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OWEN'S EXPOSURE

OF THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS





OWEN'S EXPOSITION

OF THE

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.





AN  
EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS,  
WITH  
PRELIMINARY EXERCITATIONS.

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BY JOHN OWEN, D.D.

A NEW EDITION, IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.—John v. 39.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IN the Title-page of the original Edition, the Author  
‘ states that in the following Exposition, ‘ The original  
‘ Text is opened and cleared—ancient and modern trans-  
‘ lations are compared and examined—the design of  
‘ the Apostle, with his reasonings, arguments, and  
‘ testimonies, are unfolded—the faith, customs, sacrifices,  
‘ and other usages of the Judaical Church, are opened  
‘ and declared—the true sense of the Text is vindicated  
‘ from the wrestings of it by Socinians and others—  
‘ and lastly, Practical Observations are deduced and  
‘ improved.’





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  - (2.) That by the obedience, death, and blood-shedding of this same Jesus, who was crucified and slain, is redemption, forgiveness of sins, deliverance from the wrath to come, righteousness, and acceptance with God, to be obtained, and by him only, 613
  - (3.) That the way and means whereby forgiveness of sin, righteousness, and acceptance with God for sinners is attained by this Jesus Christ, is, that by the sacrifice of himself, his death and blood-shedding, with the punishment for sin which he voluntarily underwent, God was atoned, his justice satisfied, and his law fulfilled; and that because he had ordered in his infinite wisdom and sovereignty, with the will and consent of Christ himself, to charge all the sin of all the elect upon him, and to accept of his obedience for them, he undertaking to be their Surety and Redeemer, 615
  4. The root of all backsliding, of all apostasy, whether it be notional or practical, gradual or total, lies in un-

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5. The malignity and venom of sin is apt to hide itself under many, under any shades and pretences,	622
6. The best way to antidote the soul against sin, is to represent it unto the mind in its true nature and tendency,	ib.
7. Whoever departs from the observance of the gospel, and the institutions thereof, doth in so doing depart from the living God,	623
8. When a heart is made evil by unbelief, it is engaged in a course of sinful defection, of revolt from the living God,	626

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2. Gospel duties have an effectual efficacy attending them in their special seasons, 632
3. We have but an uncertain season for the due performance of most certain duties, ib.
4. The deceit which is in sin, and which is inseparable from it, tends continually to the hardening of the heart, ib.

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  2. Constancy and steadfastness in believing is the great touchstone, trial, and evidence of union with Christ, or a participation of him, 641
- First. There are many appearing evidences of union with Christ, that may and do fail, 642
- Secondly. There may be certain and un-deceiving evidences of a present participation of Christ, 643
- Thirdly. No grace, no sign or mark will any longer, or any further be an evidence or testimony in this matter, but only as the soul is effectually influenced unto perseverance thereby, 645
- Fourthly. Perseverance is an evidence of union, in that it is an effect of it, ib.
- Fifthly. Whatever profession hath been made by any, whatever fruits of it have been brought forth, whatever continuance in it there hath been, if it fail totally, it is sufficient evidence that those who have made it were never partakers of Christ, ib.
3. Persistency in our subsistence in Christ unto the end is a matter of great endeavour and diligence, and that unto all believers, 646
  4. Not only our profession and existence in Christ, but the gracious beginnings of it also, are to be secured with great

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1. That every circumstance of the Scripture is instructive, . . .	652	3. Fear is the proper object of gospel comminations, which ought to be answerable to our several conditions and grounds of obnoxiousness unto those threatenings, . . .	<i>ib.</i>
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2. Unbelief not only justifies, but glorifies the greatest severities of God, against them in whom it prevails, . . .	676	6. There is a failing temporary faith with respect unto the promises of God, which will not advantage them in whom it is, . . .	<i>ib.</i>
3. The oath of God is engaged against no sin but unbelief, . . .	677	7. The great mystery of useful and profitable believing, consists in the mixing and incorporating of truth and faith in the souls and minds of believers, . . .	<i>ib.</i>
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2. It is the people of God alone, who have a right unto all the privileges of the gospel; and who, in a due manner can perform the duties of it, . . . . .	798
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4. God hath graciously given his people an entrance into rest, during their state of work and labour, to sweeten it unto them, and to enable them for it, . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
5. Believers may, and do, find assured rest in a due attendance unto, and performance of the duties of the gospel, . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
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2. The first day of the week, the day of the resurrection of Christ, when he rested from his works, is appointed and determined for a day of rest or Sabbath unto the church, to be constantly observed in the room of the seventh day, appointed and observed from the foundation of the world, under the Old Testament, . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>

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2. That as the utmost of our labours and endeavours are required to our obtaining an entrance into the rest of Christ, so it doth very well deserve that they should be laid out therein, . . . . .	811
3. There is a present excellency in, and a present reward attending gospel faith and obedience, . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
4. Precedent judgments on others, are monitory ordinances to us, . . . . .	812
5. It is better to have an example, than to be made an example of divine displeasure, . . . . .	813
6. We ought to have no expectation of escaping vengeance under the guilt of those sins which others, in a like manner guilty of, have not escaped, . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>

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1. It is the way of the Spirit of God, to excite us unto especial duties, by proposing unto us, and reminding us of such properties of God, as the consideration whereof may in an especial manner incline us unto them, . . . . .	829
2. The life and power of Christ are continually exercised about the concerns of the souls of professors, . . . . .	831
3. The power of Christ in his word is irresistible, as to whatever effects he doth design in it, . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
4. Though men may close and hide things from themselves and others, yet they cannot exclude the power of Christ in his word from piercing into them, . . . . .	833
5. The Lord Christ discerneth all inward and spiritual things, in order to his present and future judgment of those things, and the persons in whom they are, . . . . .	834
6. It is no trouble or labour to the Word of God to discern all creatures, and all that is of them, and in them, seeing that there is nothing but is evidently apparent, open and naked under his all seeing eye, . . . . .	835
7. It is a great and difficult matter, really and practically to convince professors of the practical judging omniscience of Jesus Christ in the word of God, . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
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10. A due and holy consideration of the omniscience of Christ, is a great encouragement unto the meanest and weakest believers, who are upright and sincere in their faith and obedience, . . . . .	849

## VERSE 14.

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2. It is our duty, in the midst of all oppositions, to hold our profession firm and steadfast unto the end, . . . . .	860
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1. There is, there will be a season, many a season, in the course of our profes- sion or walking before God, wherein we do or shall stand in need of especial aid and assistance, . . .	889
2. That there is with God in Christ, God on his throne of grace, a spring of suitable and seasonable help for all times and occasions of difficulty, . . .	892
3. All help succour, or spiritual assistance in our straits and difficulties, proceed from mere mercy and grace, . . .	<i>ib.</i>
4. When we have, through Christ, ob- tained mercy for our persons, we need	

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not fear but that we shall have suit- able and seasonable help for our duties, . . .	<i>ib.</i>
5. The way to obtain help from God is by a due gospel application of our souls for it to the throne of grace, . . .	<i>ib.</i>
6. Great discouragements are used to in- terpose themselves in our minds and against our faith, when we stand in need of especial help from God, and would make an application unto him for relief, . . .	<i>ib.</i>
7. Faith's consideration of the interposi- tion of Christ in our behalf, as our High Priest, is the only way to re- move discouragements, and to give us boldness in our access unto God, . . .	893
8. That in all our approaches unto God, we are to consider him as on a throne, . . .	<i>ib.</i>







## P R E F A C E.

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THE general concernments of this Epistle, have all of them been discussed and cleared in the preceding Exercitations and Discourses. The things and matters confirmed in them, we therefore here suppose, and take for granted. And some of these are of such a nature, that without a demonstration of them, a genuine and perspicuous declaration of the design of the author, and of the sense of the Epistle, cannot be well founded or carried on. Unto them therefore we must remit the reader, who desires to peruse the ensuing Exposition with profit and advantage. But yet, because the manner of the handling of things in those Discourses, may not be so suited to the minds of all who would willingly inquire into the Exposition itself, I shall here make an entrance into it, by laying down some such general principles and circumstances of the Epistle, as may give a competent prospect into the design and argument of the apostle, in the whole thereof.

First. The first of these concerns the persons whose instruction and edification in the faith is here aimed at. These in general were the Hebrews, the posterity of Abraham, and the only church of God before the promulgation of the gospel, who in those days were distributed into three sorts, or parties,

1st. Some of them believing in Christ through the gospel, were perfectly instructed in the liberty given them from the Mosaic law, with the foundation of that liberty, in the accomplishment of that law, in the person, office, and work of the Messiah, Acts ii. 41, 42.

2d. Some with their profession of faith in Christ as the promised Messiah, retained an opinion of the necessity of observing the Mosaic rites; and these also were of two sorts.

1. Such as from a pure reverence of their original institutions, either being not fully instructed in their liberty, or by reason of prejudices, not readily admitting the consequences of that truth wherein they were instructed, abode in the observance of them without seeking for righteousness or salvation by them, Acts xxi. 20.

2. Such as urged their observance as indispensably necessary to our justification before God, Acts xv. 1; Gal. iii. 4. The first sort of these the apostles bore with in all meekness; yea, and using the liberty given them of the Lord, to avoid offending of them, joined with them in their practice, as occasion did require, Acts xvi. 3, ch. xxi. 23, 24, 26, ch. xxvii. 9; 1 Cor. ix. 20. Whence for a long season, in many places, the worship of the gospel, and the synagogue worship of the law, were observed together, James ii. 2, though in process of time many disputes and differences were occasioned thereby, between the Gentile and Jewish

worshippers, Rom. xiv. The other sort they opposed, as perverters of the gospel which they pretended to profess, Acts xv. 5; Gal. ii. 13—16, ch. iv. 9—11, ch. v. 2. And of these, some afterwards apostatized to Judaism; others abiding in a corrupt mixture of both professions, separated themselves from the church, and were called Nazarenes and Ebionites.

3d. Others, far the greatest number of the whole people, persisted in their old church-state, not receiving the salvation that was tendered unto them in the preaching of the gospel; and these also were of two sorts. 1. Such as, although they had not embraced the faith, yet were free and willing to attend to the doctrine of it, searching the Scriptures for a discovery of its truth, and in the meantime instantly serving God, according to the light of the Old Testament which they had received, and in these was the essence of the Judaical church preserved to its final dissolution, Acts xvii. 11, ch. xxviii. 22—24. 2. Such as being hardened in their infidelity, blasphemed, scoffed at, and persecuted the gospel, with all that professed it, Acts xiii. 45, 50, ch. xiv. 19, ch. xvii. 5; 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16; Rom. xi. 7—10, whom, not long after, the vengeance of God overtook in their total destruction.

Now our apostle, vehemently thirsting after the salvation of the Hebrews in general, Rom. ix. 1, ch. x. 1. having all these several sorts or parties to deal with, so frames his Epistle unto them, that it might be suited to the good of all, in their conversion, instruction, edification and establishment, as their several conditions did require; the latter sort only excepted, who being under judicial blindness, were cast out of the care of God, and of the apostle, Acts xiii. 46, 51. Hence in part is that admirable texture of this epistle, which Peter ascribes to his eminent wisdom, 2 Pet. iii. 18. As it is indeed evident from the story, that he did excel in applying himself to the various principles, capacities and prejudices, of them with whom he had to do. The Lord Christ having set him forth as a great example of that diligence, zeal and prudence, which he requires in the dispensers of the gospel. Divine reasonings, instructions, exhortations, promises, threats and arguments, are so interwoven in this epistle from the beginning to the end, that all to whose hands or hearing it should come, might everywhere meet with that which was of especial and immediate concern to themselves, unto which of the sorts before mentioned soever they did belong. And this principle we must have respect unto, in that intermixture of arguments to prove the truth of the gospel, with exhortations to constancy in the profession of it, which we shall meet with. The several conditions of those to whom the apostle wrote, required that way of procedure. Hence no one chapter in the Epistle is purely dogmatical, the first only excepted, nor purely parænetical; for though the design that lies in view, and is never out of sight, be exhortation, yet far the greatest part of the Epistle is taken up in those doctrinals, wherein the foundations of the exhortations do lie, and both are interwoven together, somewhat variously from the method of the same apostle in all his other Epistles, as hath been observed; that to the Galatians, which is of the like nature with this, only excepted.

Secondly. A second thing to be previously observed is, that although

those to whom the apostle wrote, were of the several sorts before mentioned, yet they centred in this, that they were Hebrews by birth and religion, who all agreed in some common principles relating to the subject about which he treated with them. These he makes use of unto them all; for though the unbelieving Jews did deny, or did not yet acknowledge, that Jesus was the Christ, yet they also consented to, or could not gainsay, what in the Old Testament was revealed concerning the person, office, dignity and work of the Messiah, when he should come, that being the faith whereby they were saved before his appearance, Acts xxvi. 6, 7. Upon these general principles wherein they also agreed, and which were the general persuasion of the whole Judaical church, the apostle lays the foundation of all his arguments. And hence he oft-times takes that for granted, which, without this consideration, should we look on any of those to whom he writes under the general notion of unbelievers, would seem to be the thing principally in question. And therefore have we at large already manifested what in those days was the avowed profession of the sounder part of the Judaical church concerning the Messiah, which the apostle here and elsewhere, in dealing with the Jews, built upon, Acts xxvi. 22, 23, 27, ch. xxviii. 23, ch. xiii. 16, 17; &c. which the reader must have constant respect to.

Thirdly. In urging testimonies out of the Old Testament, he doth not always make use of those that seem to be most perspicuous and apposite to his purpose; but oftentimes takes others more abstruse, obscure, and which at first view seem to be of less evident consequence. And that upon a double account. First, that he might instruct the believers amongst them in the more abstruse prophecies of the Old Testament, and thereby incite them to the further search after Christ under the Mosaic veil, and propheticall allegories, whereby he is therein expressed, aiming to lead them on towards perfection, ch. v. 12, vi. 1. Secondly, because most of the testimonies he makes use of, were generally granted by the Jews of all sorts to belong to the Messiah, his kingdom and offices; and his design was to deal with them chiefly, upon their own concessions and principles. As we have some few other helps remaining to acquaint us with what was the received sense of the Judaical church concerning sundry passages in the Old Testament relating unto the promised Christ, so the paraphrases of Scripture that were either at that time in use amongst them, as was the Greek translation amongst the Hellenists; or about that time composed, as the Targums, at least some parts of them, will give us much light into it. What of that ancient sense appeareth yet in the corrupted copies of those translations which remain, being considered, will much evince the reason and suitableness of the apostle's quotations. And this is needful to be observed, to refute that impiety of some (as Cajetan) who not being able to understand the force of some testimonies cited by the apostle as to his purpose in hand, have questioned the authority of the whole epistle; as also the mistake of Hierome, who in his epistle to Pammachius, rashly affirmed that Paul did quote Scriptures that were not indeed to his purpose, but out of design to stop the mouths of his adversaries, as he himself had dealt with Jovinian; which was very far

from him whose only design was ἀληθευειν εν αγαπη, to promote the truth in love.

Fourthly. He takes it for granted in the whole epistle, that the Judaical church-state did yet continue, and that the worship of it was not yet disallowed of God; suitably to what was before declared concerning his own and the other apostle's practice. Had that church-state been utterly abolished, all observance of Mosaic rites, which were the worship of that church as such, had been utterly unlawful, as now it is. Neither did the determination recorded Acts xv. abolish them as some suppose, but only free the Gentiles from their observance. Their free use was yet permitted unto the Jews, Acts xxi. 20, 22, 26, xxvii. 9, and practised by Paul in particular, in his Nazaretical vow, Acts xxi. 26, which was attended with a sacrifice, Numb. vi. 13. Nor was Mosaic worship utterly to cease, so as to have no acceptance with God until the final ruin of that church, foretold by our Saviour himself, Matt. xxiv., by Peter, 2 epist. iii, by James also, v. 6—9, and by our apostle in this epistle, x. 37, xii. 25—27, was accomplished.

Hence it is that our apostle calls the times of the gospel, the world to come, ch. ii. 5, vi. 5, the name whereby the Jews denoted the state of the church under the Messiah, proper unto it only whilst the legal administrations of worship did continue. Thus as *de facto* he had showed respect unto the person of the high priest, as one yet in lawful office, Acts xxiii. 5; so doctrinally he takes it for granted, that that office was still continued, Hebrews viii. 4, 5, with the whole worship instituted by Moses, ch. xiii. 11, 12. And this dispensation of God's patience being the last trial of that church, was continued in a proportion of time answerable to their abode in the wilderness upon its first erection; which our apostle reminds them of, ch. iii. iv.

The law of Moses then was not actually abrogated by Christ, who observed the rules of it in the days of his flesh; nor by the apostles, who seldom used their liberty from it, leaving the use of it to the Jews still. But having done the work whereunto it was designed, and its obligation expiring, ending, and being removed, or taken away in the death and resurrection of Christ, and in the promulgation of the gospel that ensued thereupon, which doctrinally declared its ανωφελειαν or uselessness; God in his providence put an end unto it, as to its observance, in the utter and irrecoverable overthrow of the temple, the place designed for the solemn exercise of its worship; so did it decay, wax old, and vanish away, ch. viii. 13.

And this also God ordered in his infinite wisdom, that their temple, city, and nation, and so consequently their whole church-state, should be utterly wasted by the Pagan Romans, before the power of the empire came into the hands of men professing the name of Christ; who could neither well have suffered their temple to stand as by them abused, nor yet have destroyed it, without hardening them in their impenitence and unbelief.

Fifthly. That which is proposed unto confirmation in the whole epistle, and from whence all the inferences and exhortations insisted on do arise, and are drawn, is the excellency of the gospel, and the worship of God therein revealed and appointed, upon the account of



its manifold relation to the person and offices of Christ the mediator, the Son of God. Now, because some of those to whom it is directed, did, as hath been declared, adhere to Mosaic ceremonies and worship, in conjunction with the gospel, others with a preference of them above the gospel, and some to the relinquishment of the gospel, especially when they once found its profession obnoxious to persecution; the apostle institutes, and at large prosecutes a comparison between the law of Moses and the gospel, as to their usefulness and excellency, in reference unto men's acceptance with God, by the one and the other; as also of the spirituality, order, and beauty of the worship severally required in them. And, herein, though he derogates in no respect from the law that which was justly due unto it, yet on the accounts before mentioned, he prefereth the gospel before it; and not only so, but also manifests, that as Mosaic institutions were never of any other use, but to prefigure the real mediatory work of Christ, with the benefits thereof, so he being exhibited, and his work accomplished, their observance was become needless, and themselves, if embraced to a neglect or relinquishment of the gospel, pernicious.

This comparison, (wherein also the proof of the positive worth and excellency of the gospel is included,) omitting for weighty reasons (intimated by James, Acts xxi. 21, and by himself Acts ix. 25, ch. xxii. 19—21,) all prefatory salutations, he enters upon in the first verses of the epistle; and having thereby occasion to make mention of the Messiah, from whose person and office, the difference he was to insist upon did wholly arise, he spendeth the residue of the chapter in proving the divine excellency of his person, and the eminence of his office, as the only king, priest, and prophet of his church; on all which the dignity of the gospel, in the profession whereof he exhorts them to persevere, doth depend.

He then that would come to a right understanding of this epistle must always bear in mind, 1. To whom it was written, namely, the Jews of the several sorts before mentioned. 2. To what end it was written, even to prevail with them to embrace the gospel, and to persist in the profession of it; without any mixture of Mosaic observances. 3. On what principles the apostle deals with them in this argument, which are no other, for the most part, than what were granted by the Jews of all sorts. 4. What testimonies out of the Old Testament he insists on to prove his purpose, namely such as were commonly received in the Judaical church to belong to Messiah and his office. 5. What he labours to instruct them in, as to the general use of all sorts amongst them, which is the nature and use of the Mosaic rites. 6. The main argument he insists on for the ends before mentioned, which is the excellency of the gospel, the worship instituted therein, and the righteousness manifested thereby, upon the account of its author and subject, the principal efficient cause of its worship, and only procurer of the righteousness exhibited in it, even Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Mediator, the Eternal Son of God. Unless these things are well borne in mind, and the case of the Jews particularly heeded, our Exposition will, it may be, seem oft times to go out of the way, though it constantly pursue the design and scope of the apostle.

Sixthly. Though this epistle was written to the Hebrews, and immediately for their use, yet it is left on record in the canon of the Scripture by the Holy Ghost, for the same general end with the other parts of the Scripture, and the use of all believers therein to the end of the world.

This use in our Exposition is also to be regarded, and that principally in the parænetical or hortatory part of it. That then which is dogmatical, and the foundation of all the exhortations insisted on, may be two ways considered.

1. Properly, as to the special and peculiar tendency of the principles and doctrines handled, and so they specially intend the Jews, and must be opened with respect to them, their principles, traditions, opinions, objections; all which must therefore be considered, that the peculiar force and efficacy of the apostle's reasonings with respect to them, may be made manifest. And from the doctrinal part of this epistle so opened, the exhortations that arise do chiefly respect the Jews, and are peculiarly suited unto their state and condition.

2. Again, the doctrines treated on by the apostle may be considered absolutely and abstractedly from the special case of the Jews, which he had in his eye, merely as to their own nature, and so they are many of them of the chief fundamental principles of the gospel. In this respect they are grounds for the application of the exhortations in the Epistle, to all professors of the gospel to the end of the world. And this must guide us in our Exposition. Having to deal with the Jews, the doctrinal parts of the Epistle must be opened with special respect to them, or we utterly lose the apostle's aim and design; and dealing with Christians, the hortatory part shall be principally insisted on, as respecting all professors; yet not so, but that in handling the doctrinal part, we shall weigh the principles of it, as articles of our evangelical faith in general, and consider also the peculiar respect that the exhortations have to the Jews.

Now whereas, as was said, many principles of the Jews are partly supposed and taken for granted, and partly urged and insisted on to his own purpose by the apostle, we must in our passage make some stay in their discovery and declaration, and shall insert them under their proper heads, where they occur, even as many of them as are not already handled in our prolegomena.



## EXPOSITION,

ETC.

## CHAPTER I.

THE general scope and design of the apostle in this whole Epistle, hath been before declared, and needs not here be repeated. In this first chapter, he fixeth and improveth the principal consideration that he intends to insist on throughout the Epistle, to prevail with the Hebrews unto constancy and perseverance in the doctrine of the gospel. And this is taken from the immediate author of it, the promised Messiah, the Son of God. Him therefore in this chapter he at large describes; and that two ways. 1. Absolutely, declaring what he is in his person and offices, as also what he hath done for the church. And, 2. Comparatively, with respect unto other ministerial revealers of the mind and will of God, especially insisting on his excellency and preeminence above the angels; as we shall see in the explication of the several parts and verses of it.

Ver. 1, 2.—Πολυμερως και πολυτροπως παλαι ὁ Θεος λαλησας τοις πατрасιν εν τοις προφηταις, επ' εσχατων των ημερων τουτων ελαλησεν ημιν εν νύφ, ὃν εθηκε κληρονομον παντων, δι' ού και τους αιωνας εποιησεν.

Many of these words being variously rendered, their true grammatical sense and importance is to be considered, before we open the meaning of the whole, and the aim of the apostle in them; in which way we shall also proceed throughout the whole Epistle.

Πολυμερως. בכל מכן. Syr. In all parts, or by many parts. Multifarium, Vulg. Eras, A. Montan, diversely. Multis vicibus, Beza; which ours render, 'at sundry times.' Μειρομαι is sortior divido, to part, to take part, to divide; whence is μέρος, the part of any thing, and πολυμερες that which consisteth of many parts; and πολυμερως, by many parts; which is also used as εν τω μερει, for alternis vicibus, sundry changes. The word properly is, by many parts; fully, by several parts at several times, as our translation intimates; yet so that a diversity of parts and degrees, rather than of times and seasons, is intended.

και πολυτροπως. ובכל דמן. Syr. in all forms. Multisque modis, Vulg. Eras. A. Montan. Beza, many ways; or as ours, in divers manners.

παλαι. מן תרם. Syr. ab initio, from the beginning; Olim, the Latin translations, of old, formerly, in times past; παλαι is olim, quondam, pridem, jamdudum; any time past that is opposed, τω αρτι, or νυν, to that which is present; properly, time some good while past, as that was whereof the apostle treats, having ended in Malachi four hundred years before.

τοις πατρασιν. עמ אבאן. Syr. with our fathers; to the fathers.

εν τοις προφηταις. בנביא. Syr. in the prophets; so all the Latin translations, in prophetis.

επ' εσχατων των ημερων τουτων, ובחלן יומתא אחריא. Syr. 'and in these last days;' ultimis diebus hisce; ultimis diebus istis; 'in these last days;' novissime diebus istis, Vulg. 'last of all in these days.' Some Greek copies have επ' εσχατου των ημερων τουτων, in extremo dierum istorum, 'in the end of these days,' the reason of which variety we shall see afterwards.

εν υω, as before in the prophets; not by his Son, but in the Son. The emphasis of the expression is necessarily to be retained, as the opening of the words will discover.

τους αιωνας, mundos, secula: העלמים. Syr. the ages, times, worlds. In the remaining words there is no difficulty, as to the grammatical signification: we shall then read them.

Ver. 1, 2—*By sundry parts, and in divers manners, God having formerly (or of old) spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in the Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all, by whom also he made the worlds.*

The apostle intending a comparison between the Mosaic law and the gospel, referreth it unto two heads. First, To their revelation and institution, whence the obligation to the observance of the one and the other did arise; and, secondly, To their whole nature, use and efficacy. The first he enters upon in these words, and premising that wherein they did agree, he distinctly lays down the several things wherein the difference between them doth consist; both which were necessary to complete the comparison intended.

That wherein they agree, is the principal efficient cause of their revelation, or the prime Author from whom they were. This is God. He was the Author of the law, and of the gospel. He spake of old in the prophets, he spake in the last days in the Son. Neither of them were from men: not one from one principle, and the other from another; both have the same divine original. See 2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 16—21. Herein they both agree.

Their difference in this respect, namely of their revelation, he refers to four heads, all distinctly expressed, saving that some branches of the antithesis, on the part of the gospel, are only included in the opposite expressions that relate unto the law.

First. They differ in respect of the manner of their revelation, and that in two particulars. 1. The revelation of the will of God under

the law was given out by divers parts; that under the gospel at once, or in one dispensation of grace and truth. 2. That in divers manners; this one way only, by the Spirit dwelling in the Lord Christ in his fulness, and by him communicated to his apostles.

Secondly. The times and seasons of their revelation: that of the law was made of old, formerly, in times past; this of the gospel, in these last days.

Thirdly. The persons to whom the revelation of them was made. That was to the fathers, this to us.

Fourthly, and principally. The persons by whom these revelations were made. That was by the prophets, this by the Son. God spake then in the prophets; now he hath spoken in the Son.

The whole stress of the apostle's argument resting on this last instance, he omits the prosecution of all the other particulars, and enters on the further description of this immediate revealer of the gospel in whom God spake, the Son, and lays down in general,

1. The authority committed to him, "God made him heir of all."

2. The ground and equity of committing that great power and trust to him, in those words, "by whom also he made the worlds." And thus he opens his way to the farther declaration of his divine and incomparable excellencies, wherein he is exalted far above all, or any that were employed in the revelation or administration of the law of Moses, and the holy worship instituted thereby.

All these particulars must be opened severally, that we may see the intention of the apostle, and the force of his argument in the whole. And some of them must necessarily be somewhat largely insisted on, because of their influence upon the ensuing discourse.

First. That wherein the law and gospel do both agree is, that God  $\delta$  Θεός, was the author of them both. About this, there was no difference, amongst the most of them with whom the apostle treated. This, therefore, he takes for granted. For the professing Jews did not adhere to Mosaic institutions, because God was their author, and not the author of the gospel, but because they were given from God by Moses, in such a manner as never to be changed or abrogated. This the apostle lays down as an acknowledged principle with the most, that both law and gospel, received their original from God himself; proving also, as we shall see in the progress of our discourse, to the conviction of others, that such a revelation as that of the gospel, was foretold and expected, and that in particular the gospel which was preached to them, was the revelation which had been promised by God.

Now God being here spoken of in distinction from the Son expressly and from the Holy Ghost by evident implication, it being He by whom he spake in the prophets, that name is not taken *ουσιωδως*, substantially, to denote primarily the essence or being of the Deity, and each person as partaking in the same nature, but *υποστατικως*, denoting primarily one certain person, and the divine nature only as subsisting in that person. This is the person of the Father; as elsewhere the person of the Son is so signified by that name, Acts xx. 28; John i. 1, 2; Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 16; 1 John iii. 19, v. 20; as also the person of the Holy Spirit, Acts v. 3, 4; 1 Cor. xii. 7, 11; Col. ii. 2. So that God.

even the Father, by the way of eminency, was the peculiar author of both law and gospel, of which afterwards. And this observation is made necessary from hence, even because he immediately assigns divine properties and excellencies to another person, evidently distinguished from him whom he intends to denote by the name God in this place, which he could not do, did that name primarily express, as here used by him, the divine nature absolutely, but only as it is subsisting in the person of the Father.

From this head of their agreement the apostle proceeds to the instances of the difference that was between the law and the gospel, as to their revelation from God, of which a little inverting the order of the words, we shall first consider that which concerns the times of their being given out, sundry of the other instances being regulated thereby.

For the first, or the revelation of the will of God under the Old Testament, it was of old, God spake *παλαι*, 'formerly,' or 'of old.' Some space of time is denoted in this word, which had then received both its beginning and end; both which we may inquire after. Take the word absolutely, and it comprises the whole space of time from the giving out of the first promise, to that end which was put to all revelations of public use under the Old Testament. Take it as relating to the Jews, and the rise of the time expressed in it, is the "giving of the law by Moses" in the wilderness. And this is that which the apostle hath respect to. He had no contest with the Jews about the first promise, and the service of God in the world built thereon; nor about their privilege, as they were the sons of Abraham; but only about there then present church privilege and claim by Moses' law. The proper date then and bound of this *παλαι*, 'of old,' is from the giving out of the law of Moses, and therein the constitution of the Judaical church and worship, to the close of public prophecy in the days of Malachi. From thence to the days of John the Baptist, God granted no extraordinary revelation of his will, for the standing use of the whole church. So that this dispensation of God's "speaking in the prophets," continued for the space of twenty-one jubilees, or near eleven hundred years. That it had now ceased for a long time, the apostle intimates in this word, and that agreeably to the confessed principles of the Jews, whereby also he confirmed his own of the coming of the Messiah, by the reviving of the gift of prophecy, as was foretold, Joel ii. 28, 29.

