, one of the most stupid of all the creatures, become man's instructors and monitors. How ignorant, and inattentive to their duty and their interest are many under a gospel dispensation! If we talk to them of any thing calculated to gratify a vain curiosity, or to promote their worldly wealth, they are all *ear* and attention. But, if we speak to them of the things which belong to their spiritual and everlasting welfare and comfort, they hear as if they heard us not. They understand, they care for none of these things. Though, considering the *time*, the opportunities and advantages which they have had, we might reasonably expect them now to be fit to be *teachers* of others, they themselves *have yet need that one teach them again, which be the very first principles of the oracles of God; and they are such as yet have need of milk, and not of strong meat.* Heb. v. 12. How justly does

does the Apostle describe the imbecility and weakness of the human understanding, the inability and incapacity of it, for discerning and perceiving spiritual things in the now fallen state! *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* 1 Cor. xi. 14.

Did the human WILL, in its original state, universally correspond to the holy will of God? The reverse is the case with it in the now lapsed state. In it there is universal opposition and contrariety to his will. What he loves we naturally hate. What he hates we naturally love. What he requires we refuse. What he forbids we do. Against his commanding will, the rule of our duty, our corrupt wills secretly, but strongly, remonstrate and spurn. At his providential will, relating to our situation and temporal lot on earth, our unhallowed wills repine and murmur. Especially is there in our unrenewed wills the strongest aversion and opposition to God's gracious will concerning our redemption and recovery by Jesus Christ. This occasions the chief complaint, which the all-sufficient and ever-willing Saviour has against sinners. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* John v. 40.

Our CONSCIENCES are corrupted, as well as our understandings and wills. How faithful a monitor was conscience to man in his uncorrupted state! On all occasions was it ready to remind him of his duty, and to excite him to the due performance of it. Far otherwise is it with fallen man. In how many is conscience fast asleep! Their conduct in numberless instances is criminal; but conscience has ceased to be a reprover to them. Great as the danger, with which they are threatened, is, it neglects to admonish and forewarn them of it. Often is conscience misinformed, and does it err exceedingly. Of the misinformed and erring conscience, the Apostle Paul furnishes us with a very singular instance,

stance, in the account which he gives of his unconverted state before king Agrippa. *I verily thought with myself,* says he, *that I ought,* that I was bound in conscience and duty, *to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.* Acts xxvi. 9. How much to be feared is a benumbed, a sleeping conscience; or what the Apostle, in his figurative stile, calls *a conscience seared with a hot iron!* 1 Tim. iv. 2. Callous and unfeeling the consciences of sinners may be for a season; but awakened they must be,—and sooner or later they will speak.

The MEMORY, no less than the conscience, is corrupted. How disinclined, and how disabled, is it for retaining what is good! A repository and storehouse of good it once was. But with what are the memories of many men now replenished? With toys and trifles; nay, with less and worse than trifles; with that which, instead of contributing to the health and prosperity of the soul, is poisonous and ruinous to it. How necessary, but how much neglected, is the solemn call to our Jerusalem! *Wash thine heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem! that thou mayest be saved: how long shall thy vain,* I may add, *vile, thoughts lodge within thee!* How much is the Apostolic exhortation neglected by professors of religion in our times? *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.* How worthy of a place in the memory, in the inmost heart, is the word of Christ! But with what shameful neglect do the greater part treat it!

The AFFECTIONS, no less than the superior powers of the soul, are corrupted. What anarchy and disorder has sin introduced into these inferior powers of the soul! Often are they misplaced, and terminate on the most unworthy objects. How earthly and sensual are they! How often do they run out inordinately toward lawful objects? Often do they carry us on precipitately in the  
pursuit



pursuit of unlawful objects. We chuse what we ought to refuse. We refuse what interest, as well as duty, requires us to chuse. Of the most egregious folly are we guilty. The creature we prefer to the Creator, substituting the former in place of the latter. *My people, saith God, even my professed people, have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*

Such is the corruption of the immaterial part of our nature, and the several faculties of it! How changed the human soul! Let us in the

*2d place*, Review the other constituent part of our nature, the BODY. That this inferior part of our nature is a partaker with the superior in sin, and a sharer with it in punishment, scripture and experience concur to evince. Accordingly, as I said on a former answer, there is the *filthiness of the flesh*, as well as the *filthiness of the spirit*; and, therefore, as the heart needs to be sprinkled, the body needs to be washed. That corruption, which as an infectious leaven, lurks in the heart, diffuses and spreads itself through the whole outward man, rendering the several members of it unhappily instrumental in the commission of sin. Of the corruption of the body, as well as of the corruption of the soul, and of the instrumentality of the several parts of the former in various species of immorality and vice, to the dishonour of God, and the ruin of mankind, the Apostle, in the verses preceding our text, has given us a most affecting, but just, representation. And, as the Prophet speaks, *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.* Isa. i. 5, 6. No member of the body has escaped the contagion of sin. In instances innumerable are the several members of it instrumental in the commission of sin.

How

How often are our HANDS and our FEET, which should be ever ready to run the errands, and perform the work, that God assigns to us, employed in the service of sin and Satan! Often are our EYES, with which we ought to contemplate his works, and to read his word, employed in a manner not only unprofitable and vain, but most pernicious and hurtful. The Apostle Peter, describing the unhappy seducers in both his own and other times of the world and the church, among many other things, tells us, that *they have EYES full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin.* 2 Pet. ii. 14. In how improper and unlawful a manner do many use their EARS, as well as their eyes! Often are they shut against what they ought to be ready to hear, and open to what they ought not to hear. How open are the ears of many to every species of defamation and reproach! Often and justly has it been observed, that were there fewer to receive and spread evil reports, there would be fewer to invent and raise them. One essential part of the character of a genuine citizen in Zion is, *He taketh not a reproach against his neighbour.* Psal. xv. 3. It is not enough that he doth not raise an injurious report. He does not readily, but with reluctance, receive it.

Of what evil and mischief is the TONGUE the unhappy instrument? To the most impious and base purposes is that excellent faculty of speech, the glory of human nature, prostituted and debased. In the most daring manner do many open their mouths against Heaven, and shockingly defy him who made them. *They, to borrow the words of the Psalmist, set their mouths against the heavens, and their TONGUE walketh through the earth.* Psal. lxxiii. 9. *With our TONGUE will we prevail, say they, our lips are our own: who is Lord over us?* Psal. xii. 4. With what oaths and imprecations, and lies, is God every day, every hour, affronted and insulted! How often is the Apostle's description of

of the depravity of the human tongue, in the several branches of it, exemplified! *If any man offend not in word, says he, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses mouths that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also, the ships, which, though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the TONGUE is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the TONGUE is a fire, a world of iniquity: So is the TONGUE among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature: and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the TONGUE can no man tame: it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Jam. iii. 2,—10.* Such is the corruption of mankind!

From the cursory view which I have taken of human nature in the present state, the following particulars are manifest.

(1.) This corruption is, in a twofold respect, *universal*; in respect of *persons*, and in respect of *parts*. It has overspread the whole human race. It extends to the whole man, inward and outward.

(2.) It is a *hereditary* evil, descending from parents to children in all ages and generations, earlier and later.

(3.) It is the same in the numerous descendants of Adam, in all times and places of the world. It is not the guilt of all, or of any one of the sins of our immediate parents that is imputed to us, as their children. They stood in a natural only, not a federal relation to  
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us. It is the guilt of Adam's first sin that is imputed to us all. The same original sin, inherent, as well as imputed, descends from the first man to every individual of his natural posterity.

(4.) This corruption of nature is known in the scriptures by different names. It is called *the old man*. *That ye put off*, says the Apostle, *concerning the former conversation, the OLD MAN, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts*. Eph. vi. 22. Easy is it to see why it is called the *man*. It is not restricted to any one part of the man, either the inferior or superior part; but extends to the whole. No less obvious is the reason for which it is designed the *old man*. In the Apostle's words it denotes the remaining corruption of militant saints in opposition to their renewed part, called in the context *the new man*. Now, though all militant saints have both a corrupt and a gracious part, the former is in them all *older* than the latter. The one they have from their first birth; the other only from their second birth. For, as our divine Redeemer speaks, *that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*.

This reminds me of another epithet by which the scripture expresses the corruption of nature. Often in the scriptures of the New Testament is it called *flesh*. *The FLESH*, says the Apostle, *lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the FLESH, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would*. Gal. v. 17. Is not this a plain intimation of the unhappy influence which the corruption that is seated in the heart has upon the material and fleshly part? Does it not intimate how sordid and base a thing sin is, and how our nature is degraded and debased by it? In the pursuit of the lowest and basest gratifications are un sanctified men engaged. It was by preferring the body, and the gratification of its sensual appetites, to the soul and the felicity of it, that man first sinned and fell. All  
along

along have the unhappy posterity of fallen Adam resembled and imitated their foolish first parents. The mortal body is gratified and pampered. The immaterial and immortal part is neglected and murdered. With the *most* obvious propriety, therefore, is the epithet *flesh* applied to mankind, now in a state of sin and mortality. *The Lord said*, in relation to the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, *My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.* Gen. vi. 3. *The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All FLESH is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field.* Isa. xl. 6.

(5.) This depravity of nature is *such* that it can be removed by a *sanctifying* work of the Spirit *only*. Illustriously is wisdom displayed in the method which God by the gospel has revealed for delivering us from corruption, as well as condemnation. As we do by natural generation derive the depravity of nature from the first Adam, by supernatural regeneration we derive purity from the second Adam. For, as *that which is born of the flesh is flesh*, so *that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*. If any man be *savingly in Christ*, the quickening head of the new covenant, by a regenerating work of his Spirit, *he is a new creature*. Happy, indeed, is the man that has experienced the commencement of this good work, and that now experiences the progress and advancement of it; for the commencement is an infallible evidence of the consummation of it.

Thus the corruption of nature, of which I have given you a summary view, is what we, in an especial manner, intend by original sin. It is not, indeed, the whole of that sin or the only thing which we intend by it. We do not exclude the guilt of Adam's first sin, or the want of original righteousness. These are necessarily included in the adequate idea of original sin. The depravity of nature ever necessarily supposes the privation of original righteousness and primeval purity. How strong is the

propensity to evil in mankind fallen and corrupted! What incapacity and inability for good is in them! What an aversion to it! The universal and total depravation of our natures let us incessantly bewail. For the renovation of it let us, day after day, pray. He only who made man sinless can sanctify him in his now sinful state. The

II. Part of the sinfulness of our natural condition includes all the *actual* transgressions which proceed from that natural corruption of which I have spoken. It is expressed in these words of the answer, *Together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.*

The reasons why sin of the one kind is denominated *actual*, in contradistinction to sin of the other kind, is obvious. The one is, the other is not, actually committed by us in our own persons. This part of the sinfulness of the natural state is not of equal extent with the former. Natural corruption is to be found in all the ordinary descendants of Adam, even in infants unborn, as well as born. Actual sin is committed by such *only* as have arrived at the actual exercise of their rational powers, and are capable of knowing the law, of which sin ever is a transgression, or to which it is a want of conformity.

The answer speaks of *actual transgressions* in the plural number. The individuals of mankind are multiplied to an astonishing and unknown number. The sins even of an individual exceed number. Who can enumerate his own errors and offences? What numberless sinful motions arise within us! What countless idle and sinful words have we spoken! In instances innumerable have we neglected what we ought to have done; and, in instances no less innumerable, have we done what we ought not to have done. Can you number the numberless hairs of your head? or can you count the countless vapours and drops contained in a  
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thick cloud? Still less can you number your sins of omission and commission; the sins of your earlier and of your riper years. Accordingly, the pardon of our sins is expressed in a manner, which bespeaks, at once, their vast number and high aggravations. *Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins, your numberless, as well as aggravated, sins, be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* Isa. i. 18. *I have blotted out, saith God to the church, AS A THICK CLOUD thy TRANSGRESSIONS; and, as a cloud, thy SINS.* Chap. xlv. 22.

It remains now, that I direct your attention, for a few moments, to the connection intimated in the answer, between *original sin* and *actual*. *The sinfulness of that estate into which man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, TOGETHER with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.* For an obvious reason is original sin introduced first, and actual sin last. The former, as we have again and again observed, is the cause; the latter the effect,—and the cause is understood to precede the effect.

The connection between original sin and actual is not, indeed, such, that the former must always be accompanied with the latter. Such as die in infancy, and are saved from original sin, are for ever exempted from actual. But, though original sin is not always accompanied with actual, the latter always implies the former. In other words, though there may be original sin where there is no actual, there can be no actual sin where original is not.

Let me, therefore, suggest to your consideration some of the many passages in which the scripture states the close connection between original sin and actual. It is queried, *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Differently, indeed, has this place been inter-

preted and applied. Of the propagation of sin from parents to children has it been understood. But to individuals and their actions it may also be applied. Are their actions unholy? The reason is, they themselves are unholy. A similar representation have we in the words of the Psalmist. *They are corrupt; they have done abominable works. There is none that doeth good.* Psal. xiv. 1. Is it asked, how it comes to pass that they do abominable things, that no one of them doeth good. The reason is, they themselves are corrupt. Such as the cause is, such must the effects be. In terms the most expressive and plain is this important truth affirmed in the following words, *The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.* Psal. lviii. 3. cited formerly. Whence is it, that mankind go astray in their own persons almost as soon as they be born? The reason is obvious. They are estranged from the womb; that is, from their very formation they are, by an inbred principle, inclined to evil. To all which agree the words of the church. *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags.* Isa. lxiv. 6. How comes it to pass, that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, that all we do is defiled? The reason is, we ourselves are unclean.

On this important subject the New Testament is not less explicit than the Old. Most expressive are our Lord's own words. *Ye shall know them by their fruits—Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.* Matth. vii. 16, 17, 18. Is not the corrupt tree a fit emblem of our depraved nature; and its evil fruit of our corrupt conversation? To the words of our Lord I may add those of his Apostle. *In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* Eph. ii. 2. cited already.



ready. May not the phrase, *the children of disobedience*, intimate the depravity of our nature, or that principle of disobedience which is in us from our earliest childhood and infancy? The corruption of our lives evidently is expressed by our *walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.*

Thus often and plainly does the scripture intimate to us the necessary connection between the natural depravity of our hearts, and all the practical enormities with which we are chargeable in our deportment.

This is a summary view of the sinfulness of the fallen state. From what hath been said, we may learn,

*First,* The dismal situation in which each of us either is or at least has been. It is, as we will see when we explain the subsequent answer, a state of extreme misery and danger. Especially is it a state of sin. It is a state of both condemnation and corruption. Guilty is the infant unborn, as well as born. Is the adult addicted to evils and crimes of which the infant is incapable? To those very crimes is the infant, though unconscious of it, inclined.

*Secondly,* Ineffectual must external reformation be without internal renovation. Far is it from being sufficient for a person to refrain from grosser pollutions, in which, perhaps, in times past he has indulged himself. He may be *another* man, while he is not a *new* man. It is not enough to lop off the branches of gross outward transgressions. The ax must be laid to the root of the tree of the depravity of nature. Hence we see,

*Thirdly,* The indispensable necessity of a regenerating work of the Spirit. How suitable and consolatory is the promise! *A new heart will I, saith God, give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.* Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. The great

great question as to us all is, whether these words be verified, and the good work of sanctification begun, in us or not.

*Fourthly*, We see especially the necessity of the Spirit, as the Spirit of *conviction*, to discover to us the sin of our nature. Actual, as well as original sin, does the Spirit discover to us. The former, as most obvious, he probably discovers first to the ignorant and careless sinner, and traces it as a stream up to the fountain of the depravity of nature whence it proceeds. This natural corruption lies deep and latent in the heart. It escapes the notice of superficial professors of religion. To nothing are they greater strangers than to their own depraved hearts. But the Spirit, when he deals effectually and savingly with sinners, leads them into their own hearts. He that *searcheth all things, even the deep things of God*, probes the heart of the sinner, and discovers the latent wickedness that is in it. The great question is, whether we have the experience of such a convincing work.

*Fifthly*, We see the importance and necessity of early religious instruction to children. From their earliest moments are they sinners; and do they need a Saviour. How important and necessary then is it for them to be instructed betimes concerning their original, as well as early actual sins, and the danger to which they are exposed? What a happiness to children is it when they have godly parents, and their parents are enabled to be faithful to them! What a mercy is it, that, as infants are sinners, the Saviour saves infants, as well as others!

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## The Misery of the Fallen State.

EPHES. ii. 12.

*That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise; having no hope, and without God in the world.*

**T**HIS excellent Epistle, though intended for the use of all the churches of Christ to the end of the world, is directed immediately to the church which had been collected, and now flourished in the city of Ephesus — This was one of the most famous cities in the Lesser Asia. It is said to have been built as early as the times of David; or, perhaps, much earlier. It was situated on the river Cayster. Especially was it famous for a temple dedicated to the goddess Diana. This magnificent edifice is said to have been four hundred and twenty-five feet in length; and two hundred and twenty in breadth. Its roof was supported by a hundred and twenty-seven pillars, seventy feet high; twenty-seven

ty-seven of which were curiously carved, and all the rest finely polished. The plan of this celebrated building was contrived by Ctesiphon. Of such extent and exquisite workmanship was it, that, from the laying of the foundation to the finishing of it, there was a period of no less than two hundred and twenty years. But how precarious and fluctuating are all things in this world! The once famous city of Ephesus has now dwindled into an obscure village! Variable is the state of the church, as well as of the world. A very few only of the inhabitants of that place now bear the name of Christians.

The Apostle in this context reminds the Ephesian converts that they were under special obligations to discriminating grace. In the most wretched circumstances did grace find those Ephesians. They *were*, as the text expresses it, *without Christ*, without the knowledge of him, and an interest in him. They were *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, excluded from the special immunities and privileges, civil and sacred, of the literal Israel. Especially were they strangers to the holy community and fellowship of the spiritual and believing Israel. They were *strangers from the covenants of promise*. The covenant by which the redemption of the church is effected, which, for this reason, is called the covenant of redemption, must be intended here. On account of the different administrations of it in the earlier and later ages of the church, may it be put in the plural number. Till the gospel was preached to them, they did not so much as know that there was such a covenant. They were *without hope*. They knew not Christ, who is the only foundation of our hopes for eternity. To say, in one word, all that can be said, they were *without God in the world*. The word literally is, they were Atheists. They were without the true knowledge of God, without his favour, and the fruition of him. Wretched condition! Such, however, is the situation  
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in which grace finds *all* the saved! Is it the situation of the nations and individuals only to whom the gospel has not been preached? Is it not the situation of numbers to whom the gospel is preached? Is it not the natural state of all mankind fallen? Sinful, and therefore miserable state!

Of the sinfulness of this state I have spoken already. Of the misery of it I am now to speak. May the Spirit of conviction impress both the sinfulness and the misery of it upon the conscience of the careless sinner! What I intend now is to explain that definition of the misery of the fallen state which the Compilers of the Catechism give us. *All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.*

With the most evident propriety is the sinfulness of our natural condition prefixed, and the misery of it subjoined. The one is the procuring cause of the other: Between the two, therefore; we have already found a necessary connection.

The subjects of this misery are ALL MANKIND; that is, the first Adam and all his *natural* posterity, or *all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation.* A great number of mankind indeed, are now totally freed from misery, as well as sin. So are the spirits of just men made perfect in the celestial world. But they; no less than others of mankind, were once in a state of sin and misery. Countless thousands of mankind are yet unformed and unborn. But they are, in due time, to be conceived in sin and misery. The saved, no less than others, were represented by Adam in the covenant of works; consequently must have sinned in him, and fallen with him, when he sinned and fell. Therefore are they naturally in a state of sin, and a state of sin must ever be a state of misery.

How mankind came to be involved in such misery

and ruin, the answer intimates. *All mankind, BY THE FALL, &c.* Having spoken of the fall on former occasions, I proceed to the principal part of the answer; the description which it gives us of the misery of our fallen state. Now this misery comprehends in it especially three things; the loss of man's former felicity; the misery under which he now comes into the world; and the misery to which he is liable and exposed. This last article includes in it three things; *the miseries of this life; death itself; and the pains of hell for ever.*

But, before I enter on the consideration of this description of the misery which attends our fallen state, it may not be unnecessary to take notice of a question that has long been agitated among theological writers. It is queried, whether persons dying in infancy be exposed to this misery in its full extent. On this question we find writers not a little divided in their sentiments. It has been imagined, that all who die in infancy will be infallibly blessed and happy for ever. The abettors of this opinion, however, are not fully agreed among themselves. One supposes that infants come into the world innocent; and therefore cannot be unhappy. But this opinion is utterly incompatible with the doctrine of original sin; which, I hope, I have irrefragably evinced and confirmed. Another supposes, that, though they bring original sin into the world with them, they all are saved from it. Godly parents, who have been enabled by faith to devote their infants to the Lord at baptism, or on any other occasion, have, indeed, no small encouragement to hope, in relation to them, the things which accompany salvation. This is not only a most consolatory thought, but an opinion to which the scripture seems to me to give countenance. It has been the opinion of different writers, that, though many who die in infancy may not be saved, they are exposed to a punishment very slight and easy in comparison of that of others who die in an advanced age.

What

What they mean, in short, is, that the former suffer only the punishment of *loss*, not of sense. One thing is certain. In the punishment of the wicked, as well as in the glory of the righteous, there are degrees. That the punishment of one sinner will be tolerable in comparison of that of another, our Lord has expressly informed us. *Verily, I say unto you, it shall be more TOLERABLE for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city.* Matth x. 15. The

I. Thing, in this account of the misery of our fallen state, is the *loss* of that felicity which man possessed in his original state. *All mankind, by their fall, LOST COMMUNION WITH GOD, &c.* Now, what the felicity was which innocent man enjoyed, he himself could best tell. In conformity to God, and in communion with him, man's felicity and dignity ever must consist. During the original state, man had constant access to God and uninterrupted communion with him, of which we cannot now form an adequate idea. What a loser is man by his sin and fall! Had not the second Adam interposed, his loss must have been for ever irreparable.

Man, by his sin, *disqualified* and unfitted himself for glorifying as well as enjoying, God. Into this comfortless situation he brought not only himself but his unhappy posterity; and in it he left them. Accordingly, though sinners under a gospel-dispensation have access to God, to enjoy, as well as to glorify him, they are naturally incapable of the former no less than the latter. They need, therefore, the sanctifying Spirit of Jesus Christ to qualify and fit them for the fruition of God, as well as his all-perfect righteousness to entitle them to it. Hence the Apostle's grateful acknowledgment for others, as well as himself. *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us MEET to be partakers of the saints in light:* Col. i. 12.

When man fell, he *forfeited* a title to communion with  
D d d 2 God.

God. At once did he forfeit what he had in possession, communion with God on earth; and what he had in prospect, uninterrupted and endless communion with God in heaven. God and he were now at variance; and, therefore, all comfortable intercourse between them marred. For, *how can two walk together except they be agreed?* Amos iii. 3.