And we may by the way a little consider their thoughts in this matter; for, as we have observed and proved before, the apostle engageth with them upon their own acknowledged principles. "The Jews then generally grant unto this day, that prophecy for the public use of the church, was not bestowed under the second temple after the days of Malachi; nor is to be expected until the coming of Elias. The delusions that have been put upon them by impostors, they now labour all they can to conceal; and are of late by experience made incredulous towards such pretenders, as in former ages they have been brought to much misery by. Now as their manner is to fasten all their conjectures, be they true or false, on some place, word, or letter of the Scripture, so have they done this assertion also. Observing or sup-



posing the want of sundry things in the second house, they pretend that want to be intimated, Hag. i. 7, 8; where God, promising to glorify himself in that temple, the word אכבד, 'I will glorify,' is written defectively, without ה, as the Keri notes. That letter being the numeral note of five, signifies as they say, the want of five things in that house. The first of these was ארון וכרובים the ark and cherubim. The second was שמן המשיחה, the anointing oil. The third was עצי המעדכה, the wood of disposition, or perpetual fire. The fourth was אורים ותומים, Urim and Thummim. The fifth was רוח הקדש, the Holy Ghost, or spirit of prophecy. They are not indeed all agreed in this enumeration; the Talmud in יומא Joma, cap. 5, reckons them somewhat otherwise: 1. The ark with the propitiation and Cherubim. 2. The fire from heaven, which answers the third, or wood of disposition in the former order. 3. The divine majesty, in the room of the anointing oil. 4. The Holy Ghost. 5. Urim and Thummim. Another order there is according to the Rabbi Bechai, Comment. in Pentateuch, section ריג; who places the anointing oil distinctly, and confounds the שכינה, or divine majesty with רוח הקדש, the Holy Ghost, contradicting the Gemara. The commonly approved order is that of the author of Aruch; in the root, כבד.

ארון כפירת וכרוב אחד, the Ark, propitiatory, and Cherubim, one.

שכינה שני, the divine majesty, the second thing.

רוח הקדש שהוא נבואה שליש, the Holy Ghost, which is prophecy, the third.

אורים ותומים רביעי, Urim and Thummim, the fourth thing.

אש מן השמים חמישי, fire from Heaven, the fifth thing.

But as this argument is ridiculous, both in general, in wire-drawing conclusions from letters deficient or redundant in writing, and in particular in reference to this word, which in other places is written as in this, as Numb. xxiv. 12; 1 Sam. ii. 20; Isa. lxvi. 5; so the observation itself of the want of all these five things in the second house, is very questionable, and seems to be invented to give countenance to the confessed ceasing of prophecy, by which their church had been planted, nourished and maintained, and by the want of which it was signified that their church was now near expiration. For although I will grant that they might offer sacrifices with other fire, than that which was traduced from the flame descending from heaven, though Nadab and Abihu were destroyed for so doing, because the law of that fire attended the giving of it, whence upon its providential ceasing, it was as lawful to use other fire in sacrifice, as it was before its giving out; yet as to the ark, the Urim and Thummim, the matter is more questionable; and as to the anointing oil, out of question, because it being lawful for the High Priest to make it at any time, it was no doubt restored in the time of Ezra's reformation. I know Abarbinel on Exod. xxx., see, רחש, affirms that there was no high priest anointed with oil under the second house, for which he gives this reason; לפי שכבר היה ננו שמן והמשיחה, because 'the anointing oil was now hid;' שגנו יאשיהו עם שאר הדברים הקדושים, 'for Josiah had hid it with the rest of the holy things;' a Talmudical figment; to which he adds, ולא היה להם רשות לעשותו, 'and they had no power

to make it ;' I will not much contend about matter of fact, or what they did ; but that they might have done otherwise, is evident from the first institution of it ; for the prohibition mentioned, Exod. xxx. 31, 32, respects only private persons. And Josephus tells us, that God ceased to give answer by Urim and Thummim two hundred years before he wrote, lib. iii. cap. 12, which proves they had it.

"It is indeed certain, that at their first return from Babylon, they had not the Urim and Thummim, Ezra ii. 63. There was no priest with Urim and Thummim ; yet it doth not appear that afterwards that jewel, whatever it were, was not made upon the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, whereby the restoration of the temple, and the worship belonging thereunto, was carried on to perfection. Especially considering the vision of Zechariah, about "clothing the high priest with the robes of his office," ch. iii. after which time it seems they were made and in use, as Josephus shows us, lib. xi. cap. 8, treating of the reverence done by Alexander the Great to the name of God, engraven in the plate of gold on the high-priest's forehead. And Maimonides, *Tractat. Saned.* cap. 10, sect. 10, says expressly, that all the eight robes of the high-priest were made under the second temple, and particularly the Urim and Thummim ; howbeit, as he says, they inquired not of God by them, because the Holy Ghost was not on the priests. Of the ark, we shall have occasion to treat afterwards, and of its fictitious hiding by Jeremiah, or Josiah, as the Jews fancy. This we may observe for the present, that it is certain that it was carried away by the Babylonians amongst other vessels of gold belonging to the temple, either amongst them that were taken away in the days of Jehoiakim, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, or those taken away with Jehoiachin his son, ver. 11, or when all that were left before, great and small, were carried away in the days of Zedekiah, ver. 18. And it may be supposed, that it was restored by Cyrus, of whom it is said, that "he returned all the vessels of the house of the Lord, that Nebuchadnezzar brought from Jerusalem," Ezra i. 6. And it is uncertain to what end the solemn yearly entrance of the high priest into the most holy place was observed, to the very destruction of the second house, if neither ark nor mercy-seat were there. Neither is this impeached by what Tacitus affirms, *Hist.* lib. 5, that when Pompey entered the temple, he found nullas Deum effigies, vacuum sedem, et inania arcana ; for as he wrote of the Jews with shameful negligence, so he only intimates that they had no such images as were used among other nations, nor the head of an ass, which not many lines before, he had affirmed to be consecrated in their sanctuary. For aught then that appears to the contrary, the ark might be in the second house, and be carried thence to Rome with the book of the law, which Josephus expressly mentions. And therefore the same Abarbinel, in his Comment on Joel, tells us, that Israel, by captivity out of his own land, lost שלשה מתנות שתיי הם נבראה ומפתים וידיעת אלוקות, 'three excellent gifts, prophecy, miracles, and divine knowledge,' Ps. lxxiv. 9, all which he grants were to be restored by the Messiah ; without mention of the other things before recited. And they confess this openly in Sota distinc. Egla lampha. משמרו הבריאם



האחרונים חגי זכריה ומלאכי נסתלקה רוח הקודש מישראל 'after the death of the latter prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the Holy Spirit was taken away from Israel.'

"It is then confessed that God ceased to speak to the church in prophets, as to their oral teaching and writing, after the days of Malachi; which reason of the want of vision, though continuing four hundred years and upwards, is called by Haggai, chap. ii. 6, *אזה מעט*, *unum pusillum*, 'a little while,' in reference to the continuance of it from the days of Moses. Whereby the Jews may see that they are long since past all grounds of expectation of its restoration, all prophecy having left them double the time that their church enjoyed it, which cannot be called *אזה מעט* 'a little while,' in comparison thereof." To return,

This was the *παλαι*, these the times, wherein God spake in the prophets; which determines one instance more of the comparison, namely, the fathers, *τοις πατράσι*, to whom he spake in them, which were all the faithful of the Judaical church, from the days of giving the law, until the ceasing of prophecy in the days of Malachi.

In answer to this first instance on the part of the gospel, the revelation of it is affirmed to be made in these last days, "hath spoken in these last days," *ἐπ' ἐσχάτων των ἡμερων τουτων*; the true stating of which time will also discover who the persons were to whom it was made, "hath spoken to us."

Most expositors suppose that this expression, "the last days," is a periphrasis for 'the times of the gospel.' But it doth not appear, that they are any where so called; nor were they ever known by that name among the Jews, upon whose principles the apostle proceeds. Some seasons indeed under the gospel, in reference to some churches, are called the last days, 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Pet. iii. 3; 1 John ii. 18; Jude 18. For,

1. As we before observed, the apostle takes it for granted, that the Judaical church-state did yet continue, and proves that it was drawing to its period, chap. viii. ult., having its present station in the patience and forbearance of God only, without any necessity as to its worship, or preservation in the world. And hereunto doth the reading of the words in some copies, before intimated, give testimony, *ἐπ' ἐσχάτου των ἡμερων τουτων*, 'in the end or extremity of these days,' which, as the event hath proved, can no way relate to the times of the gospel.

2. The personal ministry of the Son, whilst he was on the earth in the days of his flesh, is here eminently, though not solely intended. "For as God of old spake in the prophets, so in these last days, he spake in the Son:" that is, in him, personally present with the church, as the prophets also were in their several generations, chap. ii. 3. Now as to his personal ministry, he was sent "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matt. xv. 24, (to whom also none in his own days he sent his apostles, Matt. x. 5, 6,) and is therefore said to have been a "minister of the circumcision for the truth of God," Rom. xv. 5, being in the last place sent to the same vineyard, to which the prophets were sent before, Matt. xxi, 37. The words there used, "last

of all he sent unto them his Son," are exegetical of these, "he spoke in the Son in the last days."

3. This phrase is signally used in the old Testament to denote the last days of the Judaical church. So by Jacob, Gen. xlix. 1, "I will tell you what shall befall you, באחרית הימים, in the last days," which words the LXX. rendered, ἐπ' ἑσχατῶν τῶν ἡμερῶν, the words here used by the apostle; the days pointed to by Jacob being those wherein the Messiah should come, before Judah was utterly deprived of sceptre and scribe. Again by Balaam the same words are used to signify the same time, Num. xxiv. 14, where they are rendered ἐπ' ἑσχατοῦ τῶν ἡμερῶν, 'in the end of the days,' as many copies read in this place. And in all the prophets this is the peculiar notation of that season, אחרית הימים, Micah iv. 1; Isa. ii. 1, "in the latter or last days," and הַיָּמִים הָהֵם, the He hajediah prefixed, noteth that course of days that were then running. As Deut. xxxi. 29, "Evil will overtake you, באחרית הימים, in the end of those days," and the promise of the conversion of some of the Jews to David their king is annexed to the same season, Hos. iii. 5. From these places is the expression here used taken, denoting the last times of the Judaical church, the times immediately preceding its rejection and final ruin. Hence Manasseh, lib. 3, de Resurrect. cap. 3, tells us out of Moses Gernudensis, כל מקום שנאמר בו באחרית הימים הוא לימות המשיח, 'in every place that mentions the latter days, the days of the Messiah are to be understood,' which saying of his is confirmed by Manasseh himself, though attended with a gloss abominable and false, that is purely judaical. The days of the Messiah, and the days of the end of the Judaical church, are the same. And these words are expressly also used by R. D. Kimchi. Comment. in Isa. ii. 2, who honestly refers all the words of that prophecy to the Messiah.

It is not for nothing that the apostle reminds the Hebrews, that the season then present was the last days, whereof so many things were foretold in the Old Testament. Many of their concernments lay in the knowledge of it, which, because they give great light to the whole cause as stated then between him and them, must be opened and considered. The sum is, that the end of their church and state, being foretold to be a perpetual desolation, Dan. ix. 27, the last days being now come upon them, they might understand what they were shortly to expect and look for. The end of the Jews, being a people, a church and a kingdom, was to bring forth the Messiah, whose coming and work must of necessity put an end to their old station and condition. Now because herein is enwrapped the most infallible demonstration that the Messiah is long since come, the apostle mentioning the last days to intimate that upon necessity he must be come in them, I shall further open his design in this matter; but having been large on this head in our Prolegomena, I shall briefly review the subject for their sakes, who by any difficulties may be deterred from the consideration of them.

'God having from the foundation of the world promised to bring forth the "seed of the woman," to work out the redemption of his

elect in the conquest of Satan, did, in the separation of Abraham from the rest of the world, begin to make provision of a peculiar stock, from whence the seed of the woman should spring. That this was the cause and end of his call and separation is evident from hence, that immediately thereupon God assures him that "in his seed all the kindreds of the earth should be blessed," Gen. xii. 1—3, xxii. 18, which is all one as if he had expressly said to him, For this cause have I chosen and called thee, that in thee I might lay a foundation of bringing forth the promised seed, by whom the curse is to be taken away, and the blessing of everlasting life procured, as Gal. iii. 13, 14. For this cause was his posterity continued in a state of separation from the rest of the world, that he might seek a holy seed to himself, Num. xxiii. 9; Mal. ii. 15. For this cause did he raise them into a civil, regal and church state, that he might in them typify and prefigure the offices and benefits of the promised Messiah, who was to gather to himself the nations that were to be blessed in the seed of Abraham, Gen. xlix. 10; Psal. xlv; Hos. iii. 5; Ezek. xxxiv. 23. And all their sacrifices did but shadow out that great expiation of sin, which he was to make in his own person, as hath been already proved.

Things being thus disposed, God promised to them that there civil political state, their condition as a peculiar nation and people, should be continued until the coming of the Messiah, Gen. xlix. 10; Ezek. xxi. 27. And this was made good to them, notwithstanding the great oppositions of those mighty empires, in the midst of whose devouring jaws they were placed, with some such short intermissions of the actual administration of rule amongst them, as being foretold, impeached not the promise. They lost not their civil state, until he came, to whom was "the gathering of the nations." After that, though many of the individuals obtained mercy, yet their being a nation or people, was of no peculiar use as to any special end of God. Therefore was it immediately destroyed, and irrecoverably exterminated. From that day, God in a wonderful manner blasted and cursed all their endeavours, either for the preservation of what they then had, or for its recovery and restoration when lost. No means could ever retrieve them into a people or nation on the old account. What may be hereafter on a new, God knows. The end of the days was come, and it was to no purpose for men to endeavour to keep up that which God would lay aside. After having accomplished the utmost of his design by it and upon it. And this season was fully evidenced to all the world, by the "gathering of the people to Shiloh," or the coming in of the nations to partake in the "blessing of faithful Abraham," Micah iv. 1, 2.

Of their church-state there were two principal parts: the temple itself, and the worship performed in it. The first of these, namely, the temple, and also the tabernacle, was set up to typify him in whom the fulness of the "Godhead should dwell bodily," and the worship prefigured the same person as he was to be the great High Priest and the sacrifice. Both these also were to be continued until the coming of the Messiah, but by no endeavours could be continued afterwards. Hence was that promise of the glory of the second house, built after the captivity, and restored by Herod, because of his coming to it who

was signified by it, Hag. ii. 9; Mal. iii. 1. He was to come whilst that temple was standing, after which it was to be of no more use. And therefore Ezekiel describes a third spiritual temple to succeed in the room thereof. The condition of their sacrifices was the same. Therefore Daniel, foretelling the coming of the Messiah four hundred and ninety years after the captivity, adds, that upon his death the "daily sacrifice must cease for ever," and a total desolation ensue, of all the things that were used for the Old Testament worship, as the end had been accomplished, Dan. ix. 24—27. The nation, state, temple, sacrifices, being set apart, set up and designed for no other end but to bring him forth, he was to come whilst they were standing and in use, after which they were none of them to be allowed a being upon their old foundation. This is that which the apostle pointed at in mentioning the last days, that they might consider in what condition the church and people of the Jews then were.

'To discover the evidence of this demonstration, as confirmed in our Prolegomena, I shall here also briefly add some considerations of the miserable entanglements of the Jews in seeking to avoid the argument here intimated to them by the apostle. It is a common tradition among them, that all things were made for the Messiah, whereby they do not intend, as some have imagined, the whole old creation, but all things of their church, state, and worship. So the Targum, Psal. xl. 8, in the person of the Messiah. "I shall enter into life eternal when I study in the volume of the Law, דאחכתיבא אפסולתי, that was written for my sake." By the law they understand their *all*. All depended on their Messiah, all was written for him. They see by experience that there was a coincidence of all these things in the last days when Jesus came. No sooner had he done his work, but sceptre and scribe departed from Judah. They ceased to be a church and nation. The temple which the Lord whom they formerly sought came to, was destroyed, their sacrifices wherein they trusted caused to cease, and the nations of the earth were gathered into the faith of Abraham. From that time they have no more been a people, nor have had any distinction of tribes or families, temple, priesthood or sacrifice, nor any hope of a restoration to their pristine condition. Let us then see what course they have taken, or do take, to countenance themselves in their infidelity. Two ways to relieve themselves they have fixed on.

'1. Granting that the Messiah was to come to their government and worship, they laboured to keep them up, and to restore them when cast down, that so they might prolong their expectation of that as to come, which was indeed already past. This in the righteous and holy providence of God, proved the means of their ruin. For their endeavour to maintain their liberty, rule and government, after the coming of the Messiah, was the cause of the utter overthrow of all rule, authority, and public worship amongst them, by Vespasian, and Titus his son. Their endeavour to restore themselves into a state and people under their false Messiah, Barcosbi, was the means of their utter desolation from all hopes of being a people and nation any more, by Adrian; as also for their extermination for ever out of that country, wherein they had been separated from all nations, for that



end which God appointed to them. After this, once more, still to avoid the thoughts that the Messiah was come, and had put an end to their former condition, they endeavoured, and were encouraged by Julian the emperor, to rebuild their temple and restore their sacrifices. And this attempt also God turned to their further confusion. For whereas in former days in the building of the temple, he encouraged and supported them against all difficulties and oppositions; being now upheld and strengthened by the favour and wealth of the Roman empire in the same work, he sets himself against them, and scatters them with no less indignation than he did the builders of Babel of old. When he would have a temple amongst them, he punished them with famine, for building their own houses, and suffering his to lie waste, Hag. ii. 8—11. Now, they may build houses for themselves where they please; but if they take in hand to build a temple, God is against them. In this state they have now continued for sixteen hundred years, and were not blindness come upon them to the utmost, they could not but see, that it is not the will of God that they should be a people, state, or church, on the former account, any more. What then is become of their Messiah, who was to come unto them whilst they were a state and church, seeing they were so, by their own confession, only for his sake? This puts their later masters to their last miserable shifts. For,

‘2. Contrary to the evident nature of all things relating to them from the appropriating of the promise to the family of Abraham, contrary to the whole design of the Scripture, and to the express testimonies of it before mentioned, with many other to the same purpose, they deny that their Messiah was to come to them, or at least to abide with them for the work whereunto he was destined, whilst their state, temple, and sacrifices, continued. In the management of this shift of unbelief, they are wofully divided amongst themselves.

‘1. For the continuance of their state, until the coming of the Messiah, Gen. xlix. 11, some say, that by Shiloh the Messiah is not intended; who are confuted by their own Targums, all rendering the word Messiah, and by the constant tradition of the elder doctors. Some say, that by the sceptre and scribe, the rod of affliction and instruction only are intended; which is a gloss evidently contrary to the design of the prophecy, to the use of the words in all places where their sense is not restrained by evident circumstances, to the Targums, and to all old writers; asserting that which was not peculiar to Judah, nor true in itself; that tribe having for so long a season enjoyed as flourishing a condition as any people in the world, as good as the Jews look for under the Messiah. This state then is utterly gone, and their Messiah as it seems not come.

‘2. What say they unto their temple, that second house whereunto he was to come, and so render the glory of it greater than that of the former. Hag. ii; Mal. iii. Of old they unanimously agreed, that he was born whilst the temple stood, or that day that it was destroyed, as Aben Ezra confesseth on Isa. liii. Many stories out of them might be told to this purpose; where he was born, how, and of whom; to whom it was revealed by the *בן קול* who saw him, where he was dis-

posed of, where he is; but these being all the fancies of idle curious heads, and unbelieving hearts, which St. Paul calls βεβηλους και γραωδεις μυθους, 1 Tim. iv. 7, *profane and old wives' fables*, we shall not trouble the reader with them. Abarbinel, who in corrupting the prophecies concerning the Messiah, hath a reach beyond his fellows, affirms that Haggai speaks not of the second, but of a third temple to be built under the Messiah; but this is nothing but a bold contradiction of the prophet, who three or four times signally declares that he spake of that house which was then building, which their eyes saw, and which so many contemned as not to be compared with the former, ch. i. 4, *this house*, ch. ii. 7, *this house*, ver. 8, *this house*, so ver. 18. Others say, that the glory of that house did not consist in the coming of the Messiah unto it, but in its duration and continuance; for it stood ten years longer than the former. But this also is contrary, 1. To the catholic persuasion of their forefathers, Targums, Talmuds, and all ancient doctors. 2. To experience; for what could the miserable languishing of ten years by that house, whilst it was by their own confession a den of thieves, contribute unto it to enable it to vie for glory with that wonder of the world the temple of Solomon, in comparison whereof, their forefathers thought it no more than some of them of old thought themselves when compared to the sons of Anak. 3. To the truth; affirming that the glory of that house was to consist in the coming of the Lord, whom they sought, the desire of all nations, unto it: all which things are vindicated in our *Prolegomena*.

3. Their temple being utterly destroyed, as well as their state, and their Messiah not yet come, what think they of their sacrifices? Daniel tells them that he was to come, and to be cut off, before the ceasing of the daily sacrifices. But they must confess, that all sacrifices are long since utterly ceased; for surely their offering of a cock to the devil on the day of expiation, is no continuance of them. Some say, that the Messiah intended by Daniel, was king Agrippa, whom Vespasian slew at Rome. But this obstinacy is intolerable. That a semi-pagan, as Agrippa was, should be their Messiah, so honourably foretold, is a figment which, whatever they pretend, they themselves believe not. Nor was Agrippa slain, or cut off, but lived in peace to the day of his death. The most of them know not what to say, but only object that the computation of Daniel is dark and obscure, which Christians themselves are not agreed about: concerning which, I must refer the reader to our *Prolegomena*; as also for the full and large handling of the things here by the way only touched upon.

This makes it evident who the persons were who were spoken to in these last days, το us, ἡμιν; that is, to the members of the Judaical church, who lived in the days of the personal ministry of Christ, and afterwards under the preaching of the gospel to that day, ch. ii. 3. The Jews of those days were very apt to think, that if they had lived in the times of the former prophets, and had heard them delivering their message from God, they would have received it with a cheerful obedience; their only unhappiness they thought was, that they were born out of due time as to prophetic revelations. This is intimated of them, Matt. xxiii. 30. The apostle meeting with this persuasion



in them, minds them that in the revelation of the gospel, God had spoken to themselves, the things they so much desired, not questioning but that thereon they should believe and obey. If this word then they attend not unto, they must needs be self-condemned. Again, that care and love which God manifested towards them, in speaking immediately unto them, required the same obedience; especially considering the manner of it, so far excelling that which before he had used towards the fathers; of which afterwards.

And these are two instances of the comparison instituted, relating unto times and persons.

The next difference respects the manner of these several revelations of the will of God, and that in two particulars. For, 1. The former was made *πολυμερως*, *by divers parts*, one after the other. The branch of the antithesis that should answer hereunto is not expressed, but implied to be, *ἅπαξ*, or *ἐφάπαξ*, *at once*.

*Πολυμερως*, *by many parts*, and so consequently at sundry times. The gradual discovery of the mind and will of God, by the addition of one thing after another, at several seasons, as the church could bear the light of them, and as it was subserving to his main design of reserving all pre-eminence to the Messiah, is that which is intended in this expression. How all this is argumentative to the apostle's purpose, will instantly appear. Take the expression absolutely to denote the whole progress of divine revelation from the beginning of the world, and it compriseth four principal parts or degrees, with those that were subservient unto them.

The first of these was made to Adam, in the promise of the Seed, which was the principle of faith and obedience to the fathers before the flood; and unto this were subservient all the consequent particular revelations made to Seth, Enos, Enoch, Lamech, and others before the flood.

The second to Noah after the flood, in the renewal of the covenant, and establishing the church in his family, Gen. viii. 21, ch. ix. 9, 10, whereunto were subservient the revelations made to Melchisedec, Gen. xiv. 18, and others before the calling of Abraham.

The third to Abraham in the restriction of the promise to his seed, and fuller illustration of the nature of it, Gen. xii. 1—4, ch. xv. 11, 12, xvii. 1, 2, confirmed in the revelations made to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 24; Jacob, Gen. xlix; Joseph, Heb. xi. 22, and to others of their posterity.

The fourth to Moses in the giving of the law, and erection of the Judaical church in the wilderness, unto which there were three principal heads of subservient revelations:

1. To David, which was peculiarly designed to perfect the revelation of the will of God concerning the Old Testament worship, in those things that their wilderness condition was not capable of, 1 Chron. xxiii, 25—28, ch. xxviii. 11—19. To him we may join Solomon, with the rest of the prophets of their days.

2. To the prophets, after the division of the kingdom until the captivity, and during the captivity; to whom it was peculiar to be

called to plead with the people about their defection by sin and false worship.

3. To Ezra, with the prophets that assisted in the reformation of the church after its return from Babylon, who, in an especial manner, excited the people to an expectation of the coming of the Messiah.

These were the principal parts and degrees of the revelation of the will of God from the foundation of the world, until the coming of Christ in his fore-runner John the Baptist. And all this I have fully handled and unfolded in my discourse of the rise, nature, and progress of Scripture divinity or theology.

But as I showed before, if we attend unto the special intention of the apostle, we must take in the date of these revelations, and begin with that to Moses, adding to it those other subservient ones now mentioned, which were peculiar to the Judaical church, which taught and confirmed the worship that was established amongst them.

This then is that which in this word the apostle minds the Hebrews of; namely, that the will of God concerning his worship and our obedience, was not formerly revealed all at once to his church, by Moses or any other; but by several parts and degrees, by new additions of light, as in his infinite wisdom and care he saw meet. The close and last hand was not to be put unto this work before the coming of the Messiah. He, they all acknowledged, was to reveal the whole counsel of God, John iv. 25, after that his way had been prepared by the coming of Elias, Mal. iv. Until that time they were to attend to the law of Moses, with those expositions of it which they had received, ver. 4, 5. That was the time appointed, *לחתם חזון*, *to seal*, complete and finish, *vision and prophet*; as also *לחתם חטאת*, *to seal up sin*, or as we render it, *to make an end of sin*, or the controversy about it, which had long been held in agitation by sacrifices, that could never put an end to that quarrel, Heb. x. 1, 2. 14.

Now in this very first word of his epistle, doth the apostle clearly convince the Hebrews of their mistake in their obstinate adherence unto Mosaic institutions. It is as if he had bidden them consider the way whereby God revealed his will to the church hitherto. Hath it not been by parts and degrees? Hath he at any time shut up the progress of revelation? Hath he not always kept the church in expectation of new revelations of his mind and will? did he ever declare that he would add no more unto what he had commanded, or make no alteration in what he had instituted? What he had revealed was to be observed, Deut. xxvii. 29, and when he had revealed it: but until he declare that he will add no more, it is folly to account what is already done, absolutely complete and immutable. Therefore Moses, when he had finished all his work in the Lord's house, tells the church, that God would raise up another prophet like unto him; that is, who should reveal new laws and institutions as he had done, whom they were to hear and obey on the penalty of utter extermination, Deut. xviii. 18.

‘ And this discovers the obstinacy of the modern Jews, who from the days of Maimonides, who died about the year of our Lord 1104, have made it one of the fundamental articles of their religion, which they have inserted in their prayer-books, that the law of Moses is never to be changed, and that God will never give them any other law, or rule of worship. And as they further ground that article in Ezrim Vearba, printed in the end of Bomberg’s Bibles, they affirm, that ‘ nothing can be added unto it, nothing taken away from it, and that no alteration in its obligation can be admitted ;’ which is directly contrary both to the truth and to the confession of all their predecessors, who looked for the Messiah, as we shall afterwards declare.’

In opposition to this gradual revelation of the mind of God under the Old Testament, the apostle intimates, that now by Jesus the Messiah, the Lord hath at once begun and finished the whole revelation of his will, according to their own hopes and expectation. So, Jude 3, the faith ‘ was once delivered unto the saints ;’ not in one day, not in one sermon, or by one person, but at one season, or under one dispensation, comprising all the time from the entrance of the Lord Christ upon his ministry, and the closing of the Canon of Scripture, which period was now at hand. This season being once past and finished, no new revelation is to be expected to the end of the world. Nothing shall be added unto, nor altered in the worship of God any more. God will not do it ; men that attempt it, do it on the price of their souls.

2. God spake in the prophets, *πολυτροπως*, *after divers sorts or manners*. Now this respects either the various ways of God’s revealing himself to the prophets, by dreams, visions, inspirations, voices, angels, every way with an equal evidence of their being from God ; or the ways of his dealing with the fathers by the prophets, by promises, threats, gradual discoveries of his will, special messages and prophecies, public sermons, and the like. The latter, or the various ways of the prophets delivering their messages to the people from God, is principally intended, though the former be not excluded, it being that from whence this latter variety did principally arise and flow.

In opposition hereunto, the apostle intimates, that the revelation of God and his will by Christ was accomplished *μονειδως*, in one only way and manner, by his preaching the gospel who was anointed with the Spirit without measure.

The last difference, or instance in the comparison, insisted on by the apostle is, that of old God spake in the prophets, but now in the Son, *εν τοις προφηταις* ; *εν* for *δια* say most expositors, *in* for *by*, *δια των προφητων* ; as Luke i. 70, *δια στοματος των αγιων προφητων*, *by the mouth of the holy prophets*. But *εν* here answers the Hebrew ב Num. xii. God spake *במשח* *in Moses*. The certainty of the revelation and presence of God with his word, is intimated in the expression. So the word of the Lord was ביד, *in the hand* of this or that prophet. They were but instruments to give out what they had received from God.

Now these prophets in whom God spake of old, were all those who were divinely inspired and sent to reveal his will and mind, as to the duty of the church, or any special concernment of his providence in the rule and government thereof, whether they declared the inspirations they had, or revelations they received, by word of mouth, or by writing. 'The modern Jews make a distinction between the gift of prophecy and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, following Maimonides in his *More Nebuchim*, part ii. cap. 32. His opinion, which he calls the opinion or sentence of the law, about prophecy in general, is the same with that of the Gentile philosophers, as he professeth. In one thing only he differs from them; namely, that prophecy doth not so necessarily follow after due preparation, as that a man cannot but prophesy who is rightly prepared. But the gift of prophecy he asserts wholly to depend on the temperature of the brain, natural and moral exercises for the preparing and raising of the imagination, upon which divine visions will succeed; a brain-sick imagination, confounding divine revelation with fanatical distempers. But in the eleven degrees of prophecy which he assigns, and attempts to prove by instances out of Scripture, he placeth that of inspiration by the Holy Ghost in the last and lowest place. And therefore by the late masters is the book of Daniel cast into this latter sort, though eminently prophetical, because they are so galled with his predictions and calculations; no other reason of that disposition readily occurs. And this is the ground of their disposition of the books of the Scripture, into *תורה*, *the law*, or *the five books of Moses*, given in the highest way and degree of prophecy; *נביאים*, of two sorts, *נביאים ראשונים* and *נביאים אחרונים* *prophets, first* (or books historical) and the latter; and *כתובים*, or *רוב דקדוש*, 'books written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Of the ground of which distinction, see Kimchi in his preface to the Psalms. Their mistake lies in this, that prophecy consists principally in, and is distinguished into several degrees, by the manner of revelation; as by dreams, visions, appearances of angels or men, and the like. But as *נביא*, a *prophet*, and *נבואה*, *prophecy*, are of a larger signification than that pretended, as appears from Num. xi. 29; 1 Sam. x. 5; 1 Chron. xxv. 1—3; so that which made any revelation to be prophecy in that sense, as to be an infallible rule for the guidance of the church, was not the means of communicating it to the prophets, but that inspiration of the Holy Ghost which implanted in their minds, and gave forth by their tongues or pens, that which God would utter in them, and by them, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

In answer unto this speaking of God in the prophets, it is asserted, that in the revelation of the gospel, God spake in his Son, *עו טו*. This is the main hinge on which all the arguments of the apostle in the whole epistle do turn; this bears the stress of all the inferences afterwards by him insisted on. And therefore having mentioned it, he proceeds immediately unto that description of him, which gives evidence to all that he draws from this consideration. Now because no one argument of the apostle can be understood, unless this be



rightly stated, we must of necessity insist somewhat largely upon it; and unto what we principally intend, some previous observations must be premised.

1. I take it at present for granted, that the Son of God appeared unto the prophets under the Old Testament. Whether ever he spake unto them immediately, or only by the ministry of angels, is not so certain. It is also granted, that there was in vision sometimes signs or representations of the person of the Father, as Dan. vii. But that the Son of God did chiefly appear to the fathers under the Old Testament, is acknowledged by the ancients, and is evident in Scripture: see Zech. i. 8—11. And he it was who is called the angel, Exod. xxiii. 20, 21. The reason that is pleaded by some, that the Son of God was not the angel there mentioned, namely, because the apostle says, that “To none of the angels was it said at any time, Thou art my Son, this day I have begotten thee,” which could not be affirmed if the Son of God were that angel, is not of any force. For notwithstanding this assertion, yet both the ancient Jews and Christians generally grant, that it is the Messiah that is called the angel of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1, though the modern Jews foolishly apply that name to Elias, whom they fancy to be present at circumcision, which they take to be the covenant; a privilege, as they say, granted him upon his complaint, that the children of Israel had forsaken the covenant, 1 Kings xix. 14, that is, as they suppose, neglected circumcision. The apostle therefore speaks of those who were angels by nature, and no more, and not of him who being Jehovah the Son, was sent of the Father, and is therefore called his angel or messenger, being so only by office. And this appearance of the Son of God, though not well understanding what they say, is acknowledged by sundry of the Post-talmudical Rabbins. To this purpose very considerable are the words of Moses Gernudensis, on Exod. xxiii. *Iste Angelus si rem ipsam dicamus, est Angelus Redemptor, de quo scriptum est, quoniam nomen meum in ipso est. Ille inquam Angelus qui ad Jacob dicebat, Ego Deus Bethel. Ille de quo dictum est, et vocabat Mosen Deus de rubo. Vocatur autem Angelus, quia mundum gubernat. Scriptum est enim, eduxit nos ex Ægypto. Præterea scriptum est, et Angelus faciei salvos fecit eos. Nimirum ille Angelus qui est Dei facies; de quo dictum est, facies mea præbit et efficiam ut quiescas; denique ille Angelus est de quo vates, subito veniet ad templum suum Dominus quem vos quæritis, Angelus fœderis quem cupitis.* ‘The angel, if we speak exactly, is the angel the Redeemer, of whom it is written, my name is in him; that angel which said unto Jacob, I am the God of Bethel. He of whom it is said, God called unto Moses out of the bush. And he is called the angel, because he governeth the world. For it is written, “Jehovah brought us out of Egypt;” and elsewhere, “He sent his angel, and brought us out of Egypt.” And again, it is written, “And the angel of his presence (face) saved them; namely, the angel which is the presence (face) of God; of whom it is said, my presence (face) shall go before thee, and I will cause thee to rest:” lastly, that angel of whom the prophet speaks, “the Lord whom you



seek shall suddenly come to his temple, the angel of the covenant whom you desire." To the same purpose speaks the same author on Exod. xxxiii. 14. "My presence shall go before thee;" *Animadvertente quid ista sibi velint. Moses enim et Israelitæ semper optaverunt Angelum primum; cæterum, quis ille esset vere intelligere non potuerunt. Neque enim ab aliis percipiebant, neque prophetica notione satis assequabantur. Atqui facies Dei ipsum significat Deum—* And again, *Facies mea præcedet, hoc est, Angelus fœderis quem vos cupitis.* 'Observe diligently what is the meaning of these words; for Moses and the Israelites always desired the principal angel, but who he was they could not perfectly understand: for they could neither learn it of others, nor attain it by prophecy, but the presence of God is God himself. "My presence (face) shall go before thee; that is, the angel of the covenant whom ye desire." Thus he: to which purpose others also of them do speak; though how to reconcile these things to their unbelief in denying the personality of the Son of God they know not. This was the angel whose רצון, Moses prayed for on Joseph, Deut. xxxiii. 16, and whom Jacob made to be the same with the "God that fed him all his days," Gen. xlviii. 15, 16, whereof we have treated largely before. The Son of God having from the foundation of the world undertaken the care and salvation of the church, he it was who immediately dealt with it in things which concerned its instruction and edification. Neither doth this hinder but that God the Father may be, or that in this place he is asserted to be, the fountain of all divine revelation.

2. There is a difference between the Son of God revealing the will of God in his divine person to the prophets, of which we have spoken, and the Son of God as incarnate, revealing the will of God immediately to the church. This is the difference here insisted on by the apostle. Under the Old Testament the Son of God in his divine person instructed the prophets in the will of God, and gave them that spirit on whose divine inspiration their infallibility did depend, 1 Pet. i. 11; but now in the revelation of the gospel, taking his own humanity, or our nature hypostatically united unto him, in the room of all the *internuncii* or prophetic messengers he had made use of, he taught it immediately himself.

There lies a seeming exception unto this distinction in the giving of the law; for as we affirm, that it was the Son by whom the law was given, so in his so doing he spake immediately to the whole church, Exod. xx. 22. The Lord said, "I have talked with you from heaven." The Jews say, that the people understood not one word of what was spoken, but only heard a voice, and saw the terrible appearances of the majesty of God, as ver. 18; for immediately upon that sight, they removed and stood afar off; and the matter is left doubtful in the repetition of the story, Deut. v. 4. It is said indeed, "The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount;" but yet neither do these words fully prove that they understood what was spoken, and as it was spoken, but only that they clearly discovered the presence of God delivering the law: for so are those words expounded in ver. 5; "I stood," saith Moses, "between the Lord and you at that time, to

show you the word of the Lord, for you were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;" that is, you understood not the words of the law, but as I declared them unto you; and it being so, though the person of the Son caused the words to be heard, yet he spake not immediately to the whole church, but by Moses. But secondly, we shall afterwards show, that all the voices then heard by Moses or the people, were formed in the air by the ministry of angels, so that they heard not the immediate voice of God. Now in the last days did the Lord take that work into his own hands, wherein from the foundation of the world he had employed angels and men.

3. Though the apostle's argument arise not immediately from the different ways of God's revealing himself to the prophets, and to Christ; but in the difference that lies in his immediate speaking unto us in Christ the Son, and his speaking unto the fathers in the prophets, yet that former difference also is intimated by him, in his affirming, that he spake to them variously or diversely, as hath been declared, and therefore we must consider that also; and herein we are to obviate the great Judaical prejudice against the gospel, to which end observe,

1. That though the apostle mentions the prophets in general, yet it is Moses whom he principally intends. This is evident in the application of this argument which he makes in particular, ch. iii. 3, where he expressly prefers the Lord Jesus before Moses by name, in this matter of ministering to the church in the name of God. For whereas, as was before intimated, the apostle manages this thing with excellent wisdom in this epistle, considering the inveterate prejudices of the Hebrews in their adhering unto Moses, he could not mention him in particular, until he had proved him whom he preferred above him to be so excellent and glorious, so far exalted above men and angels, that it was no injury to the reputation of Moses to be esteemed inferior to him.

2. That the great reason why the Jews adhered so pertinaciously unto Mosaic institutions, was their persuasion of the unparalleled excellency of the revelation to Moses. This they retreated unto, and boasted of, when they were pressed with the doctrine and miracles of Christ, John ix. 28, 29. And this was the main foundation in all their contests with the apostles, Acts xv. 1, xxi. 28. And this at length they have made a principal root or fundamental article of their faith, being the fourth of the thirteen articles of their creed; namely, that Moses was the most excellent and most sublime among the prophets, so far above that excellency, that degree of wisdom and honour which men may attain unto, that he was equal to angels. This Maimonides, the first disposer of their faith into fundamental articles, expounds at large, More Nebuch. p. 2, cap. 39. Declaravimus, saith he, quod prophetia Mosis doctoris nostri ab omnium aliorum prophetiis differat; dicemus nunc quod propter solam illam apprehensionem ad legem vocati sumus; quia nempe vocationi illi qua Moses nos vocavit similis neque antecessit ab Adamo primo ad ipsum usque, neque etiam post ipsum apud ullum prophetam secuta est; sic undamentum Legis nostræ est quod in æternum finem non sit habi-

tura vel abolenda, ac propterea, etiam ex sententia nostra, alia lex nec unquam fuit, nec erit præter unicam hanc Legem Mosis doctoris nostri. 'We have declared that the prophecy of Moses our master, differeth from the prophecies of all others; now we shall show that upon the account of this persuasion alone,' (namely of the excellency of the revelation made to Moses,) 'we are called to the law. For from the first Adam to him, there was never any such call' (from God) 'as that wherewith Moses called us, nor did ever any such ensue after him. Hence it is a fundamental principle of our law, that it shall never have an end, or be abolished, and therefore, also, it is our judgment that there was never any other (divine) law, nor ever shall be, but only this of our master Moses.' This is their present persuasion, it was so of old. The law and all legal observances are to be continued for ever: other way of worshipping God there can be none: and this upon the account of the incomparable excellency of the revelation made to Moses.

To confirm themselves in this prejudicate apprehension, they assign a four-fold pre-eminence to the prophecy of Moses above that of other prophets, and these are insisted on by the same Maimonides, in his explication of cap. x. Tractat. Sanedr. and by sundry others of them.

1. The first they fix on is this, 'That God never spake to any prophet immediately, but only to Moses,' to him he spake without angelical mediation. For so he affirms that he spake to him, פה אל פה, "mouth to mouth, Numb. xii. 8.

2. 'All other prophets,' they say, 'received their visions either in their sleep, or presently after their sleep, but Moses in the day time standing between the cherubims,' Exod. xxix. 42. And,

3. 'That when other prophets received their visions or revelations, although it was by the mediation of angels, yet their nature was weakened by it, and the state of their bodies, by reason of the consternation that befel them, Dan. x. 8, but Moses had no such perturbation befalling him when the Lord spake to him, but it was with him, as when "a man speaks unto his friend."'

4. 'That other prophets had not inspirations and answers from God at their own pleasures, but sometimes were forced to wait long, and pray for an answer before they could receive it. But Moses was wont when he pleased to say, "Stay and I will hear what God will command you," Num. ix. 8.' So they.

And to reconcile this to what is elsewhere said, that he could not see the face of God and live, they add, that he saw God not immediately but באספקלריא, in speculo or speculari, (a word formed from the Latin,) 'in a glass,' an expression which the apostle alludes to 1 Cor. xiii. 12, only they add איספקלריות היו הנביאים רואים, 'other prophets saw through nine perspectives,' ספקלריא, 'משה ראה מחר ספקלריא,' 'but Moses saw through one only,' Vaikra Rabba. sec. 1, whereunto they add that his speculum was clear and lucid, theirs spotted.

It must be granted that Moses, being the lawgiver and first revealer of all that worship, in the observance whereof the Judaical church state and privilege of that people did consist, had the pre-eminence above the succeeding prophets, whose ministry chiefly tended to in-

struct the people in the nature, and keep them to the observance of his institutions. But that all these things by them insisted on, were peculiar to him, it doth not appear, nor if it did so, are the most of them of any great weight or importance.

The first is granted, and a signal privilege it was. God spake to him *face to face*, פנים אל פנים, *Exod. xxxiii. 11*, and *mouth to mouth*, פה אל פה, *Num. xii. 8*; and this is mentioned as that which was peculiar to him above the prophets which should succeed him in the ministry of that church. But that Moses saw the essence of God, which the Jews contend from these words, is expressly denied in the text itself. For even then when it was said, that God spake to him *face to face*, it is also affirmed that he did not, nor could see the face of God, *Exod. xxxiii. 20*; see *John i. 17, 18*. Both these expressions intend only that God revealed himself to him in a more clear and familiar way than he had done to other prophets, or would do while that administration continued. For although the things he revealed to and by other prophets, were more clear, evident, and open to the understanding of believers, than they were in the revelation made to Moses, (they being intended as expositions of it,) yet in the way of the revelation itself, God dealt more clearly and familiarly with Moses, than with any other prophet of that church whatever.

The second difference assigned is vain. Of the times and seasons wherein the prophets received their visions there can be no determinate rule assigned. Many of them were at ordinary seasons, whilst they were waking, and some about the employment of their callings, as *Amos vii. 15*.

The third also, about that consternation of spirit which befel other prophets, is groundless. Sometimes it was so with them, as the instance of Daniel proves, *chap. viii. 28, x. 8*; and so it befel Moses himself, *Heb. xii. 21*, which, if we attain to that place, we shall prove the Jews themselves to acknowledge. Ordinarily it was otherwise, as with him so with them, as is manifest in the whole story of the prophets.

There is the same mistake in the last difference assigned. Moses did not so receive the spirit of prophecy, as that he could at his own pleasure reveal those things which were not discoverable but by that spirit, or speak out the mind of God infallibly in any thing for the use of the church without actual inspiration as to that particular; which is evident from the mistake that he was under as to the manner of his government, which he rectified by the advice of Jethro, *Exod. xviii. 19*. And likewise in other instances did he wait for particular answers from God, *Num. xv. 34*. To have a comprehension at once of the whole will of God concerning the obedience and salvation of the church, was a privilege reserved for "him who in all things was to have the pre-eminence." And it seems that Maimonides himself in his exaltation of Moses excepted the Messiah. For whereas in the Hebrew and Latin copies of *More Nebuch. part 2. cap. 45*. there are these words, וְיוֹנָס בֶּן מִדְרָגָה יַעֲזִי יִשְׂרָאֵל, which Buxtorf renders, *'est gradus hic etiam præstantissimorum consiliariorum Israelis*,—this is the degree (in prophecy) of the counsellors of Israel: the Arabic or original



hath, 'And this also is the degree of the Messiah of Israel, who goeth before, or excelleth all others,' that is, in point of prophecy.

Not to follow them in their imaginations, the just privileges of Moses above all other prophets lay in these three things :

1. That he was the lawgiver and mediator by whom God gave that law, and revealed that worship, in the observance whereof the very being of the Judaical church did consist.

2. That God in the revelation made to him, dealt in a more familiar and clear manner, as to the way of his outward dealing, than with any other prophets.

3. In that the revelation made to him concerned the ordering of the whole house of God, when the other prophets were employed only about particulars built on his foundation.

In these three things consisted the just and free pre-eminence of Moses, which, whether it were such as would warrant the Jews in their obstinate adherence to his institutions upon their own principles, shall be inquired into. But before we manifest that indeed it was not, the revelation of the mind of God in and by the Son, which is compared with, and preferred before and above this of Moses, must be unfolded, and this we shall do in the ensuing observations.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ, by virtue of the union of his person, was from the womb filled with a perfection of gracious light and knowledge of God and his will. An actual exercise of that principle of holy wisdom wherewith he was endued, in his infancy, as afterwards, he had not, Luke ii. 52. Nor had he in his human nature an absolutely infinite comprehension of all individual things past, present, and to come, which he expressly denies, as to the day of judgment, Mat. xxiv. 36, Mark xiii. 32. But he was furnished with all that wisdom and knowledge which the human nature was capable of, both as to principle and exercise, in the condition wherein it was, without destroying its finite being, and variety of conditions from the womb. The Papists have made a vain controversy about the knowledge of the human soul of Christ. Those whom they charge with error in this matter, affirm no more than what is expressly asserted in the places of Scripture above mentioned; and by their answers to those places, it is evident how little they care to what scorn they expose the Scripture and all religion, if they may secure their own mistakes. But this wisdom, whatever it were, is not that whereby God so revealed his mind to him, as thereby to be said to speak to us in him. He had it by his union, and therefore immediately from the person of the Son, sanctifying that nature by the Holy Ghost which he took into subsistence with himself. But the revelation, by which God spake in him to us, was in a peculiar manner from the Father, Rev. i. 1, and as we have showed, it is the person of the Father that is here peculiarly spoken of. And hence the inquiry of some on this place, how the second person revealed himself to the human nature, is not to the purpose of it. For it is the person of the Father that is spoken of. So that,

2. The commission, the mission and the furnishing of the Son as incarnate and as Mediator, with abilities for the declaration of the mind and will of God to the church, were peculiarly from the Father.



For the whole work of his mediation, he received command of the Father, John x. 18, and what he should speak, John xii. 49, according to which commandment he wrought and taught, John xiv. 31. Whence that is the common periphrasis whereby he expressed the person of the Father, 'he that sent him,' as also 'he that sealed and anointed him.' And on that account he testified, that his doctrine was not his, his own, that is, primarily or originally as Mediator, but his that sent him, John vii. 16. It was from the Father that he heard the word, and learned the doctrine that he declared to the church. And this is asserted wherever there is mention made of the Father's sending, sealing, anointing, commanding, teaching him; of his doing the will, speaking the words, seeking the glory, obeying the commands of him that sent him. See John viii. 26, 28, 40, xiv. 10. xv. 15, Rev. i. 1; and in the Old Testament, Zech. ii. 8, Isa. xlviii. 15—17, chap. l. 4. That blessed tongue of the learned whereby God spake in and by him, the refreshing word of the gospel, to poor weary sinners, was the gift of the Father.

3. As to the manner of his receiving the revelation of the will of God, a double mistake must be removed, and then the nature of it must be declared.

1. The Socinians, to avoid the force of those testimonies which are urged to confirm the deity of Christ, from the assertions in the gospel that he who spake to the disciples on earth was then also in heaven, John iii. 13, vi. 35, 51, vii. 32, 33, 41, 42, 57, 58, viii. 29, have broached a Mahometan fancy, that the Lord Christ, before his entrance on his public ministry, was locally taken up into heaven, and there instructed in the mystery of the gospel, and the mind of God which he was to reveal, *Catech. Raccov. cap. 3. de Offic. Ch. Prophet. Quest. 4, 5. Smalcus de Divinitat. Christi, cap. 4. Socin. Respons. ad Paræn. Vol. ii. p. 38, 39.*

But, 1. There was no cause of any such rapture of the human nature of Christ, as we shall evidence in manifesting the way whereby he was taught of the Father, especially after his baptism. 2. This imaginary rapture is grounded solely on their *πρωτον ψευδος*, that the Lord Christ in his whole person was no more than a mere man. 3. There is no mention of any such thing in the Scripture, where the Father's revealing his mind and will to the Son is treated of, which, had it been, ought not to have been omitted. 4. The fancy of it is expressly contrary to Scripture; for, 1. The Holy Ghost affirms, that Christ entered once into the holy place, and that after he had obtained eternal redemption, Heb. ix. 12, which should have been his second entrance, had he been taken thither before in his human nature, so that coming of his into the world, which we look for at the last day, is called "his second coming," his "coming again," because of his first entrance into it at his incarnation, Heb. ix. 28. 2. He was to suffer before his entrance into heaven and his glory therein, Luke xxiv. 26. And 3. As to the time of his ascension which these men assign, namely, the forty days after his baptism, it is said expressly that he was all that time "in the wilderness amongst the wild beasts," Mark

i. 13. So that this figment may have no place in our inquiry into the way of the Father's speaking in the Son.

2. Some lay the whole weight of the revelation of the will of God to Christ, upon the endowments of the human nature by virtue of its personal union with the eternal Word; but this is wholly inconsistent with the many testimonies before rehearsed, of the Father's revealing himself to him after that union. Wherefore, to declare the nature of this revelation, we must observe further,

4. That Jesus Christ in his divine nature, as he was the eternal Word and Wisdom of the Father, not by a voluntary communication, but eternal generation, had an omniscience of the whole nature and will of God, as the Father himself hath, because the same with that of the Father; their will and wisdom being the same. This is the blessed *συμπεριχωρησις*, or 'in-being of each person,' the one in the other, by virtue of their oneness in the same nature: thus, as God, he had an absolute omniscience. Moreover, the mystery of the gospel, the especial counsel and covenant of it concerning the redemption of the elect in his blood, and the worship of God by his redeemed ones, being transacted between Father and Son from all eternity, was known to him as the Son, by virtue of his own personal transactions with the Father in the eternal counsel and covenant of it. See what we have elsewhere delivered concerning that covenant.

5. The Lord Christ discharged his office and work of revealing the will of the Father, in and by his human nature, that nature wherein he dwelt among us, John i. 14. For although the person of Christ, God and man, was our Mediator, Acts xx. 28; John i. 14. 18, yet his human nature was that wherein he discharged the duties of his office, and the *principium quod* of all his mediatory actings, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

6. This human nature of Christ, as he was in it "made of a woman made under the law," Gal iv. 4. was from the instant of its union with the person of the Son of God, a "holy thing," Luke i. 35, "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners," and radically filled with all that perfection of habitual grace and wisdom, which was or could be necessary to the discharge of that whole duty which as a man he owed to God, Luke ii. 40, 49, 52; John viii. 46; 1 Pet. ii. 22. But,

7. Besides this furniture with habitual grace for the performance of all holy obedience to God, as a man made under the law, there was a peculiar endowment with the Spirit, without and beyond the bounds of all comprehensible measures, that he was to receive as the great Prophet of the church, in whom the Father would speak and give out the last revelation of himself. This communication of the Spirit to him, was the foundation of his sufficiency for the discharge of his prophetic office, Isa. xi. 2, 3, xlviii. 16, lxi. 1—3, Dan. ix. 24. As to the reality and being of this gift of the Spirit, he received it from the womb, whence in his infancy he was said to be *πληρουμενος σοφιας*, Luke ii. 40. "filled with wisdom," wherewith he confuted the doctors to amazement, ver. 47. And with his years were these gifts increased in him; *προεκοπτε σοφια και ηλικια και χαριτι*, 'he went forwards in wisdom, and stature, and favour,' ver. 52. But the full communica-

tion of this Spirit, with special reference to the discharge of his public office, with the visible pledge of it in the Holy Ghost descending on him in the shape of a dove, he was made partaker of in his baptism, Matt. iii. 16, when also he received his first public testimony from heaven, ver. 17; which when again repeated, received the additional command of hearing him, Mat. xvii. 5, designing the prophet that was to be heard on pain of utter extermination, Deut. xviii. 18, 19. And therefore he was thereupon said to be *πνευματος ἁγίου πληρης*, Luke iv. 1. "full of the Holy Ghost," and sealed to this work by the sign foretold of God, John i. 33.

This was the foundation of the Father's speaking in the Son as incarnate. He spake in him by his Spirit, so he did in the prophets of old, 2 Pet. i. 21. And herein in general the prophecy of Christ and theirs did agree. It remaineth then to show wherein his pre-eminence above them did consist, so that the word spoken by him is principally and eminently to be attended to, which is the argument of that which the apostle hath in hand in this place.

8. The pre-eminencies of the prophecy of Christ, above that of Moses, and all other prophets, were of two sorts, 1. Such as arose from his person who was the prophet. 2. Such as accompanied the nature and manner of the revelation made to him.

1. They arise from the infinite excellency of his person above theirs. This is that which the apostle from the close of this verse insists upon to the very end of the chapter, making his discourse upon it the basis of his ensuing exhortations. I shall therefore remit the consideration of it, unto its proper place.

2. There were sundry excellences that attended the very revelation itself, made unto him, or his prophecy as such. For,

1. "Receiving the Spirit not by measure," John iii. 34, as they all did, he had given unto him altogether, a comprehension of the whole will and mind of God, as to whatever he would have revealed of himself, with the mystery of our salvation, and all that obedience and worship which in this world he would require of his church. "It pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell," Col. i. 19, that is, "of grace and truth," John i. 17, not granting him a transient irradiation by them, but a permanence and a constant abode of them with him in their fulness; all "treasures of wisdom and knowledge being hid in him," Col. ii. 3, as their home and proper abiding place; which made him of "quick understanding in the fear of the Lord," Isa. xi. 3. All the mysteries of the counsel between the Father and the eternal Word for the salvation of the elect, with all the ways whereby it was to be accomplished through his own blood, were known unto him; as also were all the bounds, the whole extent of that worship which his church was to render unto God, with the assistance of the Spirit that was to be afforded unto them for that end and purpose. Hence, the only reason why he did not at once reveal unto his disciples the whole counsel of God, was not because all the treasures of it were not committed unto him, but because they could bear no other but that gradual communication of it, which he used towards them, John xvi. 12. But he himself dwelt in the midst of

those treasures, seeing to the bottom of them. All other prophets, even Moses himself, receiving their revelation by transient irradiations of their minds, had no treasure of truth dwelling in them, but apprehended only that particular wherein they were enlightened, and even that not clearly in its fulness and perfection, but in a measure of light accommodated unto the age wherein they lived, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. Hence the Spirit is said to rest on him, Isa. xi. 2, 3, and to abide on him, Matt. iii. 16, who did only in a transient act affect the minds of other prophets; and by an actual motion, which had not an habitual spring in themselves, cause them to speak or write the will of God; as an instrument of music gives forth a sound according to the skill of him that strikes it, and that only when it is so stricken or used. Hence,

2. The prophets receiving their revelations, as it were, by number and tale from the Holy Ghost, when they had spoken or written what in particular at any season they had received from him, could not add one word or syllable of the same infallibility and authority with what they had so received. But the Lord Christ having all the treasures of wisdom, knowledge, and truth hid and laid up in him, did at all times, in all places, with equal infallibility and authority give forth the mind and will of God, even as he would; what he so spake, having its whole authority from his speaking of it, and not from its consonancy unto any thing otherwise revealed.

3. The prophets of old were so barely instrumental in receiving and revealing the will of God, being only servants in the house, Heb. iii. 4, for the good of others, 1 Pet. i. 11, that they saw not to the bottom of the things by themselves revealed; and did therefore both diligently read and study the books of them that wrote before their time, Dan. ix. 2, and meditated upon the things which the Spirit uttered by themselves, to obtain an understanding in them, 1 Pet. i. 10—12. But the Lord Jesus, the Lord over his own house, had an absolutely perfect comprehension of all the mysteries revealed to him and by him, by that divine wisdom which always dwelt in him.

4. The difference was no less between them in respect of the revelations themselves made to them, and by them. For although the substance of the will and mind of God concerning salvation by the Messiah was made known unto them all, yet it was done so obscurely to Moses and the prophets that ensued, that they all came short in the light of that mystery of John the baptist; and he did not rise up in a clear and distinct apprehension of it, unto the least of the true disciples of Christ, Matt. xi. 11, whence the giving of the law by Moses to instruct the church in that mystery, by its types and shadows, is opposed to that grace and truth which were brought by Jesus Christ, John i. 17, 18. See Ephes. iii. 8—11; Col. i. 26, 27; Tit. ii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 10.

In these and sundry other things of the like importance, had the Father's speaking in the Son the pre-eminence above his speaking in Moses and the prophets; for which cause the apostle placeth this consideration in the head of his reasonings and arguments, for attendance unto and observance of the things revealed by him. For even all these things have influence into his present argument, though the



main stress of it be laid on the excellency of his person, of which at large afterwards.

6. We must yet further observe, that the Jews, with whom the apostle had to do, had all of them an expectation of a new signal and final revelation of the will of God, to be made by the Messiah in the last days, that is, of their church-state, and not, as they now fondly imagine, of the world. Some of them indeed imagined that great prophet promised Deut. xviii. to have been one distinct from the Messiah, John i. 21, but the general expectation of the church for the full revelation of the will of God, was upon the Messiah, John iv. 25. Of the same mind were their more ancient doctors, that retained any thing of the tradition of their fathers; asserting that the law of Moses was alterable by the Messiah, and that in some things it should be so. Maimonides is the leader in the opinion of the eternity of the law; whose arguments are answered by the author of *Sepher Ikkarim*, lib. iii. cap. 13, and some of them by Nachmanides. Hence it is laid down as a principle in *Neve Shalom*, ונשא ממשה מלך משיח ירום מאברהם ונשא ממלכי חשרת 'Messiah the king shall be exalted above Abraham, be high above Moses, yea, and the ministering angels.' And it is for the excellency of the revelation made by him, that he is so exalted above Moses. Whence Maimonides himself acknowledgeth, *Tractat. de Regibus*, that at the coming of the Messiah, יהיו הדברים הפתורים 'hidden and deep things, (that is, of the counsel of God,) shall be revealed or laid open unto all.' And this persuasion they built on the promise of a new covenant to be made with them, not "like the covenant made with their fathers," Jerem. xxxi. 32, 33. Whence the author before mentioned concludes, that it was the judgment of the ancient doctors, that they should receive a new covenant from the mouth of God himself; and all their worship being annexed and subservient unto the covenant that was made with them in Horeb, upon the removal of that covenant, there was of necessity a new kind of worship, subservient thereunto, to ensue.

From all these observations, we may evidently perceive wherein the force of the apostle's argument doth lie, which he insists upon in this very entrance of his discourse; rather insinuating it from their own principles, than openly pressing them with its reason, which he doth afterwards. They acknowledged that the Messiah was to come; that he was to be in a special manner the Son of God, (as we shall show;) that in him God would ultimately reveal his mind and will unto them; and that this revelation on many accounts would be far more excellent than that of old made to and by Moses. And that this was all accomplished in the ministry of Jesus Christ, and that unto themselves in the latter days of their church, according to what was long before foretold, he asserts and proves; whence it was easy for them to gather, what a necessity of adhering to his doctrine and institutions, notwithstanding any contrary pleas or arguings, was incumbent on them.

But, moreover, the apostle in these words hath opened the spring from whence all his ensuing arguments do flow; in fixing on him who brought life and immortality to light by the gospel. And from thence takes occasion to enter upon the dogmatical part of the epistle, in the



description of the person of Christ, the Son of God, and his excellency, in whom God spake unto them, that they might consider with whom they had to do; wherein he proceeds to the end of this chapter.

But before we proceed, we shall stay here a little to consider some things that may be a refreshment to believers in their passage, in the consideration of those spiritual truths, which for the use of the church in general are exhibited to us, in the words which we have considered.

And the first is this.

I. The revelation of the will of God, as to all things which concern his worship and our faith and obedience, is peculiarly and in a way of eminence from the Father.

This is that which the apostle partly asserts, and partly takes for granted, as the head and spring of his whole ensuing discourse. And this shall now be a little further cleared and confirmed: to which end we may observe,

1. That the whole mystery of his will antecedently to the revelation of it, is said to be hid in God, that is, the Father, Ephes. iii. 9, it lay wrapt up from the eyes of men and angels, in his eternal wisdom and counsel, Col. i. 26, 27. The Son, indeed, who is, and from eternity was in the bosom of the Father, John i. 18, as one brought up with him, his eternal delight and wisdom, Prov. viii. 29, 30, was partaker with him in this counsel, ver. 31, as was also his eternal Spirit, who searches and knows all the deep things of God, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. But yet the rise and spring of this mystery, was in the Father. For the order of acting in the blessed Trinity, follows the order of subsistence. As the Father, therefore, is the fountain of the Trinity, as to subsistence, so also as to operation. He hath life in himself, and he gives to the Son to have life in himself, John v. 26. And he doth it by communicating unto him his subsistence by eternal generation. And thence saith the Son, "As my Father worketh, so I work," John v. 17. And what he seeth the Father do, that doth the Son likewise, ver. 19, not by imitation or repetition of the like works; but in the same works, in order of nature the will and wisdom of the Father, doth proceed; so also is it in respect of the Holy Ghost, whose order of subsistence denotes that of his operation.