A common relation, indeed, subsisted between God, as the Creator, and man, as his creature. As a man, he was still a partaker of the providential bounty of God; and in operation, as well as being, upheld by him. But the federal relation between God, as his God in covenant, and man, as the friend of God, was now violated and broken. That sweet fellowship, therefore, which they had one with another now ceased. Accordingly, he, whose very life lay in constant intercourse with God, was now afraid of him, and sought rather to shun him. For, when *they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden*. No wonder though man was afraid; for God was offended. As a certain indication that man had incurred God's displeasure, and forfeited his former comfortable intercourse with his Maker, he was expelled from paradise. *So he drove out the man; and he placed, at the east of the garden of Eden, Cherubim and a flaming sword, a fearful emblem of the vindictive wrath of Almighty God, which turned every way to keep the tree of life.* Now, the life promised in the covenant of works was forfeited, and all friendly intercourse with God in the way of that covenant for ever at an end. Let us, in the

II. place, Attend to the *misery* under which fallen man comes into the world. *All mankind, by their fall, ARE UNDER THE WRATH AND CURSE of God.* Wrath, when applied to the infinite God, and when applied



to his creatures, must be understood very differently. Applied to him, the great JEHOVAH, it must be interpreted in a manner consonant to the absolute perfection of his nature, with which all human passions are utterly incompatible. It must denote, in general, the tremendous effects of that holy resentment which arises from the contrariety there is in sin to his immaculate nature. What the extent of the wrath of Almighty God is, his omniscient Self only knows. How significant the question, and the declaration subjoined to it! *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear is thy wrath.* Psal. xc. 11.

Glorified saints in heaven, on the one hand, know felicity, and condemned sinners in hell, on the other, know misery, in perfection. What the extent of infernal misery is we know not. Who would wish to make the awful experiment? *Upon sinners in the infernal state, wrath comes to the uttermost.* But what the extent of the phrase, the *uttermost* of the wrath of the Almighty is, who can pretend to say? What reason then have *sinners in Zion* to be afraid? No wonder though *fearfulness surprise the hypocrite.* For *who among us can dwell with devouring fire? who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. xxxiii. 14.

Sinners are said to be UNDER the wrath of God. The manner of expression exactly coincides with our Lord's own words. *He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* John iii. 36. It hovers on the guilty sinner's head. It lies upon him, though he feels it not. Who can think of the situation of Sodom and Gomorrah and their wretched inhabitants, when the storm of brimstone and fire hung over their heads, ready every moment to burst and fall upon them, and not be shocked? But what is a tempest of brimstone and fire, though tremendous beyond imagination, in comparison with the wrath of JEHOVAH?

Fallen man is said to come into the world *under the curse*, as well as the wrath of God. By the former we may understand the condemnatory sentence of the broken law, by which the guilty sinner is bound over to the latter. *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the CURSE; for it is written, CURSED is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* Gal. iii. 10. Thus, as sin is ever attended with guilt, and each of us is conceived and born a sinner, each of us comes into the world in an *accursed* state. The import of the maledictory sentence of the broken law, and the nature, as well as the extent of the punishment, to which it dooms guilty sinners, will appear from the consideration of the

III. Third thing in this account of the misery of our fallen state—*All mankind, by their fall, have not only lost communion with God, and are under his wrath and curse, but are LIABLE TO ALL THE MISERIES OF THIS LIFE, TO DEATH ITSELF, AND TO THE PAINS OF HELL FOR EVER.* Here are *three* things, the miseries of this life; death itself; and the pains of hell for ever.

*First, The miseries of this life.* On a former occasion we found, that the life promised in the covenant of works included not only the continued union of soul and body, but the felicity and comforts of life. We said, on the other hand, that the death threatened in that covenant comprehended not only the actual separation of soul and body, but also a forfeiture of the comforts of life, and the infliction of temporal calamities, which are the forerunners and beginnings of death. Thus the moment man sinned, he began to suffer in both soul and body. What a long train of temporal miseries and woes did sin introduce into the world! To what a complication and variety of temporal calamities and maladies is fallen man subjected! Affecting, indeed,

deed, is the account which the sacred history gives us of the consequences of the fall. To all the three concerned in it, *the serpent, the woman, and the man*, and even to the earth, the theatre on which this fatal tragedy was acted, do they extend. THE LORD GOD SAID UNTO THE SERPENT, *Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it, or he, shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*—UNTO THE WOMAN HE SAID, *I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be toward thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*—AND UNTO ADAM HE SAID, *Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread; till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

A full enumeration and detail of the temporal miseries and maladies, to which sin has exposed fallen man, I will not attempt. They attend man in all the stages of life, from his birth to his death. Justly has it been observed, that man is born crying, lives complaining, and dies disappointed from the world. These miseries attend men in all stations and conditions of life, from the king on the throne to the beggar that sits on the dunghill. Who ever described the vanity and calamities of human life in more plaintive and moving strains than the most celebrated prince that ever swayed an earthly sceptre? He does it in an advanced age, having previously experienced a great variety of  
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worldly gratifications and pleasures, as well as disappointments and trials. Rather than quote particular passages to you, I recommend to you a careful perusal of the whole book of Ecclesiastes. In all relations and circumstances is man exposed to miseries and distresses; in the married state as well as the unmarried. If the married state has its comforts, it also has its crosses. The husband often is a heavy trial to the wife, and the wife to the husband. Often are parents a trial to their children; and children bring down the grey hairs of their parents with sorrow to the grave. At an early period did man begin to experience family-affliction. Fratricide is one of the earliest crimes committed in our world. Cain, to the inexpressible grief of his parents, most unnaturally embued his hands in the blood of his brother Abel. The dying complaint of the man according to God's own heart reduplicated mainly upon his family-trials. His household was not such in point of either piety or prosperity as he could have wished. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Families, once the most flourishing, have become wholly extinct. Cities of vast extent, and exceedingly populous, have been overturned; and scarce a vestige of their former grandeur now remains. Travellers are very much at a loss to ascertain the spot on which they stood. Nations, formerly most prosperous and powerful, have been totally exterminated. Empires and kingdoms most opulent and mighty have been subverted and totally ruined. What war and blood shed, massacres and cruelties, have been perpetrated in the world! For thousands of years has our world been an Aceldama, a field of blood. The barbarities which have been perpetrated by human beings, and the havoc which they have made of one another, are a lasting disgrace to human nature; and the recital or recollection of them hurts the feelings, not only of the Christian, but of the man. Were I to ransack the history of the world,

world, of even the world called Christian, I might find materials for many volumes on this painful subject.

Ungrateful man! having risen in rebellion against the great Governor of the world, the inferior creatures have thrown off their former subjection to him. The beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, have become the executioners of divine vengeance; and the several elements have fought against sinful man. Heaven above and the earth below have conspired for his destruction and ruin. For a fearful specimen of the public calamities which sin has introduced into the world, let us take a cursory view of the final destruction of Jerusalem, and dispersion of the Jews a few years after our Lord's ascension.

Of the fearful prodigies and signs which preceded this dismal event, many writers have taken notice. A star, in the form of a sword, hung over the city of Jerusalem a whole year. In the dead of the night, at the time of the feast of tabernacles, a light, similar to that of the sun in his meridian splendor, shone for half an hour on the temple, and the places contiguous to it. The great eastern gate of the temple, which was all of solid brass, and which twenty men were scarcely sufficient to shut, though fastened with strong bolts, suddenly opened of its own accord. Armies were seen engaging one another in the air. The priests, watching in the temple at the feast of Pentecost, heard a voice, as of a great multitude, crying, *Let us go hence*. For no less than seven years and a half, a country man, called Jesus, ran up and down the streets of Jerusalem, especially at their solemn festivals, crying, in doleful accents, *Wo to Jerusalem! Wo to the city! Wo to the people! Wo to the temple!* and, though he was cruelly punished, nothing could restrain him from crying; till at last, as he was uttering these words, *Wo to myself also!* he was struck dead by a stone from a sling.—These awful tokens and warnings were far from being insignificant

and vain. The catastrophe which they prognosticated exceeds description.

Soon did the Roman army, under Vespasian, invade their country from the north-east, spreading desolation through city and country. The Jews, under a fearful and judicial infatuation, instead of submitting to the merciful Vespasian, madly resisted; nay, bent on their own destruction, they, in many places, fought and massacred one another. At Jerusalem, especially, was the scene bloody and tragical beyond imagination. The destruction of that unhappy city happened at the time of the passover, when, it is supposed, there might be a considerably greater number in it than in all North Britain.

Its inhabitants, as an additional evidence of their infatuation, were divided into factions and parties. These, though they occasionally united, to make furious, but unsuccessful, sallies on the Romans, often murdered one another. They even murdered the inhabitants in sport, pretending to try the sharpness of their swords. The multitudes of unburied dead bodies, corrupting the air, produced a fearful pestilence. Along with sword and pestilence, famine prevailed to such a degree that they fed on one another. Ladies, otherwise delicate, broiled their sucking infants, and ate them. After an obstinate defence, for six months, the city was taken, and prodigious numbers of its inhabitants put to the sword. Six thousand Jews, having been persuaded to take shelter in the temple, it was set on fire, and they perished in the flames. A Roman commander, that our Lord's words might be literally fulfilled, ordered the foundations of this stately edifice to be plowed up. To such a degree was Titus, one of the most merciful generals that ever commanded an army, provoked with the obstinacy and madness of the Jews, that he crucified of them, before the walls of the city, so long as he had wood to erect crosses.

At Jerusalem, no less a number of the Jews than eleven hundred thousand perished by sword, famine, and pestilence. Between two and three hundred thousand were cut off in other places. Almost one hundred thousand were taken prisoners, and sent into Egypt and Syria, to be exposed for shows, devoured by wild beasts, or sold for slaves.

The cruelties and massacres which the unhappy Jews suffered in subsequent ages are incredible. In a dreadful war, about a hundred years after our Lord's ascension, occasioned by a base impostor pretending to be the Messiah, about six hundred thousand Jews are said to have been slain by the sword, besides what perished by famine and pestilence. The very rivers are said to have been high swelled with human blood; and the sea, into which they ran, for some miles, marked with it.—An astonishing series of almost unparalleled calamities did the Jews suffer in following ages. But I have said enough for a specimen.

To an unknown number and variety of miseries has sin subjected mankind. These are, in general, of two kinds, *outward* and *inward*. To what bodily maladies and distempers are we liable? Long has our world been a *hospital*. Day after day do we hear complaints from all quarters. From disease and pain is no part of the body, either external or internal, exempted. One we see languishing and pining away in sickness; another covered with wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, attended with the most excruciating agonies and pains. Shocking is the account which writers give us of the leprosy, for instance, which often rages with fatal violence, especially in hot countries. Shocking, indeed, must it be for a human body to be roasted in a fire, kindled within itself, till many of its members, such as the nose, the fingers, &c. be not only rendered useless, but rot and fall off. This terrible distemper, it is said, raged in Europe, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, to

such a degree, that no less a number than ten thousand hospitals were found necessary for lepers only. Is it any wonder that the body, in all its organs and members, should suffer? The body is a partaker with the soul in sin; and, therefore, is a sharer in the painful effects of it. To what reproach and shame, as well as bodily pain, are mankind exposed in the world! Poverty and want, hunger and thirst, as well as reproach, do they often suffer. Of the many bodily diseases, and temporal calamities, which mankind suffer, we have a striking representation in the last of the five books of Moses. I cannot forbear to repeat part of the passage. *The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land whether thou goest to possess it. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning. and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew. The Lord shall smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart. The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.* Deut. xxviii. Chapter.

There are the *internal*, as well as the external, miseries of this life. The soul, the principal part of the man, the chief seat of corruption, must be the principal subject of misery. With all the powers and faculties of our souls have we sinned. No wonder then though we suffer in all the powers of our souls, as well as in all the parts of our bodies.

Of the internal miseries, to which man is liable in consequence of the fall, we have a sufficient specimen in the Larger Catechism on this subject. It specifies *blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections.* The  
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general import of those different expressions is obvious. They refer to the different powers of the soul. May they not, in one view, be said to relate to the sinfulness of the fallen state; and, in another, to the misery of it?

It may be said here, if the miseries of this life be the effects of sin, and if believers be saved from sin, and delivered from the punishment of it, why are they not exempted from those maladies and evils which sin introduced into this world, as well as the punishment of it in the world to come? It may suffice to say, that had it pleased God, he could have at once saved every sinner belonging to the election of grace from sin itself, and from all the painful effects of it; instantaneously regenerating and glorifying the elect sinner in both soul and body. But it is in a gradual, not an instantaneous manner, that sinners are delivered from sin and the consequences of it. The good work begun in regeneration is perfected in glorification; and between the two there is an interval of longer or shorter duration. Thus are they, posterior to their conversion to Christ, exposed to a variety of adversities and trials, which even to them are the consequences of sin. For to such afflictions and evils would they never have been subject had they never sinned. But, though to believers they be the consequences of sin, they are not the proper punishment of it. From the malignant and penal nature of such calamities and evils are all true believers for ever exempted. To such persons they come not in the channel of the threatening of the old covenant; but rather in the channel of the promissory part of the new. To such persons, therefore, they are a privilege, rather than a punishment. They are intended to imbitter sin to them, and to excite them to be the more solicitous for total and final freedom from it. What a blessing is sanctified affliction! It is not threatened as a punishment, but promised as a privilege. Thus God speaks in relation to the head of the  
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new covenant, and the militant members of his mystical body, *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 take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. Psa. lxxxix. 30, —33.

The next thing in the misery to which fallen man is liable, is,

*Secondly, Death itself.* On a former occasion we found, that the scripture speaks of different *deaths*. In it there is express mention of the second death; and a second death supposes a first. Death is usually considered as *threefold*; as natural, as spiritual, and as eternal.

But as death in this answer is distinguished both from the miseries of this life, on the one hand, and from the pains of hell, on the other, it must denote *natural* death. Now, natural death, as I had occasion to show formerly, denotes the actual dissolution of the mysterious union between the soul and the body, and the temporary separation of these two constituents of our nature. It is here understood that the union of these two great parts of man, as a compound being, is necessary and conducive to his perfection and felicity. The body, on the one hand, is intended to be a proper receptacle and habitation for the soul; the soul, on the other, to inhabit and actuate the body. That *death itself* is included in the threatening, as a material part of the punishment denounced to be inflicted in the case of transgression, is manifest. For thus the threatening runs, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely DIE.*

But it may be said here, if death be a part of the punishment of sin, why are not believers altogether freed from it? Are they not totally delivered from the covenant of works, in its precept and its penalty? Are they not as completely freed from the punishment of sin

fin as if they never had incurred it? Why then are they not totally delivered from the stroke of natural death? That believers, no less than unbelievers, are subjected to the stroke of death, is certain. But though subjected to the stroke, they are freed from the sting of it. They do not die in the sense of the threatening of the covenant of works, or suffer a penal death. Death to them is no proper punishment; but, on the contrary, a great privilege. Others may be losers by the death of the saints; but they themselves are everlasting gainers. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.* Rev. xiv. 13. *For all things are theirs, says the Apostle to the believing Corinthians, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23.

Easily could God have freed his redeemed from the stroke of death, as well as the sting. But while he delivers them from the latter, he has his own reasons for subjecting them to the former. Is it not most fit that the members be in all things conformed to the head? Did he die, and was he buried? and shall we be unwilling to follow him to death and to the grave? Does not every believer most cordially bespeak him as Ruth did Naomi? *Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.* WHERE THOU DIEST WILL I DIE, AND THERE WILL I BE BURIED. It remains that I now consider,

*Thirdly,* The last thing mentioned in the misery to which fallen man is liable, *the pains of hell for ever.* The words in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and in the Greek of the New, which we translate *hell*, have often been observed to have an ambiguity in them. The meaning of the word *hell* in the answer now under consideration, is obvious. It denotes the  
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state and place of misery, in which wicked men and sinning angels are punished in a manner inexpressibly severe. Almost all nations under heaven profess the belief of both a heaven and a hell. One of the most stupid and barbarous of even the African nations are said to hold the opinion of no less than twenty-seven heavens, and thirteen hells. A variety of fables and fictions concerning heaven, on the one hand, and hell, on the other, are to be found in ancient Heathen writings. A celebrated Latin poet, speaking of the wicked in the infernal world, tells us, that if he had an hundred mouths and a hundred tongues, he could not express the one half of their misery.

The question relating to the locality and situation of hell has been agitated among Heathens, as well as among Jews and Christians. Some of them have fancied hell to be situated in the subterraneous regions under the lake Avernus in Campania, from which poisonous vapours are said to arise. Others have imagined it to be under a certain promontory of Laconia; which is said to be a dark frightful place beset with thick woods. The Mahometans profess their belief of a hell, and the endless punishment of the wicked in it. They tell us, that it has seven gates; the first for Musselmens themselves; the second for Christians; the third for Jews; the fourth for the Sabians; the fifth for the Magians; the sixth for Pagans; the seventh for hypocrites of all nations.

The Jewish writers say, that hell is situated in the centre of the earth, and that there are three passages which lead to it; the first in the wilderness, probably the wilderness of Arabia; the second in the sea, perhaps the Mediterranean; and the third at the city of Jerusalem.

As for Christian writers, earlier and later, they are not a little divided in their sentiments concerning the nature, as well as the situation, of hell. Often is it in  
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the sacred writings represented under the notion of *fire*. This has given occasion to the question, Is hell a *material* fire? The arguments on the different sides of this question I reckon it altogether unnecessary to enumerate and examine. That it is to be understood of a material fire, I can see no reason to think. Why it is compared to fire, it is easy to see. The pain occasioned by fire is most exquisite. To deter, therefore, from sin, which renders us obnoxious to hell, and to excite us to flee from the wrath to come, betaking ourselves by faith to Jesus, a Saviour from sin and from wrath, we are reminded, that in the infernal world the corroding *worm* of a condemning conscience, which incessantly gnaws and preys upon the vitals of the damned, *dieth not*; and the *fire* of the vindictive wrath of Almighty God is *not quenched*. *If thy right hand offend thee, says our Lord, cut it off; for it is better for thee to enter into life maimed; than having two hands to go into HELL, into the fire that never shall be quenched.* WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THEIR FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED. Mark ix. 43, 44.

To this unhappy place, the words of the Prophet have often been applied. *Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of Jehovah, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.* Isa. xxx. 33.

As for the opinion of the primitive Christians concerning the locality and situation of hell, it has been observed, that, imagining the earth to be an extended plain, with the heavens as an arch drawn over it, some of them supposed hell to be a place under the earth. Others imagined hell to be a great abyss in the bowels or centre of the earth. Since the figure of the earth came to be understood, other theories and opinions concerning the situation of hell have been invented and propagated. Some have supposed it to be in a certain

comet, or rather a number of comets, which, it is imagined, by their eccentric motions, carry the damned at one time into the confines of the sun, and so near to that immense body of burning matter, that they are miserably scorched with his heat; and at another carry them into dark dreary regions, where they are exposed to the most intense cold. The opinion of a certain modern writer is, that hell is situated in the body of the sun.

As to the most prevailing opinions concerning the situation of hell, they seem to go upon the supposition, that by it we are to understand a material fire. But how precarious and improbable is this opinion! That hell is we know; but where it is we know not. Far more material and necessary is it for us to be solicitous to escape it, than to know where it is.

Another question relating to hell is, whether the misery in it be endless. This question, the answer, in terms the most express, determines. *The pains of hell* are said to be FOR EVER. It was, as is well known, the opinion of a famous Christian father, and has been the opinion of others in later times, that the duration of the punishment of the wicked in hell is to be longer or shorter in proportion to the number and magnitude of their crimes in this world; and that they are all in due time to be liberated from the infernal prison. But, not to urge other considerations, there is one obvious argument to prove the ETERNITY of the punishment of the wicked in hell, which never has been, and, I may venture to say, cannot be answered. It is the following. The same terms are used to express the duration of the misery of the wicked which are applied to the duration of the felicity of the righteous. For thus our Lord speaks, *These*, that is, the wicked, *shall go away into EVERLASTING punishment; but the righteous into life ETERNAL.* Matth. xxv. 46. The word applied to the punishment of the wicked, and translated *everlasting*, is, without variation,

riation, applied to the felicity of the righteous, and rendered *eternal*. Why is the same word used to express the duration of the one, that is applied to the duration of the other? Is it not for this obvious reason, that the one is of equal duration with the other? The reason of the endlessness of the punishment of the wicked is manifest. They never can adequately satisfy for their sins, and, therefore, must suffer for ever.

The punishment which the wicked suffer in hell is commonly considered in a twofold light; as a punishment of *loss*, and as a punishment of *sense*. Of all good, temporal and spiritual, are they for ever deprived. All penal evil are they for ever to undergo, in both their outward and their inward man, in a manner and to a degree that must far exceed our conceptions in this state of mortality. The inhabitants of that infernal world understand the words of the Apostle better than I, or any preacher on earth, can pretend to do. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; for our God is a consuming fire.* Heb. x. 31. and xii. 29.

Such is the misery of our fallen state! Such misery, temporal and eternal, has each of us incurred.

To this brief sketch of the punishment of sin, let me subjoin a few obvious reflections.

*First*, Let us learn the nature and the demerit of sin. When we recollect what man lost when he fell; when we reflect on the situation in which he now comes into the world; when we consider the evils which we already feel, and also the additional evils which we fear, let us remember, that of all these evils sin is the origin. They are only the effects. Sin is the cause. What an accursed, what an odious thing is sin! Hateful is it to God. Hateful, as well as hurtful, is it to all good men.

*Secondly*, We have here a striking instance and proof of the insensibility that attends, necessarily attends, our natural state. We come into the world under the ma-

lediction of Heaven, and the wrath of the ALMIGHTY. Insupportable weight! It is infinitely more than sufficient to sink creation. Under the accumulated guilt and punishment of the sins of the elect, the Son of God himself sunk *in deep mire where there was no standing*; and *he came into deep waters where the floods overflowed him*. But, heavy as the weight of sin and punishment, under which we naturally lie, is, we feel it not. The offer of relief and ease, which the Saviour, in the gospel, makes to us, we treat with the utmost neglect. *I have called, says he, and ye refused. I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded.* Prov. i. 24.

*Thirdly*, Is the punishment of sin such? What reason has each sinner to say, as unhappy Cain, *My punishment is greater than I can bear*. Who knows the demerit of sin, or the extent of the punishment of it? What reason have sinners, especially sinners in Zion, to be afraid? Afraid either at an earlier or a later period, the most unfeeling and fearless sinner must be. What the apprehensions and feelings of an awakened and alarmed sinner are, the person that has been in such a situation can best tell. What painful anxiety and solicitude do Peter's hearers express? *They were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?*

*Fourthly*, What an essential difference is there between the afflictions of the godly, and the troubles of the ungodly, in this world! The former are no longer under the covenant of works, and, therefore, no longer under its curse; consequently their afflictions come to them in the way of the new covenant, which has in it no curse. They are in a blessed state, and a blessing accompanies their afflictions, as well as their comforts. The latter, on the contrary, are under the broken covenant; and, therefore, under its baneful curse. They



are in an accursed state; consequently a curse attends all their comforts, as well as their afflictions. In short, the curse imbitters what otherwise would be sweet to the one; and the blessing sweetens what otherwise would be bitter to the other.

*Fifthly*, Between the death of the wicked and that of the righteous, there is a specific difference. To the former, it is a heavy punishment; the consequences of it are most fatal. To the latter, it is converted into a privilege; a precious privilege it is. What a happy, and what a comfortable thing must it be to fall asleep in Christ, in the arms of his mercy, in the embraces of his love! What good reason had Solomon to say in relation to each of the saints, *The day of death is better than the day of one's birth*. Eccl. vii. 1.

*Sixthly*, The duration of the misery of the damned in hell, no less than the degree of it, is a most fearful consideration. It is a punishment as endless as it is intense. Endless punishment! Tremendous thought! Shall we, for momentary gratifications, expose ourselves to endless miseries and woes? What infatuation and folly!

*In fine*, Is the punishment of sin such as hath been said? Under what obligations are the redeemed of the Lord to the dying love of Jesus Christ; and what must the love be that could induce him to satisfy our sin? Such is the demerit of sin, such the inexorable justice of Jehovah, that, rather than pass sin unpunished, he would punish it on his own Son. *For God spared not his own Son, but delivered him over to agony and death for us*. The sword of sin-revenging justice was drawn, and sheathed in the bowels of that divinely innocent person. Such was the love of the Son to us, that, rather than we should not be saved from sin and wrath, he would suffer the punishment of our sin, and save us from it. Does sin itself, or does its punishment, seem to you, or any of you, a light thing? Go to Calvary,  
view

view the Son of God, the surety of sinners, suffering the punishment of their sins. Look into his pierced side. Behold his hands and his feet fastened with torturous nails to the accursed tree. If sin brought the Lord of glory and of life, to such an ignominious and excruciating death, how shall we satisfy for it? Suffer we may; but satisfy for it we cannot. *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. Be persuaded to flee from the wrath to come. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.*

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## The Covenant of Grace.

PSAL. lxxxix. 3.

*I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant.*

**M**OST important are the discoveries which divine revelation has made in our world. Two things especially has it made known unto us; of which we must otherwise have been ignorant. It informs us of an ancient federal transaction between the great God and the father of the human race; a contract almost as old as the creation itself. But this is not all. It informs us of a covenant incomparably more ancient; a covenant between the eternal Father and his co-eternal Son, from the earliest ages of eternity, in order to the redemption of mankind, ruined by the breach of the other covenant. Of this superior covenant JEHOVAH speaks in the words which I have now read. *I have, says he, made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant.*

To

To the account which the text, and similar places of scripture, a number of which will be introduced in the sequel, give us of this eternal covenant, agrees the definition of it which the Compilers of the Catechism give us in the following answer. *God having, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.*

Having beheld man falling from a state of great dignity, into a state of the most abject misery, and having contemplated both the sinfulness and the wretchedness of his fallen state, we now leave the dark side of the subject, and enter on a more pleasing task. What an astonishing and delightful scene now opens before us! The secrets of eternity are disclosed, and the counsels of heaven are opened to our view. We see that, prior to our fall in Adam, prior to the making of the covenant of works with him, by the violation of which our fall was occasioned, even long before Adam himself was brought into being, a superior federal Head was found out, and a better covenant made with him, by which we recover the felicity and dignity which we forfeited; nay, felicity and dignity, such as we never could have expected or obtained in the way of the other covenant. We are now entering on the discussion of a subject of vast importance and extent. It may be said to be the capital article of revelation.

From the scriptures, as I have shown on former occasions, it is sufficiently evident, that a proper covenant was made with the first Adam in a state of innocence. But the revelation of that covenant, which we have in the scriptures, is rather indirect and implicit. Of it we have a number of proofs, but proofs rather of the oblique and collateral kind.—But the revelation of the better covenant, in the scriptures of both the Old Testament and the New, is most explicit

PLICIT and plain, as well as copious and full. The scripture seems to speak of the OLD covenant as if it were with reluctance and in a sparing manner. But in the frequent mention, and full discovery of the NEW covenant God has peculiar complacence and delight. On every occasion does he speak of it with a manifest air of approbation and satisfaction. The violation of the covenant of works was permitted with a manifest view to the introduction of the covenant of grace. Accordingly, as soon as the one was broken, the other was revealed, and the administration of it commenced. The revelation of it in the several ages of the Old Testament may be compared to the gradual increase of light, from the first dawn of it in the morning till mid-day.

The Old Testament has been divided into four periods; in each of which the church was favoured with express revelations of the superior covenant. In the antediluvian age it was revealed, and typically ratified by sacrifices. Gen. iii. 15. and iv. 26. Of the revelation of this covenant to Noah, and of his faith in it, and in the all-atoning sacrifice, by which it was in due time to be confirmed, signified by the typical sacrifices which he offered, the inspired Writer of the Book of Genesis informs us in Chapters viii. and ix. From the flood to the calling of Abraham, that revelation was preserved and enlarged; for we are informed by an Apostle of the New Testament, that *unto Abraham the gospel was preached*. Gal. iii. 8. During the interval between the calling of Abraham, and the times of Moses, this revelation was farther amplified. The very promulgation of the law at Sinai is prefaced with an intimation of this covenant. Thus the supreme Law-giver speaks, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and the house of bondage. Thou shalt, therefore, have no other gods before me.* In all the several subsequent ages of the church, till the actual

incarnation and personal ministry of Jesus Christ, the revelation of the better covenant was not only preserved, but rendered more and more full and clear.

In many parts of the writings of the Prophets, as well as the Apostles, is it mentioned under the express name of a covenant. In numerous other places, though the word *covenant* does not occur, we have intimations of it no less full and plain. On one occasion, the *conditional* part of it is introduced, and on another, the *promissory*. In a great number of passages, both its parts, conditional and promissory, are stated; and the dependence the one has upon the other intimated. For a specimen, I shall select only one passage. It is the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. The great work assigned to the Surety of this covenant, and which, as the sole proper condition of it, he in due time performed in our room and for our redemption, as well as in our world and in our nature, that illustrious passage expresses, by his *bearing our griefs, and carrying our sorrows*; by his *being stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*; by his *being wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*; by his *being oppressed and afflicted*. The rich reward, which, as a principal branch of the promissory part of the covenant, he was to receive for his arduous work, it expresses thus. *He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied*. In this evangelical passage are copious and clear intimations of the two great parts of that everlasting covenant, on which the redemption of the church of both the Old Testament and the New depends. No less plainly is the connexion between the two parts of it, and the dependence the one has upon the other, intimated to us.

Most expressive and full to this purpose are verses 10, 11, 12. *When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, that is, in consideration of his making his soul an offering*

ing for sin, and, as a just reward for so great and good a work, *he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* Have we not in this consolatory passage a sufficient intimation of the two great parts of the covenant of redemption, and of the two glorious parties in it, the one undertaking for the fulfilment of its arduous condition, the other engaging for the accomplishment of its precious promises?

This covenant certainly is the chief of the ways and works of God. It is the result of his manifold wisdom, and the most glorious display of it. Into it angels, as well as men, do look and pry. Admirably is it calculated for the advancement of the glory of all the divine persons and perfections. How often does God call it, by way of distinction, *his covenant*? The covenant of works, indeed, was his. But no where does he call it *his covenant*. The former is his covenant in point of *contrivance*. It is his in point of *discovery*. An everlasting secret must it have been, had he not revealed it to us. He institutes sinners in it, and confers upon them all the benefits and blessings of it. He is infinitely glorified by it, and ineffably pleased with the glorious head of it, the blood of it, and with every person who obtains a saving interest in it. Once, at least, is it said to be the *church's covenant*; for thus the head bespeaks her, *As for thee also, by the blood of THY covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit where there is no water.* Zech. ix. 11.

The general *design* and *tenor* of this covenant we may learn from the epithets applied to it in the scriptures. It is commonly known by the name of the covenant of *grace*. Condescending and good was God in the covenant of works. But the most illustrious display of grace was reserved for this second and superior covenant. It has often been stiled the covenant of *redemption*; for by it the redemption of the church of

the first born is effected. It is, in the scriptures, stiled a covenant of *peace*. Isa. liv. 10. The benevolent design of it was to bring about reconciliation between the *offended* God, and *offending* sinners of mankind. Often is it denominated the *new* covenant. Long ago did the covenant of works *wax old*. But this covenant ever has been, and ever will be, new. Often is it designed an *everlasting* covenant. It was from eternity, and it is to eternity. Everlasting is it in respect of the interest which every believer has in it, as well as in all other views. With great propriety may the Old Testament phrase, a covenant of *salt*, be applied to it. Salt of old was a token of friendship, and a symbol of incorruption, and was used in the different offerings and sacrifices, which were presented to God under the Old Testament. The salutary design of this covenant, as I said already, is to restore a *permanent* and *inviolable* friendship between God and man, whom sin had set at variance. For this end was it ratified and confirmed by the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the great High Priest of our profession.

In the account which the answer gives of the great plan of redemption, there are four important particulars, which merit our most serious consideration; the author of it, *God*; the origin and spring of it, his *mere good pleasure*; the early period at which this glorious plan was formed, *from all eternity*; and the important steps which the CO-ETERNAL THREE, at that early period, took for the redemption of mankind, foreseen fallen in time, *having elected some to everlasting life, God entered into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.*

I. The great *Author* of this important plan, *God*. All things belonging to creation were of God. Especially are all things belonging to redemption of him.

Creation



Creation was the joint work of the uncreated Three. Especially do they all concur in the œconomy of redemption. God the Father, however, is chiefly intended here. The order in which the divine persons act, ever must correspond to the mysterious order in which they subsist. Accordingly, as the Father is the first in the order of subsistence, the motion or proposal for our recovery is said to come originally from him. Thus the Father, sustaining the majesty of the Deity, elects and calls the Son to be his servant, and the Son condescends to become the Father's servant, and, in that capacity, to accomplish the work of our redemption.

That by God here, we are to understand the eternal Father, is manifest; for to the Father, as distinguished from the Son and the Spirit, is our election expressly attributed in the scriptures. The Son condescended to be by the Father chosen, and set apart, to be our Surety and Head in the eternal covenant. For this reason he is stiled *his elect*, in whom his soul delighteth. Isa. xlii. 1. It was the first Person that made the covenant with the second, the Purchaser of our salvation, with the concurrence of the third, who has voluntarily condescended to apply to us the salvation which the Surety has purchased for us. In a word, it is here understood, that the redemption of fallen man is a work which the omnipotent God only can accomplish. The question, *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?* necessarily implies, that, if God had not pitied mankind in their fallen state, they must have unavoidably perished for ever, their case would have been altogether hopeless, and helpless, for any thing which they themselves, or the other creatures, could have done for their relief and help.

II. There is the *origin* and *spring* of our redemption, HIS MERE GOOD PLEASURE. To his sovereignty, indeed, creation must be ascribed. But especially is our redemption

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tion owing, and to be attributed to it. In the world and in the church, he does whatsoever pleaseth him. Did he create the world, does he redeem the church, because he stood in need of either the one or of the other? Can any accession to his essential glory and felicity accrue from either the one or the other? No. Why did he purpose to redeem fallen men, not fallen angels? Why did he determine to redeem a part of mankind, not the whole? One answer suffices for all such questions? The reason of all is, so it seemed good in his sight. Into the sovereign pleasure of God, the Apostle of the Gentiles resolves it. This is the only way in which it can be accounted for. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame, before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, ACCORDING TO THE GOOD PLEASURE OF HIS WILL, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace: Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: That, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together into one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN WILL. Eph. i. 3,—11.*

III. There is here the *early period*, at which the important plan of our redemption was formed, FROM ALL ETERNITY. That every thing which comes to pass in time

time was foreordained from eternity, we saw on a former occasion. Especially was the whole plan of our recovery by Jesus Christ concerted and adjusted from everlasting. That our election in Christ, as our representing Head, and undertaking Surety, obtained; and that the covenant, on which our redemption depended, and by which it is effected, was entered into between the *eternal* Father, and his *co-eternal* Son, *from everlasting*, the answer itself affirms, and I will have occasion to evince in the sequel. Any thing, therefore, that might be now said for the illustration of this branch of the subject will occur afterwards. Therefore I proceed to the

IV. And which, indeed, is that part of the answer, which, in an especial manner, claims our consideration; the important steps, which the co-eternal Three, from the earliest ages of eternity, took in order to the redemption of fallen man in time. God, having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, *electèd some to everlasting life, entered into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer*. Here are two things; our election to *everlasting life*; and the making of a covenant; the important and salutary design of which is *to deliver us out of a state of sin and misery, and to bring us into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer*.

*First*, Our election in Christ to everlasting life. Often and differently is the word *election* used in the scriptures. It frequently denotes the designation of a person to a function or office, either in church or state. In this view, it is applied to Saul king of Israel. *Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath CHOSEN*, or elected, 1 Sam. x. 24. Our Lord applies it to the twelve Apostles. *Jesus answered them, Have not I CHOSEN*, or elected, *you twelve, and one of you is a devil?*

John

John vi. 70. It cannot mean the election of all the twelve to eternal life; for one of them was a son of perdition. It sometimes signifies the providential separation of a number of persons to an external profession of religion, by which they are distinguished from the profane world, though many of them be not chosen in Christ to eternal life. In this view it is applied to the whole Jewish nation. Though there is reason to think, that the lesser part of them only were ordained to everlasting life, they were singled out from among the other nations of the world, and, by solemn profession, were, in a peculiar manner, the people of God. Accordingly, Moses bespeaks them thus, *Because the Lord loved thy fathers, therefore he CHOSE, or elected, their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight, with his mighty power out of Egypt.* Deut. iv. 37. In like manner are the numerous members of the Apostolical churches stiled ELECT, though even in them there probably were persons who were not chosen in Christ to eternal life. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

But in a higher sense is the term used in the answer. What in the general is intended by election here, I had occasion to show in a preceding Lecture. In treating the divine decrees, I transcribed the definition which the Larger Catechism gives us of both election and what is called reprobation, as applied to angels, and as applied to men. In what respects the election of men differs from that of angels, I have already shown.

Election, indeed, is an important point. Much has it been mis-understood; and sadly has it been perverted. Apt are weak and scrupulous minds to be stumbled and offended at it. In order to fortify you against temptations from within and from without, and to evince this to be a most consolatory, as well an important doctrine, let me recommend to your serious consideration the following particulars relating to it.

1st, Our

1st, Our election from eternity is of God. He only existed at that early period. He alone, therefore, could be the author of our election. Our redemption from its commencement to its consummation is God's work. Our election was especially the act of God the Father; and bespeaks his astonishing love to us. *According as HE, that is, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath CHOSEN us in him before the foundation of the world.* Eph. i. 4. In similar terms does the Apostle address the Thessalonian converts. *We are bound to give thanks unto God alway for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because GOD hath from the beginning CHOSEN you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* 2 Theff. ii. 13.

2dly, There is the *date* of our election. It was, as has been observed, from eternity. How derogatory to God, and how comfortless to the saints, is it to suppose, that our election or non-election to eternal felicity, depends on our behaviour, good or bad in this world! That God, from all eternity, positively and unalterably determined a definite number of persons to be saved in time, the scripture often and clearly intimates to us. Even from eternal ages, was their actual salvation infallibly determined. This is the consolatory doctrine which the Apostle teaches in the verses already quoted. For thus he bespeaks the believing Ephesians, *According as he hath chosen us in him BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.* That by the phrase, *before the foundation of the world*, he means eternity, is abundantly evident. How shall we express, or how can we think of eternity, but in relation to time, or as prior and as posterior to it? What is the Apostle's doctrine to the Thessalonian churches? Thus he addresseth them, *God hath FROM THE BEGINNING chosen you to salvation.* From the beginning of what? Scripture is the best interpreter of scripture. Let the quotation from the Epistle to the Ephesians explain that from the Epistle to

the Theſſalonians. Muſt not the Theſſalonian converts have been choſen at as early a period as the Ephesian? Both, therefore, muſt have been choſen before the foundation of the world. That the expreſſion, *from the beginning*, in ſcripture, denotes eternity, I had occaſion to ſhow in a preceding Lecture. So it does in the following words, *I was*, ſays the perſonal wiſdom of God, *ſet up FROM EVERLASTING, FROM THE BEGINNING, ere ever the earth was.* Prov. viii. 23. That the phraſe, *from the beginning*, is equivalent to the phraſe, *from everlaſting*; and that by both we muſt underſtand a period prior to the earth, and other parts of creation, even that eternity which is equally without beginning and without end, is manifeſt.

2dly, Our election is *moſt abſolute*. Were it conditional, as has been abſurdly imagined, or did it depend at all on any good thing in us, or to be performed by us, in how comfortleſs a condition would we be? Were it ſuſpended on the condition of our perfevering and abounding in good works, how precarious might it be ſaid to be! But of ſuch a condition the ſcripture ſpeaks nothing. Good works, indeed, for neceſſary uſes, and from evangelical principles, it often and ſtrongly inculcates. But that the final ſalvation of all belonging to the election of grace, is ſo infallibly determined, that nothing can obſtrict or prevent it, is manifeſt from the ſcriptures. Accordingly, they are expreſsly ſaid to be *choſen to ſalvation.* 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. Between their election and their final ſalvation, there is a neceſſary connection. The ſaved part of mankind are affirmed to have been *foreordained to eternal life.* Acts xiii. 48. Has that God, who is infinite in wiſdom and infinite in power, foreordained them to eternal life, and can they poſſibly come ſhort of it? Predeſtination, or election from eternity as paſt, and glorification through eternity as to come, are by the Apoſtle inſeparably connected, as links of a chain, which cannot be ſeparated one from another.

another. For thus he speaks, *Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate: whom he did predestinate, them he also called: whom he called, them he also justified: whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Rom. viii. 29, 30. Were the scripture less explicit and full on this head than it is, from the perfection and immutability of God, we might infer the absoluteness and irreversibility of the purpose of election.

4thly, I am to consider the *objects* of God's electing love from eternity. They were, not the sinning angels, but sinful *men*. They did not, indeed, exist from eternity. But they were foreseen existing and fallen in time. Persons and things are not past and present with God as they are with us. Infinitely different is his duration, as well as his knowledge, from ours.

One question that has been agitated among divines in relation to the objects of electing love, refers to the *manner* in which they were considered by God in their election. Certain divines, who are usually distinguished by the name of *Supralapsarians*, hold, that in election God considered man as to be created and to fall. Others, known by the name of *Sublapsarians*, say, that he considered man as created and fallen. The former state the case thus—The great God, though infinitely happy in himself, purposed for the manifestation of his supereminent perfections, to produce a number of other beings; and, that he might manifest his justice as well as his mercy, the former in the punishment of one part, and the latter in the salvation of another, he determined to permit many of them to fall into a state of sin and misery.—The latter state the matter thus—The great God, infinitely happy in the fruition of his ever-blessed self, for the manifestation of his being and perfections, purposed from all eternity, to produce a great number of other beings, particularly angels and men; and, having determined in himself to permit the fall of mankind, in the foresight of it, purposed

fed, for his own glory, especially for the glory of his rich grace, to save a part of them; fixing on a certain number, and foreordaining them to eternal life. According to this last hypothesis man was considered, in his election from eternity, as created and *as fallen*. And how he could be *chosen to salvation*, as the Apostle expressly informs us he was, without the supposition of his fall, it is hard to say.

How conspicuous is divine sovereignty in eternal election! Sinning angels are altogether passed by. Fallen men are pitied. Passing by the former, electing love pitches upon the latter. A part of mankind, nay, the smaller part only is chosen. *Many are called, externally by the gospel, but FEW are chosen.* Matth. xxvi. 14. Of mankind the lesser part only are called. But even of these part only, and the lesser part, are chosen. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life; and few only find it.* Matth. vii. 14.

5thly, Let us attend to the *impulsive cause* of our election. One, though he allows that election obtained from eternity, holds that God was influenced to elect one rather than another, because he then foresaw the former to be more worthy and deserving than the latter. But such a supposition argues gross inattention to the great design which God has in the redemption of sinners, as well as the grossest ignorance of the situation of the persons whom he has chosen and redeems. Most unworthy are they all, and most illustriously does he manifest the sovereignty and riches of his grace in their salvation. To grace is our salvation, from first to last, ascribed. In every part of it, from its commencement to its conclusion, is grace displayed. Were all the redeemed, in heaven and on earth, now before me, I might address them in the words of the Apostle to the Ephesians. *By GRACE are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Our justification is an act, and our sanctification a work,*



of grace. To grace is our election, in an especial manner, ascribed; and, for this obvious reason, is it stiled THE ELECTION OF GRACE. Rom. xi. 5.

6thly, A certain number of the individuals of mankind were elected. The number is to us unknown; but unto God it is well known. *The Lord knoweth them that are his*, the number of them, as well as every other thing pertaining to them and their salvation. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Each of the individuals belonging to this number he knows; and he knows the particular corner of the earth where the person sojourns, and the time, and all the other circumstances of his conversion before it happens, as well as after it. Accordingly, their names are said to be enrolled in a book, called *the book of life*; for it is the book in which are registered all the names of the individuals of mankind who were chosen from eternity to *everlasting life*. Rev. xiii. 8. A person's name, is that by which he is known and distinguished from another. When, therefore, their names are said to be enrolled in a book, it intimates, that the omniscient God has an exact knowledge of all the individuals whom he has chosen, born and unborn. And, as we commit to writing what we wish to be remembered, the metaphorical expression of the book of life carries in it a plain intimation, that God will not neglect any one of the individuals belonging to the election of grace, but will in due time bring them in. Their inbringing to Christ may be long delayed; but a delay in this case is no denial.

How absurd, and how comfortless is the opinion adopted and defended by Arminian writers, that the scripture speaks nothing of the election of individuals, but only of churches; and that their election does not insure their eventual salvation, but only includes the enjoyment of the means of grace, which such persons may, or may not improve; and that, therefore, they may be, or they may not be, saved. That the  
 scripture

scripture speaks of churches as *elect*, we have seen already. But, is the election of a particular nation or people to enjoy the means of salvation, for a season, at all inconsistent with the election of certain individuals in Christ, to eternal life? The Jews of old were a chosen generation; chosen and called out from among the nations of the world, to enjoy the gospel and the ordinances of it, as no other nation then did; and to be, in a *peculiar* manner, the *people* of God. But does not our Lord himself, and does not the Apostle Paul, intimate, that among them there was a remnant, there were persons chosen in a superior sense; that is, not only, under the direction of an all-disposing Providence, led out to attend the means of grace, and to make an external profession of religion, but foreappointed to eternal salvation? For thus our Lord speaks—*Except these days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the ELECTS sake, those days shall be shortened.* Matth. xxiv. 22. Let us recollect to whom, and with what view, these words were spoken. Was it not to the Jews in the view of the destruction of their city, and the dispersion of their church and nation? Now, is it not here understood, that though the whole nation was in one view elected, among them there was a remnant elected in such a manner, and with such a view, as the great body of them were not? These were the select few, for the sake of whom the perilous days predicted and approaching, were to be shortened.