2. That the revelation of the mystery of the will of God, so hidden in the counsel of his will from eternity, was always made and given out in the pursuit, and for the accomplishment of the purpose of the Father; or of that eternal purpose of the will of God, which is by the way of eminence ascribed unto the Father, Eph. i. 8, 9. "He hath abounded towards 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." It is the Father of whom he speaks, ver. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Now he abounds to usward in wisdom and prudence, or abundantly manifests his infinite wisdom in his dealing with us, by the revelation of the mystery of his will; and this he doth in pursuit of his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself; or that purpose of his will which had its foundation solely in his good pleasure. This is the purpose of election, as is declared, ver. 3—5. And this purpose is pecu-

liarily assigned unto him, John xvii. 6; 2 Thess. ii. 13. For the accomplishment of this purpose, or the bringing of those predestinated thereby, to the end purposed for them by the means ordained, for the praise of God's glorious grace, is the whole revelation of the will of God, first and last, made. He spake in his Son, and he spake in him, that he might manifest his name (himself and will) to the men whom he gave him; for, saith the Son, "Thine they were," set apart for thee in thy eternal purpose, and "thou gavest them unto me," John xvii. 6. And therefore Paul tells us, that in preaching of the gospel, he endured all things for the elect's sake, 2 Tim. ii. 10, knowing that it was for their salvation, that the mystery of it was revealed from the bosom of the Father, as God also had before taught him, Acts xviii. 10; see Rom. xi. 7, viii. 28, &c.

3. This purpose of God being communicated with, and unto the Lord Christ, or the Son, became the counsel of peace between them both, Zech. vi. 13. The Son, rejoicing to do the work that was incumbent on him for the accomplishment of it, Prov. viii. 30—32; Psal. xl. 7, 8: it became peculiarly the care and work of the Father, to see that the inheritance promised him upon his undertaking, (Isa. liii. 10—12,) should be given unto him. This is done by the revelation of the will of God unto men, concerning their obedience and salvation, whereby they are made the lot, the seed, the portion and inheritance of Christ. To this end doth the Lord, that is the Father, who said unto the Lord the Son, "Sit thou on my right hand," Ps. cx. 2, send the "rod of his power out of Zion," ver. 2, by it to declare his rule even over his enemies, and to make his people, those given unto him, willing and obedient, ver. 3. The inheritance given by the Father unto Christ, being wholly in the possession of another, it became him to take it out of the usurper's hand, and deliver it up to him, whose right it was; and this he did, and doth by the revelation of his mind in the preaching of the word, Col. i. 12, 13. And from these considerations it is, that,

4. The whole revelation and dispensation of the will of God in and by the word, is, as was said, eminently appropriated unto the Father. "Eternal life (the counsel, the purpose, ways, means, and procurer of it) was with the Father, and was manifested to us by the word of truth," 1 John i. 1, 2. And it is the Father, that is, his will, mind, purpose, grace, love, that the Son declares, John i. 18; in which work he speaks nothing but what he heard from, and was taught by the Father, John viii. 28. And thence he says, "the doctrine is not mine," that is, principally and originally, "but his that sent me," John vii. 16. And the gospel is called, the "gospel of the glory of the blessed God," 1 Tim. i. 11, which is a periphrasis of the person of the Father, who is the "Father of glory," Eph. i. 17. And we might also declare, that the great work of making this gospel effectual on the minds of men, doth peculiarly belong unto the Father, which he accomplisheth by his Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 18, chap. iv. 6. But that is not our present business. Thus the revelation of events that should befall the church to the end of the world, that Christ signified by his angel unto John, was first given him of the Father, Rev. i. 1. And, there-

fore, though all declarations of God and his will, from the foundation of the world, were made by the Son, the second person of the Trinity, and by his Spirit speaking in the prophets, 1 Pet. i. 11—13, yet as it was not by him immediately, no more was it as absolutely so, but as the great angel and messenger of the covenant, by the will and appointment of the Father. And therefore, the very dispensers of the gospel are said, *πρεσβευειν ὑπερ Χριστου*, to ‘treat as ambassadors about the business of Christ’ with men in the name of God the Father; *ὡς του Θεου παρακαλουντος δι ἡμων*, saith the apostle; as if God the Father “exhorted in and by us,” 2 Cor. v. 20. For to him doth this whole work principally relate.

And from the appropriating of this work originally and principally to the Father, there are three things that are particularly intimated unto us.

1. The authority that is to be considered in it; the Father is the original of all power and authority; of him the whole family in heaven and earth is named, Eph. iii. 15. He is the Father of the whole family, from whom Christ himself receives all his power and authority as Mediator, Matt. xxviii. 18, which, when his work is accomplished, he shall give up again into his hand, 1 Cor. xv. 28. He sent him into the world, set him over his house, gave him command unto his work. The very name and title of Father, carries authority along with it, Mal. i. 6. And in the disposal of the church, in respect of this paternal power doth the Son affirm, that the Father is greater than he, John xiv. 28, and runs up the contempt of the word in the preaching of it by its messengers, into a contempt of this authority of the Father: he that “refuseth you, refuseth me; he that refuseth me, refuseth him that sent me.”

The revelation, then, and dispensation of the mind and will of God in the word, is to be considered as an act of supreme sovereign authority, requiring all subjection of soul and conscience in the receiving of it. It is the Father of the family that speaks in this word; he that hath all power and authority essentially in him, over the souls and eternal conditions of them to whom he speaks. And what holy reverence, humility, and universal subjection of soul to the word this in a particular manner requires, it is easy to apprehend.

2. There is also *love*. In the economy of the blessed Trinity about the work of our salvation, that which is eminently and in an especial manner ascribed unto the Father is *love*, as hath been at large elsewhere showed, 1 John iv. 9, 10, 16. *God*, that is, the Father, saith he, *is love*. And how he exerts that property of his nature in the work of our salvation by Christ, he there shows at large; so John iii. 16; Rom. v. 7, 8. To be love, full of love, to be the especial spring of all fruits of love, is peculiar to him as the Father; and from love it is that he makes the revelation of his will whereof we speak, Deut. vii. 8; chap. xxxiii. 3; Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. It was out of infinite love, mercy, and compassion, that God would at all reveal his mind and will unto sinners. He might for ever have locked up the treasures of his wisdom and prudence, wherein he abounds towards us in his word, in his own eternal breast. He might have left all the

sons of men unto that woful darkness, whereinto by sin they had cast themselves, and kept them, with the angels who sinned before them, under the chains and power of it, unto the judgment of the great day. But it was from infinite love that he condescended to reveal himself and his will unto us. This mixture of authority and love, which is the spring of the revelation of the will of God unto us, requires all readiness, willingness, and cheerfulness in the receipt of it, and submission unto it. Besides these also,

3. There is *care* eminently seen in it. The great care of the church is in, and on the Father. He is the husbandman that takes care of the vine and vineyard, John xv. 1, 2. And thence our Saviour, who had a delegated care of his people, commends them to the Father, John xvii. as to him to whom the care of them did principally and originally belong. Care is proper to a father, as such; to God as a Father. Care is inseparable from paternal love. And this also is to be considered in the revelation of the will of God.

What directions from these considerations may be taken for the use both of them that dispense the word, and of those whose duty it is to attend unto the dispensation of it, shall only be marked in our passage.

For the dispensers of the word, let them,

1. Take heed of pursuing that work negligently, which hath its spring in the authority, love, and care of God; see 1 Tim. iv. 13—16.

2. Know to whom to look for support, help, ability, and encouragement in their work, Ephes. vi. 19, 20. And,

3. Not to be discouraged, whatever opposition they meet with in the discharge of their duty, considering whose work they have in hand, 2 Cor. iv. 15, 16.

4. Know how they ought to dispense the word, so as to answer the spring from whence it comes; namely, with authority, love to, and care for the souls of men. And,

5. Consider to whom they are to give an account of the work they are called to the discharge of, and entrusted with, Heb. xiii. 7.

And for them to whom the word is preached, let them consider,

1. With what reverence and godly fear they ought to attend to the dispensation of it, seeing it is a proper effect and issue of the authority of God, Heb. xii. 25. And,

2. How they will escape if they neglect so great salvation declared unto them from the love and care of God, Heb. ii. 3. And,

3. With what holiness and spiritual subjection of soul unto God, they ought to be conversant in and with all the ordinances of worship, that are appointed by him, Heb. xii. 28, 29.

Other observations I shall more briefly pass over. “God spake in them.”

II. The authority of God speaking in and by the penmen of the Scriptures, is the sole bottom and foundation of our assenting to them, and what is contained in them, with faith divine and supernatural.

He spake in them: he then continues to speak by them, and therefore is their word received, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. But this is elsewhere handled at large.

III. God's gradual revelation of himself, his mind and will unto



the church, was a fruit of infinite wisdom and care towards his elect.

“These are parts of his ways,” says Job, “but how little a portion is heard of him!” Job xxvi. 14. Though all his ways and dispensations are ordered in infinite wisdom, yet we can but stand at the shore of the ocean, and admire its glory and greatness. Little it is that we can comprehend. Yet what may be our instruction, what may further our faith and obedience, is not hidden from us. And these things lie evident unto us, in this gradual discovery of himself and his will.

1. That he over-filled not their vessels, he gave them out light as they were able to bear. Though we know not perfectly what their condition was, yet this we know, that as no generation needed more light than they had, for the discharge of the duty that God required of them, so more light would have unfitted them for somewhat or other, that was their duty in their respective generations.

2. He kept them in a continual dependence upon himself, and waiting for their rule and direction from him, which, as it tended to his glory, so it was exceedingly suited to their safety, in keeping them in an humble waiting frame.

3. He so gave out the light and knowledge of himself, as that the great work which he had to accomplish, that lay in the stores of his infinitely wise will, as the end and issue of all revelations, namely the bringing forth of Christ into the world, in the way wherein he was to come, and for the ends which he was to bring about, might not be obviated. He gave light enough to believers to enable them to receive him; and not so much as to hinder obdurate sinners from crucifying him.

4. He did this work so, that the pre-eminence fully and ultimately to reveal him, might be reserved for him, in whom all things were to be gathered unto a head. All privileges were to be kept for, and unto him, which was principally done by this gradual revelation of the mind of God.

5. And there was tender care conjoined with this infinite wisdom. None of his elect in any age were left without that light and instruction which were needful for them in their seasons and generations. And this so given out unto them, as that they might have fresh consolation and support as their occasions did require. While the church of old was under this dispensation, they were still hearkening when they should hear new tidings from heaven for their teaching and refreshment. And if any difficulty did at any time befall them, they were sure not to want relief in this kind. And this was necessary before the final hand was set to the work. And this discovers the woful state of the present Jews. They grant that the revelation of the will of God is not perfected, and yet notwithstanding all their miseries, darkness, and distresses, they dare not pretend they have one word from heaven these 2000 years, that is from the days of Malachi; and yet they labour to keep the veil upon their eyes.

IV. We may see hence the absolute perfection of the revelation of the will of God by Christ and his apostles, as to every end and purpose

whatever, for which God ever did, or ever will in this world reveal himself, or his mind and will.

For as this was the last way and means that God ever designed for the discovery of himself, as to the worship and obedience which he requires, so the person by whom he accomplished this work, makes it indispensably necessary that it be also absolutely perfect; from which nothing can be taken, to which nothing must be added under the penalty of the extermination threatened to him that will not attend to the voice of that prophet.

We now return again unto the words of our apostle. Having declared the Son to be the immediate revealer of the gospel, in pursuit of his design, he proceeds to declare his glory and excellency, both that which he had in himself antecedently to his susception of the office of Mediator, and what he received upon his investiture therewith.

Two things in the close of this verse he assigns unto him: 1. That he was appointed heir of all. 2. That by him the worlds were made. Wherein consists the first amplification of his proposition, concerning the revealer of the gospel, in two parts, both acknowledged by the Jews, and both directly conducing to his purpose in hand.

Ὁν ἐθηκε κληρονομον παντων. Ἐθηκε; *posuit, fecit, constituit*; Syr. כס, *posuit: he placed, set, made, appointed.*

I. Ὁν, *whom*; that is the Son, in whom the Father spake unto us; and as such, as the revealer of the gospel, Θεανθρωπος, *God and man*. The Son, as God, hath a natural dominion over all. To this he can be no more appointed, than he can be to be God. On what account he hath his divine nature, on the same he hath all the attributes and perfections of it, with all things that necessarily on any supposition attend it, as supreme dominion doth. Nor doth this denotation of him respect merely the human nature; for although the Lord Christ performed all the acts of his mediatory office in and by the human nature, yet he did them not as man, but as God and man in one person, John i. 14; Acts xx. 28. And therefore unto him, as such, do the privileges belong that he is vested with on the account of his being Mediator. Nothing indeed can be added unto him as God; but there may be to him who is God, in respect of his condescension to discharge an office in another nature which he did assume. And this solves the paralogism of Felbinger on this place, which is that where-with the Jews and Socinians perpetually entangle themselves. *Deus altissimus non potest salva majestate sua ab aliquo hæres constitutus esse. Filius Dei a Deo est hæres omnium constitutus, ergo Filius Dei non est Deus altissimus.* God is called, אֵל עֶלְיוֹן, *the high, or most high God*, with reference to his sovereign and supreme exaltation over all his creatures, as the next words in the place where that title is given unto him do declare, קַדְמָה שְׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, *Possessor of heaven and earth*, Gen. xiv. 19. He is not termed, *Deus altissimus*, the most high God, as though there were another *Deus altus*, a high God that is not the *altissimus*, which is the sense of the Socinians. This one *Deus altissimus*, most high God, absolutely in respect of his divine nature, cannot be appointed an heir by any other. But he who is so this high God, as to be the eternal Son of the Father, and made man, may in

respect of the office, which in the nature of man he undertook to discharge, be made heir of all by his Father.

II. *Κληρονομον*, the *heir*: *κληρος* is a *lot*, and a peculiar portion received by lot: thence an *inheritance*, which is a man's lot and portion. *Κληρος επιδικος*, is an *inheritance under controversy*; *κληρονομον*, is an *heir to goods divided by lot*, or he that distributeth an inheritance to others by lot; absolutely an *heir*. So the poet of the covetous Hermocrates, *εν διαζηκαις αυτον των ιδιων εγραψε κληρονομον*, 'he appointed himself his own heir in his last will and testament.' It hath also a more large signification in Plato; 'he whose turn it was to speak next,' is, *ο του λογον κληρονομος*. Strictly it is the same with *hæres*, an *heir*. And an heir is he, 'qui subintrat jus, locum, et dominium rerum defuncti, ac si eadem persona esset,' 'who entereth into the right, place, and title of him that is deceased, as if he were the same person.' But yet the name of an heir is not restrained in the law to him that so succeeds a deceased person, in which sense it can have no place here. 'Hæredis nomen, latiore significatione, possessorem et fidei commissarium et legatarium comprehendit:' it comprehends a *possessor*, a *trustee*, and a *legatary*: so Spigelius. This sense of the word takes off the catachresis which must be supposed in the application of it unto the Son, if it only denoted such an heir as Abraham thought Eliezer would be to him, Gen. xv. 3, 4, one that succeeds to the right and goods of the deceased. For the Father dieth not, nor doth ever forego his own title or dominion. Neither is the title and right given to the Son as Mediator, the same with that of God absolutely considered. This is eternal, natural, co-existent with the being of all things; that new, created by grant and donation, by whose erection and establishment the other is not at all impeached. For whereas it is affirmed, that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son," John v. 22, 27, 30, it respects not title and rule, but actual administration.

In the latter sense of the word as it denotes any rightful possessor by grant from another, it is properly ascribed unto the Son; and there are three things intended in this word.

1. *Title, dominion, lordship*: 'Hæres est qui herus;' for thence is the word, and not from *ære*, as Isidore supposeth. The heir is the lord of that which he is heir unto. So the apostle, Gal. iv. 1, *κληρονομος*, is *κυριος παντων*, 'the heir is lord of all.' And in this sense is Christ called בכור, the first-born, Psalm lxxxix. 27, "I will give him to be my first-born, higher than," (or and high above,) "the kings of the earth." Princeps, Dominus, Caput familiæ; the Prince, Lord, and Head of the family, that hath right to the inheritance, and distributes portions to others. Hence בכור is used for every-thing that excelleth, and hath the pre-eminence in its own kind, Job xviii. 10; Isa. xiv. 30; Ezek. xlvii. 12. So Col. i. 15.

2. *Possession*. Christ is made actual possessor of that which he hath title unto. As he is בכור, so he is ירש, such a possessor as comes to his possession by the surrender or grant of another. God, in respect of his dominion, is called קנה, the absolute possessor of heaven and earth, Gen. xvi. 22. Christ, as a Mediator, is



וְיִרְשֵׁהוּ, a possessor by grant. And there was a suitableness, that he that was the Son, should thus be heir. Whence Chrysostom and Theophylact affirm, that the words denote, *καὶ τὸ τῆς υἱότητος γνησίου, καὶ τὸ τῆς κυριότητος ἀναποστάτου*, 'The propriety of his sonship, and the immutability of his lordship.' Not that he was thus made heir of all, as he was *μονογενής*, "the only-begotten Son of the Father," John i. 14; but it was agreeable and consonant, that he who was eternally *μονογενής*, and had on that account an absolute dominion over all with his Father, becoming *πρωτοτοκος ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς*, Rom. viii. 29, "the first-born amongst many brethren," should have a delegated heirship of all, and be given to be the head over all unto the church, Eph. i. 22.

3. That he hath both this title and possession by grant from the Father, of which afterwards. Christ then, by virtue of a grant from the Father, is made Lord by a new title, and hath possession given him according to his title: he is *κληρονομος*, 'the heir.'

III. *Παντων*, of all. This is the object of the heirship of Christ, his inheritance. The word may be taken in the masculine gender, and denote all persons; all those of whom he had spoken before, all the revealers of the will of God under the Old Testament. The Son was the Lord over them all, which is true; but the word in the neuter gender denotes all things absolutely, and so it is in this place to be understood. For,

1. It is so used elsewhere to the same purpose, 1 Cor. xv. 27, *παντα ὑπετάξε*, "he hath subjected all things unto him." So Rom. ix. 5, *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ παντὶ Θεός*, "who is God over all."

2. This sense suits the apostle's argument, and adds a double force to his intention and design. For, 1. The author of the gospel being Heir and Lord of all things whatever, the sovereign disposal of all those rites and ordinances of worship about which the Jews contended, must needs be in his hand, to change and alter them as he saw good. 2. He being the Heir and Lord of all things, it was easy for them to conclude, that if they intended to be made partakers of any good in heaven or earth, in a way of love and mercy, it must be by an interest in him, which, without a constant abode in obedience to his gospel cannot be attained.

3. The next words evince this sense, "By whom also he made the worlds." Probably they render a reason of the equitableness of this great trust made to the Son. He made all, and it was meet he should be Lord of all. However, the force of the connexion of the words, *δι' οὗ καὶ τοὺς αἰῶνας*, "by whom also he made the worlds," equals the *παντων*, the all foregoing, to the *αἰῶνας*, or the *worlds* following.

4. The inheritance given, answers the promise of it to Abraham, which was, that he should be heir of the world, Rom. iv. 13, namely, in his seed, Gal. iii. 16, as also the request made by Christ on that promise, Psalm ii. 8, both which extend it to the whole world, the ends of the earth.

5. The original and rise of this inheritance of Christ, will give us its true extent, which must therefore more especially be considered.

Upon the creation of man, God gave unto him a dominion over all



things in this lower world, Gen. i. 28, 29. He made him his heir, vicegerent, and substitute in the earth. And as for those other creatures, to which his power and authority did not immediately extend, as the sun, moon, and stars, the whole inanimate host of the superior world, they were ordered by him that made them, to serve for his good and behoof, Gen. i. 14; Deut. iv. 19. So that even they also in a sort belonged unto his inheritance, being made to serve him in his subjection unto God.

Further, besides this lower part of his dominion, God had for his glory created angels in heaven above, of whom we shall have occasion hereafter to treat. These made up another branch of God's providential kingdom, the whole administered in the upper and lower world, being independent of each other, and meeting in nothing but their dependence upon, and subjection unto God himself. Hence they did not so stand in the condition of their creation, but that one kind or race of them might fail and perish without any impeachment of the other. So also it came to pass. Man might have persisted in his honour and dignity, notwithstanding the fall and apostasy of some of the angels. When he fell from his heirship and dominion, the whole subordination of all things unto him, and by him unto God, was lost; and all creatures returned to an immediate absolute dependence on the government of God, without any respect to the authority and sovereignty delegated unto man. But as the fall of angels did not in its own nature prejudice mankind, no more did this fall of man the angels that persisted in their obedience, they being no part of his inheritance. However by the sin, apostasy, and punishment of that portion of the angels which kept not their first station, it was manifested how possible it was, that the remainder of them might sin after the similitude of their transgression. Things being brought into this condition, one branch of the kingdom of God under the administration of man, or allotted to his service, being cast out of that order wherein he had placed it, and the other in an open possibility of being so also, it seemed good to the Lord in his infinite wisdom to erect one kingdom out of these two disordered members of his first dominion, and to appoint one common Heir, Head, Ruler, and Lord to them both. And this was the Son, as the Apostle tells us, Eph. i. 10, "He gathered together in one all things in Christ, both which are in the heavens, and which are in the earth, even in him." He designed *ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι*, 'to bring all into one head,' and rule in him. It is not a similitude taken from casting up accounts, wherein lesser sums are in the close brought into one head, as some have imagined; nor yet an allusion to orators, who in the close of their long orations, sum up the matter they have at large treated of, that the apostle makes use of; both which are beneath the majesty of, and no way suited to illustrate the matter he hath in hand. But as Chrysostom well intimates on the place, it is as if he had said, *μιαν κεφαλην ἅπασιν ἐπέθηκε*, 'he appointed one head to them all,' angels and men, with whatsoever in the first constitution of the divine government was subordinate unto them. So we have found the object and extent of the heirship of Christ, expressed in this word *παντων*, which I shall further explain in

that brief scheme of the whole kingdom of Christ, which to the exposition of these words shall be subjoined.

IV. ΕΘΗΚΕ, *the way* whereby Christ the Son came to his inheritance is in this word expressed. God appointed or placed him therein. The word may denote either those special acts whereby he came into the full possession of his heirship, or it may be extended to other preparatory acts that long preceded them; especially if we shall take it to be of the same import with εθeto, in the second aorist. In the former sense, the glorious investiture of the Lord Christ, in the full actual possession of his kingdom after his resurrection, with the manifestation of it in his ascension, and the token of its stability in his sitting at the right hand of God, is designed. By all these God, εθηκε, made him, placed him with solemn investiture, heir of all. The grant was made to him upon his resurrection, Matt. xxviii. 18, and therein fully declared unto others, Rom. i. 3; Acts xiii. 33. As there was a declaration of Solomon's being king, when he was proclaimed by Benaiah, Zadok, and Nathan, 1 Kings i. 31—34. The solemnization of it was in his ascension, Psalm lxviii. 17, 18; Eph. iv. 8—10, typified by Solomon's riding on David's mule unto his throne, all the people crying יהי המלך, 1 Kings i. 39, "Let the king live." All was sealed and ratified when he took possession of his throne at the right hand of the Father, by all which he was made and declared to be Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 36; iv. 11; v. 30, 31. And such weight doth the Scripture lay upon this glorious investiture of Christ in his inheritance, that it speaks of his whole power as then first granted unto him, Rom. xiv. 9; Phil. ii. 7—10. And the reason of it is, because he had then actually performed that work and duty, upon the consideration whereof that power and authority were eternally designed, and originally granted unto him. God's actual committing to him all power over all things and persons in heaven and earth, to be exerted and managed for the ends of his mediation; and declaring this act, grant, and delegation by his resurrection, ascension, and sitting at his right hand, is that which this word denotes.

I will not deny but it may have respect unto sundry things preceding these, and preparatory unto them; as,

1. The eternal purpose of God ordaining him before the foundation of the world, unto his work and inheritance, 1 Pet. i. 20.

2. The covenant that was of old between the Father and Son for the accomplishment of the great work of redemption; this inheritance being included in the contract, Prov. viii. 30, 31; Isa. liii. 10, 11.

3. The promises made unto him in his types, Abraham, David, and Solomon, Gen. xv; Psal. lxxii.

4. The promises left upon record in the Old Testament for his support and assurance of success, Psal. ii; Isa. xlix. &c.

5. The solemn proclamation of him to be the great heir and Lord of all, at his first coming into the world, Luke ii. 11, 30—32.

But it is the consummation of all these, whatever was intended or declared in these previous acts of the will and wisdom of God, that is principally intended in this expression.

Some suppose it of importance in this matter of the heirship of Christ,

to assert that he was the rightful heir of the crown and sceptre of Israel. This opinion is so promoted by Baronius, as to lead him to contend, that the right of the kingdom was devolved on him, which was caused to cease for a season in Antigonus, who was slain by M. Anthony. But what was the right of the kingdom that was in Antigonus, it is hard to declare. The Hasmonæans, of whom he was the last that ruled, were of the tribe of Levi. Their right to the sceptre was no more than what they had won by the sword; so that by his death there could be no devolution of a right to reign unto any, it being that which he never had. Nor is it probable that our Saviour was the next of kin to the reigning house of Judah, nor was it anywise needful he should be so, nor is there any promise to that purpose. His lineal descent was from Nathan, and not from Solomon: of that house was Zerubbabel the Aichmalotarches, which therefore is specially mentioned in the reformation, Zech. xii. 12. Besides, the heirship promised unto Christ was neither of a temporal kingdom of Israel, which he never enjoyed, nor of any other thing in dependance thereon. Were it so, the Jews must first have the dominion, before he could inherit it. And such indeed was the mistake of the disciples, as it is of the Jews to this day, who inquired not whether he would take the kingdom to himself, but whether he would restore it unto Israel.

We have opened the words: it remaineth that we consider the sense and persuasion of the Hebrews in this matter. 2. Show the influence of this assertion into the argument that the apostle hath in hand. And, 3. Annex a brief scheme of the whole lordship and kingdom of Christ.

The testimonies given to this heirship of the Messiah in the Old Testament, sufficiently evidencing the faith of the church guided by the rule thereof, will be mentioned afterwards. For the present, I shall only intimate the continuance of this persuasion among the Jews, both then when the apostle wrote unto them, and afterwards. To this purpose is that of Jonathan in the Targum on Zech. iv. 7, ויגליא משיחא, דאמיר שמח מלקדמן וישלט בכל מלכותא, "He shall reveal the Messiah, whose name is from everlasting, who shall have the dominion over all kingdoms." See Psal. lxxii. 11. And of him who was brought before the Ancient of days, like the Son of man, Dan. vii. to whom all power is given, they say, הוא מלך המשיח, 'he is Messiah the king.' So R. Solomon on the place: So R. Bechai on Exod. xxiii. 21, *My name is in him.* 'He is called,' saith he, מטרוך, because in that name two significations are included, אדון, *a lord*, and שליח, *an ambassador*; the reasons of which etymology out of the Greek and Latin tongues, he subjoins, I confess, foolishly enough; but yet he adds to our purpose. 'It may have a third signification of *a keeper*; for the Targum, instead of the Hebrew משמר hath מטרת, from נטר: because he, that is the Messiah, preserves or keeps the world, he is called, שומר ישראל *the keeper of Israel*. Hence it appears, that he is the Lord of all things, they being put under him, and that the whole host of things above and below are in his hand. He is also the messenger of all above and beneath, because God hath made him to rule over all; hath appointed him the Lord of his house, the ruler of all he hath: which expressions, how consonant



they are to what is delivered by the apostle in this place, and in ch. iii. is easily discerned.

The influence of this assertion, or common principle of the Judaical church, into the argument that the apostle hath in hand, is evident and manifest. He who is the Heir and Lord of all things, spiritual, temporal, and ecclesiastical, must needs have power over all Mosaic institutions, be the Lord of them, which are no where exempted from his rule.

The words being opened, and the design of the apostle in them discovered, because they contain an eminent head of the doctrine of the gospel concerning the lordship and kingdom of Jesus Christ the Messiah, I shall stay here a little to give a scheme of his whole dominion, seeing the consideration of it will not again so directly occur unto us. That which is the intention of the words in the interpretation given of them, is this :

God the Father, in pursuit of the sovereign purpose of his will, hath granted unto the Son as incarnate, and Mediator of the new covenant, according to the eternal counsel between them both, a sovereign power and authority over all things in heaven and earth, with the possession of an absolute proprietor, to dispose of them at his pleasure, for the furtherance and advancement of his proper and peculiar work, as head of his church.

I shall not insist on the several branches of this thesis, but, as I said, in general confirm this grant of power and dominion unto the Lord Christ, and then give our scheme of his kingdom in the several branches of it, not enlarging our discourse upon them, but only pointing at the heads and springs of things as they lie in the Scripture.

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### *Of the Kingdom or Lordship of Christ.*

THE grant of dominion in general unto the Messiah, is intimated in the first promise of him, Gen. iii. 15. His victory over Satan, was to be attended with rule, power, and dominion, Psal. lxxviii. 18 ; Isa. liii. 12 ; Eph. iv. 8, 9 ; Col. ii. 15 ; and confirmed in the renewal of that promise to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 17, 18. For in him it was, that Abraham was to be heir of the world, Rom. iv. 13. As also unto Judah, whose seed was to enjoy the sceptre and lawgiver, until he came, who was to be Lord over all, Gen. xlix. 10. As Balaam also saw the star of Jacob, with a sceptre for rule, Num. xxiv. 17, 19. This kingdom was fully revealed unto David, and is expressed by him, Psal. ii. throughout. Psal. xlv. 3—8, lxxxix. 19—24, &c., lxxii. 6—9, &c., cx. 1—3. As also in all the following prophets : see Isa. xi. 1, 2, ix. 6, 7, liii. 12, lxiii. 1—3 ; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6 ; Dan. vii. 13, 14, &c.

As this was foretold in the Old Testament, so the accomplishment of it is expressly asserted in the New. Upon his birth, he is proclaimed to be Christ the Lord, Luke. ii. 11. And the first inquiry after him is, Where is he that is born King ? Mat. ii. 2, 6. And this testimony doth he give concerning himself ; namely, that all judgment was his, and therefore all honour was due unto him, John v. 22, 23. And that



all things were delivered unto him, or given into his hand, Matt. xi. 25, yea, all power in heaven and earth, Matt. xxviii. 18, the thing pleaded for. Him who was crucified, did God make both Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 35, 36, exalting him at his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, Acts v. 31. He is highly exalted, having a name given him above every name, Phil. ii. 9—11, being set at the right hand of God in heavenly places, far above, &c. Eph. i. 20—22, where he reigns for ever, 1 Cor. xv. 25, being the King of kings, and Lord of lords, Rev. v. 12—14, for he is Lord of quick and dead, Rom. xiv. 7—9.