In like manner speaks the Apostle of the Gentiles. *Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Even at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Rom. xi. 1,—5. That it is of the Jews, the chosen nation, the Apostle here speaks, and that he distinguishes a remnant from the great body of them, is sufficiently manifest. That the former were chosen in such a sense as the latter were not, he plainly intimates.

7thly, We are expressly said to have been chosen in *Christ*. Eph. i. 4. forecited. This, as I had occasion to say in a former Lecture, is one thing that distinguishes the election of men from the election of angels. Of the *elect angels* the scripture speaks expressly. But no where are they said to have been chosen in *Christ*. He has, indeed, been supposed to be a confirming head to the standing angels. But this is at best a problematical point.

Our election in *Christ* supposes the election of *Christ* himself. For, as I said already, the Father expressly styles him HIS ELECT, in whom his soul delighteth; and in the text prefixed to this Lecture, the Father speaks in relation to him thus; *I have made a covenant with MY CHOSEN one*. Gloriously was wisdom displayed in the choice of a person so fit for a work of such vast importance and difficulty. Most fit was he to be the head of the election of grace. Most fit was he to be our representative and Surety in the everlasting covenant. It cannot, with any truth or propriety, be said that *Christ* was the cause of our election. It is, indeed, on his account, and in consideration of his mediatory work on earth, that the benefits of redemption are conferred upon us. His mediation was necessary, in order that the effects of electing love might be bestowed upon us, in a consistency with the rights and honour of justice. But our eternal election originated in sovereignty.

To what honour does electing and redeeming love advance the saints! Highly honoured, indeed, were they in their election from eternity. At once did electing love terminate on the Son of God, as the Head, and on the saints, as his members; on him, as the primary object, and on them, as the secondary objects of it.

Ancient, as well as most intimate, is the relation between the Head and the members of his mystical body.

How

How come they to obtain a saving personal inbeing in him in time? The reason is, they subsisted federally in him from eternity.

8thly, I am to consider the *end* of our election. Now the great end of it is our salvation, in a subserviency to the glory of God. This is another thing which distinguishes our election from the election of the standing angels. Having never sinned, they need no Saviour or salvation. The purpose of election considered them as holy and happy beings; and the design of it was their confirmation in that state of purity and felicity. But in election we were considered as fallen creatures; and, accordingly, are said to have been *chosen to salvation*, 2 Theff. ii. 14. forecited; or, as it is expressed in the also forecited Acts xiii. 48. *to eternal life*. This salvation, to which we were chosen, includes a rich variety of particular benefits; benefits of which we are partakers in this world, and benefits, the possession of which is reserved for the world to come. Of these blessings which, as so many streams, flow from the electing love of God, as their eternal fountain, the Apostle gives us a comprehensive summary in a passage quoted already. Rom. viii. 29, 30.

9thly, Eternal election includes not only complete and final salvation at the end, but also the *means* by which this great and good end is accomplished. It pleases God, in ordinary cases, to work by means. He works in the church, as well as in the world, not according to the extent of his power, but according to the determinations of his sovereign will. The redemption of the church may be said to be the principal work which God has in view in this lower world. Now, in order to the accomplishment of it, he has appointed certain means, and by these means he fulfils his design and end. This is the account which the scripture directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, gives of the matter, in places too many to be cited on this occasion.

Let

Let me only remind you of the Apostle's words to the believing Thessalonians, repeated in the preceding part of this Lecture. *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation*; that is, total and final salvation. This was the end of their election. How, and by what means, was this salutary purpose to be accomplished? It is *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.*

How absurdly do many reason in relation to election? Thus they speak; Our salvation depends entirely upon our election. It does not matter what we do; for, if we were elected from eternity, whether we do any thing or not, we will infallibly be saved. If we were not elected, whatever we do, we cannot possibly be saved. Such reasoning argues the most unaccountable inattention to the connection between the means and the end: Were a person to reason thus; The prolongation of my life depends entirely upon the divine decree. There was a time appointed at which I was born. There is a time fixed at which I am to die. The decree cannot be altered, or the execution of it prevented. I will neither eat nor drink; for, if it was decreed that I am to live for years to come, the decree insures my life; and, therefore, whether I eat and drink or not, I cannot die till my time come. What would we say of such a person, or of such reasoning? Would we hesitate a moment to pronounce himself mad, and his reasoning most absurd? Has God all along saved others by *means*? And shall we, depending upon the decree of election, expect to be saved without them?

Unalterably was it decreed, that Hezekiah, king of Judah, should recover of his dangerous illness; and no less than fifteen years were to be added to his former life. But did this determination of Heaven supersede the use of proper means for his recovery? No. The Prophet, by the commandment of God, said, *Take a lump of figs; and they took and laid it on the boil, and he*

recovered. 2 Kings xx. 7. Is a person dangerously wounded or sick? Does a skilful physician tell him, that, if he use certain means, he will recover; but if he *do not* use them, he cannot expect to recover? Does the person treat the physician's advice and warning with the utmost contempt; pretending that he depends upon the divine decree, and makes no account of any such means? Can we forbear to pronounce him an arrant fool? Has God appointed certain means of salvation, and assured us that it only is in the way of using the means that we can expect to obtain the end? And shall we, after all, neglect the former, and yet hope for the latter? Such presumption and folly!

*Finally.* Let me observe, that it only is by its *fruits* and *effects* in time that we can know our election from eternity. It is here understood that we may in time come to know that we were elected from eternity. Such a necessary and comfortable knowledge has been the attainment of others, and it may be our attainment. Happy, indeed, is the person that can adopt the Apostle Paul's words. *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* 2 Tim. i. 12.

Not only is it competent for us to know that we were elected from eternity, but incumbent upon us to use all appointed means for acquiring the knowledge of it. For thus the Spirit, speaking in the scriptures to the churches, bespeaks us, *Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates.* 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Now, how are we to set about this important duty, and to acquire the knowledge of our election from eternity? Are we to expect information concerning it by a secret whisper into our ears, or by an extraordinary impulse upon our minds? No. There are certain gracious effects of it, by which only we can obtain the solid and satisfactory knowledge of it. Eter-  
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nal election has inseparably connected with it effectual calling, and all its salutary concomitants and consequences. Now, though the cause, in this case, exists long prior to the effects, it only is by discerning the latter that we can know the former. How preposterously do multitudes proceed in this important enquiry! When they become thoughtful and serious, the first question, which, through the subtilty of Satan, and the deceit of their own minds, occurs, is this, were we elected, or were we not elected, from eternity? Preposterous question! They ought, in such circumstances, to reason thus; Has election from eternity the effectual vocation of the elected, and its several saving concomitants and consequences in time, inseparably connected with it? Must their eternal election be to them a profound secret, till it be discovered to them by their effectual calling and sanctification in time? Then the great question, as to each of us is, have we been irresistibly and savingly called? Has the word of the gospel ever come to us, not in word only, but in the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost? Till we be thus regenerated and quickened, called and renewed, we cannot possibly know that we were elected from eternity. But, if we have been regenerated and savingly called, then we may infallibly conclude, that we were elected from eternity; for between eternal election and effectual calling in time, there is a necessary connection. *Whomsoever he did PREDESTINATE, them he sooner or later effectually CALLETH.*

Accordingly, when the Apostle Peter recommends it to us as our bounden duty to ascertain the truth of our calling and election, he purposely prefixes our calling in time to our election from eternity; for thus he speaks, *Brethren, give diligence to make first your calling and then your election sure.* 2 Pet. i. 10. In vain do you at first instance ask, whether you were elected from eternity or not. The first question is, Have you

been effectually called? Does the question recur, or does it remain a difficulty or problem with you, whether you have been effectually called; and consequently, whether you have been elected or not? The Apostle in the context, points out the way in which you may obtain satisfaction in this important point. In effectual calling a saving change is wrought, and supernatural dispositions and graces implanted in the soul, by which the regenerated and called are distinguished from others, who, though they make an external profession of religion, still remain in a state of irregnecy. The most effectual method, therefore, that Christians can take to acquire a more confirmed knowledge of their calling and election, and higher degrees of that spiritual comfort which flows from it, is to exercise and increase in those graces. Accordingly, in immediate connection with the injunction to make our calling and election sure, and in direct subservience to the design of it, the Apostle exhorts us thus, *Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience. and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness and charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his own sins. WHEREFORE, the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.* Is it not as if the Apostle had said, Do you wish to abound in the knowledge and the comfort of your election? You must cultivate and exercise those graces which I have now enumerated; for they ever suppose election as well as effectual calling, and are the happy effects and evidences of it.

Having stated and illustrated the doctrine of our election in conformity to the scriptures, and in opposition to different misapprehensions and misrepresentations of it, I am,

Secondly,



*Secondly*, To enter on a more particular consideration of the most important and consolatory point expressed in the remaining part of the answer, namely, that covenant into which God the Father, from the beginningless ages of eternity, entered with his co-eternal Son, in order to the redemption of sinners of mankind, ruined by the breach of the covenant of works—God, having from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, *did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of the state of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.*

What a covenant in general is, I have already had occasion to show. It is unnecessary for me to enter into any critical disquisitions concerning the etymology of the word used in the sacred writings, of either the Old Testament or the New, and translated *covenant*. The propriety of the English word *covenant*, as applied to this great subject, has, indeed, been questioned. But what is it with which one or another will not quarrel? The chief question among the Orthodox is, whether the name *covenant* or *testament* be most proper. These two epithets and designations, certain writers have conjoined, calling it a *testamentary covenant*, or a *federal testament*. For adjusting the matter, I would observe, that there are especially two views of it; and, according to the one, it is in the fullest and most proper sense of the word a *covenant*; and, according to the other, it rather is a *testament*. It may be viewed as it was from eternity proposed by the Father to the Son, and accepted by him as our representative and undertaking Surety; and, in this view, it may, with the utmost propriety, be called a *covenant*; a covenant, strictly conditional; and, in the highest sense of the word, a covenant of *works*. Or it may be considered as it is by the gospel revealed to us, and, in the actual exercise of faith, accepted by us. In this view it is altogether unconditional and gratuitous; not a covenant of works, but

but entirely a covenant *of grace*; or a rich testament in which the most precious legacies are bequeathed to us in the freest, as well as the fullest, manner.

This twofold view of it accounts for the propriety and justness of the two names by which it is commonly known; the covenant *of redemption*, and the covenant *of grace*. In relation to the Surety, it was a covenant of REDEMPTION. Its benefits and blessings he purchased and procured for the persons represented by him in it. To us it is in every view a covenant of GRACE. Grace moved God to make it with his Son and our Surety, from everlasting. Grace moves him to instate sinners personally and savingly in it in time, putting them in possession of its inestimably precious blessings. With what propriety it may be called a *covenant* as it relates to the Surety, and a *testament* as it refers to us, will appear more fully from the account which I am to give of it in the sequel.

I go here upon the supposition, that the covenant made with the Surety from eternity, and with sinners in their own persons in time, is *one*. It has, indeed, been an opinion, that one covenant was made with the Surety from everlasting, the condition of which he fulfilled in his obediencial life and satisfactory death; and that another covenant, distinct from the former, is made with sinners in time, the condition of which is *faith*; or, as others speak, *faith and repentance*; to which some have added, *sincere obedience*. But that the covenant, though, as I said already, it admits of a twofold consideration, is *one*, and that *faith* can with no propriety be called the condition of it, I am to evince in the sequel.

Accordingly, of this covenant, I shall give you a particular account in the following order.

I. I may take notice of the great ANTIQUITY of this covenant. That the election of Christ, the representative

live in the covenant, and of those whom he represents in it, obtained from *eternity*, we have seen already. At that early period was the covenant entered into with him, and with us in him. How superior is it to the covenant of works in antiquity, as well as in all other respects! From eternity, indeed, did God decree to make a covenant with the first Adam. But that covenant can with no propriety be said to have been made from eternity. The reason is obvious. One of the parties contracting in it did not exist, and, therefore, could not act, from eternity. The covenant of works, indeed, we commonly call the *first*, and the covenant of grace the *second* covenant. The reason of this arrangement is no less manifest. The covenant of grace was not at all known in our world till the covenant of works was broken. The reason of this is also plain. Had not the one covenant been violated, and man ruined by the violation of it, there would have been no occasion for the revelation of the other; the merciful design of which is, the restoration of fallen man. Astonishing is the length, as well as the breadth, of redeeming love. It is from eternity and to eternity.

That from the earliest ages of eternity this superior covenant was made, and the whole plan of our redemption settled, the scripture often, and with great plainness, intimates to us. The Surety and Head of this covenant is introduced speaking thus, *I was set up from EVERLASTING, from the beginning, ere ever the earth was.* Prov. viii. 23. It has been observed, that the word translated, *I was set up*, literally signifies, *I was anointed* from everlasting. The phraseology is manifestly borrowed from the manner in which persons were solemnly set apart to an office in the church and nation of the Jews. It was with the ceremony of anointing. Do not the words then carry in them the fullest and plainest intimation, that Christ was set apart to his mediatory office and work; or, in other words, to be the Surety

Surety and Head of the new covenant, from everlasting? An essential part, I mean the promissory part, of the covenant, is expressly said to have obtained from eternity. The Apostle speaks of *that eternal life which God that cannot lie promised BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN.* Tit. i. 2. Now, must not the promissory part of the covenant ever imply the conditional? If, therefore, the one was, the other must have been, from eternity.

With great propriety is this covenant almost every where in the scriptures of both the Old Testament and the New, said to be *the everlasting covenant.* *I will establish my covenant,* said God to Abraham, *between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations,* FOR AN EVERLASTING COVENANT; *to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee.* Gen. xvii. 7. Now, *the God of peace,* saith the Apostle to the believing Hebrews, *that brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of* THE EVERLASTING COVENANT, &c. Heb. xiii. 20. Is not this covenant said to be everlasting, to intimate that it was from eternity, and is to eternity?

II. We are to consider the glorious PARTIES contracting in this covenant. In every covenant, divine and human, there are understood to be different parties. A proper covenant has necessarily two parts; a *conditional* and a *promissory*; and, therefore, in it there must be, at least, *two* parties, one to perform the one part, and another to fulfil the other. It was so in the covenant of works. On the one hand, there was the great God that made it; and, on the other, man, with whom it was made. It is so also in the covenant of grace. One of the glorious parties in this better covenant, the answer expressly mentions. *GOD, having out of his mere good pleasure, &c.* Why the other party is not mentioned, I know not. In the account of this covenant which  
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the Larger Catechism gives us, the Son, with whom it was made, no less than the Father, who made it with him, is expressly mentioned. It is asked, *With whom was the covenant of grace made?* The answer is, *The covenant of grace was made with CHRIST, as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.* Of both the parties in it, we have a plain intimation in the words with which I introduced this Lecture. He who made the covenant informs us with whom he made it. For; says he, *I have made a covenant WITH MY CHOSEN.* Accordingly we have here

*First*, The MAKER of this covenant. The Son is not said to have made it with the Father. But the Father is said to have made it with the Son. The CO-EQUAL Three act according to the order in which they subsist.

Often has it been observed, that the word in the Old Testament, which is applied to the making of the covenant, literally signifies *cutting* the covenant. *I have MADE*, saith God, *a covenant with my chosen.* The expression is probably borrowed from the manner in which covenants were ratified in ancient times. On such occasions animals were sacrificed. Was not this a plain intimation that the everlasting covenant was, in due time, to be confirmed by an all-meritorious sacrifice? Not only were animals sacrificed. but divided asunder; and the persons covenanting passed between the parts of them. This practice carried in it a tacit imprecation, that it might be done to them as it had been done to the sacrificed animals. in the event of their violating the covenant. The everlasting covenant was made with the Surety of sinners, who, by sin, have incurred death. Sin separates between God and sinners. In order, therefore, that a total and final separation between God and sinners might be prevented, the Surety condescended to undergo a temporary separation of the two constituent parts of his humanity. Though neither his human soul or

his human body, was separated from his divine person; they were, for a season, divided asunder the one from the other. What must the love be that could induce the eternal Father to make a covenant in such a manner with his own co-eternal Son!

As to the *maker* of this covenant, it has been queried, was it God *essentially* considered, or was it God the Father, the first person in the order of the mysterious Trinity, that made this covenant with Christ? One thing is certain. Though the divine persons as such, be distinct one from another, they are, in essence and will, one. The making of the covenant of works with the first Adam was the joint work of the divine Three. And, in making the superior covenant with the second Adam, they all concurred. It was the three-one God that was offended by the person who violated the first covenant, and was to be satisfied by the Surety of the second. But it may be said, that on this important occasion, the first person in the order of subsistence sustained the majesty of the Deity, and transacted with the Son, as our undertaking Surety in that covenant, by which all the persons and perfections of the Godhead are most eminently glorified.

*Secondly*, There is the PARTY with whom this everlasting covenant was made, stiled, in the answer quoted from the Larger Catechism, *the second Adam*. As the eternal Son of the eternal Father, or, as the second person in the mysterious Trinity, he, no less than the first and the third persons, was concerned in the making of it, and in the glory which was to accrue from it. But what an unknown depth, as well as height, is there in the undertaking and dying love of Jesus Christ! With what alacrity did he undertake to be our representative and Surety in this covenant! No readier was the Father to call him to the work than he was to undertake and accomplish it. Compelled to it he could not be. But, as compulsion was impracticable, it was no less unnecessary.

necessary. With what ineffable satisfaction does the Father speak of him in the text? *I have*, says he, *made a covenant with MY CHOSEN*. To intimate that the Head of the election of grace, the Surety of the new covenant, is intended, the word, as has been observed, is in the singular number. The covenant of works was made with one man, and so was the covenant of grace. So it is written, *The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. The first man is of the earth earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven.* 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.

Great was the inequality between the two parties contracting in the covenant of works. But between the parties contracting in this covenant there is no such inequality. The Son, with whom it was made, was not originally inferior, but equal to the Father, that made it with him. In this covenant, however, he has assumed a character, in which he acts in subordination to the Father. With great propriety, therefore, is he, in the account which the Larger Catechism gives of him, stiled the second Adam. In the covenant made with him, he acts as the representative of others. As the first Adam represented his natural seed in the covenant of works, the second Adam represents his spiritual seed in the covenant of redemption. Accordingly, the party with whom this covenant was made, comes under a twofold consideration, as the party *representing*, and as the party *represented*. The latter, when the covenant was originally made, did not actually exist in their own persons. But they may be said to have had a federal subsistence in their undertaking Head. Accordingly, as the covenant was made with him, representing them, and with them, represented by him, from eternity, it is, in the scriptures, often said to be made with them in their own persons in time. Voluntarily did he accept of it, when, as a covenant strictly conditional, it was by the Father proposed to

him from eternity. Voluntarily do they in the day of power accept of it, and of all its benefits, exhibited to them in the gospel, in the most unconditional and gratuitous manner. Well pleased was he with it; and well pleased are they with it. *Although my house be not so with God as it ought,* said David, and says every believer, *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.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Was this covenant made with Christ, as the second Adam; and in him, with all the elect, as his seed? Then how absurd is the supposition, that there are two covenants for the recovery of fallen man; one made with the Surety, and another made with sinners themselves! This hypothesis, without foundation in the sacred scriptures, is attended with different inconveniences and difficulties. One thing is obvious. In every proper covenant there are two *essential* parts; a conditional, and a promissory. If, therefore, there be a covenant made with sinners, different from the covenant made with the Surety, it must have a condition, which they themselves must perform. Accordingly, the abettors of the opinion of two covenants have been obliged to call *faith* the condition of the covenant made with sinners. But that faith can with no propriety be called the condition of the covenant, I am afterwards to prove.

That there is only **ONE** covenant, viewed differently as it relates to the Surety and to sinners, I might evince from various considerations. May it not be inferred from the analogy which the scripture, in so full and plain a manner, intimates between the first Adam and the second? Why is Jesus Christ stiled the *second Adam*? Why is the first Adam said to have been a *figure* of the second? The answer is obvious. The one was the head of the covenant of works, and in it represented his natural seed. The other is the head of the covenant of redemption, and in it represents his spiritual seed.



seed. Now, was there one covenant made with the first Adam, the condition of which he was to perform, and another made with his posterity, the condition of which they are to fulfil? No. One covenant included him and them. It was made with him as their representative, and with them as represented in and by him. The proper condition of it, as we said in a former Lecture, was that perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience which he was to perform: and the actual performance of it was to be accepted for them as well as him, and to entitle them, no less than him, to the felicity promised in it. In like manner, one covenant includes the second Adam and his spiritual seed. The condition of it he hath fulfilled; and his fulfilment of its condition entitles them, as well as himself, to the eternal life promised in it. Accordingly, it has been observed, that the scripture all along speaks of it as *one* covenant; and speaks of the blood, not of *covenants* in the plural number, but of the covenant in the singular. *Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold, THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT.* Exod. xxiv. 8. *As for thee also, by the blood of thy COVENANT, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.* Zech. ix. 11. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle, in two different places, makes express mention of *the blood of the covenant.* chap. x. 29, and xiii. 20.

Accordingly, when the scripture, in allegorical language, represents this covenant under the familiar emblem of a *chariot*, and, to intimate the excellency and duration of it, a chariot *of the wood of Lebanon*, it intimates, that there is only one chariot for king Solomon himself and for the daughters of Jerusalem; not one for him and another for them, but only one for both. *King Solomon made a CHARIOT of the wood of Lebanon. He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple; the middle thereof being paved*

*paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem.* Song iii. 9, 10. It has, indeed, been observed, that the word rendered chariot here does not occur any where else in the Old Testament. It has, therefore, been reckoned doubtful, whether it should be translated *chariot*, or by another word. It has also been a question, what is intended and to be understood by it. That the best interpreters understand it of this superior covenant is well known. With the most obvious propriety may it be compared to a chariot. A chariot is a well known machine, by which persons are carried, with dignity as well as ease, from one place to another. The salutary design of the chariot of the wood of Lebanon, is to transport poor sinners of mankind from the wilderness of a natural state, and out of the wilderness of this present evil world, into the heavenly country. Now, as I said, the chariot is one. King Solomon himself and his happy and honoured bride sit in the same chariot.