And this in general is fully asserted in the Scripture, unto the consolation of the church, and to the terror of his adversaries. This I say is the spring of the church's glory, comfort, and assurance. It is our Head, Husband, and elder Brother, who is gloriously vested with all this power. Our nearest Relation, our best Friend is thus exalted, not to a place of honour and trust under others, a thing that contents the airy fancy of poor earth-worms; nor yet to a kingdom on the earth, a matter that swells some, and even breaks them with pride; no, nor yet to an empire over this perishing world; but to an abiding, an everlasting rule and dominion over the whole creation of God. And it is but a little while before he will cast off and dispel all those clouds and shades which at present interpose themselves, and eclipse his glory and majesty from them that love him. He who in the days of his flesh, was reviled, reproached, persecuted, crucified for our sakes, that same Jesus is thus exalted and made a Prince and a Saviour, having a name given him above every name; for though he was dead, yet he is alive, and lives for ever, and hath the keys of hell and death. These things are every-where proposed for the consolation of the church.

The consideration of it also is suited to strike terror into the hearts of ungodly men that oppose him in the world. Whom is it that they do despise? Against whom do they magnify themselves, and lift up their horns on high? Whose ordinances, laws, and institutions do they condemn? Whose gospel do they refuse obedience unto? Whose people and servants do they revile and persecute? Is it not he? Are they not his, who hath all power in heaven and earth committed unto him, in whose hand are the lives, the souls, and all the concerns of his enemies? Cæsar thought he had spoken with terror, when threatening him with death who stood in his way? he told him, 'Young man, he speaks it, to whom it is as easy to do it.' He speaks to his adversaries, who stand in the way of his interest, to deal no more so proudly who can in a moment speak them into ruin, and that eternal. See Rev. vi. 14—17.

Thus is the Son made heir of all in general; we shall further consider his dominion in a distribution of the chief parts of it, and manifest his power severally in and over them all. He is Lord or Heir, *παντων*, that is, of all *persons* and of all *things*.

*Persons*, or rational subsistences here intended, are either angels or men; for it is evident that "He is exempted, who hath subjected all things unto him," 1 Cor. xv. 27.

Angels are of two sorts: 1. Such as abide doing the will of God, retaining that name by way of eminence. 2. Such as by sin have lost

their first habitation, state and condition, usually called evil angels, or devils. The Lord Jesus hath dominion over all of both sorts of them.

Men may be cast under one common distribution, which is comprehensive of all distinctions whereby they are differenced. For they all are either elect or reprobates. And the Lord Jesus hath rule and dominion over them all.

*Things* that are subject unto the Lord Jesus, may be referred unto four heads : for they are either, 1. Spiritual; or, 2. Ecclesiastical; or, 3. Political; or, 4. Natural.

Again, Spiritual are either, 1. Temporal, as 1st, Grace, 2d, Gifts; or, 2. Eternal, as Glory.

Ecclesiastical, or church things, are either, 1. Judaical, or Old Testament things; or, 2. Christian, or things of the New Testament.

Political and civil things may be considered as they are managed, 1. By his Friends; 2. His Enemies.

Of Natural things, we shall speak in a production of some particular instances to prove the general assertion.

Those in the first place assigned as part of the inheritance of Christ are the angels, and the good angels in especial. These belong to the kingdom, rule and dominion of Christ. I shall be brief in this branch of his heirship, because it must be professedly handled in opening sundry other verses of this chapter, in which the apostle insisteth on it.

Of the nature of angels, their glory, excellence, dignity, work, and employment, we have here no occasion to treat. Something must afterwards be spoken to these things. Christ's pre-eminence above them, rule over them, their subjection unto him, with the original right and equity of the grant of this power and authority unto him, are the things which now fall under our consideration.

1. His pre-eminence above them is asserted by the apostle in the fourth verse of this chapter. He is made better, more excellent than the angels. See the words opened afterwards. This was known to the Jews, who acknowledged that the Messiah should be above Moses, Abraham, and the ministering angels; so Neve Shalom, lib. 9. cap. 5. We have testimony unto it, Eph. i. 20, 21. "He set him at his own right hand, *ἐν ἐπσρανίοις*, among heavenly things, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named." Whatever title of honour or office they enjoy, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, who enjoy their power and dignity in that state of glory which is promised unto them also, who here believe on him. Phil. ii. 9. "God also hath exalted him, and given him a name" (power, authority and pre-eminence) "above every name; that at the name of Jesus" (unto him vested with that authority and dignity) "every knee should bow" (all creatures should yield obedience and be in subjection) "of things in heaven," the *ἰδίων οικητηρίου*, proper habitation, and place of residence of the blessed angels, Jude 6. For.

2. As he is exalted above them, so by the authority of God the Father they are made subject unto him, 1 Pet. iii. 22. He is gone into heaven, *ὑποταγεντων αὐτῷ ἀγγέλων*, "Angels being brought into order by subjection unto him," Eph. i. 22. *Πάντα ὑπέταξεν*, "He hath put

all things" (angels of which he treats) "in subjection to him," under his feet, as Psal. viii. 7. *וְהָאֱלֹהִים רַגְלָיו*, 1 Cor. xv. 27. And this by the special authority of God the Father, in a way of grant of privilege and honour unto him. And to evidence the universality of this subjection.

3 They adore and worship him; the highest act of obedience, and most absolute subjection. This they have in command, Heb. i. 6. "Let all the angels of God worship him," Psal. xcvi. 7. *וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ*, *worship him* with prostration, self-abasement, and all possible subjection to him; of which place afterwards. Their practice answers the command given them, Rev. v. 11—14. All the angels round about his throne fall down and ascribe blessing, and honour, and glory, and power unto him, as we are taught to do in our deepest acknowledgment of the majesty and authority of God, Matt. vi. 13. And as to outward obedience, they are ready in all things to receive his commands, being ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall inherit salvation, Heb. i. 13, and that by him who is Head over all things unto the church, Eph. i. 22. As for instance, he sent out one of them to his servant John, Rev. i. 1, who from their employment under him towards them that believe, are said to be their fellow-servants, that is, unto Christ; namely, of all them who have the testimony of Jesus, Rev. xix. 10, xxii. 9. And to this purpose,

4. They always attend his throne. Isa. vi. 1, 2. "I saw the Lord upon his throne, and above it stood the seraphim." This Isaiah spake of him, when he saw his glory, John xii. 39, 40. He was upon his throne, when he spake with the church in the wilderness, Acts vii. 38, that is, in Mount Sinai, where the angels attending him as on chariots, ready to receive his commands, "were twenty thousands, even thousands of angels," Ps. lxxviii. 19; Ephes. iv. 8; or "thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand," as another prophet expresses it, Dan. vii. 10. And so he is in the church of the New Testament, Rev. v. 11; and from his walking in the midst of his golden candlesticks, Rev. i. 13, are the angels also present in church assemblies, as attending their Lord and master, 1 Cor. xi. 10. And so attended shall he come to judgment, 2 Thess. i. 7, when he shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of his power, which was foretold concerning him from the beginning of the world, Jude 7, 8.

Thus his lordship over angels is universal and absolute, and their subjection unto him answerable thereunto. The manner of the grant of this excellence, power, and dignity unto him, must be further cleared in the opening of these words of the apostle, ver. 4, "being made better than the angels;" the original right and equity of this grant, with the ends of it, are now only to be intimated.

1. The radical fundamental equity of this grant, lies in his divine nature; and in his creation of angels; over whom, as mediator, he is made Lord. To the general assertion of his being made heir of all, the apostle in this place subjoins that general reason, manifesting the rise of the equity of it in the will of God, that it should be so; "by whom also he made the worlds." Which reason is particularly applicable to every part of his inheritance, and is especially pleaded in reference unto angels: Col. i. 15, 16. "Who is the image of the



invisible God, the first-born of every creature;" that is, the heir and Lord of them all; and the reason is, "Because by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him." His creation of those heavenly powers, is the foundation of his heirship or lordship over them. Εκτισθη, that is, saith a learned man, (Grotius) on the place, not created or made; but ordered—ordained; all things were ordered by Christ, as to their state and dignity. But what reason is there to depart from the proper, usual, yea, only sense of the word, in this place? Because, saith he, mention is made of Christ, which is the name of a man, and so the creation of all things cannot be attributed unto him. But Christ is the name of the Son of God incarnate, God and man: Christ, who is "over all, God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5; see Luke ii. 11. And he is here spoken of as the "image of the invisible God," ver. 15, the essential image of the Father, endowed with all his eternal attributes, and so the creator of all. The Socinians add, that the words are used in the abstract, 'principalities and powers,' and therefore, their dignities, not their persons, are intended. But, 1. All things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, are the substances and essences of things themselves, and not their qualities and places only. 2. The distribution into thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, respects only the last branch of things affirmed to be created by him, namely, things in heaven, invisible; so that if it should be granted, that he made or created them only as to their dignity, order, and power, yet they obtain not their purpose, since the creation of all other things, as to their being and subsistence, is ascribed unto him. But, 3. The use of the abstract for the concrete is not unusual in Scripture. See Eph. vi. 12, πνευματικά for πνεύματα. Thus, ἡγεμονες και βασιλεις, "rulers and kings," Matt. x. 18, are termed αρχαι και εξουσια, "principalities and powers," Luke xii. 11. And in this particular, those who are here principalities and powers, are "angels great in power," 2 Pet. ii. 11. And Eph. i. 20, 21, he is exalted ὑπερανω πασης αρχης και εξουσιας και δυναμεως και κυριοτητος, that is, 'above all, vested with principality and power,' as the next words evince, 'and every name that is named.' So Peter tells us of some, of whom he says, κυριοτητος καταφρονουντας, δοξας ου τρεμουνσι, 2 Pet. ii. 10; and of them Jude says, κυριοτητα αθετουσι, δοξας βλασφημουσι, Jude 8. "They despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities;" that is, those vested with them. And Paul, Rom. viii. 38, 39, "I am persuaded, that neither angels," ουτε αρχαι ουτε δυναμεις, "nor principalities nor powers;" ουτε τις κτισις ἑτερα, "nor any other creature." So that these principalities and powers are κτισεις, *certain creatures*, created things and subsistences, that is, the angels variously differenced amongst themselves, in respect of us, great in power and dignity.

This is the first foundation of the equity of this grant, of all power over the angels unto the Lord Christ; in his divine nature he made them, and in that respect they were before his own; as on the same account, when he came into the world, he is said to come εις τα ιδια, John i. 11, 'to his own,' or the things that he had made.



2. It is founded in that establishment in the condition in which they were created, which they received by his interposition to recover what was lost by sin, and to preserve from ruin the untainted part of the creation. In their own right, the rule of their obedience, and the example of those of their number and society who apostatized from God, they found themselves in a state not absolutely impregnable. Their confirmation, which also was attended with that exaltation which they received by their new relation unto God in and through him, they received by his means; God gathering up all things to a consistency and permanency in him, Eph. i. 10. And hence, also, it became equal, that the rule and power over them should be committed unto him, by whom, although they were not like us, recovered from ruin, yet they were preserved from all danger of it. So that in their subjection unto him consists their principal honour and all their safety.

And as this act of God in appointing Christ Lord of angels hath these equitable foundations, so it hath also sundry glorious ends.

1. It was as an addition unto that glory that was set before him, in his undertaking to redeem sinners, A kingdom was of old promised unto him, and to render it exceedingly glorious, the rule and sceptre of it is extended not only to his redeemed ones, but to the holy angels also; and the sovereignty over them is granted him as a part of his reward, Phil. ii. 8—11; Eph. i. 20, 21.

2. God hereby gathers up his whole family, at first distinguished by the law of their creation into two especial kinds, and then differenced and set at variance by sin, into one body under one head, reducing them that originally were twain, into one entire family, Eph. i. 10. "In the fulness of time he gathered together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, in him;" as was before declared. Before this, the angels had no immediate created head; for themselves are called אֱלֹהִים, *Gods*, Ps. xcvi. 7; 1 Cor. viii. 5. Whoever is the head, must be אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהִים, the 'God of gods,' or 'Lord of lords,' which Christ alone is; and in him, or under him as one head, is the whole family of God united.

3. The church of mankind militant on the earth, whose conduct unto eternal glory is committed unto Christ, stands in need of the ministry of angels. And therefore hath God granted rule and power over them unto him, that nothing might be wanting to enable him to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him. So God hath given him to be head over all things to the church, Ephes. i. 22, that he should, with an absolute sovereignty, use and dispose of all things to the benefit and advantage of the church.

This is the first branch of the lordship and dominion of Christ, according to the distribution of the severals of it before laid down. He is Lord of angels, and they are all of them his servants, the fellow-servants of them that have the testimony of Jesus. And as some men do wilfully cast themselves by their religious adoration of angels, under the curse of Canaan, to be servants unto servants, Gen. ix. 25, so it is the great honour and privilege of true believers, that in their worship of Christ, they are admitted into the society of "an innumerable company of angels," Heb. xii. 22; Rev. xv. 1—3, for they are not ashamed

to esteem them their fellow-servants, whom their Lord and king is not ashamed to call his brethren. And herein consists our communion with them, that we have one common head and Lord; and any intercourse with them, but only on this account, or any worship performed towards them, breaks the bond of that communion, and causeth us not to hold the head, Col. ii. 19. The privilege, the safety and advantage of the church, from this subjection of angels to its head and Saviour, are by many spoken unto.

II. There is another sort of angels, those who "by sin left their primitive station," and fell off from God, of whom, and of their sin, fall, malice, wrath, business, craft in evil, and final judgment, the Scripture treateth at large. These belong not indeed to the possession of Christ, as he is the heir, but they belong unto his dominion as he is Lord. Though he be not a king and head unto them, yet he is a judge and ruler over them. All things being given into his hand, they also, are subjected unto his power. Now, as under the former head, I shall consider, 1. The right or equity, and 2. The end of this authority of Christ over this second sort, of the first race of intellectual creatures, the angels that have sinned.

1. As before, this right is founded in his divine nature, by virtue whereof, he is *ἰκανός*, fit for this dominion. He made these angels also, and therefore, as God, hath an absolute dominion over them. The creatures cannot cast off the dominion of the Creator by rebellion; though they may lose their moral relation unto God as obedient creatures, yet their natural, as creatures, cannot be dissolved. God will be God still, be his creatures never so wicked; and if they obey not his will they shall bear his justice. And this dominion of Christ over fallen angels, as God, makes the grant of rule over them to him, as Mediator, just and equal.

2. The immediate and peculiar foundation of his right unto rule over fallen angels rendering the special grant of it equal and righteous, is lawful conquest. This gives a special right, Gen. xlviii. 22. Now that Christ should conquer fallen angels was promised from the foundation of the world, Gen. iii. 15. The seed of the woman, the Messiah, was to break the serpent's head, despoil him of his power, and bring him into subjection; which he performed accordingly, Col. ii. 15. He spoiled principalities and powers, divested fallen angels of all that title they had got to the world, by the sin of man; triumphing over them as captives, to be disposed of at his pleasure. He stilled, or made to cease as to his power, this enemy, *וּמַחֲקֵם*, and self-avenger, Ps. viii. 2, leading captivity captive, Ps. lxxviii. 18, breaking in pieces the head over the large earth, Ps. cx. 6, binding the strong man armed, and spoiling his goods. And the Scripture of the New Testament is full of instances as to his executing his power and authority over evil angels; they take up a good part of the historical books of it.

Man having sinned by the instigation of Satan, he was, by the just judgment of God, delivered up to Satan's power, Heb. ii. 14. The Lord Christ undertaking to recover lost man from under his power by destroying his works, 1 John iii. 8, and to bring them again into favour with God; Satan with all his might sets himself to oppose him in his

work, and failing in his enterprise, being utterly conquered, he became absolutely subjected to him, trodden under his feet, and the prey he had taken was delivered from him.

This is the next foundation of the authority of Christ over the evil angels. He had a great contest and war with them, and that about the glory of God, his own kingdom; and the eternal salvation of the elect; prevailing absolutely against them, he made a conquest over them, and they are put in subjection to him for ever. They are subjected to him, as to their present actings, and future condition. He now rules them, and will hereafter finally judge them. And in so far as in his holiness and wisdom he suffers them to act in temptations, seductions, and persecutions, he bounds and limits their rage, malice, and actings; he orders and disposes these events to his own holy and righteous ends, and keeps them under "chains for the judgment of the last day." Then, for the full manifestation of his dominion over them, he will cause the meanest of his servants to set their feet on the necks of these conquered kings, and to join with himself in sentencing them to eternal ruin, 1 Cor. vi. 3, into which they shall be cast by him, Rev. xix.

2. The ends of this lordship of Christ are various, as 1. His own glory, Ps. cx. 1. 2. The safety of the church, Matt. xvi. 18; Rev. xii. 7—9. And 3. Exercise for their good. 1. By temptation, 1 Pet. v. 8—10. And 2. Persecution, Rev. ii. 10, xii. 10; both which he directs, regulates, and bounds to their eternal advantage. 4. The exercising of his wrath and vengeance on his stubborn enemies, whom these slaves and vassals to his righteous power, seduce, blind, harden, provoke, ruin, and destroy, Rev. xii. 15; xvi. 13, 14; Ps. cvi. And how much of the peace, safety, and consolation of believers lies wrapt up in this part of the dominion of Christ, it were easy to demonstrate, as also that faith's improvement of it, in every condition, is the greatest part of our wisdom in our pilgrimage.

III. All mankind, (the second sort of intellectual creatures or rational subsistences,) belong to the lordship and dominion of Christ. All mankind was in the power of God as one *φύραμα*, 'one mass,' or lump out of which all individuals are made and framed, Rom. ix. 21. Some to honour, some to dishonour; the *το αυτο φύραμα*, not denoting the same substance, but 'one common condition,' and the making of the individuals, is not by temporal creation, but eternal designation. So that all mankind, made out of nothing, and out of the same condition destined to several ends for the glory of God, are branched into two sorts. Elect, or vessels from the common mass to honour; and reprobates, or vessels from the common mass to dishonour. As such, they were typified by Jacob and Esau, Rom. ix. 11, 12, and are expressed under that distribution, 1 Thess. v. 9. Some *απ' αρχης*, 'from the beginning being chosen to salvation,' 2 Thess. ii. 13; *προ καταβολης κοσμου*, Eph. i. 4, 'before the foundation of the world,' Rom. viii. 29; xi. 5; Matt. xx. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 10; Rev. xxi. 27. Others are appointed to the day of evil, Prov. xvi. 4, *παλαι προγεγραμμενοι*, 'of old fore-ordained to condemnation,' Jude 4; *εις αλωσιν και φθοραν*, 'for to be destroyed,' 2 Pet. ii. 12; see Rom. ix. 22, xi. 7; Rev. xx. 15.

To both these sorts, or to all mankind, is the lordship of Christ extended, and to each of them respectively. 1. He is Lord over all flesh, John xvii. 2, both living and dead, Rom. xiv. 9; Phil. ii. 9, 10.

2. Particularly he is Lord over all the elect. And besides the general foundation of the equity of his authority and power in his divine nature, and in the creation of all things, the grant of the Father to him as Mediator to be their Lord, is founded in other especial acts both of Father and Son. For,

1. They were given to him from eternity in design and by compact, that they should be his peculiar portion, and he their Saviour, John xvii. 2. Of the *πάσης σαρκος*, 'all flesh,' over which he hath authority, there is a *παν ὃ δέδωκε*, an universality of them, whom the Father gave him in a special manner, of whom he says, "thine they were, and thou gavest them unto me," ver. 6; Acts xviii. 10. They are a portion given him to save, John vi. 39, of which he takes the care, as Jacob did of the sheep of Laban when he served him for a wife, Gen. xxxi. 36, 40; see Prov. viii. 30, 31. This was an act of the will of the Father in the eternal covenant of the Mediator, whereof elsewhere.

2. His grant is strengthened by redemption, purchase, and acquisition. This was the condition of the former grant, Isa. liii. 10—12, and this condition was made good by him; so that his lordship is frequently asserted on this very account, 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6; John x. 15, xi. 52; Eph. v. 25—27; Rev. v. 9. And this purchase of Christ, is peculiar to them so given him of the Father in the covenant of the Mediator, as, 1. Proceeding from his especial and greatest love, John xv. 12, 13; Rom. v. 8; 1 John iii. 16, iv. 9, 10; Acts xx. 28; Rom. viii. 32. And, 2. Being accompanied with a purchase for them which they shall certainly enjoy, and that of grace and glory, Acts xx. 28; Eph. i. 14; Acts ii. 36; Phil. i. 29; Heb. ix. 12, 15. And indeed the controversy about the death of Christ, is not primarily about its extent, but its efficacy and fruits in respect of them for whom he died.

3. Those thus given him of the Father and redeemed by him, are of two sorts. 1. Such as are actually called to faith in him, and union with him. These are further become his, upon many other especial accounts. They are his, in all relations of subjection, his children, servants, brethren, disciples, subjects, his house, his spouse. He stands towards them in all relations of authority; he is their Father, Master, elder Brother, Teacher, King, Lord, Ruler, Judge, and Husband; he rules in them by his Spirit and grace, and over them by his laws in his word; he preserves them by his power, chastens them in his care and love; in his providence feeds them out of his stores; tries them and delivers them in his wisdom; bears with their miscarriages in his patience; and takes them for his portion, his lot, and inheritance; he raises them at the last day, and takes them to himself in glory; every way avouching them to be his, and himself to be their Lord and Master.

2. Some of them are always uncalled, and shall be so, until the whole number of them be completed and filled. But even before they are called, they belong, on the former accounts, to his lot, care, and



rule, John x. 6. They are already his sheep by grant and purchase, though not really so by grace and holiness. They are not yet his, by present obediential subjection, but they are his by eternal designation and real acquisition.

Now the power that the Lord Jesus hath over this part of mankind is universal, unlimited, absolute, and exclusive of all other power over them, as to the things peculiarly belonging to his kingdom. He is their King, Judge, Lawgiver, and in things of God, purely spiritual and evangelical, other they have none. It is true he takes them not out of the world, and therefore, as to *τα βιωτικά*, "the things of this life,"—things of the world, they are subject to the laws and rulers of the world; but as to the things of God, he is the only lawgiver who is able to kill and make alive. But the nature and ends of the lordship of Christ over the elect, are too large and comprehensive to be here spoken unto, in this brief delineation of his kingdom, which we undertook in this digression.

2. His lordship and dominion extends to the other sort of men also namely, reprobates, and men finally impenitent. They are not exempted from that "all flesh" which he hath power over, John xvii. 2, nor from those "quick and dead" over whom he is Lord, Rom. xiv. 9, nor from that "world" which he shall judge, Acts xvii. 31. And there are two special grounds that are peculiar to them, of this grant, and power, and authority over them.

1st. His interposition upon the entrance of sin against the immediate execution of the curse due to it, as befel the angels. This fixed the world under a dispensation of,

1. Forbearance and patience, Rom. ii. 4, 5; Acts xvii. 30; Rom. ix. 22. Ps. lxxv. 3.

2. Goodness and mercy, Acts xiv. 16, 17.

That God who spared not the angels, when they sinned, but immediately cast them into chains of darkness, should place sinners of the race of Adam, under a dispensation of forbearance and goodness; that he should spare them with much long-suffering during their pilgrimage on the earth, and fill their hearts with food and gladness, with all whose fruits of kindness, which the womb of his providence is still bringing forth for their benefit and advantage; is thus far on the account of the Lord Christ, that though these things as relating to reprobates, are no part of his especial purchase, as Mediator of the everlasting covenant of grace, yet they are a necessary consequent of his interposition against the immediate execution of the whole curse upon the first entrance of sin, and of his undertaking for his elect.

2d. He makes a conquest over them. It was promised that he should do so, Gen. iii. 15, and though the work itself prove long and irksome, though the ways of accomplishing it be to us obscure and oftentimes invisible, yet he hath undertaken it, and will not give it over, until they are every one brought to be his footstool, Ps. cx. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 25. And the dominion granted him on these grounds, is,

1. Sovereign and absolute; his enemies are his footstool, Psal. cx. 2; Matt. xxii. 44; Mark xii. 36; Luke xx. 42; Acts ii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Heb. i. 13. They are in his hand as the Egyptians were in

Joseph's, when he had purchased both their persons and their estates to be at arbitrary disposal. And he deals with them as Joseph did with those, so far as any of the ends of his rule and lordship are concerned in them. And,

2. Judiciary, John v. 22, 23. As he hath power over their persons, so he hath regard unto their sins, Rom. xiv. 9; Acts xvii. 3; Matt. xxv. 31. And this power he variously exerciseth over them, even in this world, before he gloriously exerts it in their eternal ruin. For, 1. He enlightens them by those heavenly sparks of truth and reason, which he leaves unextinguished in their own minds, John i. 9. 2. Strives with them by his Spirit, Gen. vi. 3; secretly exciting their consciences to rebuke, bridle, yoke, afflict, and cruciate them, Rom. ii. 14, 15. And 3. On some of them he acts by the power and authority of his word, whereby he quickens their consciences, galls their minds and affections, restrains their lusts, bounds their conversations, aggravates their sins, hardens their hearts, and judges their souls, Ps. xlv.; Isa. vi. 4. He exerciseth rule and dominion over them in providential dispensations, Rev. vi. 15, 16; Isa. lxiii. 1—4; Rev. xix. 13. By all which he makes way for the glory of his final judgment of them, Acts xvii. 3; Matt. xxv. 31; Rev. xix. 20; xx. 10—15. And all this will he do, to the ends, 1. Of his own glory. 2. The good exercise and safety of the church.

And this is the second instance of the first head of the dominion of Christ in this world, He is Lord over persons, angels, and men.

II. The second part of the heirship and dominion of Christ, consisteth in his lordship over all things besides, which, added to the former, comprises the whole creation of God. In the distribution of these premised, the first that occur, are spiritual things, which also are of two sorts, 1. Temporal, or such as in this life we are made partakers of, and 2. Eternal, the things that are reserved for them that believe in the state of glory. The former may be reduced to two heads, for they are all of them either grace or gifts, and Christ is Lord of them all.

1. All that which comes under the name of grace in Scripture, which, flowing from the free and special love of God tends directly to the spiritual and eternal good of them on whom it is bestowed, may be referred to four heads. For as the fountain of all these (or the gracious free purposes of the will of God from whence they all do flow) being antecedent to the mission of Christ the Mediator, and immanent in God, it can be no otherwise granted to him, but in respect of its effects, which we shall show that it is. Now these are,

1. Pardon of sin, and the free acceptance of the persons of sinners, in a way of mercy. This is grace Eph. ii. 8; Tit. iii. 5, 7. And a saving effect and fruit of the covenant, Jer. xxxi. 31—34; Heb. viii. 12.

2. The regenerating of the person of a dead sinner, with the purifying and sanctifying of his nature, in a way of spiritual power. This also is grace, and is promised in the covenant, and there are three parts of it: 1. The infusion of a quickening principle into the soul of a dead sinner, Rom. viii. 2; Tit. iii. 5; John iii. 6; Eph. ii. 1—6. 2. The habitual furnishing of a spiritually quickened soul, with

abiding radical principles of light, love and power, fitting it for spiritual obedience, Gal. v. 17. 3. Actual assistance, in a communication of supplies of strength for every duty and work, Phil. i. 13; John xv. 3.

3. Preservation in a condition of acceptance with God, and holy obedience to him to the end, is also of especial grace. It is the grace of perseverance, and eminently included in the covenant, as we have elsewhere showed at large.

4. Adoption as a privilege, with all the privileges that flow from it, is also grace, Eph. i. 5, 6.

All these, with all those admirable and inexpressible mercies that they branch themselves into, giving deliverance to sinners from evil, temporal and eternal; raising them to communion with God here, and to the enjoyment of him for ever hereafter, are called grace; and do belong to the lordship of Christ, as he is Heir, Lord, and Possessor of them all. All the stores of this grace and mercy that are in heaven for sinners, are given into his hand, and resigned up to his sovereign disposal: as we shall intimate in general, and particular.

1. In general, Col. i. 19. "It pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell." There is a fourfold fulness in Christ: 1. Of the deity in his divine nature, Rom. ix. 5. 2. Of union in his person, Col. ii. 9. 3. Of grace in his human nature, John i. 14, ch. iii. 34; Luke ii. 52, ch. iv. 1. 4. An authoritative fulness to communicate of it unto others; that is the fulness here intended. For it is in him as the head of the church, ver 18, so as that from him, or from that fulness, which it pleased the Father to entrust him withal, believers might receive grace for grace, John i. 16. 17. Thus he testifies that all things are delivered to him of the Father, Matt. xi. 27, put into his power and possession. And the things which he there intends, are the things on the account whereof he invites sinners weary and laden to come unto him, ver. 28, that is, all mercy and grace, which are the things that burdened sinners need and look after. The same is testified, John iii. 35, 36, and fully, John xvi. 15. "All things that the Father hath are mine." All the grace and mercy that are in the heart of God as a Father, to bestow upon his children, they are all given into the hand of Christ, and are his, or part of his inheritance.

In particular;

1. All pardoning grace for the acceptance of our persons, and forgiveness of our sins, is his: he is the Lord of it, Acts v. 31. He is made a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness of sin is wholly given unto him, as to the administration of it; nor doth any one receive it, but out of his stores. And what is the dominion of ten thousands of worlds in comparison of this inheritance? Sure he shall be my God and King, who hath all forgiveness at his disposal. All that this world can do, or give, is a thousand times lighter than the dust of the balance, if compared with these good things of the kingdom of Christ.

2. All regenerating, quickening, sanctifying, assisting grace is his. 1. John v. 21. He "quickeneth whom he pleaseth." He walks among dead souls, and says to whom he will, Live. And, 2. He

sanctifies by his Spirit whom he pleaseth, John iv. 14. All the living waters of saving grace are committed to him, and he invites men unto them freely, Cant. v. 1; Isa. lv. 1; Rev. xxi. And. 3. All grace actually assisting us unto any duty, is his also; for without him we can do nothing, John xv. 5; for it is he alone that gives out suitable help at the time of need, Heb. iv. 16. No man was ever quickened, purified or strengthened, but by him; nor can any dram of this grace be obtained, but out of his treasures. Those who pretend to stores of it in their own wills are so far Antichrists.

3. The grace of our preservation in a state of acceptance with God, and obedience unto him, is solely his, John x. 28. And so also,

4. Are all the blessed and gracious privileges whereof we are made partakers, in our adoption, John i. 12; Heb. iii. 6. He is so Lord over the whole house and family of God, as to have the whole inheritance in his power, and the absolute disposal of all the good things belonging unto it.

These are the riches and treasure of the kingdom of Christ, the good things of his house, the revenues of his dominion. The mass of this treasure that lies by him is infinite, the stores of it are inexhaustible; and he is ready, free, gracious, and bountiful in his communications of them to all the subjects of his dominion. This part of his heirship extends unto, 1. All the grace and mercy that the Father could find in his own gracious heart to bestow, when he was full of counsels of love, and designed to exalt himself by the way of grace, Eph. i. 6. 2. To all the grace and mercy which he himself could purchase by the effusion of his blood, Heb. ix. 14; Eph. i. 13; and indeed these are commensurate, if things, in respect of us altogether boundless, may be said to be commensurate. 3. All that grace which hath saved the world of sinners which are already in the enjoyment of God, and that shall effectually save all that come to God by him. 4. All that grace which in the promises of it in the Old Testament, is set out by all that is rich, precious, glorious, all that is eminent in the whole creation of God; and in the New is called treasures, unsearchable riches, and exceeding excellence, which being communicated by him to all the subjects of his kingdom, makes every one of them richer than all the potentates of the earth who have no interest in him.

The especial foundation of all this trust, is in an eminent manner expressed, Isa. liii. 10—12. His suffering for the sins of all those to whom he intends to communicate of this his fulness, according to the will of God; and the purchase he made in his death according to the tenor of the covenant of the Mediator, makes it just and righteous that we should enjoy this part of his inheritance. Heb. ii. 17; chap. ix. 12. The Father says unto him, 'seest thou these poor wretched creatures, that lie perishing in their blood, and under the curse? They had once my image gloriously enstamped on them, and were every way meet for my service; but behold the misery that is come upon them by their sin and rebellion! Sentence is gone forth against them upon their sin; and they want nothing to shut them up under everlasting ruin but the execution of it. Wilt thou undertake to be their Saviour and Deliverer, to save them from their sins, and the wrath to come? Wilt thou make thy soul an offering for their sins, and lay



down thy life a ransom for them? Hast thou love enough to wash them in thy own blood, in a nature to be taken of them, being obedient therein unto death, the death of the cross? Whereunto he replies, 'I am content to do thy will, and will undertake this work, and that with joy and delight. Lo, I come for that purpose; my delight is with these sons of men, Psal. xl. 8: Prov. viii. 31. What they have taken, I will pay: what is due from them, let it be required at my hand. I am ready to undergo wrath and curse for them, and to pour out my soul unto death.'—'It shall be,' saith the Father, 'as thou hast spoken, and thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul, and be satisfied. I will give thee for a covenant and a leader unto them, and thou shalt be the Captain of their salvation. To this end take into thy power and disposal all the treasures of heaven, all mercy and grace to give out unto them for whom thou hast undertaken. Behold, here are unsearchable hidden treasures, not of many generations, but laid up from eternity! take all these riches into thy power, and at thy disposal shall they be for ever.' This is the noble peculiar foundation of this part of the inheritance of Christ.

From what hath been spoken, the rule also whereby the Lord Christ proceedeth in disposing these treasures to the sons of men, is made evident. Though he hath all grace committed unto him, yet he bestows not grace upon all. The rule of his procedure herein, is God's election. For the foundation of this whole trust is his undertaking for them, who were given him of his Father; see Acts xiii. 48; Rom. xi. 7; Eph. i. 3—8. And the variety which is seen in his actual communication of grace and mercy unto sinners, depends upon the sovereign and eternal designation of the persons of them, who by him were to obtain mercy, and be made heirs of salvation.

But although the persons are designed and allotted unto him from eternity, who were to receive this grace and mercy at his hands, yet as to the manner, and as to all circumstances of his dispensing and communicating these blessings, they are wholly committed unto his own sovereign will and wisdom. Hence, some he calls at one time, some at another; some in the morning, that they may glorify grace in working all the day; some in the evening of their lives, that they may exalt pardoning mercy to eternity; on some he bestows much grace, that he may render them useful in the strength of it; on others less, that he may keep them humble in a sense of their wants. Some he makes rich in light, others in love; some in faith, others in patience; that they may all peculiarly praise him, and set out the fulness of his stores. And hereby, 1. He glorifies every grace of his Spirit, by making it shine eminently in one or other, as faith, in Abraham and Peter, love in David and John, patience in Job. And, 2. He renders his subjects useful one to another, in that they have opportunities upon the defects and fulness of each other, to exercise all their grace. And, 3. So he renders his whole body uniform and comely, 1 Cor. xii. 16—27. 4. Keeping every member in humility and dependence, while it sees its own wants in some graces that others excel in, Col. ii. 19.

This is another most eminent part of the inheritance and kingdom of Christ.

II. All gifts that are bestowed on any of the sons of men, whereby

they are differenced from others, or made useful unto others, belong also to the inheritance and kingdom of Christ.

Gifts bestowed on men, are either natural or spiritual. Natural gifts are special endowments of the persons or minds of men, in relation to things appertaining to this life; as wisdom, learning, skill and cunning in arts and sciences. I call them natural, in respect of the objects that they are exercised about, which are *τα βιωτικά*, ‘things of this life,’ as also in respect of their end and use. They are not always so, as to their rise and spring, but may be immediately infused, as wisdom was into Solomon, for civil government, 1 Kings ix. 12, and skill for all manner of mechanical operations into Bezaleel, Exod. xxxi. 2, 3, 6. But how far these gifts are educed in an ordinary course of providence, out of their hidden seeds and principles in nature, in a just connexion of causes and effects, and so fall under a certain law of acquisition, or what there may be of the interposition of the Spirit of God in an especial manner, immediately conferring them on any, falls not under our present consideration of them. Nor yet can we insist on their use, which is such, that they are the great instrument in the hand of God, for the preservation of human society, and for keeping the course of man’s life and pilgrimage from being wholly brutish. I design only to show that even they also belong (though more remotely) to the lordship of Jesus Christ; which they do on two accounts;

1. In that the very use of men’s reason, and their natural faculties, as to any good end or purpose, is continued to them upon the account of his interposition, bringing the world thereby under a dispensation of patience and forbearance, as was declared, John i. 9.

2. He is endued with power and authority to use them, in whose hand soever they lie, whether of his friends or enemies, to the special ends of his glory, in doing good to his church. And indeed in the efficacy of his Spirit and power upon the gifts of the minds of men, exciting, ordering, disposing, enabling them unto various actings and operations, by and with these gifts; and in controlling, over-ruling, entangling each other, and themselves in whom they are, by them; his wisdom and care in the rule, government, chastisement and deliverance of his church, are most conspicuous.

III. 1. Spiritual gifts, which principally come under that denomination, are of two sorts, extraordinary and ordinary. The first are immediate endowments of the minds of men with abilities exceeding the whole system of nature, in the exercise whereof they are mere instruments of him who bestows those gifts upon them. Such of old were the gifts of miracles, tongues, healing, prediction, and infallible inspiration, given out by the Lord Christ, unto such as he was pleased to use in his gospel service in an extraordinary manner. The ordinary gifts are the furniture of the minds of men, enabling them to comprehend spiritual things, and to manage them for spiritual ends and purposes. Such are wisdom, knowledge, prudence, utterance, aptness to teach; in general, abilities to manage the things of Christ and the gospel, unto their own proper ends. And these also are of two sorts: 1. Such as are peculiar unto office; and, 2. Such as are common unto others for their own and other’s good and edification according as they

are called to the exercise of them. And these two sorts of gifts differ only in respect of degrees. There are no ordinary gifts that Christ's officers are made partakers of, their office only excepted, which differ in the kind or nature of them from those which he bestows on all his disciples; which makes their stirring up, and endeavours to improve the gifts they have received, exceedingly necessary to them. And Christ's collation of these gifts upon men, is the foundation of all the offices that under him they are called to discharge; see Eph. iv. 8, 11; 1 Cor. xii. 7; John xx. 21, 22. And as they are the spring and foundation of office, so they are the great and only means of the church's edification. By them Christ builds up his church, to the measure appointed unto the whole and every member of it. And there is no member but hath its gift; which is the talent given, or rather lent to trade withal.

Now of all these Christ is the only Lord, they belong unto his kingdom. Psal. lxxviii. 18. לָקַח מִתְּנָה בְּאֵדָה, when he ascended on high he *took* or received gifts for man; he *took* them into his own power and disposal, being given him of his Father, as Peter declares, Acts ii. 33, adding, that he 'received the Spirit,' by whom all these gifts are wrought. And, Eph. iv. 8, the apostle renders the words of the Psalmist, ἔδωκε δόματα, 'he gave gifts,' because he received them into his power, not to keep them unto himself, but to give them out to the use of others. And so לָקַח doth sometimes signify *to give*. Hos. xiv. 2. Verbum accipiendi dare significat, cum accipiunt aliunde ut dent, say the Jewish masters. And it was after his resurrection, that this accession was made unto his kingdom, in such an eminent and visible manner as to be a testimony of his office, John vii. 39, οὐπω ἦν Πνεῦμα ἅγιον, 'the Holy Ghost was not yet,' because Jesus was not yet glorified; not eminently given and received as to these gifts, Acts xix. 2. And this investiture of him, with power over all gifts, he makes the foundation of the mission of the apostles, Matt. xxviii. 18. This he had as a fruit of his suffering, as a part of his purchase, and it is a choice portion of his lordship and kingdom.

The end also why all these gifts are given into his power and disposal, is evident. 1. The propagation of his gospel, and consequently the setting up of his kingdom in the world, depends upon them. These are the arms that he furnished his messengers withal, when he sent them forth to fight with, to conquer and to subdue the world unto him. And by these they prevailed. By that spirit of wisdom and knowledge, prayer and utterance, wherewith they were endowed, attended where, and when needful, with the extraordinary gifts before mentioned, did they accomplish the work committed to their charge. Now the Lord Christ having a right given him to a kingdom and inheritance, which was actually under possession of his adversary, it was necessary that all those arms, wherewith he was to make a conquest of it, should be given to his disposal, 2 Cor. x. 4. These were the weapons of the warfare of his apostles and disciples, which through God were so "mighty to cast down the strongholds of sin and Satan." These are the slings and stones, before which the Goliaths of the earth and hell did fall. This was that power from above, with which he promised to furnish his



apostles, when they should address themselves to the conquest of the world, Acts i. 8. With these weapons, this furniture for their warfare a few persons despised in the eyes of the world, went from Judea unto the ends of the earth, subduing all things before them to the obedience of their Lord and Master. And,

2. By these is his church edified ; and to that end doth he continue to bestow them on men, and will do so to the end of the world, 1 Cor. xii. 7—14 ; Eph. iv. 8—13 : Rom. xii. 6—8 ; 1 Pet. iii. 10, 11 ; Col. ii. 19. And for any to hinder their growth and exercise, is what in them lies to pull down the church of Christ, and to set themselves against that testimony which he gives in the world, that he is yet alive ; and that he takes care of his disciples, being present with them according to his promise.

3. And by these means and ways is God glorified in him and by him, which is the great end of his lordship over all the gifts of the Spirit.

That we may a little by the way look into our especial concerns in these things, the order of them, and their subserviency one to another, may be briefly considered. For as natural gifts are the foundation of, and lie in an especial subordination unto spiritual gifts, so are spiritual gifts enlivened, made effectual and durable by grace. The principal end of Christ's bestowing gifts, is the erection of a ministry in his church, for the ends before mentioned. And where all these in their order and mutual subserviency unto one another are received by any, there, and there alone, is a competent furniture for the work of the ministry received. And where any of them, as to their whole kind, are wanting, there is a defect in the person, if not a nullity as to the office. Natural gifts and endowments of mind, are so necessary a foundation for any that looks towards the work of the ministry, that without some competent measure of them, it is madness and folly to entertain thoughts of any progress. Unless unto these, spiritual gifts are in Christ's time superadded, the other will never be of any use for the edification of the church, as having in their own nature and series, no especial tendency unto that end. Nor will these superadded spiritual gifts enable any man to discharge his duty unto all well-pleasing before God, unless they are quickened and seasoned by grace. And where there is an intercision of this series and order in any, the defect will quickly appear. Thus some we see of excellent natural endowments, in their first setting forth in the world, and in their endeavours on that single stock, promising great usefulness and excellency in their way, who when they should come to engage in the service of the gospel, evidence themselves to be altogether unfurnished for the employment they undertake ; yea, and to have lost what before they seemed to have received. Having gone to the utmost length and bounds that gifts merely natural could carry them, and not receiving superadded spiritual gifts, which the Spirit of Christ bestoweth as he pleaseth, 1 Cor. xii. 11, they faint in the way, wither, and become utterly useless. And this for the most part falleth out, when men either have abused their natural gifts to the service of their lusts, and in an opposition to the simplicity of the gospel, or when they set upon spiritual things, and pretend to the service of



Christ merely in their own strength, without dependence on him, as the heir and Lord of all, for abilities and furniture for his work ; or when they have some fixed corrupt end and design to accomplish and bring about by a pretence of the ministry, without regard to the glory of Christ, or compassion to the souls of men ; for the Lord Christ will not prostitute the gifts of his Spirit to make them subservient to such purposes. And sundry other causes of this failure may be assigned.

It is no otherwise as to the next degree in this order, in reference unto spiritual gifts and saving grace. When these gifts, in the good pleasure of the Lord of them, are superadded unto the natural endowments before mentioned, they carry on them who have received them cheerfully, comfortably, and usefully in their way and progress. The former are increased, heightened, strengthened and perfected by the latter, towards that special end for which they are designed ; namely, the glory of Christ in the work of the gospel. But if these also are not in due season quickened by saving grace, if the heart be not moistened and made fruitful thereby, even they also will wither and decay. Sin and the world, in process of time will devour them, whereof we have daily experience. And this is the order wherein the great Lord of all these gifts hath laid them in a subserviency one kind unto another, and all of them unto his own glory.

And this that hath been spoken, will abundantly discover the reason and ground of the apostolical exhortation, "Covet the best gifts," 1 Cor. xii. 31. As first, the gift of wisdom and knowledge in the word and will of God, 1 Cor. xii. 8 ; 1 Cor. ii. 7 ; 1 Tim. iii. 15 ; 1 Cor. i. 5. Secondly, the gift of ability to manage and improve this wisdom and knowledge to the edification of others, Heb. iii. 13, x. 25 ; Rom. xv. 14 ; 1 Thess. v. 11. Thirdly, of prayer. And many more might be added of the like usefulness and importance.

IV. 3. To close our considerations of this part of the lordship of Christ, there remains only that we show him to be the Lord of all spiritual and eternal things, which in one word we call glory. He is himself the Lord of glory, 2 Cor. ii. 4, and the Judge of all, John v. 25. In the discharge of which office, he gives out glory as a reward unto his followers, Matt. xxv. 32 ; Rom. xiv. 10. Glory is the reward that is with him, which he will give out at the last day, as a crown, 2 Tim. iv. 8 ; John xvii. 2. And to this end that he might be Lord of it, he hath 1. Purchased it, Heb. ii. 10, ix. 12 ; Eph. i. 14. 2. Taken actual possession of it in his own person, Luke xxiv. 25 ; John xvii. 5. 22. 24. And that, 3, as the forerunner on whom he will bestow it, Heb. ix. 20. And this is a short view of the lordship of Christ as to things spiritual.

V. Ecclesiastical things, or things that concern church institutions, rule and power, belong also unto his rule and dominion. He is the only Head, Lord, Ruler, and Lawgiver of his church. There was a church-state ever since God created man on the earth, and there is the same reason of it in all its alterations, as unto its relation to the Lord Christ. Whatever changes it underwent, still Christ was the Lord of it, and of all its concerns. But by way of instance and eminence, we may consider the Mosaic church-state under the Old Testament, and the evan-

gelical church-state under the New. Christ is Lord of and in respect unto them both.

1st. He was the Lord of the Old Testament church-state, and he exercised his power and lordship towards it in four ways.

1. In, and by its institution and erection; he made, framed, set up, and appointed that church-state, and all the worship of God therein observed. He it was who appeared unto Moses in the wilderness, Exod. iii. 5; Acts vii. 32, 33, and who gave them the law on mount Sinai, Exod. xx; Psal. lxxviii. 17; Eph. iv. 8, and continued with them in the wilderness, Num. xxi. 6; 1 Cor. x. 9. So that from him, his power and authority, was the institution and erection of that church.

2. As its lawgiver, by prescribing to it when erected, a complete rule and form of worship and obedience, to which nothing might be added, Deut. vii. 4. 12. 32.

3. By way of reformation, when it was collapsed and decayed, Zech. ii. 8—1; Mal. iii. 13—3.

4. By way of amotion, or taking down what he himself had set up; because it was so framed and ordered as to continue only for a season, Heb. ix. 10; Deut. xviii. 16—18; Hag. ii. 6, 7; Isa. lxxv. 17, 18; 2 Pet. iii. 13. Which part of his power and lordship, we shall afterwards abundantly prove against the Jews.

2d. Of the New Testament evangelical church-state also, he is the only Lord and ruler; yea, this is his proper kingdom, on which all other parts of his dominion do depend; for he is given to be “head over all things unto the church,” Eph. i. 22. For,

1. He is the foundation of this church-state, 1 Cor. iii. 11, the whole design and platform of it being laid in him, and built upon him. And 2. He erects this church-state upon himself, Matt. xvi. 18. “I will build my church;” the Spirit and Word whereby it is done, being from him alone, and ordered in and by his wisdom, power and care. And 3. He gives laws and rules of worship and obedience unto it, when so built by himself and upon himself, Matt. xxviii. 18; Acts i. 2; Heb. iii. 2—6. And 4. Is the everlasting, constant, abiding head, ruler, king, and governor of it, Eph. i. 22; Col. ii. 19; Heb. iii. 6; Rev. ii. 3. All which things are ordinarily spoken unto, and the ends of this power of Christ fully declared.

VI. He is Lord also of political things. All the governments of the world that are set up and exercised therein for the good of mankind, and the preservation of society according to rules of equity and righteousness; over all these, and those who in and by them exercise rule and authority amongst men, is He Lord and King.

He alone is the absolute potentate; the highest on the earth are in a subordination unto him. That, 1. He was designed unto, Ps. lxxxix. 27. And accordingly he is, 2. made Lord of lords and King of kings, Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16; 1 Tim. vi. 15. And 3. He exerciseth dominion answerable unto his title, Rev. vi. 16; xvii. 14; xviii. 16—20; Ps. ii. 8, 9; Isa. lx; Mich. v. 7—9. And 4. hath hence right to send his gospel into all nations in the world, attended with the worship by him prescribed, Matt. xxviii. 18; Ps. ii. 9—12, which none of the rulers or governors of the world have any right to refuse or oppose,

nor can so do, but upon their utmost peril. And 5. All kingdoms shall at length be brought into a professed subjection to him and his gospel, and have all their rule disposed of unto the interest of his church and saints, Dan. vii. 27; Isa. lx. 12; Rev. xix. 16—19.

VII. The last branch of this dominion of Christ consists in the residue of the creation of God; heaven and earth, sea and land, wind, trees, and fruits of the earth, and the creatures of sense, as they are all put under his feet, Ps. viii. 7, 8; Eph. i. 22; 1 Cor. xv. 27, so the exercise of his power severally over them, is known from the story of the gospel.—And thus we have glanced at this lordship of Christ in some of the general parts of it: and how small a portion of his glorious power, are we able to comprehend or declare.

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Δι' οὗ καὶ τοὺς αἰῶνας ἐποίησεν. “By whom also he made the worlds.”

The apostle in these words gives further strength to his present argument, from another consideration of the person of the Messiah; wherein he also discovers the foundation of the pre-eminence ascribed unto him in the words last insisted on. By him the worlds were made; so that they were his own, John i. 11, and it was meet that in the new condition which he underwent, that he should be the Lord of them all. Moreover, if all things be made by him, all disobedience unto him is certainly most unreasonable, and will be attended with inevitable ruin; of the truth whereof, the apostle aims to convince the Hebrews.

Now, whereas the assertion which presents itself at first view in these words is such, as if we rightly apprehend the meaning of the Holy Ghost in it, must needs determine the controversy that the apostle had with the Jews, and is of great use and importance unto the faith of the saints in all ages, I shall first free the words from false glosses and interpretations, and then explain the truth asserted in them, both absolutely, and with relation to the present purpose of the apostle.

That which some men design in their wresting of this place, is to deface the illustrious testimony given in it unto the eternal deity of the Son of God; and to this purpose they proceed variously.

1. By δι' οὗ *by whom*, they say δι' οὗ *for whom*, is intended. And so the sense of the place is, that ‘for Christ, for his sake, God made the world:’ so Eniedinus; and Grotius embraceth his notion; adding in its confirmation that this was the opinion of the Jews, namely, that ‘all things were made for the Messiah:’ and therefore ἐποίησε, he renders by *considerat*, as signifying the time long since past, before the bringing forth of Christ in the world; as also that δι' οὗ is put for δι' οὗ, in Rom. vi. 4; Rev. iv. 11, i. 14, and therefore may be here so used. According to this exposition of the words, we have in them an expression of the love of God towards the Messiah, in that “for his sake he made the worlds;” but not any thing of the excellency, power and glory of the Messiah himself.

It is manifest that the whole strength of this interpretation lies in this, that δι' οὗ, may be taken for δι' οὗ, *by whom* instead of *for*

*whom*: but neither is it proved that in any other place those expressions are equipollent; nor if that could be supposed, is there any reason offered why the one of them should in this place be put for the other: for,

1. The places referred unto, do no way prove that *δια* with a genitive doth ever denote the final cause, but the efficient only. With an accusative for the most part it is as much as *propter*, signifying the final cause of the thing spoken of, and rarely in the New Testament is it otherwise used, *δια το θελημα σου*, Rev. iv. 11, ‘at thy will or pleasure;’ the efficient and disposing not the final cause seems to be denoted. And chap. xiii. 14, *δια τα σημεια*, ‘by the signs that were given him’ to do, the formal cause is signified. But that joined with a genitive case it any where signifies the final cause, doth not appear. Beza, whom Grotius cites, says, on Rom. vi. 4, that *δια δοξης πατρος*, ‘by the glory of the Father,’ may be taken for *εις δοξην*, ‘unto the glory.’ But the case is not the same, where things, as where persons are spoken of; *ου* here relates unto a person, and yet is *δια* joined with it asserted to denote the end of the things spoken of, which is insolent. Besides *δοξα πατρος*, in that place, is indeed the glorious power of the Father, the efficient of the resurrection of Christ treated of. So that whereas *δια* is used six hundred times with a genitive case in the New Testament, no one instance can be given, where it may be rendered *propter*, for, and therefore cannot be so here.

2. On supposition that some such instance might be produced, yet being contrary to the constant use of the word, some cogent reason from the text wherein it is used, or the thing treated of, must be urged, to give that sense admittance. And nothing of that nature is, or can be here pleaded.

3. As *δι’ ου* and *εις ον*, are distinguished, the one expressing the efficient, the other the final cause, Rom. xi. 36, so also are *δι’ ου* and *δι’ ον*, in this very epistle, chap. ii. 10, *δι’ ον τα παντα, και δι’ ου τα παντα*, ‘for whom are all things, and by whom are all things;’ and is it likely that the apostle would put one of them for the other, contrary to the proper use which he intended immediately to assign severally unto them?

4. *Δι’ ου by whom* here, is the same with *δι’ αυτου, by him*, John i. 3, which the same person interprets properly for the efficient cause.

On these accounts the foundation of this gloss being removed, the superadded translation of *εποιησε*, by *condiderat*, is altogether useless; and what the Jews grant that God did with respect to the Messiah, we shall afterwards consider.

2. The Socinians, generally lay no exception against the person making, whom they acknowledge to be Christ the Son, but to the worlds said to be made. These are not, say they, the things of the old, but of the new creation, not the fabric of heaven and earth, but the conversion of the souls of men; not the first institution and forming of all things, but the restoration of mankind, and translation into a new condition of life. This Schlictingius at large insists on, in his comment on this place, bringing, in justification of his interpretation, the sum of what is pleaded by any of them, in answer not only to



this testimony, but also to that of John i. 3, and that also of Col. i. 16, 17.

1st, 'The old creation,' he says, 'is never said to be performed by any intermediate cause, as the Father is here said to make these worlds by the Son.' But 1. This is *petitio principii*, that this expression doth denote any such intermediate cause, as should interpose between the Father, and the creation of the world by an operation of its own, divers from that of the Father, Job. xxvi. 13. God is said to adorn the heavens בְּרוּחוֹ, 'by his Spirit,' which they will not contend to denote an intermediate cause, and *δια* here is but what the Hebrews express by ב. 2. In the creation of the world the Father wrought in and by the Son, the same creating act being the act of both persons, John v. 17, their will, wisdom, and power being essentially the same.

2d, He adds, 'There is an allusion only in the words to the first creation, as in John i. 1--3, where the apostle sets out the beginning of the gospel in the terms whereby Moses reports the creation of the world. And therefore mentions light in particular, because of an allusion to the light at first created by God, when of all other things wherein there is no such allusion he maketh no mention.'

Ans. 1. The new creation granted by the men of this persuasion, being only a moral suasion of the minds of men by the outward doctrine of the gospel, I know not what allusion can be fancied in it, to the creation of the world out of nothing.

2. It is granted that the apostle speaks here of the same creation that John treats of in the beginning of his gospel, but that this is the creation of the whole world, and of all things contained in it, hath been elsewhere proved, and must be granted, or we may well despair of ever understanding one line in the Scripture, or what we ordinarily speak one to another.

3. John doth not mention any particular of the old creation, affirming only in general, that by the Word "all things were made," whereof he afterwards affirms, that it was the "light" of men, not assigning to him in particular, the creation of light, as is pretended.

3d, He tells us, 'the article proposed, *τοὺς αἰῶνας*, intimates that it is not the old creation that is intended, but some new special thing distinct from it and preferred above it.' Ans. 1. As the same article doth, used by the same apostle to the same purpose in another place, Acts xiv. 15, *ὅς ἐποίησε τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν*, 'who made the heaven, the earth and sea,' which were certainly those created of old. 2. The same article is used with the same word again in this epistle, chap. xi. 3, *πιστεῖ νοοῦμεν κατηγορεῖσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας*, 'by faith we understand that the worlds were made,' where this author acknowledgeth the old creation to be intended.

4. He adds, 'that the author of this epistle seems to allude to the Greek translation of Isa. ix. 6, wherein אֲבִירֵךְ, the Father of eternity, or eternal Father, is rendered the Father of the world to come.' Ans. 1. There is no manner of relation between *πατὴρ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*, 'the Father of the world to come,' and *δὲ οὐ τοὺς αἰῶνας ἐποίησεν*, 'by whom he made the worlds,' unless it be that one word is used

in both places in very distinct senses, which if it be sufficient to evince a cognation between various places, very strange and uncouth interpretations would quickly ensue. For 2. Doth that, which the apostle here treats of, any way respect that which the prophet in that place insists on, his name and nature being only declared by the prophet, and his works by the apostle. And 3. It is presumption to suppose the apostle to allude to a corrupt translation, as that of the LXX. in that place is, there being no ground for it in the original, for אֲבִי־עֵד is not *πατήρ μελλόντος αἰῶνος*, but *πατήρ αἰῶνιος*, 'the eternal Father,' and what the Jews and LXX. intend by the world to come, we shall afterwards consider.

5. His last refuge is in Isa. li. 16, 'Where the work of God,' as he observes, 'in the reduction of the people of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon, is called his planting the heavens, and laying the foundations of the earth. And the Vulgar Latin translation,' as he farther observes, 'renders the word, *ut cælum plantes, ut terram fundes*, ascribing that to the prophet which he did but declare, and in this sense he contends, that God the Father is said to make the worlds by his Son.' Answ. 1. The work mentioned is not that which God would do in the reduction of the people from Babylon, but that which he had done in their delivery from Egypt, recorded to strengthen the faith of believers in what for the future he would yet do for them. 2. The expressions of 'planting the heavens, and laying the foundation of the earth,' are in this place of the prophet plainly allegorical, and are in the very same place declared so to be. First, in the circumstance of time, when this work is said to be wrought, namely, at the coming of the Israelites out of Egypt, when the heavens and the earth, properly so called, could not be made, planted, founded, or created. Secondly, by an adjoined exposition of the allegory, 'I have put my words into thy mouth, and said unto Zion thou art my people.' This was his planting of the heavens, and laying the foundation of the earth, even the erection of a church and political state amongst the Israelites. 3. It is not to the prophet, but to the church, that the words are spoken, and לָנֶשֶׁע and לִיסָד, are not *ut plantes et ut fundes*, but *ad plantandum*, 'to plant,' and *ad fundandum*, 'to lay the foundation,' and our author injures his cause, by making use of a translation to uphold it, which himself knows to be corrupt. 4. There is not then, any similitude between that place of the prophet, wherein words are used allegorically, (the allegory in them being instantly explained,) and this of the apostle, whose discourse is didactical, and the words used in it proper, and suited to the things intended by him to be expressed. And this is the substance of what is pleaded to wrest from believers this illustrious testimony given to the eternal Deity of the Son of God. We may yet further consider the reasons that offer themselves from the context, for the removal of the interpretation suggested.

1. It sinks under its own weakness and absurdity. The apostle, intending to set out the excellency of the son of God, affirms, that "by him the worlds were made," that is, say they, 'Christ preaching the gospel converted some to the faith of it, and many more were

converted by the apostles preaching the same doctrine, whereupon blessed times of light and salvation ensued. Who, not overpowered with prejudice, could once imagine any such sense in these words? especially considering that it is as contrary to the design of the apostle, as it is to the import of the words themselves. This is that which Peter calls "men's wresting the Scripture to their own perdition."

2. The apostle, as we observed, writes didactically, plainly expressing the matter whereof he treats in words usual and proper. To what end then should he use so strained an allegory in a point of doctrine, yea, a fundamental article of the religion he taught, and that to express what he had immediately in the words foregoing properly expressed, for "by whom he made the worlds," is no more in these men's apprehensions, than "in him hath he spoken in these latter days." Nor is this expression any where used, no not in the most allegorical prophecies of the Old Testament, to denote that which here they would wrest it to. But making of the world, signifies making of the world, in the whole Scripture throughout, and nothing else.

3. The "making of the worlds" here intended, was a thing then past, *εποιησε*, 'he made them,' that is, he did so of old. And the same word is used by the LXX. to express the old creation. But now that which the Jews called the world to come, or the blessed state of the church under the Messiah, the apostle speaks of, as of that which was not yet come, the present worldly state of the Judaical church yet continuing.

4. The word *αιων*, and *αιωνες*, or *עולם* and *עולמים*, which are so rendered, taken absolutely as they are here used, do never in any one place of the Old or New Testament signify the new creation, or state of the church under the gospel, but the 'whole world,' and all things therein contained, they do signify in this very epistle, chap. xi. 3.

5. Wherever the apostle in this epistle speaks in the Judaical idiom of the church state under the Messiah, he never calls it by the name of *οικουμενη*, or *αιων*, but still with the limitation of "to come," as chap. ii. 5, vi. 5. And where the word is used absolutely as in this place, and chap. xi. 3, it is the "whole world," that is intended.

6. The context utterly refuseth this gloss. The Son in the preceding words is said to be made heir or Lord of all; that is of all things absolutely and universally, as we have evinced, and is confessed. To that assertion he subjoins a reason of the equity of that transcendent grant made to him, namely, because "by him all things were made," whereunto he adds his upholding, ruling, and disposing of them when so made by him; "he upholdeth all things by the word of his power." That between the "all things" whereof he is Lord, and the "all things" that he upholds, there should be an interposition of words of the same import with them, expressing the reason of those that go before, and the foundation of that which follows, knitting both parts together, and yet indeed have a signification in them of things utterly heterogeneous to them, is most unreasonable to imagine.

We have now obtained liberty by removing the entanglements cast in our way, to proceed to the opening of the genuine sense and import of these words.