It is asked, whom does the second Adam represent in the covenant of redemption? The answer may be collected from what hath been said already. In it he undertook for that part of mankind whom God the Father is said to have chosen in him. Them, and no others, does he represent in this covenant. All mankind did the first Adam represent in his covenant. Only a part of mankind does the second represent in his. For this reason are they called *a remnant*. Had all mankind been predestinated to life, they could not have been said to be *elected*. Election bespeaks the choice and separation of a part from the whole. Christ himself speaks of them as chosen out from among the rest of mankind, and as given to him, to be by him represented in his covenant, and redeemed from sin and wrath. *I have manifested thy name,* says he to his Father, *unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept*

*kept thy word.* John xvii. 6. In their stead, therefore, and in order to their salvation, he fulfilled the condition of the covenant, by obeying the law and satisfying justice for their sins. For, says he, *I lay down my life for the sheep.* John x. 15.

III. We are to attend to the PARTS of this covenant. Now, every proper covenant, as has been repeatedly observed, has two essential parts; a *conditional*, and a *promissory*. What in the general is intended by the conditional, and what by the promissory part of a proper covenant, we saw on a former occasion. The covenant of works, we found, had three parts; a *minatory* part, as well as a conditional and a promissory. But the minatory part was accidental, arising from the fallibility of the person with whom it was made. But this superior covenant, as we will see in the sequel, has no proper penalty. He, with whom it was made, is God, as well as man, and therefore infallible. Of the two constituent parts of this covenant I shall speak in order.

*First*, I shall consider the *CONDITIONARY* part of it. Now the question, *What is the condition of the covenant of grace?* has been answered different ways. Often has it been said, from both the pulpit and the press, that *faith*, or, as the Apostle expresses it, *belief in the Lord Jesus Christ*, is the condition of the covenant. But this manner of expression, however well it may have been intended by the many great and good men who have used it. to say no worse of it, is highly improper. It goes upon a supposition, for which, we have found already, there is no foundation in the scriptures, that there are two covenants; a covenant of grace made with believers in time, different from the covenant of redemption made with the Surety from eternity. This bespeaks inattention to the true notion and nature of the condition of a proper covenant. What can the  
condition

condition of a covenant be, but that part of it on the fulfilment of which the accomplishment of the promissory part is suspended? Was not this covenant made with the Surety? Is it not incumbent on the person with whom a covenant is made, to fulfil the condition of it? Did not the second Adam represent his spiritual seed in his covenant, as much as the first Adam did his natural seed in his? Now, whether did it belong to the first Adam, the representative in the covenant of works, or his posterity represented by him in it, to perform its condition? Was it not the personal obedience of Adam himself that was the proper condition of that covenant, to entitle him and also his posterity to the felicity promised in it? Did it not, in like manner, belong to the second Adam, as our representative and Surety in the covenant of grace, to fulfil the condition of it? Is it not what he did, not what we ourselves do, but what HE did in our nature and stead, which alone can entitle us to the benefits and blessings promised in the covenant? Was not his fulfilment of the condition of this everlasting covenant the great work which he came into our world to accomplish? Is not this the work in relation to which he speaks thus, *It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness?* Matth. iii. 15. Does he not speak in the plural number, to intimate, that he now acted in the capacity and character of a public person and federal Head; or, in other words, as our representative and Surety in the everlasting covenant.

Does not *faith* belong to the promissory part of the covenant? Is it not, as much as any other benefit or blessing, promised to us in the covenant? Now, can faith belong to the promissory part of the covenant, and be the condition of it? Are not the conditional and promissory parts of a covenant always distinct the one from the other? That faith is a precious grace and blessing, promised in the new covenant, is a most certain and consolatory truth. Were it not so, no sinner of mankind

kind ever could believe. Unable and unwilling to believe are we all naturally. How then does any person obtain faith? The Apostle's words, formerly quoted, account for it—*Ye are saved by grace, through FAITH, and that not of yourselves, it IS THE GIFT OF GOD.* And Esaias saith, *There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES TRUST.* Rom. xv. 12. Ask the saints of the most High in heaven and on earth, whether they consider any thing performed in them or by them as the foundation of their right to the blessings, or any of the blessings of the covenant. Such an insinuation and pretension, they all would, in one voice, disclaim and disavow.

To what hath been said, may be objected the answer to the following question in the Larger Catechism—*How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant? The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provideth, and offereth to sinners, a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requireth faith as the condition to interest them in him; promiseth and giveth his holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed unto salvation.* But, to every reader and hearer it must occur at once, that the Compilers of the Larger Catechism do not affirm faith to be the condition of the covenant. All that they say, is, that *God requires faith, as the condition TO INTEREST US IN THE MEDIATOR* of the covenant. To say that faith is required as the proper *condition* of the covenant, and to say that it is required as the condition or *instrument* of interesting us in Christ, and instating us in the covenant, are two things exceedingly different. That faith can with no propriety be called the condition of the covenant, I have, I think, made sufficiently evident

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already. But that faith is indispensably necessary, as the instrument or mean, by which we are personally and savingly instated in the covenant, is a most important truth. To faith the scriptures often ascribe a particular instrumentality in the business of our salvation. By it we are *justified, adopted, and sanctified*. Without faith we have no interest in Christ, or in the covenant of grace. The only question, therefore, with regard to the quotation from the Larger Catechism, is, whether the term *condition* in it be proper or not. And without disparagement to that excellent Summary, or to the worthy Compilers of it, I may say, that another word less exposed to misconstruction might have been used.

That faith has a particular instrumentality in our salvation, and is, in a peculiar manner, the mean of instating us in the superior covenant, and interesting us in the whole of salvation, the scripture often and clearly intimates. *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, said the Apostle to the Philippian jailor, and thou shalt be saved.* Acts xvi. 31. *He that believeth, saith our Lord himself, shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned.* Mark xvi. 16. Does our Lord himself, or does his Apostle, mean that faith is the condition of salvation? No. All that can be inferred from the words either of the former or the latter is, that between faith and all the other blessings of salvation, there is such a necessary connection, that without the former we cannot expect to obtain the latter. This connection between faith and the whole of salvation, the scripture, in places innumerable, intimates. I might quote a great variety of places; but a specimen may suffice. *Look unto me, that is, believe in me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.* Isa. xlv. 22. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—He that BELIEVETH on the*  
*the*

*the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* John iii. 16, 36. The reason of this connection, which the scripture so often states between faith and salvation, is obvious. Faith apprehends and applies Christ, in whom, and in whom alone, there is salvation, and an all-sufficiency of salvation. Accordingly, in whatever view the object of faith is revealed in the scriptures, faith in its actings is represented in a manner corresponding to it. Is the object of faith revealed under the familiar notion of meat and drink? *Believing* is accordingly expressed by eating and drinking. *My flesh,* says our Lord, *is MEAT indeed. and my blood DRINK indeed. Except, therefore, ye eat the flesh of the Son of God, and drink his blood, ye can have no life in you.* John vi. Chapter. Is the object of faith represented under the metaphorical notion of a garment or robe? Then *to believe* is to put it on. *PUT YE ON the Lord Jesus, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* Rom. xiii. 14. Is the Saviour, in short, or is salvation, exhibited under the notion of a rich and free gift? Then *to believe* on Christ is to receive him. *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.* John i. 12.

Is salvation, in the freest, as well as the fullest manner, exhibited and offered to us? Is faith only the instrument, or the hand, by which we receive what God gives freely? Then we can, with no propriety, ascribe conditionality to it. In order that we may possess the inestimably precious gift of salvation, our believing acceptance of it, in the nature of things, must be indispensably necessary. A kind friend sets meat before us, and, in the most pressing manner, invites us to eat it. Except we do actually eat it, however, we cannot be nourished by it. Christ crucified is the food of our souls. But in order to our spiritual nourishment, we

must apply and use this food. But is the offer of it suspended upon our application of it as a condition? No. The offer is understood to be altogether free; for *the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the bread and the water of life FREELY.* Rev. xxii. 17.

Having seen, that, though faith be the instrument by which we apprehend and obtain a saving interest in the new covenant, it can, with no propriety, be called the *condition* of it; it remains that I now show what is the *sole, proper* condition of this covenant. Now, in order to ascertain this important point, we must recollect the definition which I already gave of the condition of a proper covenant. It is that part of it, the actual performance of which, by the person with whom the covenant is made, entitles him to the reward promised by the person that made it with him. On the person, therefore, whoever he be, with whom the covenant is made, must it be incumbent to fulfil the conditional part of it. Was the covenant of grace made with the second Adam, as our great undertaking Surety in it? Then, on him was it incumbent to perform the condition of it; and his performance of it must entitle not only himself, but all those whom he represents in the covenant, to the felicity promised in it. Accordingly, by the condition of this everlasting covenant, we understand what the great Surety of it, with whom the eternal Father made it, did and suffered during the days of his humiliation on earth. There was a certain period, during which, the first Adam was to fulfil the condition of his covenant. There was, in like manner, a limited season, during which, the second Adam was to be employed in the great work of performing the condition of his superior covenant. There is especially a twofold state of the glorious Mediator corresponding to the two parts of the covenant;



a state of *humiliation* on earth, in which he fulfilled its condition. and a state of *exaltation* in heaven, during which he enjoys the infinitely rich reward promised in it. By the condition of the covenant, in short, we understand the surety-righteousness of Jesus Christ. The perfect obedience of the first Adam was required as the condition of the covenant of works. The perfect obedience and *satisfaction* of the second Adam constitute the sole proper condition of the covenant of grace. The reason why the second covenant requires satisfaction, as well as obedience, we will see in the sequel.

This is called the *surety-righteousness* of Jesus Christ. The reason is obvious. An essential righteousness belongs to him as God. An unrighteous God is a contradiction in terms. Righteousness is essential to that Godhead which is common to all the uncreated Three. But it is the righteousness which the Son of God, as the second Adam, or the Surety of the everlasting covenant, performed in his obediential life and satisfactory death, of which I now speak. For when the covenant was entered into between the Father and the Son before all worlds, it was stipulated on the part of the former, and restipulated on the part of the latter, as our undertaking Surety, that he, as the fulfilling Surety of the covenant, should, in the fulness of time, do the following things—

1<sup>st</sup>, That he should, in due time, assume our nature in full habitual conformity, in all the powers and parts of it, to the holy law. Subjection to the law in either its precept or its penalty was utterly incompatible with the perfection of his divine nature. It behoved him, therefore, to take to himself a nature capable of subjection to the law in both its precept and penalty. In human nature was that obedience, which was required as the condition of the covenant of works, to be performed. In the same specific nature was that all-perfect righteousness performed, which is the condition of this better covenant.

venant. An exchange of persons is admitted. Obedience is performed by the Surety in the place of sinners. But the same nature *in kind* that sinned is subject to the law, and suffers to satisfy for sin. *For as much then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.*—*For, verily, he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.* Heb. ii. 14, 16. As it was in this assumed nature that the Son of God, sustaining the character of the second Adam, was to fulfil the conditional part of this covenant, when the period arrived, at which he was to perform the great work, he, who made the covenant with him, prepared it for him, and he assumed it accordingly. *For when, at his incarnation, he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me.* Heb. x. 5. Now, was human nature restored to its primeval purity. For this end, that humanity, which the Son of God assumed, was prepared in a manner altogether miraculous and unprecedented. In his birth, no less than in his life, was he *holy, harmless, and undefiled.*

That *habitual* righteousness, or, in other words, that universal conformity of the whole man, in all the powers of the soul and in all the parts of the body, which the law originally required in the first Adam, as the head of the covenant of works, and of which, though concreated with him, he at an early period deprived himself, is restored in the person of the second Adam, as the Surety of the covenant of grace. Thus was the humanity of the Son of God formed holy and pure, that in it he might be fully conformed to the law of works, to which he, as our federal head, submitted; and that it might be the model, according to which the members of his mystical body, as far as is consistent with the necessary disparity between the head and the members, might be fashioned. Had the first  
Adam

Adam retained his original purity, not only would he have fulfilled the condition of the covenant of works, but transmitted purity to his numerous posterity. But, having contracted impurity in his own person, he communicates it to each of his natural descendants. The second Adam, on the contrary, retaining that universal purity, with which his humanity was formed, as our Head and Surety fully answered the demands of the law for us; and from him we, his spiritual seed, derive that purity of nature which we lost in our first federal head. With great propriety, therefore, may the Surety be said to *restore what he took not away*. What the first Adam could once say, the second Adam has said, *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart*. It was, in short, to the moral law in its *federal* form, or, as the New Testament expresses it, as the law of works, that the Son of God, in the character of our fulfilling Surety, was subjected. For the very design of his subjection to it was to deliver us from it. From it as a rule of moral conduct, no rational creature can be exempted. But from it, as a proper covenant, or, as the law of works, rewarding obedience with eternal life, and punishing disobedience with everlasting destruction, every believer in Christ is freed, and freed in consequence of the Surety's conformity and obedience to it. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law; being made a curse for us.—For when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* Gal. iii. 13. and iv. 4, 5.

Practice is supposed ever to correspond to nature. In order, therefore, that the Surety might perform universal practical obedience to the law, it behoved him to be in his whole humanity conformed to it. The law extends to the man, as well as to his manners. The Surety, therefore, *was*, as well as *did*, what the law

law requires. *For such an high priest became us, who is HOLY, HARMLESS, UNDEFILED, SEPARATE FROM SINNERS.* Heb. vii. 26.

Having, in a preceding Lecture briefly illustrated that original righteousness with which the first Adam, at his creation, was endued in his whole man, I need not now exemplify or explain that universal rectitude and purity, with which the humanity of the second Adam was formed. Accordingly, in the

*2d place,* It behoved the Surety of this better covenant, in order to the fulfilment of its conditional part, to perform a series of universal and unfinning obedience to the law, from the commencement to the conclusion of his humbled state. Not only was the first Adam, at his creation, endued with universal habitual conformity to the law, but, in order to the fulfilment of the condition of the covenant of works, was bound to perform universal *practical* obedience to it all along to the end of his probationary state. It, in like manner, behoved the fulfilling Surety of the covenant of grace, not only in his conception and nativity, to be, but all along, in his life and actions on earth, to do, what the law of works required. So he himself intimates to John at his baptism. *Jesus answered and said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.* Of his subjection and obedience to the whole Mosaic law, the history of his life and actions furnishes us with express instances. In token of his subjection to the ceremonial law, he was, at the period and in the manner it prescribes, circumcised. As a proof of his ready subjection to the political laws of his country, he condescended to pay tribute. Especially was he under and did he obey the moral law. This is the law, in universal obedience to which the condition of the first covenant consisted. This also is the law in universal subjection and perfect obedience to which the conditional part of the superior

rior covenant especially consists. This law he fulfilled in its utmost extent. In both its tables, and in all the several commandments belonging to each of them, did he obey it, and obey it perfectly. From all the sins which it forbids was he totally exempted. All the duties which it enjoins did he perform. God he claimed and avowed for his God. In the several duties and ordinances of religion was he most conscientious and exemplary. These duties and exercises he performed, in the manner and at the times which the law appointed, with the utmost punctuality. No less regular and conscientious was he in the duties of the second table. What a bright pattern has he left us of filial duty to parents! Not only was he in the earlier period, and during the obscurer part of his life, most dutiful to his *legal* father and real mother; but, during his extremest agony, and in his departing moments, he shews a becoming regard to the latter, by recommending her to the special notice of a particular surviving friend. *When Jesus, therefore, saw HIS MOTHER, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy Son. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.* John xix. 26, 27. How scrupulously just, and how profusely generous, was the Surety and Saviour!

The obedience which the Surety performed to the law was, in all respects, *perfect*. He himself was perfect, and his works were perfect. A perfection of *degrees*, as well as of parts, did his obedience possess. The highest possible honour did he to the law, and to the lawgiver. For he, who, as God, is the supreme lawgiver, be astonished O heavens! condescended, as God-man, in our stead, as well as in our nature, to be the law fulfiller. By the obedience of the first Adam, had he persisted in it, the law would have been *satisfied*. But by the obedience of the second Adam, the Lord

from heaven, the law is *magnified* and ennobled, in a manner for which there had been no room, had not sin entered the world. Therefore *is Jehovah well pleased for his righteousness sake, for he hath magnified the law and made it honourable.* Isa. xlii. 21.

Perfect was the obedience of the second Adam in *duration*, as well as in all other respects. For long thirty-three years did he perform universal obedience to the law of works. How long the period was in which the first Adam, as the head of the covenant of works, was to have yielded that obedience to the law, which was to have been accepted as the proper condition of it, entitling him and his posterity to the eternal life promised in it, we know not. But from the evangelical history of the second Adam's state of subjection and servitude on earth, we know how long the period was in which he performed the most arduous of all works, the condition of the covenant of redemption, by which he obtained for himself, the Head, and for his spiritual seed, the members, the eternal life promised in it. In this work the Surety was all alacrity and activity. From the commencement to the consummation of it he was incessant and unwearied. Accordingly, when the end of his state of humiliation approached, and his work was almost completed, in his solemn address to his eternal Father, he speaks thus, *I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* And the day following, with his expiring breath, he adds, *It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.* John xvii. 4. and xix. 30. But this is not all. In order to the completion of the conditional part of this covenant, it behoved the fulfilling Surety of it, in the

*3d place*, To make real and adequate satisfaction for the numerous and aggravated offences of the persons whom he represented in it. This is one thing in which especially the condition of the second covenant differs from

from that of the first. It behoved the head of the latter, in order to the fulfilment of its condition, to obey. But, in order to the performance of the condition of the former, it behoved the Surety both to obey and to die. The reason is obvious. This covenant was made with him, as the representative of sinful men; who have not only come short of the obedience which the law requires, but, by the violation of its precept, have incurred its penalty. Thus was the work assigned to the Surety in the second covenant far more arduous than that assigned to the head of the first covenant. The Surety was under the law of works in its penalty, as well as in its precept. In order that we may escape the eternal death threatened in the covenant of works, and obtain the eternal life promised in the covenant of grace, he not only led a holy and meritorious life, but underwent an accursed and expiatory death.

Real and full satisfaction for sin is here understood to be indispensably necessary in order to the pardon of it. *Without shedding of blood is no remission of sin.* Heb. ix. 22. It, therefore, behoved the Surety of the covenant to be an atoning, as well as interceding high priest. The necessity of that vicarious satisfaction for sin, which he, as the great High Priest of our profession, made by the all-meritorious sacrifice of himself, the scripture often intimates to us. Thus he himself speaks. *IT BEHOVED Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.* Luke xxiv. 46. For, as the Apostle, writing to the Christians of the dispersions, speaks, we could not be *redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Not only was blood, but *blood divine*, indispensably necessary, in order to the expiation of our guilt, and the redemption of our souls. *The redemption of the soul is precious*, and must have remained forever unaccomplished, had not a divine person under-

taken it. But how admirably qualified and fitted was the Mediator for the arduous, the difficult work! In human nature, indeed, he suffered and died. But he that suffered, and bled, and died, was God, as well as man. That humanity in which he fulfilled the precept, and underwent the penalty of the law, never subsisted but in his divine Person. Therefore, though the nature that suffered was human, the person was divine; and from his divinity the sufferings of his humanity derived infinite value. Accordingly, the blood which he shed, and by which he appeased the Majesty of heaven, is expressly said to be the *blood of God*. So the Apostle speaks in his solemn charge to the elders of the Ephesian church — *Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which HE hath purchased WITH HIS OWN BLOOD.* Acts xx. 28. From sinners to the Surety was there a translation of guilt and punishment. Under this tremendous weight did the Surety labour and groan for a series of years in our world; and, had he not been the omnipotent God, under it he must have unavoidably succumbed. What must the pressure have been, which could extort from the Creator of the ends of the earth the heavy complaint, *I sink in deep mire where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me!* Psal. lxxix. 2. What must the inward anguish have been, which could force from the numerous pores of his human body that preternatural sweat, of which the evangelical historian speaks! *And, being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his SWEAT was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* Luke xxii. 44. What must the inconceivable distress have been that could induce him, who from the earliest ages was bent on this bloody work, to pray thus, *Father, if thou be willing, IF IT BE POSSIBLE, let this cup pass from me.* Bloody work! To satisfy for sin, and to save sinners, it behoved the Lord  
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of life and of glory to undergo a most excruciating, as well as a most ignominious death.

Such, my friends, is the general tenor of the conditional part of this everlasting covenant. Easy was the condition of the covenant of works. Infinitely arduous was the condition of the covenant of grace. Hard, indeed, was the work assigned to the Surety of this covenant! Such things it behoved him to do, and such things it behoved him to suffer, in order to the fulfilment of its condition, and the actual impetration of the infinitely rich blessings promised in it. I proceed,

*Secondly*, To the consideration of the PROMISSORY part of this superior covenant. As it was incumbent on the Surety, with whom it was made, to fulfil its condition, it belonged to the eternal Father, that made it with him, to accomplish its *promissory* part. Now, the accomplishment of this part of the covenant goes upon the supposition of the fulfilment of its condition. The promises of it, indeed, began to be fulfilled long before the conditional part of it was actually accomplished. But from the earliest ages, the Surety agreed to perform the condition of it in due time; and his undertaking was, by the Father, accepted as the fullest security for it.

This promissory part of the covenant is of such importance, that the covenant is expressly denominated from it, and accordingly stiled a *covenant*; or, for reasons already assigned, *covenants OF PROMISE*. Eph. ii. 12. forecited. Now, as the party, with whom this covenant was made, comes under a twofold consideration, as the party *representing*, and the party *represented*, the *promissory* part of it may be viewed especially in a *twofold* light, as it relates to *him*, and as it relates to *them*. To him, their undertaking Surety in the covenant, were all the promises originally made. Even the promises, which are accomplished to his spiritual seed, were *primarily* made  
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and fulfilled to him, and are made and performed only in a *secondary* way to them. For, as the Apostle affirms, *all the promises of God are IN HIM; and in him are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God.* 2 Cor. i. 20. And he speaks of *the hope of that eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised; that is, promised us in Christ, before the world began.* Tit. i. 2. I might

1st, Consider the *promissory* part of the covenant so far as it is *peculiar* to the Surety, and terminates on his Mediator person. And, in this limited view, it includes especially three things; *sufficient assistance* in his arduous work; the *actual acceptance* of it; and an *infinitely rich reward* for it.

Sufficient assistance in his arduous work was insured to the Surety. When the covenant of works was made with the first Adam, he was furnished with sufficient strength for performing the condition of it. When the second Adam was sent into the world to accomplish the superior work of the condition of this covenant, he, in like manner, was furnished with human nature, and with the extraordinary assistances of the Holy Ghost, to qualify him for the performance of it. Often, in the view of his coming into the world, and fulfilling his work in it, is the assistance insured to him intimated. Thus speaks the Father in relation to him, *With him my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him.* Psal. lxxxix. 21.

Animated with such assurances of sufficient support and assistances, on his coming into the world, he speaks thus, *I will give my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pluck off the hair; I will not hide my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will keep me, therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us stand together; who is mine adversary? let him come near unto me. Behold, the Lord God will keep*

*keep me ; who is he that shall condemn me ? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment ; the moth shall eat them up.* Isa. l. 6, 7, 8, 9. From his very conception and nativity, in a manner peculiar to himself, was he in his humanity endued with the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit. Nay, *God gave not the Spirit by measure unto him.* John iii. 34. Accordingly, when he was baptized in Jordan, *the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him ; and, it is added, Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.* Luke iii. 21, 22. and iv. 1. And the history of his last agony informs us, that when he had *kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me : nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done ; there appeared an angel unto him, from heaven, STRENGTHENING him.* Chapter xxii. 41, 42, 43.