Δι' οὗ, 'by whom,' not as an instrument or an inferior intermediate created cause, for then also must he be created by himself, seeing all things that were made were made by him, John i. 3, but as his own eternal Word, wisdom, and power, Prov. viii. 22—24; John i. 3. The same individual creating act, being the work of Father and Son, whose power and wisdom being one and the same undivided, so also are the works which outwardly proceed from them. And as the joint working of Father and Son doth not infer any other subordination but that of subsistence and order, so the preposition *δια* doth not of itself intimate the subjection of an instrumental cause, being used sometimes to express the work of the Father himself, Gal. i. 1.

Ἐποίησε, ברא, 'created,' so the apostle expresseth that word, Acts xvii. 24, 26. And the LXX. most commonly, as Gen. i. 1, though sometimes they use *κτιζω*, as our apostle also doth, chap. x. He made, created, produced out of nothing, "by the things not seen," chap. xi. 3.

Τους αἰῶνας, αἰων, עולם, so that word is constantly rendered by the Greeks. עולם is 'to hide, or to be hid, kept secret, close, undiscovered.' Whence a virgin is called עלמה, one not yet come into the public state of matrimony, as by the Greeks on the same account *κατακλειστος*, one 'shut up,' or a 'recluse,' as the Targumists call a harlot ברא, 'a goer abroad,' from that description of her, Prov. vii. 11, 12, בביתה ברחבת, לא ישכנו רגליה פעם בחוץ פעם ברחבת, "her feet dwell not in her own house; one while she is in the street, another while abroad." As the mother of a family is called בית, "the dweller at home," Psalm lxviii. 13. Hence, עולם signifies the ages of the world in their succession and duration, which are things secret and hidden; what is past is forgotten, what is to come is unknown, and what is present is passing away without much observation. See Eccles. i. 10.

The world then that is visible and a spectacle in itself, in respect of its continuance and duration, is עולם, a "thing hidden." So that the word denotes the 'fabric of the world,' by a metonymy of the adjunct. When the Hebrews would express the world in respect of the substance and matter of the universe, they do it commonly by a distribution of the whole into its most general and comprehensive parts, as the heavens, earth and sea, subjoining all things contained in them. This the Greeks and Latins, from its order, frame and ornaments, call *κοσμος*, and *mundus*, which principally respects that שפדו שמים, that beauty and ornament of the heavens, which God made by his Spirit, Job xxvi. 13. And as it is inhabited by the sons of men, they call it חבל, that is, *οικουμενη*, that is, חבל ארץ, Prov. viii. 30. "The world of the earth," principally the habitable parts of the earth. As, "quickly passing away," they call it חלוך; and in respect of its successive duration עולם, that is, *αἰων*, the word here used.

2. *Αἰωνες*, in the plural number, 'the worlds,' so called, chap. xi. 3, by a mere enallage of number, as some suppose, or with respect to the many ages of the world's duration. But moreover, the apostle accommodates his expression to the received opinion of the Jews, and



their way of expressing themselves about the world. עולם, denotes the world as to the subsistence of it, and as to its duration; in both these respects, the Jews distributed the world into several parts, calling them so many worlds. R. D. Kimchi on Isa. vi. distributes these worlds into three, on the account of which he says, קדוש, holy, was three times repeated by the Seraphim. There are, saith he, שלשה עולם, 'three worlds,' המלאכים והנשמות, 'the upper world which is the world of angels and spirits,' עולם העליון והוא עולם המלאכים והנשמות, 'the world of the heavens and stars;' and עולם השפל, 'this world below.' But in the first respect they generally assign these four, 1, העולם השפל, 'the lower world,' 'the depressed world,' the earth and air in the several regions of it. 2, העולם המלאכים, 'the world of angels, or ministering spirits, whom they suppose to inhabit high places, where they may superintend the affairs of the earth. 3, עולם העליון, 'the world of spheres,' and 4, עולם העליון, 'the highest world,' called by Paul 'the third heaven,' 2 Cor. xii. 2, and by Solomon שמי, 'the heaven of heavens,' 2 Kings viii. 27, and עלם הנשמות, Olam hannahemuth, the world of spirits, or souls departed. In respect of duration they assign a five-fold world. 1, עולם עבר, called by Peter the 'old world,' or the world before the flood, the world that perished. 2, עולם הזה, 'the present world,' or the state of things under the Judaical church. 3, עולם הביאתה משיח, 'the world of the coming of the Messiah,' or the world to come, as the apostle calls it, chap. ii. 5. 4, עולם החיות המתים, 'the world of the resurrection of the dead.' And 5, עולם אריך, 'the prolonged world,' or life eternal. Principally with respect to the first distribution, as also to the duration of the whole world to the last dispensation mentioned in the second, doth the apostle here call it, *τοὺς αἰῶνας*, 'the worlds.'

Thus the apostle having declared the honour of the Son, as Mediator, in that he was made "heir of all," adds thereto his excellency in himself from his eternal power and godhead, which he not only asserts, but gives evidence to an argument from the works of creation. And to avoid all straitening thoughts of this work, he expresseth it in terms comprehending the whole creation, in that distribution whereunto it was usually cast by themselves. As John contents not himself by affirming that he made all things, but adds to that assertion, that without him nothing was made that was made, John i. 3.

And this was of old the common faith of the Judaical church. That all things were made, and all things disposed by the Word of God, they all confessed. Evident footsteps of this faith abide still in their Targums. For that by the word of God so often mentioned in them, they did not understand the word of his power, but an hypothesis in the divine nature, is manifest from the personal properties which are every-where assigned unto it; as the Word of God did this, said that, thought, went, and the like; as Psalm lxxviii. 17, they affirm that 'Word' which gave the law on Mount Sinai, 'dwells in the highest heavens.' Yea, and they say in Bereschit Rabba, of those words, Gen. i. 2, 'the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters,' זה רוחו של מלך המשיח, 'this is the Spirit of the King Messiah,' by whom they cannot deny but that all things were formed. And the

apostle in this expression lets the Hebrews know, that Jesus the Messiah was that word of God, 'by whom all things were made.' And so the influence of these words on his present argument is manifest. For the Son, in whom the Father had now spoken to them, and declared the gospel, being his eternal Word, by whom the world and all ages were created, there could be no question of his authority to alter their ceremonial worship, which he himself had appointed for a season.

Before we pass to the next verses, we may mark out those instructions, which the words passed through afford us in common, as to the abiding interest of all believers.

The foundation of them is, That the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great prophet of his church under the New Testament, the only revealer of the will of the Father, as the Son and Wisdom of God, made the worlds, and all things contained in them. And therein,

1. We have an illustrious testimony given to the eternal Godhead and power of the Son of God; for he who made all things is God, as the apostle elsewhere affirms. And,

2. Unto the equity of his being made Heir, Lord, and Judge of all. No creature can decline the authority or wave the tribunal of him that made them all. And,

3. A stable ground of faith, hope, contentment, and patience, is administered unto the saints in all dispensations. He who is their Redeemer that bought them, hath all that interest in all things wherein they are concerned, that the sovereign right of creation can afford to him; besides that grant which is made to him for this very end, that that they might be disposed of to his own glory, in their good and advantage, Isa. liv. 4, 5. And,

4. From this order of things, that Christ as the eternal Son of God having made the worlds, hath them, and all things in them, put under his power as Mediator and Head of the church, we may see in what a subserviency to the interest of the saints of the Most High, the whole creation is laid and disposed. And,

5. The way of obtaining a sanctified interest in, and use of the things of the old creation; namely, by receiving them not merely on the general account as made by the Son of God, but on the more especial account, of their being granted to him as Mediator of the church. And,

6. How men on both these foundations, are to be accountable for the use or abuse of the things of the first creation.

But besides these particular instances, there is that which is more general, and which we may a little insist upon from the context and design of the apostle in this whole discourse, the consideration of which will not again occur to us; and it is, That God in infinite wisdom ordered all things in the first creation, so as that the whole of that work might be subservient to the glory of his grace, in the new creation of all by Jesus Christ.

By the Son he made the worlds in the beginning of time, that in the fulness of time he might be the just Heir and Lord of all. The Jews have a saying, that the world was made for the Messiah: which is thus far true, that both it, and all things in it, were made, disposed

of, and ordered in their creation, so as that God might be everlastingly glorified in the work which he was designed unto, and which by him he had to accomplish. I shall consider it only in the present instance; namely, that by the Son he made the worlds, that he might be the proper Heir and Lord of them; of which latter we shall treat more particularly on the ensuing words.

This was declared of old, where he was spoken of as the Wisdom of God, by whom he wrought in the creation and production of all things, Prov. viii. 22—30. Here this Son, or Wisdom of God, declares at large, 1. His co-existence with his Father from eternity, before all or any of the visible or invisible creation were by his power brought forth, ver. 22, 23, and so onward. And then sets forth the infinite, eternal and ineffable delight, that was between him and his Father, both before, and also in the work of creation, ver. 30. Farther, he declares his presence and co-operation with him in the whole work of making the world, and the several parts of it, ver. 27—30, which in other places is expressed as here by the apostle, that God by him made the worlds. After which he declares the end of all this dispensation; namely, that he might “rejoice in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delight be with the sons of men;” to whom therefore he calls to hearken unto him, that they may be blessed, ver. 31, to the end of the chapter; that is, that he might be meet to accomplish the work of their redemption, and bring them to blessedness, to the glory of the grace of God; which work his heart was set upon, and which he greatly delighted in, Ps. xl. 6—8.

Hence the apostle John, in the beginning of his gospel, brings both the creations together: the first by the eternal Word, absolutely; the other by him as incarnate, that the suitableness and correspondence of all things in them might be evident. ‘The Word was with God,’ saith he, ‘in the beginning, and all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made,’ ver. 1—3. But what was this to the gospel that he undertook to declare? Yes, very much; for it appears from hence, that when this word was made flesh, and came and dwelt among us, ver. 14, that he came into the world that was made by him, though it knew him not, ver. 10, he came but to his own, whatever were the entertainment that he received, ver. 11. For this end then God made all things by him, that when he came to change and renew all things, he might have good right and title so to do, seeing he undertook to deal with or about no more but what he had originally made.

The holy and blessed Trinity could have so ordered the work of creation, as that it should not immediately, eminently, and signally have been the work of the Son, of the eternal Word. But there was a farther design upon the world to be accomplished by him, and therefore the work was signally to be his; that is, as to immediate operation, though as to authority and order, it peculiarly belonged to the Father; and to the Spirit, as to disposition and ornament, Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13.

This, I say, was done for the end mentioned by the apostle, Eph. i. 10. All things at first were made by him, that when they were lost,

ruined, and scattered, they might again in the appointed season, be gathered together into one head in him ; of which place more at large elsewhere.

And this mystery of the wisdom of God, the apostle at large unfoldeth, Col. i. 15—19. Speaking of the Son by whom we have redemption, he informs us, that in himself and his own nature, he is the image of the invisible God ; that is of God the Father, who until then had alone been clearly revealed unto them ; and that in respect of other things, he is the first-born of every creature, or as he terms himself, Rev. iii. 14, ‘ the Beginning of the creation of God ; ’ that is, he who is before all creatures, and gave beginning of the creation of God. For so expressly the apostle explains himself in the next verses : “ By him all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” But this is not the full design of the apostle. He declares not only, that all things were made by him, but also that all things were made for him, ver. 16, so made for him, that he might be the head of the body the church ; that is, that he might be the fountain, head, spring, and original of the new creation, as he had been of the old. So the apostle declares in the next words, “ who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead.” As he was the beginning, the first-born of every creature in the old creation, so he is the beginning and first-born from the dead ; that is, the original and cause of the whole new creation. And hereunto he subjoins the end and design of God in this whole mysterious work, which was, that the Son might have the preeminence in all things ; as he had in and over the works of the old creation, seeing they were all made by him, and all consist in him ; so also he hath over the new on the same account, being the beginning and first-born of them. The apostle in these words gives us the whole of what we intend, namely, that the making of the worlds, and of all things in them, in the first creation by the Son, was peculiarly subservient to the glory of the grace of God, in the reparation and renovation of all things by him as incarnate.

It is not for us to inquire much into, or after the reason of this economy and dispensation : we cannot “ by searching find out God, we cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection,” Job. xi. 7. It may suffice us, that he disposeth of all things according to the counsel of his own will, Eph. i. 12. This, antecedently unto the consideration of the effects of it, we cannot, we may not search into, Deut. xxix. 29. What are the effects and consequences of his infinitely holy, wise counsel, wherein his glory shines forth unto his creatures, those we may consider and contemplate, and rejoice in the light that they will afford us into the treasures of these counsels themselves.

Now herein we see, first, that it was the eternal design of God, that the whole creation should be put in subjection to the Word incarnate, whereof the apostle also treats in the second chapter of this Epistle. God 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. 9—11. God hath put all things in subjection unto him, not only the things peculiarly redeemed by him, but all things whatever, as we shall show in the next words of our Epistle : see 1 Cor. xv. 24 ; Heb. ii. 8 ; Rom. xiv. 11. Hence John saw 'every creature which is in heaven and earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, even all that are in them, ascribing blessing, and honour, and glory, and power unto the Lamb for ever and ever,' Rev. v. 13, that is, owning and avowing their duty, obedience, and subjection unto him. This being designed of God in the eternal counsel of his will, before the world was, 1 Peter i. 2 ; Tit. i. 2 ; he prepared and made way for it in the creation of all things by him ; so that his title and right to be the Ruler and Lord of all angels and men, the whole creation, in and of heaven and earth, might be laid in this great and blessed foundation, that he made them all.

Again, God designed from eternity, that his great and everlasting glory should arise from the new creation, and from the work thereof. Herein hath he 'ordered all things to the praise of the glory of his grace,' Eph. i. 6. And this praise will he inhabit for ever. It is true, the works of the old creation did set forth the glory of God, Ps. xix. 1, they manifested his eternal power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20. But God had not resolved, ultimately to commit the manifestation of his glory unto those works, though very glorious ; and therefore did he suffer sin to enter into the world, which stained the beauty of it, and brought it wholly under the curse. But he never suffered spot nor stain to come upon the work of the new creation, Eph. v. 6, nothing that might defeat, eclipse, or impair the glory that he intended to exalt himself in thereby. Yet God hath so ultimately laid up his glory in the new creation, as that he will not lose any thing of that, which also is due unto him from the old ; but yet he will not receive immediately from thence neither, but as it is put over into a subserviency unto the work of the new. Now God ordered all things so, as that this might be effected without force, co-action, or wresting of the creation, or putting it out of its own order. And is there any thing more genuine, natural and proper, than that the world should come into subjection unto him, by whom it was made, although there be some alteration in its state and condition, as to outward dispensation, in his being made man ? And this I take to be the meaning of that discourse of the apostle about the bondage and liberty of the creature, which we have, Rom. viii. 19—22. The apostle tells us, that the creature itself had an expectation and desire after the manifestation of the sons of God, or the bringing forth of the kingdom of Christ in glory and power, ver. 19, and gives this reason for it, because it is brought into a condition of vanity, corruption and bondage ; wherein it did, as it where, unwillingly abide, and groaned to be delivered from it. That is, by the entrance of sin, the creation was brought into such a condition, that it could not answer the end for which it was made and erected, namely, to declare the glory of God, that he might be worshipped and honoured as God ; but was as

it were left, especially in the earth, and the inhabitants of it, to be a stage for men to act their enmity against God upon, and a means for the fulfilling and satisfaction of their filthy lusts. This state being unsuitable to its primitive constitution, preternatural, occasional, and forced, it is said to dislike it, to groan under it, to hope for deliverance, doing that, according to its nature, which it would do voluntarily, were it endowed with a rational understanding. But, saith the apostle, there is a better condition for this creation, which whilst it was afar off, it put out its head after and unto. What is this better state? Why the glorious liberty of the sons of God; that is, the new state and condition that all things are restored unto, in order to the glory of God by Jesus Christ. The creation hath, as it were a natural propensity, yea, a longing to come into a subjection to Christ, as that which retrieves and frees it from the vanity, bondage and corruption that it was cast into, when put out of its first order by sin. And this ariseth from that design and plan which God first laid in the creation of all things;—that they being made by the Son, should naturally and willingly, as it were, give up themselves unto obedience to him, when he should take the rule of them upon the new account of his mediation.

Thirdly, God would hereby instruct us, both in the use that we are to make of his creatures, and in the improvement that we are to make of the work of the creation to his glory. For the first, it is his will that we should not use any thing as merely made and created by him, though originally for that purpose, seeing as they are so left, they are under the curse, and so impure and unclean unto them that use them, Tit. i. 15. But he would have us to look upon them, and receive them as they are given over to Christ. For the apostle in his application of the eighth Psalm unto the Lord Christ, ch. ii. 6—8, manifests, that even the beasts of the field, on which we live, are given over in a peculiar manner unto his dominion. And he lays our interest in their use as to a clear, profitable, and sanctified way of it, in the new state of things brought in by Christ. 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. ‘Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer.’ The word of promise confirmed in Christ called on by the Spirit, given by Christ in prayer, gives a sanctified use of the creatures. This God instructs us in, namely to look for a profitable sanctified use of the creatures in Christ, in that himself ordered them in the very first creation, to fall at length naturally under his rule and dominion, making them all by him. And hereby also we are instructed how to learn the glory of God from them. The whole mystery of laying the works of the old creation in a subserviency to the new, being hidden from many ages and generations, from the foundation of the world men did by the effects and works which they saw conclude, that there was an eternal Power and infinite Wisdom whereby they were produced. But whereas there is but a two-fold holy use of the works of the creation, the one suited to the state of innocence, and the moral natural worship of God therein which they had lost; the other, to the state of grace, and the worship

of God in that which they had not attained; the world and the inhabitants thereof being otherwise involved in the curse and darkness wherewith it was attended, exercised themselves in fruitless speculations about them, or foolish imaginations, as the apostle calls them, and glorified not God in any due manner, Rom. i. 21. Neither unto this day can men make any better improvement of their contemplation on the works of creation, who are unacquainted with the recapitulation of all things in Christ, and the beauty of it; in that all things at first were made by him. But when men shall by faith perceive and consider, that the production of all things owes itself, in its first original, to the Son of God, in that by him the world was made; and that unto this end and purpose, that he being afterwards incarnate for our redemption, they might all be put into subjection to him; they cannot but be ravished with the admiration of the power, wisdom, goodness and love of God, in this holy, wise, beautiful disposition of all his works and ways. And this is the very subject of the eighth Psalm. The Psalmist considers the excellency and glory of God in the creation of all things, instancing in the most glorious and eminent parts of it. But doth he do this absolutely, as they are such? doth he rest there? No; but proceeds to manifest the cause of his admiration, in that God did of old design, and would at length actually put all these things into subjection unto the Man Christ Jesus; as the apostle expounds his meaning, ch. ii. which causeth him to renew his admiration and praise, ver. 9, that is, to glorify God, as God, and to be thankful; which yet Paul declared that they were not, who considered the works of God only absolutely, with reference to their first original from infinite power and wisdom.

But against what we have been discoursing, it may be objected, that God in the creation of all things, suited them perfectly and absolutely to a state of innocence and holiness, without any respect to the entrance of sin, and the curse that ensued, which gave occasion to that infinitely wise and holy work of the mediation of Christ, and the restoration of all things by him; so that they could not be laid in such a suberviency and order, one to the other, as is pretended, though the former might be afterwards traduced, and translated into the use of the other. But,

1. What is clearly testified in the Scripture, as that truth is, which we have insisted on, is not to be called into question, because we cannot understand the order and method of things in the hidden counsels of God. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us. Neither do we benefit ourselves much by inquiring into that which we cannot comprehend. It is enough for us, that we hold fast revealed things, that we may know and do the will of God; but secret things belong to him, and to him are they to be left.

2. The Scripture testifieth, that "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world," Acts xv. 18. Not only all those, which at first he wrought, but also all that ever he would work. The idea and system of them was all in his holy mind from eternity. Now, though in their creation and production they are all singly suited and fitted to the time, and season wherein they are brought

forth and made, yet as they lie all together in the mind, will, and purpose of God, they have a relation one to another, from the first to the last. There is a harmony and correspondence between them all: they lie all in a blessed subserviency in themselves, and in their respect to one another, unto the promotion of the glory of God. And therefore, though in the creation of all things, that work was suited to the state and condition wherein they were created, that is, of innocence and holiness; yet this hinders not, but that God might and did so order them, that they might have a respect to that future work of his in their restoration by Christ, which was then no less known unto him, than that which was perfectly wrought.

3. The most reasonable and intelligible way of declaring the order of God's decrees, is that which casts them under the two general heads, which all rational agents respect in their purposes and operations; namely, of the last end, and the means conducing thereunto. Now, the utmost end of God in all his ways towards the sons of men, being the manifestation of his own glory by the way of mercy and justice, whatever tendeth thereto is all jointly to be looked on, as one entire means tending to that end and purpose. The works, therefore, of the old and new creation being of this sort and nature, one joint and general means for the compassing of the forementioned end, nothing can hinder but that they may have that respect to each other, which before we have declared.

VER. 3.—The apostle, in the pursuit of his argument, proceeds in the description of the person of Christ; partly as giving a farther account of what he had before affirmed concerning his divine power in making the worlds; and partly to instruct the Hebrews from their own typical institutions, that it was the Messiah who was figured and represented formerly unto them, in those signs and pledges of God's glorious presence which they enjoyed. And so by the whole, he confirmeth the proposition he had in hand, concerning the excellence and eminence of him by whom the gospel was revealed, that their faith in him, and obedience unto him, might not be shaken or hindered.

Ver. 3.—Ὁς ὢν ἀπαυγασμα τῆς δόξης, καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυναμὸς αὐτοῦ, δι' ἑαυτοῦ καθάρισμον ποιησαμενός των ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, ἐκαθίσεν ἐν δεξιά τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς.

Δι' ἑαυτοῦ, is wanting in M. S. T., but the sense requires the words, and all other ancient copies retain them; ἡμῶν is wanting in some copies; and one or two for ἐκαθίσεν, have καθίζει, which hath nothing whereunto it should relate. Some also read, ἐν τῷ θρόνῳ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης; taken from chap. xii. 2, where the word is used.

Ὁς ὢν, qui est; qui cum sit; qui existens; 'who is;' 'who, when he is, or was;' 'who existing;' as Phil. ii. 6, ὅς ὑπαρχων ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, 'who being in the form of God.'

Who being, ἀπαυγασμα τῆς δόξης, splendor, radius, jubar, effulgentia, refulgentia, relucetia. The 'splendour, ray, beam, effulgency,'



or shining forth of glory. Syr. *ܐܬܡܝܪ* germen, so Boderius, the ‘branch;’ Tremellius and D’ Dieu, ‘splendor,’ the Arabic concurring.

*Αυγη*, is lux, ‘light;’ particularly the morning-light, Acts xx. 11, *ὁμιλήσας ἀχρεῖς αὐγῆς*, ‘he talked until the break of day,’ or, the beaming of the morning light; *αὐγη ἡλίου*, Glos. Vet. jubar solis; the sun-beam; and sometimes it denotes the day itself. It is also sometimes used for the light that is in burning iron: *ἀπαυγη*, is of the same signification: properly splendor lucis, the brightness, shining, beauty, glory, or lustre of light. Hence is *αυγαζω*, to shine forth, to shine into, to irradiate, 2 Cor. iv. 4; *εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγασαι αὐτοῖς*, that the light of the gospel should not irradiate,—shine into them. *Ἀπαυγαζω*, is of the same import; and from thence *ἀπαυγασμα*. The word is nowhere used in the New Testament save in this place only; nor doth it occur in the Old of the LXX. Only we have it, Wisd. vii. 26. Wisdom is said to be *ἀπαυγασμα φωτὸς αἰδίου*, a beam of eternal light; to which place the margin of our translation refers. And it is so used by Nazianzen, *μεγάλου φωτὸς μικρὸν ἀπαυγασμα*; a little beam of a great light. It answers exactly to the Hebrew *נֶגֶד* or *נֶגַד*; that is, the morning light, Prov. iv. 18. The path of the righteous, *נֶגַד*, *כְּאֶר*, ut lux splendoris, Hierome; as the light of brightness; that is, of the morning, *αὐγη*, Acts xx. 11. And it is also applied to the light of fire, or fire in iron, Isa. iv. 5, *נֶגַד*, *אֵשׁ*, the light of fire; and the fiery streaming of lightning, Heb. iii. 11.

The brightness, shining, ray, beam, *τῆς δόξης*, of glory; some look on this expression as a Hebraism; *ἀπαυγασμα τῆς δόξης*, the beam of glory; for *ἐνδοξον ἀπαυγασμα*, a glorious beam; but this will not answer the design of the apostle, as we shall see afterwards.

Our translators have supplied *his*, the brightness of his glory, by repeating *αὐτοῦ*, from the end of the sentence; perhaps as we shall find, not altogether necessarily; in which cases alone, such supplements unto the texts are allowed in translations.

*Και χαρακτήρ*, character, imago, forma, figura, expressa forma, figura expressa, *ܠܡܥܢܐ*, Syr. the ‘character, image, form, figure, express form, express figure;’ so variously is the word rendered by translators with little difference. It is nowhere used in the New Testament, but only in this place. In other authors it hath many significations. Sometimes they use it properly and naturally; sometimes metaphorically and artificially; as when it denotes several forms of speech, or orations. Properly from *χαρασσω* or *χαραττω*, to engrave with a tool, or style, is *χαραγμα* and *χαρακτήρ*, which is, first and properly, the note or mark cut by a tool or instrument into wood, or any other subject capable of such impression; or the stamp and sign that is left in the coining of money. The mark or scar also left by a wound, is by the LXX. termed *χαρακτήρ*, Lev. xiii. 25. It is in general an express representation of another thing communicated unto it, by an impression of its likeness upon it; opposed unto that which is umbratile and imaginary.

*Τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ*, substantiæ, subsistentiæ, personæ; Syr. *ܡܬܬܬܐ*, substantiæ ejus; hypostasis, ‘substance, subsistence, person.’ The word is four times used in the New Testament. Thrice in this

Epistle; in this place, and chap. iii. 14, and chap. xi. 1; as also, 2 Cor. ix. 4, every-where in a different sense; so that the mere use of it in one place, will afford no light unto the meaning of it in another; but it must be taken from the context and subject treated of. The composition of the word would denote substantia, but so as to differ from, and to add something unto *ουσια*, substance, or being; which in the divine nature can be nothing but a special manner of subsistence. But into the discussion of the controversy that hath been about the precise signification of these words, we shall not here enter.

φέρων, agens, regens, moderans; ‘acting, disposing, ruling, governing;’ also portans, bajulans, sustinens; ‘bearing, supporting, carrying, upholding;’ which of these senses is peculiarly intended, we shall afterwards inquire into.

Τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ; ‘by the word of his power,’—by his powerful word; Syr. בְּדִלְמָהּ דְּמִלְחָה, by the power of his word; changing the order of the words, but not the meaning of them,—by the power of his word, or the word of his power; that is, his powerful word. αὐτοῦ, some would read it αὐτου, and refer it unto the Father;—by the powerful word of him, that is, of the Father, by whose power, they say, the Son disposeth of all things. But all copies with accents have αὐτου constantly, none αὐτου, nor will the disposition of the words bear that reference.

Δι’ ἑαυτοῦ; by himself,—in his own person.

Καθαρισμὸν ποιήσαμενος. Purgationem faciens; purgatione facta. Having ‘purged, cleansed, expiated,’ or purified us from our sins: having made a purgation or purification of our sins.

Ἐκαθίσεν, καθίζω, is used both neutrally and actively; answering to יָשַׁב, both in Kal and Hiphil,—signifying to sit down, and to cause to sit down. Chrysostom seems to have understood the word in the latter sense; referring it to God the Father causing the Son to sit down. But it is hard to find any antecedent word whereby it should be regulated, but only ὅς, *who*, in the beginning of the verse; that is, he himself; and as Erasmus observes, γενομενος, in the following words, will not grammatically admit of this construction; for if ἐκαθίσε, be to be understood actively and transitively, it must have been γενομενον. And the apostle clears the neutral sense of the word, chap. viii. 1. It is well then rendered by our translators,—he sat, or sat down.

Εν δεξιᾷ, Ps. cx. 1. שֶׁב לִימִינִי; LXX. καθου ἐκ δεξιῶν, in the plural number; so is the same thing expressed, Acts vii. 55, and by Mark, ἐν δεξιῷ, chap. xvi. 5. Our apostle constantly keepeth the singular number, with ἐν, chap. i. 13, viii. 1, xii. 2. The same thing in both expressions is intended; only that of ἐκ δεξιῶν, or ἐν δεξιῷ, in the plural number is more eminently destructive of the folly of the Anthropomorphites; for they cannot hence pretend that God hath a right hand, unless they will grant that he hath many; which were not only to turn the glory of the invisible God into the likeness of a man, but of a monster. And Austin well observes, that in the Psalm where that expression is first used,—‘sit on my right hand;’ it is added, אֲדֹנָי עַל-יְמִינִי, the ‘Lord on thy right hand;’ at the right hand of him, who

sat on his right hand; which removes all carnal apprehensions from the meaning of the words.

*Της μεγαλωσυνης.* This word is seldom used in other authors:—twice in this Epistle, here, and ch. viii. 1, once by Jude, ver. 25, and no where else in the New Testament;—by the LXX. not at all. The apostle evidently expresseth by it כבוד, or כְּבוֹד, not as they are used appellatively, for glory, power, or majesty, but as they are names, and denote the essential glory of God,—the glorious God. So that *μεγαλωσυνη*, is God himself, not absolutely considered, but with reference to the revelation of his glory and majesty in heaven;—God on his throne, as our apostle declareth, ch. viii. 1.

*Εν ὑψηλοις*, in the highest. *μεγαλωσυνη εν ὑψηλοις*, is *ὑψιστος*; that is, ἱγ̃, the Highest, God himself. See Luke i. 35.

Ver. 3.—*Who being the brightness of glory, and the express image of his Person, and upholding, or disposing of, all things by the word of his power, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

The apostle proceeds in his description of the person in whom God spake in the revelation of the gospel; ascending unto such a manifestation of him, as that they might understand his eminence above all who were formerly used in the like ministrations; as also how he was pointed out and shadowed by sundry types and figures under the Old Testament.

Of this description there are three parts: the first declaring what he is; the second, what he doth, or did; and the third, the consequent of them both, in what he enjoyeth.

Of the first part of this description of the Messiah, there are two branches, or it is two ways expressed. For he affirms of him, first, That he is the brightness, beam, or splendour of the glory; and, secondly, the express image, or character of his Father's person.

In the second also there are two things assigned unto him: the former relating unto his power,—as he is the brightness of glory,—he sustaineth, or ruleth and disposeth of all things by the word of his power. The latter unto his love and work of mediation;—by himself, or in his own person, he hath purged our sins.