The actual acceptance of his work, no less than assistance in it, was infallibly insured to him. This, no doubt, is included in the Apostle's account of the great mystery of godliness, and accounts for the propriety of the manner in which he states and expresses one of the articles of it—*Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness : God was justified in the Spirit.* 1 Tim. iii. 16. No guilt did the Saviour ever contract in his own person. But the accumulated guilt of the elect was imputed to him ; and, therefore, *in point of imputation,* he was the guiltiest person that ever appeared in our world. But, having expiated our guilt, and borne our utmost punishment, he may be said to have been *officially* justified ; that is, acquitted and discharged from the debt, which, as our Surety, he owed to the law and justice of God. This, as we saw already, was insured to him in the promissory part of the covenant. For thus he himself speaks, *He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me ?*

Accordingly, though, as an indisputable proof of his

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his Deity, he is on one occasion said to RISE from the dead; on other occasions, it is affirmed, that the Father, as a certain evidence of his approbation of him, and also of his work, raised and advanced him to that felicity and dignity which he now possesses. God, says the Apostle, RAISED *him up from the dead, and GAVE HIM GLORY, that your faith and hope might be in God.* 1 Pet. i. 21. This leads me to add, that he had insured to him:

An infinitely rich and glorious reward for his great work. The unknown depth of humiliation to which he was reduced, on the one hand, and the unknown height of glory to which he is promoted, on the other, with the subserviency of the former to the latter, the Apostle states in terms the most apposite and expressive—*Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. WHEREFORE, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Phil. ii. 6,—11. Of the exaltation and dignity of the Mediator of this covenant, as well as his humiliation and debasement, I will have occasion to speak in the sequel.

A happy exchange of both state and place has he experienced. No longer is he, in humanity, on earth. The highest heaven hath *received* and must retain him till the final restitution of all things. He, who once had not where to lay his head, is constituted heir and Lord of all worlds. He, who once was arraigned and condemned at a human tribunal, has universal authority

authority and power in all worlds, seen and unseen; and is the final Judge of both quick and dead, angels and men. A place infinitely too high for the most exalted angel or saint does he occupy in the heavens. Especially is he Head and Lord of the church on earth, which is his by *redemption* and by *conquest*. In it he has a numerous offspring born to perpetuate his name, and do service to him in all generations. Such is the infinitely rich reward the Father insured to him in the everlasting covenant; in the joyful prospect of which, he was animated in his arduous work. *For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and accordingly is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Heb. xii. 2. Such a glorious reward is infinitely becoming not only his personal dignity, but the intrinsic worth of his great work.

2dly, I might review the *promissory* part of the covenant, as it relates *secondarily* to us. Had the first Adam fulfilled the condition of the covenant of works, the life promised in it would have been imparted to his posterity, as well as himself. The second Adam, in like manner, by performing the conditional part of the better covenant, has not only obtained an endless, glorious, Mediatorial life for himself, but eternal life for all whom he represents in it. This is that eternal life, which, as the Apostle speaks, *was promised in Christ Jesus before the world began*; and which, as he affirms in another place, *is the gift of God to us through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Rom. vi. 23. This life, purchased by the Surety of the covenant, is deposited in him, to be by him communicated to the persons for whom he obtained it; and he faithfully and liberally dispenses it to them accordingly. For this end, as we will see afterwards, he is by the Father entrusted with the actual administration of the covenant. By reposing this high trust in him, the Father shows at once his esteem of him the Head, and of the church as his body. In his hand

must she, and all her important concerns, be infallibly safe. *The Father loveth the Son*, that is, as our Mediator and Head, *and hath given all things into his hand*, to be by him employed for the edification and felicity of the church. John iii. 35. *It pleased the Father*, and it pleaseth the whole church of the first-born in heaven and on earth, *that in him*, her Head and Lord, *should all fulness dwell*. Col. i. 19.

Accordingly, when the rich saving communications and supplies, with which the church is furnished, to intimate the plenty and the perpetuity of them, are represented by the expressive image of an over-flowing and ever-flowing river, it is said to proceed *originally* from the throne of God, and to run immediately into the throne of the Lamb; that, from it, as a great reservoir, the church may be plentifully supplied according as her exigencies do require. Rev. xxii. 1. Thus the Mediator ever is the medium of gracious communication between God and men.

The promises of this covenant, which are accomplished to us in and through Christ, are manifold and various, as well as great and precious. This, indeed, is a subject of infinite extent. On it I might expatiate through endless ages. It knows no dimensions. It is no less unbounded than God himself. An interest in God, a saving relation and conformity to him, the favour and fruition of him, constitute the felicity and the dignity which the Surety has purchased for his spiritual seed, and which, communicated to them through the channel of the promissory part of the covenant, they possess for ever and ever. Every thing necessary and conducive to the conversion of the unconverted elect, and the final salvation of the converted, is comprehended in it.

However long the actual conversion of any individual of the elect may be delayed, under whatever maladies and distempers he may labour, to whatever dangers

gers and accidents he may be exposed, his natural life must be preserved till the actual arrival of the happy period, at which his instatement in the covenant happens. This has been understood to be the thing intended by the sinner's living in his blood. *When I passed by thee, saith God, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live.* Ezek. xvi 6. Once and again does he say unto the sinner, *Live*. The former may refer to the preservation of the natural life during the unconverted state; the latter to the infusion of spiritual life, at the happy period appointed for the sinner's conversion. Accordingly, the actual regeneration of spiritually dead elect sinners, at the appointed time, is expressly promised. *I will, saith God, put my regenerating and quickening Spirit within you, and thus cause you to walk in my statutes, and to keep my judgments and do them.* Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

The full and final *justification* of the guilty and condemned sinner is a precious blessing promised in the covenant. *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be JUSTIFIED, and shall glory.* Isa. xlv. 25. *And by him all that believe are JUSTIFIED from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, or, indeed, by any other law.* Acts xiii. 39.

*Adoption*, by which poor sinners, as spiritual aliens and outcasts, are admitted into the family of heaven, and interested in all the special privileges and immunities of the sons of God, is a precious blessing promised in the better covenant. *God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a FATHER unto you, and ye shall be my SONS and DAUGHTERS, saith the Lord Almighty.* 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17, 18.

The *sanctification* of unholy sinners is also an inestimably precious blessing promised in the new covenant. How gracious are the declarations! *I am the Lord that doth SANCTIFY you.* EXOD xxxi. 13. *A NEW HEART also will I give unto you, and a NEW SPIRIT will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an HEART OF FLESH.* Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

The *preservation* of the believer in a state of grace, till the actual arrival of the happy period at which he exchanges a state of grace for a state of glory, is another thing infallibly insured in the promissory part of the covenant. *The righteous also SHALL hold on his way, and he that bath clean hands SHALL wax stronger and stronger.* Job xvii. 9. *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.* Jer. xxxii. 40.

Temporal provision, as well as spiritual, is promised to such as have an interest in this covenant. When man, by the violation of the covenant of works, forfeited life, he, of course, forfeited the comforts of life. The unconverted sinner, therefore, is in a situation similar to a malefactor condemned to die. Though, during the non-execution of his sentence, he has a certain allowance of the necessaries of this life, he has no *legal* title either to life or to the enjoyments of it. The sinner, unstated in the new covenant, has neither a *federal* title to life, nor to any of the enjoyments of it. But, by an instatement in the better covenant, he recovers what he forfeited by the violation of the covenant of works. Both provision and protection, so long as it shall be for God's glory and the person's good, that he be continued in this world, are by express promise insured to him. *He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given*



given him, his water shall be sure. Isa. xxxiii. 6. *The young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.* Psal xxxiv. 10.

Victory over death, the last enemy which militant saints are called to encounter, is insured in the promissory part of the covenant. To which I may add redemption from the grave, and a glorious resurrection in due time. *For when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. xv. 53,—57. The promissory part of this covenant,

*In fine*, Insures the actual introduction of the numerous tribes and individuals of the spiritual Israel into the celestial Canaan, and the consummation of their felicity in the beatific vision and fruition of God and the Lamb in the new Jerusalem for ever and ever. This is that eternal life, which, as the all-comprehending blessing in the new covenant, is infallibly secured to all for whom the Surety undertook in it. All the evil threatened in the covenant of works is comprehended in the word *death*. On the other hand, all the great and good things promised in the covenant of grace are included in the term *life*. The sum-total of both covenants, therefore, is this; *The wages of sin is DEATH; but the gift of God is ETERNAL LIFE, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Rom vi. 23.

On this part of the subject, it is natural to ask, Has the covenant of grace any *penalty*? That the covenant of works made with the first Adam had a penalty, as well as a precept and a promise, we found on a former occasion. The reason of adding a penalty to that covenant is obvious. But between the two covenants there

there is a vast disparity. Infinitely superior is he, with whom the covenant of grace was made, to him with whom the covenant of works was made. A penalty in any covenant ever supposes the possibility of the failure of at least one of the parties in it. If, therefore, both the parties contracting in this covenant be infallible, the supposition of a penalty in it must be preposterous and absurd. This covenant is not less conspicuous for its *stability*, than for the other excellencies of it. Much comforted was dying David from this consideration. *Although my house be not so with God as I could wish, says he, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and SURE; this, therefore, is all my salvation, and all my desire.* Fallibility, in point of practice, indeed, belongs to such as are inflated in this covenant. But to their Surety infallibility belongs; and on him, not on them, does the completion of their redemption depend.

A passage of the Psalm, from which our text is selected, to a superficial reader, indeed, may have the appearance of a threatening. But it only is an *appearance*. In relation to the spiritual seed of the great Surety of this covenant, Jehovah speaks thus, *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.* But that this is intended, and to be interpreted, not as a proper threatening, but as a most consolatory promise, the following words put beyond a doubt. **NEVERTHELESS**, that is, notwithstanding what I have now said, may to the weak believer and discouraged Christian wear a frowning aspect, he has no reason to be intimidated or afraid, for I do not intend his hurt, but his good—*For my loving-kindness will I not take from him the Head, or from any of his members, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail either to him or them. My covenant will I not break,* either to  
the

the one or the other; nor, on any account, alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Psal. lxxxix. 30,—34. The thing in the general intended in the former part of the passage, is that necessary and useful chastisement which God, in the endearing character of a most merciful and indulgent Father, administers to his dear children on earth. Very different is the situation of a *beloved*, though *undutiful*, child, in the correcting hand of a *kind*, though *offended*, Father, from that of an unhappy criminal in the hand of a severe judge. Others of mankind, God, as a righteous judge, punishes. But his own children, he, as a compassionate Father, only corrects. He does it not because he hates, but because he loves them; not from any satisfaction he has in their affliction and sorrow on its own account, but because of the necessity and subserviency of it to their best interests. *For whom the Lord LOVETH he CHASTENETH, and SCOURGETH every son whom he RECEIVETH.* Heb. xii. 6. *For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* Lam. iii. 33. *If they are in heaviness, through manifold temptations, it only is, for a season, and because there is a necessity for it.* 1 Pet. i. 6.

Do the children of God themselves account such sanctified affliction a punishment? Far from it. Justly do they reckon it a very high privilege and blessing. For it is a special mean of the destruction of indwelling sin and the sanctification of their souls. By it are they prepared for the everlasting possession of that happy world, in which sin and sorrow are equally and forever unknown.

Is the promissory part of the covenant such? Then what a copious and rich spring of consolation does it open to all who, either at an earlier period or a later, have been refugees from the covenant of works to this superior covenant! With wonder, joy, and praise, may we, in the words of the Apostle, say, *Unto us are given exceeding great and precious promises.*

Having

Having in a cursory manner reviewed the contracting parties, and the constituent parts of this covenant, I shall now

IV. Consider the ADMINISTRATION of it. It was not sufficient that the covenant was transacted between the Father and the Son from everlasting, and that, at a certain period of time, the condition of it was fulfilled. In order that it might be forthcoming and effectual for the salutary ends and purposes of its appointment, the administration of it was necessary. It behoved the administration of it, therefore, to be committed to a person worthy of the important trust. And who so worthy of the honour of administering it, and dispensing its blessings, as the person, who, actuated by zeal for his Father's glory, and love to his chosen people, obeyed and died to purchase such precious blessings for persons the most unworthy and undeserving!

This covenant was from eternity a secret in the divine breast. But the salutary design of it required that it should be revealed to sinners, for whose salvation it was intended. Nor is it enough that the covenant is revealed and its blessings offered to us. We must be personally instated in it, and actual partakers of them. Very different, however, is this covenant, as it was from eternity proposed by the Father to the Son, and as it is in time revealed and offered to us. Having fulfilled the condition of it, the glorious Head and administrator now offers and applies its benefits to us in the most unconditional and gratuitous manner. Accordingly, as I observed on this subject already, though, as it relates to the Surety, it is, with the strictest propriety, called a *covenant*, as it refers and is administered to us, it rather is a *testament*. This occasions the twofold disposition of which our Lord speaks to his disciples. *I appoint*, says he, or *dispone, unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed, or disponded, unto me.* Luke xxii. 29.

Very

Very different, indeed, is the manner in which his Father disposes it unto him, from the manner in which he disposes it unto us. In a *federal* way was it disposed to him; that is, it was proposed to him, and he obtains it in virtue of an onerous condition performed by him. In a *testamentary* way does he dispose it to us; that is, it is, as a rich and free legacy, in the most unconditional and gratuitous manner, bequeathed to us.

With the most obvious propriety, may this covenant, in relation to us, be stiled a *testament*. Accordingly, in our translation of the Apostolical writings, it is at one time denominated a *covenant*, and at another a *testament*. Four things especially belong to a testament; a *testator*; *legacies*; *legatees*; and the *confirmation* of the testament by the death of the testator. Now, all these things, as we will see immediately, belong to this covenant, as administered in the church on earth.

1. A TESTATOR. This character the Mediator of the new covenant expressly bears. *For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the TESTATOR. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth.* Heb. ix. 16. 17. That the Apostle here speaks of our glorious Mediator, the context clearly and irrefragably proves. With what propriety and for what reasons he is stiled a *testator*, the following particulars will shew. Accordingly,

2. The LEGACIES. Rich legacies! Here are all the blessings of grace and of glory. The blessed Testator himself comprehends them all under one word, PEACE. In the immediate view of his death, he bespeaks his surviving disciples thus, *PEACE I leave with you, my PEACE I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* John xiv. 27. Accordingly, under this all-comprehending word, the Apostolical writers of the New Testament include every thing necessary and con-

ducive to our felicity and comfort, temporal and spiritual, in time and eternity. Often in their epistles are grace and peace conjoined. The former may denote the origin and spring of our felicity; the latter the copious emanations and streams which flow from it. How strong was the dying love of Jesus Christ! In the very midst of his last anguish and agonies, in his last hours and moments, how solicitous was he for the prosperity and comfort of his surviving friends!

3. The LEGATEES. Very different, indeed, is the Redeemer's testament from every other testament, of which we have read or heard. Infinitely rich are the legacies. Most unworthy and wretched are the legatees. To sinners of the human kind, as such, is the covenant administered, and the blessings of it offered. If any sinner of mankind, therefore, do not obtain these blessings and legacies, it must be because he does not claim and plead them. Many, indeed, to whom the blessings of salvation are offered, perish. What is the reason? Is it because they have no access to the Saviour and salvation? No. The true reason is assigned by our Lord himself. YE WILL NOT *come to me*, says he, *that ye might have life*. John v. 40. Now, that sinners of mankind, as such, are the objects of the external administration of the covenant, to whom the Redeemer makes over rich spiritual legacies in his testament, to be claimed by them as his legatees, to whom, in a word, a full and free salvation is offered, the scripture often declares. Is the gospel preached to the *elect*, as such? Is salvation offered only to *sensible* sinners, and persons possessing certain distinguishing qualifications? Is not the gospel rather preached, and salvation offered, to sinners of mankind, *as such*? Hear the great Preacher of righteousness himself on this important point. Thus he speaks, *Unto you, O MEN! I call; and my voice is to the sons of man*, the descendants of Adam, indiscriminately. Prov. viii. 4. *I am not come to call the righteous, but*

SINNERS to repentance; impenitent and insensible sinners. Such, in an especial manner, need repentance. Matth. ix. 13. Thus, though Christ be the actual and eventual Saviour only of his body, the church, he is the official Saviour of the world. *And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour OF THE WORLD.* 1 John iv. 14. He is a partaker of that nature which is not peculiar to any nation or description of mankind, but common to all. For he is the Author of a common salvation, and will have men of all nations and conditions to be saved.

4. The CONFIRMATION of the testament by the death of the testator. At a very early period did the Redeemer make his testament. From eternity was it agreed among the CO-ETERNAL THREE, that the second person, the Surety of the covenant, should be the *administrator* of it. Accordingly, as soon as sin entered into the world, did he enter on the actual administration of it, and make over all its benefits and blessings in a *testamentary* way to sinful, fallen men. He did not, indeed, for four thousand years from the fall of man, and the commencement of his mediatory administration, *actually* die to ratify the covenant and confirm his testament. But, from the first entrance of sin, and the revelation of this covenant, he may be said to have died and ratified it *typically*.

During the *patriarchal* ages and the Mosaic œconomy, *expiatory* sacrifices all along obtained. These were not intended to make *real* atonement for iniquity, but only to prefigure the all-atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He may, therefore, be said, to be a *Lamb slain*, though not really, yet typically, *from the foundation of the world*. And, at the appointed time, as was indispensably necessary, he actually died for the *confirmation* of his blessed testament. For *without the shedding of blood, and blood of infinite value, is no remission of sin, or redemption of sinners.*

Differently is this covenant administered in earlier and later times. The administration of the covenant has been considered in a *threefold* view; in relation to three great periods of the church; the *Patriarchal*, the *Jewish*, and the *Christian*. It is generally considered as *twofold*; *legal* and *evangelical*, or *Jewish* and *Christian*. *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* John i. 17. *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* Heb. i. 1, 2. The covenant, in substance, ever is the same. It only is in the manner of external administration that it differs in earlier and later times. Accordingly, in relation to the diversity of administrations of it, it is considered as *old*, and as *new*. In itself it ever has been and ever will be new; not only to the end of time, but through the unending ages of eternity. The first administration of it, however, has long ago waxed old. Another, a new administration, has succeeded and superseded it. In point of perspicuity, extent, and spirituality, the latter far transcends the former. The elementary and carnal dispensation besitted the infantile state of the church. A more spiritual and heavenly dispensation befits the more perfect and mature state, at which the church has now arrived. Such is the comparative view which the Apostle gives us of the two dispensations. *Now, I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the ELEMENTS of the world; but, when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* Gal. iv. 1,—5. This subject the Apostle farther elucidates and explains in an epistle, the well known design of which is to establish



establish the superiority of the Christian to the Jewish administration of the covenant. *If, says he, that first covenant, that is, the Jewish administration of the covenant of grace, had been faultless, then should no place have been found for the second, and superior administration of it. But, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house Judah; that is, I will introduce another and a better dispensation of the covenant; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers; that is, the Mo-faiac œconomy, which was adjusted and established in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.—Now, in that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now, that which decayeth, and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away. Heb. viii. 7, 8, 9, 13.*

In a very gradual way, as well as at different times, was this covenant revealed in the early ages of the world and the church. During the unincarnate state of the Son of God, and the non-accomplishment of the great work of redemption, the covenant was administered in a typical and emblematical manner. A great variety of typical persons and places, things and actions, were used. To the church in her imperfect and infantile state these represented, in a sensible manner, spiritual and heavenly things to come. Christ, in his mediatory person and work, was prefigured. During the non-accomplishment of the work, in point of impetration, matters were so ordered, that, though the administration of the covenant was effectual for the salvation of numbers, yet it was comparatively contracted and narrow. For many ages the gospel was preached, and salvation was confined to the Jews, with a few Gentile proselytes, as pledges of the introduction of the Gentile nations into the church at a future period. These proselytes are generally supposed to have been of two kinds,

kinds, distinguished by the names of *profelytes of the gate*, and *profelytes of righteousness*, or of *the covenant*.

The former renounced the gross idolatries of the nations, and observed what the Rabbinical writers among the Jews have called the seven precepts of Noah. The reason of the appellation, *profelytes of the gate*, is obvious. Notwithstanding that they were allowed to dwell in Canaan, and had certain privileges among the native Jews, they were only a sort of outer court worshippers. To the seals of the covenant they were not admitted. Naaman the Syrian, Cornelius the centurion, the Ethiopian eunuch, and Solomon's numerous servants, are supposed to have been profelytes of this kind.

The latter, or the profelytes of righteousness, not only renounced Pagan idolatry, but embraced the whole Jewish religion, submitting to the initiatory ordinance of *circumcision*, and also receiving the other seal of the covenant, the ordinance of the *passover*.

Thus, during the old administration of the covenant, the Jewish church was confined within a sacred inclosure, and all the other nations of the world were excluded. But the better dispensation knows no distinction, and has no respect of persons. *For, under it, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision.* Gal. vi. 15. *Now, there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.* Col. iii. 11.

Far is the New Testament church from being confined to any one quarter or country of the world. Sinners come to Christ and into his church, from the East and the West, the North and the South. The new Jerusalem, of which we have a magnificent description in the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation, is said to have four equal sides, and in each of its sides three gates, to intimate, that there is access into it for the inhabitants of all the four great quarters of the world.

world. *The gospel, either has been or will be preached in all parts of the inhabited world, for a witness to all nations.* Matth. xxiv. 14. *For all the ends of the earth have seen, or shall see, the salvation of our God.*

The salutary ends and purposes for which the Redeemer has been honoured with the actual administration of the covenant, and performs it in the several ages of the church, may be collected from what hath been said already. It was in order to the commencement, the progress, and the final completion of that mystery and work of grace, which is carried on in the church on earth, from the first promulgation of the gospel to Adam and Eve in paradise, till the actual arrival of the solemn period at which the blowing of the silver trumpet of the everlasting gospel is to cease, and to be succeeded by the founding of that tremendous trumpet by which the dead are to be raised. The important design of the administration of the covenant, in short, is the conversion of the unconverted elect, the edification of imperfect saints, and the complete redemption of all those for whom the Mediator undertook in this everlasting covenant.

Equally conspicuous in the choice of the administrator of the covenant are the wisdom and the grace of God. Are the glory of God and the salvation of sinners deeply concerned in the administration of the covenant? Who so worthy and so fit to be entrusted with it as the person who, stimulated by zeal for the glory of God, and an ardent desire for the salvation of perishing sinners, most cheerfully undertook and accomplished the hard work of the condition of this covenant? Infinitely worthy is he of the authority and honour attending the administration of it.

The brief view I have now given of the great doctrine of the covenant of grace, suggests a copious, as well as important improvement.

*First,* Is not this covenant, in every view, superior

to

to the covenant of works? Superior is it in point of *antiquity*. It is from everlasting, as well as to everlasting. Unknown is the length, as well as the breadth of redeeming love. In duration, it is equal to eternity itself; not less without beginning than without end. *Lord! what is man*, that he should have employed thy thoughts, that thou shouldst have formed purposes and designs of mercy to him from an earliest eternity?

Superior is this to the other covenant, in respect of the person with whom it was made. Is not the second Adam, in all respects, infinitely superior to the first? Is he not, as Mediator, the most extraordinary person known either in this or in any other world? *He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.* John iii. 31.

Superior is this covenant in respect of the glory which accrues from it to God, and the felicity which it ensures to sinners. Worthy of the wisdom and of the goodness of God, indeed, was the covenant of works. By it, had it been fulfilled, God would have been glorified, and man's felicity perpetuated, as well as completed. But far more eminently is God glorified by the fulfilment of the condition of this superior, this better covenant. Infinitely has the Redeemer glorified God on the earth. What an honour has the law received! Most amply is justice satisfied. What an endearing consideration to the saints is it, that their redemption was obtained by the blood of the Lamb that was slain?

Superior is this covenant in point of *stability*. Sufficiently firm did the covenant of works appear at first to be. The fulfilment of its condition depending upon a mutable being, there was, however, a possibility of failure. But infallibly sure is this better covenant. Accordingly, to intimate the infallibility, as well as the vast importance of it, it is said to be ratified and confirmed with the mutual oath of the covenanting parties.

Of

Of his swearing to his eternal Son, as our Surety in it, God the Father himself speaks.—*Once have I SWORN by my holiness, says he, that I will not lie unto David.* Psal. lxxxix. 35. Of the Surety's swearing, there is no less express mention in another Psalm.—*Lord! remember David and all his afflictions; how he SWARE unto the Lord, and VOWED unto the mighty God of Jacob.* Psal. cxxxii. 1, 2. Infalibly certain is the final salvation of all who by faith have obtained a saving interest in this covenant. Far superior, in point of stability, is the state of the most imperfect and weak believer on earth to that of perfect Adam in his primeval innocency. For the final perseverance of the saints, the weakest, as well as the strongest, is infalibly secured. The completion of their purity and felicity, and the perpetuity of it, nothing can obstruct. Happy, thrice happy, then is the person that is instated in this covenant. For, if once in it, ever in it.

*Secondly,* We see the propriety and importance of the different characters in which the Mediator appears and acts. In order to the fulfilment of the *conditional* part of the covenant, it behoved the Mediator to act the part of our KINSMAN-REDEEMER. This implies the forlorn condition of the persons for whom he engaged in the covenant. What was incumbent upon him, and what he, in the character of our Kinsman-Redeemer, did, I will have occasion to show in my next Lecture.

It behoved the Mediator of the covenant to be our SURETY. Insolvent debtors are we all. A twofold debt do we all naturally owe; a debt of *obedience* to the law, and a debt of *satisfaction* to justice. Neither the one nor the other could we ever in our own persons have paid. But what we could not do our Surety has done in our stead. Obedience and satisfaction from him has God accepted for us. Accordingly,

It behoved the Mediator to be our sacrificing HIGH PRIEST, and to offer an all-atoning sacrifice to satisfy

for our sins. For He, who knew no sin, was made a *sin-offering* for us.

As the *administrator* of the covenant, the Mediator also sustains and acts in various characters. He is the glorious TRUSTEE of the covenant. All things are originally in him, and of him, *as God*. An all-fulness is in him *as Mediator*. This œconomical, dispensatory fullness is in him, to be by him communicated and distributed to us. Every saving blessing was purchased and is dispensed by him. *Of his fullness, say the saints in heaven and on earth, have we all received, and grace for grace.* John i. 16.

He sustains the character, and performs the part of the TESTATOR of the covenant. How ready was he to make his *testament*, and to bequeath the richest legacies, in the freest as well as the fullest manner, to poor sinners of mankind! At how early a period did he this? Unwilling are many men to make their latter will. To the very last do they delay it. No sooner did sin enter our world than the Redeemer arrived in it, and made over to sinners the rich blessings of salvation, as so many spiritual legacies to them; and, in order to confirm their faith in the validity of his testament, he immediately, in a *typical* manner, confirmed it. How superior is Jesus Christ to all other testators! In the case of every other testament, the testator and the executor must be two different persons. But the Redeemer, though once dead for the confirmation of his testament, now lives as the executor of it. Did he die to purchase all saving benefits and blessings for us? and shall he not most readily bestow them upon us? Had he satisfaction, superior to what a hungry man has in meat or a thirsty man in drink, in fulfilling the conditional part of the covenant, and must he not have ineffable satisfaction in the administration of it for the actual redemption of the church?

It was necessary that the Mediator of the covenant should

should be a PROPHEt, no less than an atoning High Priest. It behoved the eternal secret to be disclosed. At an early period was it discovered. What wonder and what joy did the discovery of it occasion in both heaven and earth! How fit a person was the Mediator to be the *revealer* and *interpreter* of Heaven's secrets to us! For, though, *no man hath at any time seen God the Father, yet, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* John i. 18.

It behoved the Mediator to be a KING, as well as a Prophet. As Mediator he ever acts in virtue of a commission from the Father. It was necessary, therefore, that he should not only be called to the hard work of purchasing our redemption, but invested with the high honour of dispensing and applying it. For this end has *God exalted him with his right hand to be a PRINCE and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* Acts v. 31.

It is necessary, *in fine*, that the administrator of the covenant perform the office and work of an INTERCEDING HIGH PRIEST. For this end has he removed from earth to heaven; and in that celestial world he obtains the actual communication of every thing necessary and conducive to the edification and prosperity of his mystical body on earth. The actual instatement of the unconverted elect in the covenant, and the complete redemption of all who have already been instated in it, does his all-prevailing intercession infallibly insure.

Now, is not this covenant wisely ordered, and, in all respects, adjusted in a manner worthy of the manifold wisdom of God?

*Thirdly*, How admirably adapted is this covenant to the situation of sinners ruined by the violation of the old covenant! Wisely, indeed, was the covenant of works concerted. It was adapted to man's original state. But to fallen man it can afford no relief. From that quarter no help can be expected. For doing what

it requires, fallen man is totally disabled. But in the revelation of this superior covenant a door of hope is opened. Life is offered as a free gift. The offer is clogged with no condition to be performed by us. Salvation comes to us in the way of a covenant, which is altogether unconditional; the condition of it having been fully performed by the glorious Surety in our room; and in order to obtain a free redemption for us.

*Fourthly*, What a full warrant, and what ample encouragement has every sinner of mankind, to whom the gospel comes, to apprehend this covenant, and to claim its benefits and blessings for himself! What is the gospel but a revelation and exhibition of this salutary covenant, as the grand expedient which Heaven has invented and uses for the salvation of our sinful world? To whom shall an exhibition and offer of a Saviour and salvation be made but to sinners? Does the Redeemer's testament contain the benefits and blessings of a full and a free salvation, as so many spiritual legacies? Who should be his legatees? To whom should such legacies be bequeathed, but to sinners? Does a dying friend make his testament in favour of a surviving relation, and his numerous posterity, unborn as well as born? A full and particular nomination of the legatees, in this case, is unnecessary and impracticable. The several children of the family, however, are entitled to avail themselves of the testament; and, if they do not obtain its contents, it must be because they do not claim them.

The Redeemer may be said to have made his testament when he appeared to our original ancestors in paradise, immediately after the fall. Then did he first discover himself to them as their Saviour. To their astonishment and their joy did he inform them, that, long before they fell, by the violation of their covenant, this superior covenant was made with him for their recovery and redemption. Intimating to them,  
that,



that, at a future period, he was to fulfil the condition of his covenant, he exhibited to them its benefits and blessings in the fullest and freest manner. He preached and offered to them that salvation, which, as sinners, they now needed, and without which they were undone for ever. In other words, the saving benefits and blessings which the Father had, in a federal manner, from eternity, disposed to him, to be by him obtained for sinners, he now, in a testamentary manner, disposed to sinful man. His testament he now made in favour of Adam himself, and his numerous children. Accordingly, each of them, to whom the gospel comes, as soon as he is born into the world, is entitled to plead the Redeemer's testament, and to claim the rich legacies contained in it. Is it, therefore, a question with any of you, whether you be among the Redeemer's legatees, and entitled to claim his saving legacies? Interesting question! The determination of it, however, is easy. It turns upon this other question; Do you belong to the posterity of Adam? Are you members of the human family? To Adam and to his posterity, as well as himself, was this testament originally made. Each of his posterity, therefore, to whom it is notified and published, has an indisputable title to plead it, and to claim the salutary contents of it. To sinners of mankind, as such, are they exhibited and offered. For thus the Redeemer, in words already quoted, speaks, *Unto you, O MEN! I, the preacher of righteousness, call. My voice, in the gospel, is to the sons of man, the sinful descendants of fallen Adam, without exception.* For the Father hath sent me to be the Saviour of the lost world of mankind. If, therefore, any one individual of the human family, to whom the gospel is preached, be not eventually saved, it is not because he has no access to the Saviour and salvation, but because he does not employ him, and apply it.

*Fifthly,* We see the different situations of the believing

ving and unbelieving hearers of the gospel, in relation to this covenant. The former are interested in all its benefits and blessings, and entitled to the full and final possession of them. The latter, though not as yet savingly instated in this covenant, have access to it and all the saving blessings which it contains.

This right of access to Christ, which is the high privilege of gospel-hearers as such, and therefore the right of *all* gospel-hearers, is, indeed, a most important point. Whether we have an interest in Christ or not, may be a question with us. Often is it a question with believers themselves. But whether we have access to Christ, needs not to be a question with any of us. Even this, however, often has been a question with the awakened hearers of the gospel; nay, with gracious persons themselves. Their guilt stares them in the face. They have alarming apprehensions and views of their demerit and danger. Their cruel adversary whispers into their ears, their own unbelieving and legal hearts suggest, that, though at an earlier period they might have been saved, the Redeemer, notwithstanding his ability and his will to save sinners, now cannot, or at least will not, save them. Their *harvest is past and their summer ended*, and, therefore, they cannot now be saved. But, does not the gospel furnish every person, to whom it is preached, the old as well as the young, the graceless no less than the gracious, with a sufficient right of access to Christ, as a Saviour? Is not a gospel-dispensation, for this very reason, represented under the familiar similitude of a *market*? *I counsel thee*, says the compassionate Redeemer to the poor, wretched, miserable sinner, *to BUY of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see.* Rev. iii. 18. Of the persons that go to a market, one buys the wares offered to sale in it, another does

not buy. But are not the commodities exposed to the latter, and has he not access to buy as well as the former?

Were not the blessings of salvation offered to the gospel-hearer that perishes, as well as to him that is saved, the former could not contract the guilt or incur the danger of a rejection of the Saviour and salvation. A non-reception of salvation, no less than a reception of it, necessarily implies the offer of it and access to it. How ample and universal is the revelation of this covenant, and the exhibition of salvation which the gospel makes to the unworthy and wretched! *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. 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.* Isa. lv. 1, 2, 3.

Sixthly, We see the safety and felicity of every person that has been savingly brought into the bond of this covenant. Upon a sure bottom does such a person stand; a bottom that cannot possibly misgive. On a firm foundation does he build his hopes for eternity; a foundation which God has chosen and laid in our Zion. This, indeed, is the *only* foundation on which we can safely, and with success, build for eternity. Very different, indeed, is this chariot of the wood of Lebanon from all other chariots. It has *pillars of silver*, and a *golden bottom*. By the former, the best interpreters have understood the precious promises of this everlasting covenant, on which all true believers rest; and for the accomplishment of which they wait. By the latter, they understand the divine veracity and faithfulness

faithfulness interposed in the promises, and pledged for the accomplishment of them. Solid bottom! Stable foundation this! At an early period was the old covenant unbottomed, and disabled for carrying man to the realms of bliss. This chariot has a covering of *purple*; or, as the word has been translated, scarlet. Is not this evidently to be interpreted and understood of the all-atoning blood of the Surety, by which the covenant was ratified, which serves for a canopy and covert, under which every person savingly in the covenant, is effectually protected and defended from danger. Happy situation! Such a person *dwells on high*; *his place of defence is the munition of rocks*. Provision, as well as protection, does the covenant insure to him. For it is immediately added, *Bread shall be given him, and his water shall be sure*. Isa. xxxiii. 16. *There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?* Rom. viii. 1, 33, 34. Hence,

*Seventhly*, It must be the highest interest of each of you to ascertain his instatement in this covenant. Under the old covenant, and under its curse you all have been. The question then is, Have you seen your danger? Have you seen the gospel-way of escape and deliverance? Are you conscious that there is no safety for you but in the chariot of the wood of Lebanon, and under its purple covering? Are you pleased with this covenant, with the Head, with the blood, with the promises, and with the blessings of it? Is it all your salvation, and all your desire? Are you pleased with that fatherly discipline and correction insured to you as the children of God in the covenant? Do you see it to be needful and beneficial for you? and are you thankful for it? Does the advancement of the interests and honour of the Head of the covenant lie near your hearts? Do you, day after day, with fervour and importunity, pray for the accomplishment of the promissory part of the

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the covenant; not only in your own personal salvation, but in the extension and enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the edification of his mystical body in the world. In this sense, the ancient prophecy has a continued fulfilment, *Prayer shall be made for him continually.* Psal. lxxii. 15. Can you adopt the Psalmist's words, *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy?* Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6.

Lastly, We see the interest, as well as the duty, of each of us. It is to take hold, by faith, of this salutary covenant, and to apply its blessings to ourselves. Ruined and undone are we all by the breach of the covenant of works. In this superior covenant, and in it only, is there salvation for us. But what can it profit us that there is such a covenant, and in it an all-sufficient salvation, if we be not for ourselves interested in it, and partakers of its benefits? In the event of a final neglect and rejection of it, must not the painful reflection, that we once had access to it, but misimproved this inestimable blessing, afflict us in a manner which no words can express? Now, it only is by believing that we can obtain a saving interest in it. Widely is the door of this mysterious chariot opened in the gospel. But what can it avail us that it is opened, if we do not, by faith, enter into it? Often has it been opened. Many have entered into it. But yet there is room; and room for you.

I cannot forbear to embrace this opportunity of recommending to the most careful perusal of my readers a book on this important subject of a small size, but of inestimable value and worth; a book, in my opinion, incomparably the best ever yet written on the subject by an uninspired man. The book, to which I refer, is entitled, "A view of the Covenant of Grace from the Sacred

Records; wherein the Parties in that Covenant, the Making of it, its parts *Conditionary* and *Promissory*, and the *Administration* thereof, are distinctly considered." This book, as is well known, was written by that great man of God, the late Reverend Mr Thomas Boston of Ettrick,—a man, in my estimation, the first our island has produced. So long as the Redeemer has a church on earth, his name, I am persuaded, will be favourable in it. With honour will his incomparable writings transmit it to latest ages. Especially has he done the most essential service to truth by his view of the Covenant of Grace, and his explanatory notes on "the Marrow of Modern Divinity." Notwithstanding the many great and good men that have appeared and written in Europe, especially in our favoured island, since the commencement of the Protestant reformation, the nature of the covenant of grace, of the law and of the gospel, with the essential difference between the two, do not seem to me ever to have been so well understood till this singular Christian and eminent Minister's "View of the Covenant," and "Notes upon the Marrow" were published, and read. These two books, therefore, I must, in the warmest manner, recommend to the most attentive perusal of all my hearers and readers, and every person that wishes to obtain clear views of the scheme of redemption.

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## Jesus Christ the only Redeemer.

1 TIM. ii. 5.

*There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.*

**T**O Jesus Christ all the Apostles, as well as the Prophets, give witness. That he is the Saviour, the all-sufficient, the only Saviour, is the constant and uniform declaration of all the inspired writers, both earlier and later. In this central point all the lines of revelation meet. Of the sacred scriptures this is the sum. *As there is one God, there is one Mediator between God and men.*

From this text, therefore, I shall take occasion to explain to you the account which the Compilers of the Catechism have given us of the mediatory person of Jesus Christ. It is queried, *Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?* The answer is, *The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be both God and man, in two distinct natures and one person for ever.*

Nothing can be more natural than the transition from the preceding answer to this. The great subject of the former is that everlasting covenant, the important and merciful design of which was to deliver fallen men out of a state of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation, by a Redeemer. This great design was formed from the earliest ages of eternity, and is accomplished in the several ages of time. Of both the sinfulness and the misery of the state into which mankind have fallen, we have an account in the preceding part of the Catechism. To that state of sin, into which the violation of the first covenant brought us, the state of salvation, into which the superior covenant introduces us, is opposed. Of this state of salvation we have a more particular account in the following part of the Catechism. It is a state of partial salvation in this world, and perfect salvation in the world to come. Is our natural state a state of sin and misery? Our saved state is a state of purity and felicity. Now, as the preceding answer speaks, the great and good work of rescuing us from the one state, and introducing us into the other, is accomplished by a Redeemer.

Accordingly, in the answer, which now comes under review, the Compilers of the Catechism, with great propriety, introduce a description of the glorious person of the Redeemer. Two things, especially in relation to him, claim our attention; his *person*, and his *office*. Of his general office and work, as our Mediator and Redeemer, we have an intimation heré. Of his several saving offices we have a more explicit and circumstantial account in the answers to some subsequent questions. Especially have we in this, and in the following answer, a description of his mediatory person; including both his divinity or Godhead, and his humanity or manhood.

The contents of this answer, I may comprehend under two general heads; *first*, a description of the person of  
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Jesus Christ, as God-man, Mediator; and, *secondly*, an intimation of the general character which he sustains in the œconomy and work of our redemption.

I. We have a description of the person of Jesus Christ, as God-man, Mediator. *The only Redeemer of God's elect* is THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO BRING THE ETERNAL SON OF GOD, BECAME MAN, AND SO WAS, AND CONTINUETH TO BE BOTH GOD AND MAN, IN TWO DISTINCT NATURES AND ONE PERSON FOR EVER.

The several parts of this description I shall consider according to the order in which they are here arranged. We have,

*first*, His high titles; *Lord, Jesus, Christ*. In explaining these titles I shall invert the order in which they are here enumerated. And begin with

CHRIST. This word, as is well known, is originally Greek. It answers to the Old Testament word Messiah; which is of a Hebrew derivation. The signification of both is the same; that is, the *anointed*, or the anointed one. This name is manifestly borrowed from the ancient practice of setting persons apart to an office among the Jews by the ceremony of anointing. In this manner were persons consecrated to all the three offices of prophet, priest, and king. Prophets are stiled by God himself his *anointed*. *Touch not mine ANOINTED*, says he, *and do my prophets no harm*. Psal. cv. 15. Kings, as well as prophets, were consecrated by this significant rite. *Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his, that is Saul's, head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath ANOINTED thee to be captain, or king, over his inheritance.* 1 Sam. x. 1. Of the unction of priests, the scripture often and explicitly speaks.

It has been a question, whether the ceremony of anointing was always used when persons were set apart to the prophetic, priestly, or kingly office among the Jews. It has been supposed that it was always used in the

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the case of *priests*; but not always in the case of prophets and kings.

As for Jesus Christ, there is no mention of his being anointed with material oil. But, in a sense peculiar to himself, does the character, *anointed*, belong to him. Of his unction the scripture speaks expressly. *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath ANOINTED thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* Psal. xlv. 7. That the Redeemer is here intended, an inspired writer of the New Testament, as an infallible expositor of the scriptures of the Old, evinces; for to him does he apply these words. Heb. i. 9. What the oil is, with which he was anointed, the evangelical Prophet, personating him, informs us; for thus he speaks, *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath ANOINTED me to preach good tidings unto the meek.* Isa. lxi. 1. The application of the character, *anointed*, to our Redeemer, has been understood to bespeak three things.

1. His *designation* from eternity to the office and work which he performs in time. This has been called his *eternal inauguration*. Of his being set apart to his mediatory office, or, as the phrase in the original text literally signifies, anointed from eternity, he himself speaks. *I was, says he, set up, or anointed, from everlasting, from the beginning, ere ever the earth was.* Prov. viii. 23. *For he verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world*; that is, he was called and set apart to his mediatory office and work from all eternity. 1 Pet. i. 20.

2. His *authority* to execute the office and work of our Mediator. He did not run unsent. His office he did not usurp. The honour of it he did not arrogate to himself. *And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, *Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.*

*thee.* And he saith also in another place, *Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.* Heb. v. 4, 5. This has been understood to be the thing intended by the Father's sealing him, of which he himself speaks, *Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father SEALED.* John vi. 27. Often in the scriptures of both Testaments is he stiled the Father's servant, as well as his Son. The Father bespeaks him thus, *Thou art my SERVANT, O Israel! in whom I will be glorified.* (sa. xlix. 3. *Though he was in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; he took upon him the form of a SERVANT.* Phil. ii. 6, 7.

3. His *ability* and fitness for his important and arduous work. With the Spirit was he furnished superabundantly during his state of humiliation, to fit him for the accomplishment of the work in point of impetration. In him, in his now exalted state, does the Spirit reside superabundantly, to be by him dispensed to sinners as the great applier of the purchased redemption to them. Col. i. 19. John i. 16. forecited.

Were not persons set apart of old to all the three offices, of prophet, priest, and king, to intimate, that the Redeemer was to be not a prophet only, or a priest only, or a king only, but a prophet, a priest, and a king? Is he in the language of the Old Testament stiled Messiah, and in the language of the New, Christ? Is not this a plain intimation to us, that he is the common Saviour of Jews and Gentiles? The second name ascribed to him here is

JESUS. Jesus, as is well known, is originally an Old Testament name, and of a Hebrew etymology, though it has assumed a New Testament form. Thus, Jesus, in the New Testament, answers to Joshua in the Old. In his name, as well as in his office and work, was our Redeemer typified by that eminent person whom God employed

employed to lead the literal Israel out of the wilderness into the promised land. How superior is the antitypical Jesus to the typical! The former, as a Redeemer by power as well as price, brings the numerous tribes and individuals of the spiritual Israel out of the Egypt of a natural state, conducts them safely through the wilderness of this evil world, and in due time introduces them into the celestial Canaan. The important reason of the name here applied to our glorious Redeemer, an angel of the Lord appearing unto Joseph in a dream, hath assigned—*Thou shalt call his name JESUS, says he, for he shall save his people from their sins.* Matth. i. 21. It supposes, on our part, evil, both moral and penal, that is, the evil of sin and the evil of punishment; and it bespeaks deliverance from both. He delivers from wrath. Especially does he save from sin itself; from all sin, original and actual; from the all of sin; its guilt and defilement; the power and the practice, as well as the punishment of it. From all evil, to all good, does he redeem; to holiness and to happiness, to grace and glory. The third character here applied to the Redeemer is

**LORD.** Often in the scriptures of both Testaments, is this high character applied to him. Lord, in the scriptures of the Old Testament, when it is put for Jehovah, the incommunicable name of God, is observed to be written in *capital* letters. When it is put for another of the names of God, it is written in lesser characters. It has also been observed, that it is the term by which two Greek words of the New Testament are translated; and, when it answers to the one, it is applied to God essentially considered; and, when to the other, it is to be understood of the Mediator. On such philological observations, however, I need not insist.

The title *Lord* is generally understood to denote *authority, dominion, and power.* In this view it is most applicable to our glorious Mediator. Not only is he a prophet

prophet and a priest, but a king. *The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords* is his inscription. All power is originally in him; as he, in common with the other divine persons, is the supreme God. As Mediator he has universal authority and power by delegation from his Father. Thus he speaks, *All power is given unto me*, as Mediator, *in heaven and on earth*. Matth. xxviii. 18. Consolatory consideration to the church! All-sufficient is he to edify and establish, to protect and provide for her, as well as to subdue all his and her enemies.

We have,

*Secondly*, The high original of our glorious Redeemer. He is THE ETERNAL SON OF GOD. Of the Godhead itself, of the mysterious distinction of persons in it, and of the filial character of the second person, as well as of the paternal character of the first, I had occasion to speak in a foregoing Lecture. Between another father and his son, and the divine Father and his divine Son, there is an infinite disparity. Another father and his son have one specific nature. The divine Father and his divine Son have one individual or numerical nature. Though the first and second persons, as such, be different, one Godhead belongs to both. Another father, in duration, is superior, and his son inferior. But the divine Son is of equal antiquity with his divine Father. Therefore is he stiled here *the ETERNAL Son of God*. In time only is he the Son of man. But from eternity was he the Son of God. His humanity had a beginning. But his divinity is no less without beginning than without end.

To the epithet *eternal*, applied to the filial character of the second divine person, writers, in other instances orthodox, have objected. The amount of their objection is this—No where has the scripture designed him the eternal Son of God. But how nugatory is this objection! How many things does every church under heaven hold, which are not, in express terms, stated in

the scriptures? How many things are necessarily implied in the scriptures which are not fully expressed in them? That the first person in the Trinity, as such, is a Father; and that the second, as such, is a Son, the scripture, in places almost innumerable, intimates. Are not *Father* and *Son* the personal characters by which the first and the second of the co-eternal Three are distinguished, and by which we know that they are different persons? Now, if the first person, as such, be a Father, and the second, as such, a Son, must not the former be the *eternal* Father, and the latter the *eternal* Son.

Of this wonderful person it is affirmed,

*Thirdly*, That he BECAME MAN. Ever was he God. But in time only has he become man. What the Compilers of the Catechism intend by his *becoming man*, they inform us more fully in the next answer.

It was not the Godhead itself, or all the sacred Three, but the Son, in contradistinction to the Father and the Holy Ghost, that became man. This is affirmed here in opposition to the fundamental error of an ancient heretical sect of the third century, denominated from one Sabellius, a philosopher of Egypt. They held, that in the Godhead there is only one divine person; and that the second and third persons are only virtues of the Deity. The first person, whom we stile the Father, they compared to the sun; the second person to the illuminating, and the third person to the warming, influence of the sun. According to this hypothesis, the Father only is a divine person; and, therefore, he must have become man. Hence, in ancient ecclesiastical history, this sect are sometimes known by the name *patripassians*. But that, in the undivided Godhead, there are three persons, not inferior, but equal to one another, we found on a former occasion. And that the second person, called the Son, as distinguished from the first person, the eternal Father, and from the third,  
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the co-eternal Spirit, became man, the scripture often, and in terms the most explicit, teaches. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, that is, the second person was with the first, and the Word was made flesh*; that is, the second person, not either the first or the third, but the second, was incarnate, *and tabernacled among us in this lower world.* John i. 14. For, *when the fulness of the time was come, God, that is, God the Father, sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law.* Gal. i. 4.

*Fourthly*, In relation to this extraordinary person, it is added, that HE SO WAS, AND CONTINUETH TO BE BOTH GOD AND MAN IN TWO DISTINCT NATURES AND ONE PERSON FOR EVER. Prior to this period he was God only. Posterior to it he is neither God only, nor man only; but both God and man. That he ever was God I endeavoured, on a former occasion, to prove. That he now became man I am afterwards to shew. Thus there is a twofold state of the Mediator; the former an unincarnate, the latter an incarnate state; the one without beginning, the other without end. When he became man he did not cease to be God. Nor is he ever to cease either to be God, or to be man. Were our Mediator God only, or man only, he would be unqualified for his work. It is such as can be accomplished only by a person, who is both God and man. The necessity of his being God, in order to his undertaking and performing the work, is obvious.

In order that human nature might bear the avenging wrath of the Almighty, and its sufferings be adequate to the intrinsic evil and demerit of sin, it was necessary that it should subsist in a divine person. Various are the respects in which the work of our redemption appears to be such, that a divine person only could perform it. Who but God can forgive sin? Who but he can quicken the spiritually dead sinner? It behoved our Mediator to be man, as well as God. Subjection to

the law, in its precept and penalty, was incompatible with the perfection, the felicity, and the immutability of the divine nature. He became man that he might suffer and satisfy for sin, in the same specific nature that committed it. Having ever been God, and becoming in due time man, he was wonderfully fitted for his mediatory office and work. Illustriously is wisdom displayed in the constitution of the person of our Mediator. Most intimately is he related to the two parties between whom he acts. Is he God? Is he man? Is he both God and man? Then how fit a person is he to deal with both, the one the offended, the other the offending party, to bring about an honourable and permanent reconciliation betwixt them! I am not now to speak particularly of either the one or the other of his natures. Of his divinity I have spoken already. His humanity will be considered in the following answer.

It is affirmed that the two natures are entirely distinct in the person of the Mediator. Neither is the one converted into the other, nor blended with it. There is no composition or mixture of divinity and humanity here. Though they subsist in one person, they remain totally distinct. The essential properties of the one remain uncommunicated to the other. This is affirmed by the Compilers of the Catechism, in opposition to an old error held by an ancient heretical sect, known in ecclesiastical history by the name of Eutychians. This sect, denominated from Eutyches, called at one time a monk, and at another an abbot, flourished in the fifth century; and held, that the Mediator, as he is one person, has only one nature, a mixture of divinity and humanity; the two being blended together in his person, or, rather, his divinity having so swallowed up his humanity, that the latter cannot be distinguished from the former.

But that the two natures remain distinct in his mediatory person might be inferred from the natures themselves. Can divinity be degraded into humanity? or  
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can humanity be advanced to divinity? Is not immutability essential to divinity? What God now is, has he not ever been, and will he not ever be? The mysterious union of soul and body, in one human person, and the essential distinction between these two constituent parts of our nature, a certain writer on this subject supposes to be the best emblem we have to illustrate this mysterious union of divinity and humanity, and the necessary distinction that remains between them, in the person of our Mediator. Spirit and body, mind and matter, though they unite in a human person, remain unblended and unmixed the one with the other. The essential properties of the one remain uncommunicated to the other. The body, notwithstanding the mysterious union between the soul and it, retains the essential properties of body. The spirit no less retains the essential properties of spirit.

In the mediatory person of Jesus Christ divinity and humanity unite, and yet they remain altogether unblended. Neither are the essential perfections of his divinity communicated to his humanity; nor the peculiar properties of his humanity imparted to his divinity. It may be sufficient to exemplify this in one instance. Though knowledge belongs to both his divinity and humanity, the knowledge of the one infinitely differs from the knowledge of the other. The knowledge that belongs to him, as God, is unlimited and unbounded. *Peter said unto him, Lord! thou knowest ALL things; thou KNOWEST that I love thee.* John xxi. 17. The knowledge that belongs to him, as man, is limited and bounded. This accounts for what is said in Mark xiii. 32. *That day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the Father.*

Thus, as God-man, he is the most extraordinary person in heaven or in earth. Such another person is not to be found in the vast universe. Though he has

two natures infinitely more distant than heaven and earth, the one the uncreated Godhead, the other a created manhood, he is one and only one person. It is not from his humanity that he has his proper personality. He did not begin to subsist as a person, when he became man. He ever subsisted as a person, as a divine person, and a divine person distinct from the eternal Father and co-eternal Spirit. When he became man he did not assume another personality; but only took another nature into union with his divine person. His humanity never had any proper, personal subsistence by itself; but ever subsisted in his person, as the Son of God. His Mediator person was in wisdom constituted thus, in order that what he did, and what he suffered, might derive value and worth from the dignity of his person, as the Son of God. In human nature only did he suffer, and bleed, and die; and yet the blood he shed was divine; or, as the Apostle expresses it, the *blood of God*. Acts xx. 28.

The oneness of the person of the Son of God, notwithstanding the diversity of his natures, the Compilers of the Catechism assert here in opposition to a sect of heretics of the fifth century, known in ancient ecclesiastical history by the name of *Nestorians*; so denominated from Nestorius, a bishop of Constantinople. They held, that the Mediator has not only two natures, the divine and the human, but two different personalities, a divine and a human. They held, that though the virgin Mary was the mother of the man, known by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, she was not the mother of that divine person called God, and the Son of God, who is said to have purchased the church with his own blood.

The oneness of the person of the Mediator, notwithstanding the diversity of his natures, is, indeed, a mysterious, but a most important and necessary truth. Had he been man only, not God, his obedience and  
satisfaction

satisfaction could have been of only finite value and worth. Such as the cause is, such must the effect be. But if the humanity he assumed, and in which he satisfied the law in both its precept and its penalty, subsisted all along in his divine person, then, from the divinity of his person its services and sufferings must have derived infinite value and worth. That the Mediator, in point of personality, is one, notwithstanding that he has two natures, distinct and unmixed, the scripture in many places, and in terms sufficiently plain, intimates to us. *Unto us a child is born, says the evangelical Prophet, unto us a Son is given; the mighty God, the everlasting Father.* Isa. ix. 6. Here is his humanity, *a child born.* Here also is his divinity, *the mighty God, the everlasting Father.* Now, does that humanity belong to one person? and does this divinity belong to another? No. Of one person both are here predicated. He, who, in respect of his humanity, is a child born, in respect of his divinity, is the mighty God, the everlasting Father. His natures are two. But, as a person, he is one. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch; and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name, whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. In respect of his humanity, he is affirmed to be *a branch raised up unto David*; for, as man, he was of the tribe of Judah, and of the household of David. Previous to his incarnation, this once illustrious family was reduced to such obscurity, that it might, with the most obvious propriety, be compared to a *root* covered and almost dead under ground. But in his incarnation it sprung up and brought forth the most glorious fruit. Here is his divinity, as well as his humanity. JEHOVAH, the ineffable, the incommunicable name of the great God is attributed to him. Now, is it one person

son that is designed the branch, and another that is stiled Jehovah? No. The person is one. He, who, in his humanity, is the branch, possesses divinity, as well as humanity, for he is the infinite Jehovah.

Accordingly, in relation to him, the Father speaks thus, *Awake, O sword! against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts.* Zech. xiii. 7. He is man, and yet Jehovah's fellow, or equal. Is one person here stiled man, and another Jehovah's fellow? No. The same person is called man, and affirmed to be Jehovah's fellow. Similar is the account which the evangelical historian gives of him in words quoted from the evangelical Prophet—*Behold, a virgin shall be with child; and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is God with us.* Matth. i. 23. Isa. vii. 14. Here is a plain intimation of manhood; a son conceived and born. Here also is a plain intimation of Godhead; *his name is Emmanuel, God with us.* Now, is humanity attributed here to one person, and Deity to another? No. The Son, whom the virgin conceives and brings forth, is God. *Of the fathers, as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever.* Rom. ix. 5. How full and plain an intimation of the diversity of his natures, and the unity of his person! *Concerning the flesh,* or in respect of his humanity, he was a descendant of the Jewish Fathers, and yet was the supreme God. His humanity has a beginning. His divinity was no less without beginning than without end. He, who, in respect of his human nature, descended from the fathers, even he is *God blessed for ever,* without beginning, no less than without end.

The leading article of the great mystery of godliness is this, *God was manifest in the flesh.* 1 Tim. iii. 16. *The Word, that in the beginning was with God, and was God, was in due time made flesh.* John i. 1, 14.

Thus, in numerous places of both the Old Testament and

and the New we have the fullest and plainest intimations of the important truth asserted in the answer; namely, that our wonderful Mediator is *God and man in two distinct natures and ONE person.*

It is added, that this Mediator is God and man in two distinct natures, the divine and the human, and one person, FOR EVER. He once was God only, not man. Now he is both God and man; and what he now is he will be for ever. Of our nature he never is to divest himself. He loves our persons as he has not loved angels. He loves our nature as he never loved theirs. During the several ages of the Old Testament, he seemed as if he had longed for the actual arrival of the period, at which he was to become an actual partaker of human flesh and blood. Often did he then appear in a temporary human form. Ever must he continue to be God. Ever will he continue to be man. Thus may he be stiled a *substantial*, as well as an *official*, Mediator; that is, a Mediator in nature as well as in office. Ever will he be a Mediator in the former as well as in the latter view.

Having reviewed that description of the mediatory person of Jesus Christ, which the Compilers of the Catechism have given us in this answer, I am now,

II. To consider the general *character* which Jesus sustains, and under which he acts in the œconomy and work of our redemption, as *Redeemer*, and the *only Redeemer* of God's elect. THE ONLY REDEEMER of God's elect is, &c.

In the sacred scriptures is he expressly stiled a *Redeemer*. Under this character we find a very ancient believer, in the most express manner, acknowledging and avowing him. *I know that my REDEEMER liveth, saith Job, and that he shall stand, at the latter day, upon the earth. And, though after my skin worms destroy my body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and*

*mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.* Job xix. 25, 26, 27. To redeem, according to the etymology and primary signification of the word, is to buy back a thing that has been sold or lost. In the scriptures, it is applied to both persons and things. We commonly speak of two kinds of redemption; redemption *by price*, and redemption *by power*. The redemption, which our Jesus performs, is of both kinds.

It is a redemption by PRICE. Now what the ransom or price, which he paid for our redemption, is, two Apostles of the New Testament, in the fullest manner, inform us—*Feed the church of God*, says the Apostle Paul to the Ephesian elders, *which he hath purchased with HIS OWN BLOOD.* Acts xx. 28. *Ye know*, says the Apostle Peter to the Christians of the dispersion, *that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

It is a redemption by POWER. Though the Redeemer has paid a sufficient ransom for us, and satisfied justice for our sins; though he by the gospel proclaims liberty to us, we are unwilling to accept of it. Satan, the strong man, detains us in slavery to him. Both his policy and his power he exerts, in order to prevent the liberation of spiritual prisoners. This occasions the question, *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered?* Is Satan the strong man? The Saviour is infinitely stronger. By a signal exertion of his power, he spoils the strong man of his goods. By a strong hand and an outstretched arm were the literal Israel brought out of Egypt. But a superior exertion of divine power is necessary to deliver sinners from the spiritual Egypt of a state of nature. Sooner or later is the promise fulfilled in the experience of every sinner belonging to the election of grace, *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* Psal. cx. 3.

Thus

Thus the Redeemer can claim the redeemed as his property, on a twofold account. They are his by purchase, and his by conquest. He redeems them by his blood, and conquers them by his grace.

Admirably is redemption adapted to our condition, and calculated for accomplishing the important ends intended by it. Redemption supposes the alienation of the person redeemed. Man originally was not only in common with the other creatures, God's property, but, in a special manner, intended and fitted for his service and use. But soon did he alienate himself and his services from God; resigning both to sin and Satan. *For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought. Foolish bargain! But ye shall be redeemed without money.* Isa. lii. 3.

Eminently was our Redeemer typified, as well as clearly revealed, under the Old Testament. In order, therefore, to set this part of the subject in a proper light, it may be necessary and useful to review the laws relating to the redemption of both persons and things among the ancient Jews. Of these laws we have an excellent abridgment in the twenty-fifth chapter of the book of Leviticus. They relate in general to persons and to possessions—

To *possessions*. If an inheritance was sold or mortgaged, it was competent either for the person that sold or mortgaged it, or for his near kinsman, to redeem it. Verses 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. As the literal Israel of old was an emblem of the spiritual, that is, the redeemed of all ages and countries, the land appropriated to the former, and possessed by them, was a figure of that better country, of which the latter are now heirs, and which they are to possess for ever. This heavenly inheritance fallen man has forfeited. He cannot redeem it for himself; and, therefore, the forfeiture must be final, if a near kinsman, both able and willing, be not found to redeem it for him. But man's extremity is

God's merciful opportunity. The Son of God, to the astonishment of heaven and earth, interposed; and, in order to qualify himself for acting the part of our Redeemer, he condescended to become our kinsman. *For as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.* Heb. ii. 14. Thus has he recovered for fallen man that infinitely rich inheritance which by his sin he had forfeited and lost; that is. an interest in the infinite God, and the fruition of him. Each of the redeemed, therefore, can sing, *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup. Thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* Psal. xvi. 5, 6.

Among the ancient Jews there was a redemption of persons, as well as possessions. Verse 47,—55, inclusively.

Redemption is applied especially to two descriptions of persons; prisoners of war and slaves. Now such prisoners are we all in our natural state. At an early period did man commence hostilities against Heaven. Mad attempt! Soon did he find the Almighty God to be infinitely more than a match for him. Never was a poor captive as much in the power and at the mercy of a mighty conqueror, as the sinner is in the hand and at the disposal of God.

The most abject slaves are sinners in their natural condition; even slaves to Satan and to sin. Of all the species of slavery we know, this is the most wretched. From it no one of us ever could have extricated himself. But *if the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, make us free, we shall be free indeed.* It has been hinted already, that, according to the Jewish law, it was either the person himself, or his kinsman, that was to redeem him and his inheritance. Ourselves we cannot possibly redeem. The heavenly inheritance we have forfeited, and never can recover for ourselves. The redemption



redemption of the soul, and of the celestial inheritance was a work of such importance and difficulty, that a divine person only could undertake and accomplish it. But between divinity and our humanity there was an infinite disproportion. Did it behove our Redeemer to be our kinsman? How then could the eternal Son of the eternal Father be in a capacity to redeem poor sinners of mankind, and recover the heavenly inheritance for them? Difficult question! But can any thing be too hard for infinite wisdom to contrive, and for infinite power to accomplish? In the unfathomable depths of his wisdom, God found out an expedient, by which the Son of God might become the Son of man; and, becoming bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, might act the part of our *kinsman-Redeemer*. *For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; partakers of one common nature, and related to one common Father; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.* Heb. ii. 11.

To the Jewish Goel, or typical kinsman-Redeemer, it belonged to avenge the blood of his relation, if murdered. By sin and Satan was the first Adam murdered; and all his posterity were murdered in him. Sin ever has a murderous tendency and effect. In the destruction either of the sinner or of itself, it must terminate. On sin and Satan, those cruel murderers of mankind, our glorious antitypical Redeemer has executed vengeance. For by him *transgression has been finished, and an end has been made of sin.* Dan. ix. 24. *And through death he hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.* Heb. ii. 14. Actuated with zeal for the glory of his offended Father, and love to sinners of mankind, he expresses his holy indignation against sin and Satan thus,—*I will tread THEM in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.* Isa. lxiii. 3, 4.

To the typical Goel did it belong, when his relation died without children, to marry his widow and raise up children to him. Our glorious kinsman-Redeemer, in virtue of his marrying our nature, and betrothing the church to himself for his happy and honoured spouse, raises up a numerous spiritual seed, which is continued in an uninterrupted succession from generation to generation on earth; and will be continued in heaven for ever. to perpetuate his name, and to do service to him, and to his God and their God, his Father and their Father. *A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.* Psal. xxii. 30, 31.

How ample is the redemption, of which our antitypical Goel is the author! It is, as I said already, a redemption from all evil, moral and penal, to grace and glory; from the law of works, Gal. iii. 13. and iv. 5; from this present evil world; for, as the Apostle speaks, *he gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God, and our Father.* Gal. i. 4. It is a redemption from death and the grave. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death! I will be thy plagues; O grave! I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.* Hos. xiii. 14. This accounts for the Apostle's phraseology. He speaks of *waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption, that is the glorification, of our body.* Rom. viii. 23.

In a word, we are said to be redeemed to God, as well as by him; to him the fountain of felicity, as well as being. So sings the church of the first-born, unto the once slain, but now living Lamb. *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* Rev. v. 9. It includes in it restoration to the favour and  
friendship

friendship of God ; to conformity and likeness to him ; to communion and fellowship with him ; in order to the advancement of his glory, and our highest dignity and felicity in the endless fruition of him.

It is affirmed, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the **ONLY** Redeemer. This important truth is asserted in terms no less express in the text prefixed to this Lecture. *There is ONE, and ONLY one, Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* It is stated in the Catechism in a consonancy to the scriptures, and also in opposition to the Popish notion of a plurality of mediators between God and us. It is pretended, that, though Jesus Christ be the *only* Mediator in point of satisfaction, yet there are many others who act the part of mediators with God for us in point of intercession ; particularly angels and glorified saints, who now intercede with God in heaven in behalf of militant saints on earth. On this point, indeed, Papists are not agreed among themselves. One part of them hold, that, along with our now glorified Mediator, the holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, intercede with God for us, the inhabitants of this lower world. Another part of them hold, that they only act as mediators between Christ and us. According to this hypothesis, there are two kinds of Mediators ; one, that is, Christ, between God and us ; and others, between Christ himself and us.

But, though the scripture often intimates the necessity of the mediation of Jesus Christ, between the offended God and us offending sinners of mankind, no where has it said any thing in relation to other mediators. Papists and Protestants may dream a thousand things. But the dictates of revelation, not the dreams of superstitious men, must direct us in every thing relating to religion. The scripture is the *only rule*, as well as the reason of our religious faith and practice. But, say the Papists, our doctrine concerning inferior mediators is founded on the scriptures. There is, they tell us, a plain intimation

ination of them in the following words. *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and the four and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.* Rev. v. 8. But what is this to the purpose? Are we, by the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders, to understand glorified saints, perfuming the prayers of militant saints, and presenting them to God? Can the Papists prove, that, by the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders in the former part of the verse, and by saints in the latter part of it, different persons are intended? Are not the same persons intended in both? Does not the verse represent, in general, the adoration and worship, which the ministers and other members of the church perform to God and the Lamb, on the important and joyful occasion of the latter taking the mysterious book out of the right hand of the former, in order to disclose its secret contents to them? Their worship, on this occasion, is expressed in terms manifestly borrowed from the temple and the worship of it; which allusions in this book are very frequent. It is well known to have been the constant practice of the devout Jews, at the time of offering the morning and evening sacrifice, to repair to the temple for prayer. Thus the sweet smell of the incense and their prayers ascended together.\*

\* The remainder of this Lecture will begin the Second Volume.



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