His present and perpetual enjoyment, as a consequent of what he was and did, or doth, is expressed in the last words: “He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Some of these expressions may well be granted to contain some of those *ὑποσηματα*, ‘things hard to be understood,’ which Peter affirms to be in this Epistle of Paul, 2 Epist. iii. 16, which unstable and unlearned men have in all ages wrested unto their own destruction. The things intended are unquestionably sublime and mysterious. The terms wherein they are expressed are rare, and no where else used in the Scripture to the same purpose; some of them not at all, which deprives us of one great help in the interpretation of them. The metaphors used in the words, or types alluded to by them, are abstruse and dark; so that the difficulty of discovering the true, precise, and

genuine meaning of the Holy Ghost in them is such, as that this verse, at least some part of it, may well be reckoned among those places which the Lord hath left in his word, to exercise our faith, and diligence, and dependance on his Spirit, for a right understanding of them. It may be, indeed, that from what was known and acknowledged in the Judaical church, the whole intention of the apostle was more plain unto them, and more plainly and clearly delivered, than now it seemeth to us to be, who are deprived of their advantages. However, both to them and us, the things were and are deep and mysterious. And we shall desire to handle as it becometh us, both things and words with reverence and godly fear, looking up unto him for assistance, who alone can lead us into all truth.

We begin with the double description given us of the Lord Christ at the entrance of the verse, as to what he is in himself; and here a double difficulty presents itself unto us:—First, In general unto what nature in Christ, or unto what of Christ, this description doth belong. Secondly, What is the particular meaning and import of the words or expressions themselves.

For the first, some assert that these words intend only the divine nature of Christ, wherein he is consubstantial with his Father. Herein as he is said to be, ‘God of God,’ and ‘Light of Light,’ an expression doubtless taken from hence, receiving as the Son his nature and subsistence from the Father, so fully and absolutely as that he is every way the same with him in respect of his essence, and every way like him in respect of his person; so he is said to be the brightness of his glory, and the character of his person, on that account. This way went the ancients generally, and of modern expositors very many;—as Calvin, Brentius, Marloratus, Rollocus, Gomarus, Paræus, Estius, Tena, A. Lapide, Ribera, and sundry others.

Some think that the apostle speaks of him as incarnate, as he is declared in the gospel, or as preached to be the image of the invisible God, 2 Cor. iv. 4. And these take three ways in the explication of the words, and their application of them unto him.

First, Some affirm that their meaning is, that whereas God is in himself infinite and incomprehensible, so that we are not able to contemplate his excellencies, but that we are overpowered in our minds with their glory and majesty, he hath in Christ the Son as incarnate, contemporated his infinite love, power, goodness, grace, greatness, and holiness, unto our faith, love, and contemplation, they all shining forth in him, and being eminently expressed in him; so Beza.

Secondly, Some think that the apostle pursues the description that he had entered upon of the kingly office of Jesus Christ, as heir of all; and that his being exalted in glory unto power, rule, and dominion, expressing and representing therein the person of his Father, is intended in these words; so Camero.

Thirdly, Some refer these words to the prophetic office of Christ, and say that he was the brightness of God’s glory, &c., by his revealing and declaring of the will of God unto us, which before was done darkly only, and in shadows. So the Socinians generally, though Schlictingius refers the words unto all that similitude, which they fan-



cy to have been between God, and the man Christ Jesus, while he was in the earth; and therefore he renders the participle *ων*, not by the present, but preterimperfect tense, *who was*, that is, while he was on the earth, though as he says, not exclusively unto what he is now in heaven.

I shall not examine in particular the reasons that are alleged for these several interpretations, but only propose and confirm that sense of the place, which on full and due consideration appears both agreeable to the analogy of faith, and expressly to answer the design and intention of the apostle; wherein also, the unsoundness of the two last ways of applying the second interpretation, with the real coincidence of the first, and first branch of the latter exposition, will be discovered. To this end the following positions are to be observed.

First, It is not the direct and immediate design of the apostle to treat absolutely of either nature of Christ, his divine or human, but only of his person. Hence, though the things which he mentioneth and expresseth, may some of them belong unto, or be the properties of his divine nature, some of his human, yet none of them are spoken of as such, but are all considered as belonging unto his person. And this solves that difficulty which Chrysostome observes in the words, and strives to remove by a similitude, namely, that the apostle doth not observe any order or method, in speaking of the divine and human natures of Christ distinctly one after another, but first speaks of the one, then of the other, and then returns again to the former, and that frequently. But the truth is, he intends not to speak directly and absolutely of either nature of Christ; but treating *ex professo* of his person, some things that he mentions concerning him, have a special foundation in, and respect unto his divine nature; some in and unto his human, as must every thing that is spoken of him. And therefore the method and order of the apostle is not to be inquired after, in what relates in his expressions to this or that nature of Christ, but in the progress that he makes in the description of his person and offices, which alone he had undertaken.

Secondly, That which the apostle principally intends in and about the person of Christ, is to set forth his dignity, pre-eminence, and exaltation above all; and that not only consequentially to his discharge of the office of Mediator, but also antecedently, in his worth, fitness, ability, and suitableness to undertake and discharge it, which in a great measure depended on, and flowed from his divine nature.

3. These things being supposed, we observe, thirdly, that as these expressions are none of them singly, much less in that conjunction wherein they are here placed, used concerning any other but Christ only; so they do plainly contain and express things that are more sublime and glorious, than can, by the rule of Scripture, or the analogy of faith, be ascribed unto any mere creature, however used or exalted. There is in the word evidently a comparison with God the Father: he is infinitely glorious, eternally subsisting in his own person; and the Son is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Angels are called the *sons* of God, are mighty in power, and excellent in created glory; but when they come to be

compared with God, it is said they are not pure in his sight, and he chargeth them with folly, Job iv. 18, and they cover their face at the brightness of his glory, Isa. vi. 2, so that they cannot be said so to be. Man also was created in the image of God, and is again by grace renewed thereunto, Eph. iv. 23, 24. But, to say a man is the express image of the person of God the Father is to depress the glory of God by anthropomorphism. So that unto God asking that question, "Whom will ye compare unto me, and whom will ye liken me unto?" we cannot answer of any one who is not God by nature, that he is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

Fourthly, Though the design of the apostle in general be to show how the Father expressed and declared himself unto us in the Son; yet this could not be done without manifesting what the Son is in himself, and in reference unto the Father, which both the expressions do in the first place declare. They express him such an one as in whom the infinite perfections and excellencies of God are revealed unto us. So that the first application of the words, namely to the divine nature of Christ, and the first branch of the second, considering him as incarnate, are very well consistent, as A Lapide grants, after he had blamed Beza for his interpretation. The first direction then given to our faith in these words, is by what the Son is in respect of the Father, namely, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; whence it follows, that in him being incarnate, the Father's glory and his person are expressed and manifested unto us.

Fifthly, There is nothing in these words that is not applicable unto the divine nature of Christ. Some, as we have shown, suppose that it is not that which is peculiarly intended in the words; but yet they can give no reason from them, nor manifest any thing denoted by them, which may not be conveniently applied thereunto. I say, whatever can be proved to be signified by them, or contained in them, if we will keep ourselves within the bounds of that holy reverence which becomes us in the contemplation of the majesty of God, may be applied unto the nature of God as existing in the person of the Son. He is in his person distinct from the Father, another, not the Father, but yet the same in nature, and this in all glorious properties and excellencies. This oneness in nature, and distinction in person, may be well shadowed out by these expressions, "He is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." The boldness and curiosity of the schoolmen, and some others, in expressing the way and manner of the generation of the Son, by similitudes of our understanding and its acts, declaring how he is the image of the Father in their terms, are intolerable, and full of offence. Nor are the rigid impositions of those words and terms, in this matter, which they or others have found out to express it by, of any better nature. Yet I confess, that supposing with some, that by the first expression here used, "the brightness of glory," the apostle intends to set forth unto us the relation of the Son to the Father, by an allusion unto the sun

and its beams, or the light of fire in iron, some relief may then be given unto our weak understandings in the contemplation of this mystery, if we observe that one known rule, whose use Chrysostome urgeth in this place, namely, that in the use of such allusions, every thing of imperfection is to be removed in their application to God. A few instances we may give unto this purpose, holding ourselves unto an allusion to the sun and its beams.

1. As the sun in comparison of the beam is of itself, and the beam of the sun; so is the Father of himself, and the Son of the Father. 2. As the sun, without diminution or partition of its substance, without change or alteration in its nature, produceth the beam, so is the Son begotten of the Father. 3. As the sun, in order of nature is before the beam, but in time both are co-existent; so is the Father, in order of nature, before the Son, though in existence both co-eternal. 4. As the beam is distinct from the sun, so that the sun is not the beam, and the beam is not the sun; so is it between the Father and the Son. 5. As the beam is never separated from the sun, nor can the sun be without the beam; no more can the Son be from the Father, nor was the Father ever without the Son. 6. As the sun cannot be seen but by the beam, no more can the Father but in and by the Son.

I acknowledge that these things are true, and that there is nothing in them disagreeable to the analogy of faith. But yet as sundry other things may be affirmed of the sun and its beam, whereof no tolerable application can be made to the matter in hand; so I am not persuaded that the apostle intended any such comparison or allusion, or aimed at our information or instruction by them. They were common people of the Jews, and not philosophers, to whom the apostle wrote this Epistle. And therefore either he expresseth the things that he intends, in terms answering unto what was in use among themselves to the same purpose, or else he asserts them plainly in words, as meet to express them properly by, as any that are in use amongst men. To say that there is an allusion in the words, and that the Son is not properly, but by a metaphor, the brightness of glory, is to teach the apostle to express himself in the things of God. For my part, I understand as much of the nature, glory, and properties of the Son, in and by this expression, "He is the brightness of glory," as I do by any of the most accurate expressions, which men have arbitrarily invented to signify the same thing. That he is one distinct from God the Father, related unto him, and partaker of his glory, is clearly asserted in these words, and more is not intended in them.

Sixthly, These things then being premised, we may discern the general import of these expressions. The words themselves, as was before observed, being no where else used in the Scripture, we may receive a contribution of light unto them from those in other places, which are of their nearest alliance. Such are these and the like, "We have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son of God," John i. 14. "He is the image of the invisible God," Col. i. 15. "The glory of God shines forth in him," 2 Cor. iv. 6. Now, in these and the like places, the glory of the divine nature is so intimated, as that we are directed to look unto the glory of the absolutely invisible and incom-



prehensible God in him incarnate. And this in general is the meaning and intention of the apostle in these expressions. The Son in whom God speaks unto us in the revelation of the gospel, doth in his own person so every way answer the excellencies and perfections of God the Father, that he is in him expressly represented unto our faith and contemplation.

It remaineth then, in the second place, that we consider the expressions severally, with the reasons why the apostle thus expresseth the divine glory of Jesus Christ. *Ὁς ὡς ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, who being the brightness, light, lustre, majesty of glory.* The apostle, in my judgment, (which is humbly submitted for consideration,) alludes and attends unto something that the people were instructed by typically under the Old Testament, in this great mystery of the manifestation of the glory of God unto them, in and by the Son, the second Person in the Trinity. The ark, which was the most signal representation of the presence of God amongst them, was called *his glory*. So the wife of Phinehas, upon the taking of the ark, affirmed that the glory was departed, I Sam. iv. 22. "The glory is departed from Israel for the ark of God is taken." And the Psalmist mentioning the same thing, calls it his glory absolutely, Psal. lxxviii. 61. "He gave his glory into the hand of his enemies," that is the ark. Now on the filling of the tabernacle with the signs of God's presence in cloud and fire, the Jews affirm that there was a constant *ἀπαύγασμα*, *אֶפְאֹרָה*, or majestic shining glory resting on the ark, which was the *ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης*, the splendour of the glory of God, in that typical representation of his presence. And this was to instruct them in the way and manner whereby God would dwell amongst them. The apostle therefore calling them from the types, by which in much darkness they had been instructed in these mysteries, unto the things themselves represented obscurely by them, acquaints them with what that typical glory and splendour of it signified, namely, the eternal glory of God, with the essential beaming and brightness of it in the Son, in and by whom the glory of the Father shineth forth unto us. So that the words seem to relate unto that way of instruction, which was of old granted unto them.

Besides, they were wont to express their faith in this mystery with words unto this purpose, *כבוד*, *glory*, is sometimes put for God himself, Psal. lxxxv. 10. *לשכן כבוד בארצנו*, "That glory may dwell in our land;" that is, the God of glory, or glorious God. This glory the Targum calls *יקרא*, and the majesty of that glory *שכינה*; see Hab. i. 8. Hence Psal. xlv. 25, they render those words, *למה פניך חסתר*, "Why hidest thou thy face?" *למה שכינה יקרך חסלק*, "Why takest thou away the majesty of thy glory?" as both the Venetian and Basil Bibles read the place. For the Regia have only *שכינה* omitting *יקרך*. And in the vision of Isaiah, chap. vi. 1, they say it was *הכבוד*, so Kimchi; *שכינה*, so Rashi; *יקרא*, so the Targum. And they affirm, that it was the same which came down and appeared on Mount Sinai, Exod. xix. 20, where those words, *וירד יהוה על הר סיני*, "And the Lord descended on Mount Sinai," are rendered by Onkelos, *והתגלית יקרא*, "The majesty of God was revealed;" which words, from Psal. lxxviii.



are applied by our apostle unto the Son, Eph. iv. *Απαύγασμα της δόξης*, then, is nothing also but שכנה הכבוד or שכנה יקרא, “the essential presence or majesty of the glorious God.” This, saith he, is Christ the Son; and thus of old they expressed their faith concerning him.

The words, as was shown before, denote the divine nature of Christ, yet not absolutely, but as God the Father in him doth manifest himself unto us. Hence is he called שכנה or שכנתה, or שכני. The word is from שכן *he dwelt*. Elias in Tishbi gives us somewhat another account of the application of that name, in the root, קראו דו”ר לרוח הקדש שכנה על שם שהוא שכן על הנבאים. “The rabbins, of blessed memory, called the Holy Ghost Shechinah, because he dwelt upon the prophets.” But that this is not so, may be observed throughout the Targum, wherein the Holy Ghost is always expressly called רוח הקדש; and the Shechinah is spoken of in such places as cannot be applied unto him. But as the fulness of the Godhead is said to dwell in the Lord Christ, *σωματικως*, Col. i. 9, and he, as the only begotten Son of God, to dwell amongst us, John i. 14; so is he said in the same sense to be שכנה הכבוד, or *απαύγασμα της δόξης*, the majesty, presence, splendour of the glory, or the glorious God.

This then is that whereof the apostle minds the Jews. God having promised to dwell amongst them by his glorious presence, from whence the very name of Jerusalem was called, the Lord is there, Ezek. xlviii. 35, he who in and under that name was with them, as sent by Jehovah, Zech. i. 8, was the Son, in whom he had now spoken unto them in these latter days. And this must needs be of weight with them, being instructed, that he who had revealed the will of God unto them, was none other but he who had dwelt among them from the beginning, representing in all things the person of the Father, being typically revealed unto them, as the brightness of his glory.

The apostle adds, that he is *χαρακτηρ ὑποστασεως αὐτου*, “the express figure or image of his person:” that is, of the person of God the Father. I shall not enter into any dispute about the meaning of the word Hypostasis, or the difference between it and *ουσια*. Many controversies about these words there were of old. And Hierome was very cautious about acknowledging three Hypostases in the Deity, and that because he thought the word in this place to denote substantia, and of that mind are many still, it being so rendered by the vulgar translation. But the consideration of these vexed questions, not tending to the opening of the design of the apostle, and meaning of the Holy Ghost in this place, I shall not insist on them. The

1. Hypostasis of the Father, is the Father himself. Hereof, or of him, is the Son said to be the express image. As is the Father, so is the Son. And this agreement, likeness and conveniency, between the Father and the Son, is essential, not accidental; as those things are between relations finite and corporeal. What the Father is, doth, hath; that the Son is, doth, hath; or else the Father, as the Father, could not be fully satisfied in him, nor represented by him.

2. By character, two things seem to be intended. 1. That the Son in himself is *εν μορφη Θεου*, “in the likeness of God,” Phil. ii. 6.

2. That unto us he is *εικων Θεου*, “the image of God,” representing him unto us, Col. i. 15. For these three words are used of the Lord Christ in respect unto God the Father, *μορφη, εικων, χαρακτηρ*, and their use seems thus to difference them. 1. It is said of him, Phil. ii. 6, *εν μορφη Θεου υπαρχων*, “being, existing, subsisting in the form of God:” that is, being so, essentially so; for there is no *μορφη*, or form in the Deity, but what is essential unto it. This he was absolutely, antecedently to his incarnation; the whole nature of God being in him, and consequently he being in the form of God. 2. In the manifestation of God unto us, he is said to be, *εικων του Θεου του αορατου*, Col. i. 15, “the image of the invisible God;” because in him, so partaker of the nature of the Father, do the power, goodness, holiness, grace, and all other glorious properties shine forth, being in him represented unto us, 2 Cor. iv. 6. And both these seem to be comprised in this word *χαρακτηρ*, both that the whole nature of God is in him, as also that by him God is declared and expressed unto us.

Neither were the Jews of old ignorant of this notion of the Son of God. So Philo expresseth their sense, *De Confusione Linguarum*, *Καν μηδεπω μεντοι τυνχανη τις αξιοχρεως ων υιος Θεου προσαγορευεσθαι, σπουδαζε κοσμιεσθαι κατα τον πρωτογονον αυτου λογον, τον αγγελον πρεσβυτατον ως αρχαγγελον πολυνυμνον υπαρχοντα, και γαρ αρχη και ονομα Θεου και λογος, και ο κατ' εικονα ανθρωπος, και ορων Ισραηλ προσαγορευεται; “If any one be not yet worthy to be called the Son of God, yet endeavour thou to be conformed unto his first begotten Word, the most ancient angel, the archangel with many names; for he is called the Beginning, the name of God, the Man according to the image of God, the Seer of Israel.” And again, *Και γαρ ει μηπω ικανοι Θεου παιδες νομιζεσθαι γεγοναμεν, αλλα τοι της αιδιου εικονος αυτου, λογου του ιερωτατου; Θεου γαρ εικων λογος ο πρεσβυτατος. “For if we are not meet to be called the sons of God, let us be so of his eternal image, the most sacred Word; for that most ancient Word is the image of God.” Thus Philo expresses some of their conceptions concerning this eternal character of the person of the Father.**

We have seen what it is, that is intended in this expression; and shall only add thereto a consideration of that from whence the expression is taken. The ordinary engraving of rings, or seals, or stones, is generally thought to be alluded to. It may be also, that the apostle had respect to some representation of the glory of God by engravings amongst the institutions of Moses. Now there was scarcely any thing of old that more gloriously represented God, than that of the engraving of his name on a plate of gold to be worn on the front of the mitre of the high priest, at the sight whereof, the great conqueror of the east fell down before him. Mention of it we have, Exod. xxviii. 36. “Thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engraving of a signet, *יהוה*, *Holiness of Jehovah*, or to *Jehovah*. Here was that name of God which denotes his essence and being, characterized and engraven, to represent his holiness and glory to the people. And Aaron was to wear this engraven name of God on his forehead. that he might bear the iniquity of the holy things and gifts

of the children of Israel, which could really be done only by him who was Jehovah himself. And thus also, when God promiseth to bring forth the Son, as the corner-stone of the church, he promiseth to engrave upon him the seven eyes of the Lord, Zech. iii. 9, or the perfection of his wisdom and power to be expressed unto the church in him. There having been then this representation of the presence of God, by the character or engraving of his glorious name upon the plate of gold, which the high priest was to wear, that he might bear iniquities; the apostle lets the Hebrews know, that in Christ the Son is the real accomplishment of what was typified thereby, the Father having actually communicated unto him his nature denoted by that name, whereby he was able really to bear our iniquities, and most gloriously represent the person of his Father unto us.

And this, with submission to better judgments, do I conceive to be the design of the apostle, in this his description of the person of Jesus Christ. It pleased the Holy Ghost herein to use these terms and expressions, to remind the Hebrews how they were of old instructed, though obscurely, in the things now actually exhibited to them; and that nothing was now preached or declared, but what in their typical institutions they had before given their assent to.

We have been somewhat long in our explication of this description of the person of the Son of God, yet, as we suppose, not any longer than the nature of the things treated of, and the manner of their expression, necessarily required us to be. We shall therefore here stay a while, before we proceed to the ensuing words of this verse, and take some observation from what hath been spoken for our direction and refreshment in our passage.

*Observ.* 1. All the glorious perfections of the nature of God, do belong to and dwell in the person of the Son. Were it not so, he could not gloriously represent to us the person of the Father, nor by the contemplation of him, could we be led to an acquaintance with the person of the Father. This the apostle here teacheth us, as in the explication of the words we have manifested. Now because the confirmation of this allusion, depends on the proofs and testimonies given of and to the divine nature of Christ, which I have elsewhere largely insisted on, and vindicated from exceptions, I shall not here re-assume that task, especially considering that the same truth will again occur to us.

*Observ.* 2. The whole manifestation of the nature of God to us, and all communications of grace, are immediately by and through the person of the Son. He represents him to us, and through him, is every thing that is communicated to us from the fulness of the Deity conveyed.

There are sundry signal instances wherein God reveals himself, and communicates from his own infinite fulness to his creatures, and in all of them he doth it immediately by the Son. 1. In the creation of all things. 2. In the providential rule and disposal of them. 3. In the revelation of his will, and institution of ordinances. 4. In the communication of his Spirit and grace. In none of which is the person of the Father any otherwise immediately represented to us, than in and by the person of the Son.

1. In the creation of all things, God both gave them their being, and



imparted to them of his goodness, and manifested his nature to those that were capable of a holy apprehension of it. Now all this God did immediately by the Son, not as a subordinate instrument, but as the principal efficient, being his own power and wisdom. This we have manifested in our explication of the last words of the verse foregoing. In express testimony hereunto, see John i. 3; Col. i. 16; 1 Cor. viii. 6. The Son, as the power and wisdom of the Father, "made all things," so that in that work, the glory of the Father shines forth in him, and no otherwise. By him was there a communication of being, goodness, and existence to the creation.

2. In the providential rule and disposal of all things created, God farther manifests himself to his creatures, and farther communicates of his goodness to them. That this also is done in and by the Son, we shall farther evidence in the explication of the next words of this verse.

3. The matter is yet more plain, as to the revelation of his will, and the institution of ordinances from first to last. It is granted that after the entrance of sin, God doth not graciously reveal, nor communicate himself to any of his creatures, but by his Son. This might fully be manifested by a consideration of the first promise, the foundation of future revelations and institutions, with an induction of all ensuing instances. But whereas all revelations and institutions springing from the first promise, are completed and finished in the gospel, it may suffice to show that what we assert is true, with peculiar reference thereunto. The testimonies given to it are innumerable. This is the substance and end of the gospel, to reveal the Father by and in the Son to us, to declare that through him alone we can be made partakers of his grace and goodness, and that no other way we can have neither acquaintance or communion with him; see John i. 18. The whole end of the gospel is to give us the "knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6, that is, the glory of the invisible God, whom none hath seen at any time, 1 Tim. vi. 16; 1. John iv. 12, that is, to be communicated to us. But how is this to be done? absolutely and immediately as it is the glory of the Father? No, but as it "shines forth in the face of Jesus Christ," or as it is in his person manifested and represented to us; for he is, as the same apostle says in the same place, ver. 4, "the image of God." And herein also, as to the communication of grace and the Spirit, the Scripture is express, and believers are daily instructed in it, see Col. i. 17; John i. 16, especially 1 John v. 11, 14. Now the grounds of this order of things lies,

1. In the essential inbeing of the Father and the Son. This our Saviour expresseth, John x. 38, "The Father is in me, and I in him;" the same essential properties and nature being in each of the persons, by virtue thereof their persons also are said to be in each other. The person of the Son is in the person of the Father, not as such, not in or by its own personality, but by union of its nature and essential properties, which are not alike, as the persons are, but the same in the one and the other. And this inbeing of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in him, our Saviour affirms to be manifested by the works that he



wrought, being wrought by the power of the Father, yet as in him, and not as in the Father immediately. See to the same purpose John xiv. 10, 11, and xvii. 21.

2. The Father being thus in the Son, and the Son in the Father, whereby all the glorious properties of the one, do shine forth in the other, the order and economy of the blessed Trinity in subsistence and operation, requires that the manifestation and communication of the Father to us, be through and by the Son. For as the Father is the original and fountain of the whole Trinity as to subsistence, so as to operation he works not but by the Son, who having the divine nature communicated to him by eternal generation, is to communicate the effects of the divine power, wisdom, and goodness by temporary operation. And thus he becomes the brightness of his Father's glory, and the "express image of his person," namely, by the receiving his glorious nature from him, the whole and all of it, and expressing him in his works of nature and grace to his creatures.

3. Because in the dispensation and counsel of grace, God hath determined, that all communication of himself to us, shall be by the Son as incarnate. This the whole gospel is given to testify. So that this truth hath its foundation in the very subsistence of the persons of the Deity, is confirmed by the order and operation, and voluntary disposition in the covenant of grace.

And this discovers to us, first, the necessity of coming to God by Christ. God in himself is said to be in "thick darkness," as also to "dwell in light," whereunto no creature can approach; which expressions, though seemingly contrary, yet teach us the same thing, namely, the infinite distance of the divine nature from our apprehensions and conceptions, "no man having seen God at any time." But this God, invisible, eternal, incomprehensibly glorious, hath implanted sundry characters of his excellencies, and left footsteps of his blessed properties on the things that he hath made, that by the consideration and contemplation of them, we might come to some such acquaintance with him, as might encourage us to fear and serve him, and to make him our utmost end. But these expressions of God in all other things, besides his Son Jesus Christ, are all of them partial, revealing only something of him, not all that is necessary to be known, that we may live to him here, and enjoy him hereafter; they are also obscure, not leading us to any perfect, stable knowledge of him. And hence it is, that those who have attempted to come to God by the light of that manifestation which he hath made of himself, any other way than in and by Christ Jesus, have all failed and come short of his glory. But now the Lord Christ being the "brightness of his glory," in whom his glory shines to us out of the immense darkness in which his nature is enwrapped, and beams out of that inaccessible light which he inhabits, and being the "express image of his person," representing all the perfections of his person, fully and clearly to us; in him alone can we attain a saving acquaintance with him. On this account he tells Philip, John xiv. 9, "He that hath seen me, he hath seen the Father," the reason of which assertion taken from the mutual inbeing of Father and Son, and his expression of his mind and glory, he

asserts in the next verses. He then is the only way and means of coming to the knowledge and enjoyment of God, because in and by him alone, is he fully and perfectly expressed to us. And therefore, this, secondly, is our great guide and direction in all our endeavours after an acceptable access to him. Would we come to that acquaintance with the nature, properties, and excellencies of the Father, which poor, weak, finite creatures are capable of attaining in this world, and which is sufficient that we may love him, fear him, serve him, and come to the enjoyment of him? would we know his love and grace? would we admire his wisdom and holiness? let us labour to come to an intimate and near acquaintance with his Son Jesus Christ, in whom all these things dwell in their fulness, and by whom they are exhibited, revealed, unfolded to us. Seek the Father in the Son, out of whom not one property of the divine nature can be savingly apprehended, or rightly understood, and in whom they are all exposed to our faith and spiritual contemplation. This is our wisdom, to abide in Christ, to abide with him, to learn him; and in him we shall learn, see, and know the Father also.

Φερων τε τα παντα τω ρηματι της δυναμεως αυτου. To the description of the person, the apostle returns to an assertion of the power of Christ the Son of God, and therein makes his transition from the kingly and prophetic, to his sacerdotal office, on all which he intends afterwards to enlarge his discourse.

He showed before, that by him “the worlds were created,” whereunto as a farther evidence of his glorious power, and of his continuance to act suitably to that beginning of his exercise of it, he adds, that he also abides to uphold, or rule and dispose of all things so made by him.

For the explication of these words, two things are to be inquired after. First, How, or what sense Christ is said to “uphold or rule all things.” Secondly, How he doth it by the word of his power.”

Φερων is taken by expositors in a double sense, and accordingly variously rendered in translations. Some render it by upholding, supporting, bearing, carrying. And these suppose it to express that infinite divine power, which is exerted in the conservation of the creation, keeping it from sinking into its original of confusion and nothing. Hereof our Saviour saith, “My Father worketh hitherto, *εως αρτι*, or *yet*, “and I work,” that is, in the providential sustentation of all things made at the beginning. And this, saith Chrysostome on this place, is a greater work than that of the creation. By the former, all things were brought forth from nothing, by the latter are they preserved from that return to nothing, which their own nature, not capable of existence without dependence on their first cause, and their perpetual conflict by contrariety of qualities, would precipitate them into.

2. Some take the word to express his ruling, governing, and disposing of all things by him made, and (which is supposed) sustained; and so it may denote the putting forth of that power over all things which is given to the Son as Mediator, or else that providential rule over all, which he hath with his Father, which seems rather to be in-

tended, because of the way expressed whereby he exerciseth this rule, namely, by the “word of his power.”

The use of the word *φέρω*, is not so obvious in this latter sense, as it is in the former. As in the proverb, *εἰ δυνάμει τὴν αἰγὰ φέρειν, ἐπιθετε μοι τὸν βόυν*. But I see no reason why we should suppose an inconsistency in these senses, and not rather conclude that they are both of them implied. For as absolutely it is the same divine power and providence which is exercised in the upholding, and the ruling or disposing of all things, so all rule and government is a matter of weight and burden, and he who rules or governs others, is said to bear or carry them. So Moses expresseth his rule of the people in the wilderness, Num. xi. 11, 12, “Thou hast put,” saith he, “נשא the weight or burden of this people upon me, and thou hast said, שאתר, bear or carry them in thy bosom.” And hence from נשא, ‘to bear or carry,’ is נשיא, ‘a prince or ruler, that is, one that carries and bears the burden of the people, that upholds and rules them. To bear, then, or uphold, and to rule and dispose, may be both well intended in this word, as they are both expressed in that prophecy of Christ, Isa. ix. 6, “The rule or government shall be on his shoulder,” that together with his power and rule he may sustain and bear the weight of his people. Only whereas this is done amongst men with much labour and travail, he doth it by an inexpressible facility, by the “word of his power.” And this is safe, to take the expression in its most comprehensive sense.

But whereas the phrase of speech itself is no where else used in the New Testament, nor is *φέρω* applied to any such purpose elsewhere, (though once *φερομενος* be taken for *actus* or *agitatus*, 1 Pet. i,) we may inquire what word it was among the Hebrews that the apostle intended to express, whereby they had formerly been instructed in the same matter.

1. It may be, he intended מכלכל, a participle from כולל, to *sustain*, to *bear*, to *endure*; as Mal. iii. 2, it signifies also to feed, nourish and cherish; 1 Kings iv. 7; Ruth iv. 15; Zech. xi. 16, *φέρων τε πάντα*, that is, מכלכל כל, *sustinens, nutriens omnia*, ‘sustaining and cherishing all things.’ But this word hath no respect unto rule or disposal. And in this sense, as the work of creation is eminently ascribed unto the Father, who is said to “make all things by the Son,” so that of the preservation and cherishing of all things is here peculiarly assigned unto the Son. And this is not unsuitable unto the analogy of faith. For it was the power of God that was eminently exalted, and is conspicuously seen in the work of creation, as the apostle declares, Rom. i. 20, although that power was accompanied also with infinite wisdom; and it is the wisdom of God that is most eminently manifested in the preservation of all things, though that wisdom be also exercised in power infinite. At least in the contemplation of the works of the creation, we are led by the wonder of the infinite power whereby they were wrought, to the consideration of the wisdom that accompanied it; and that which in the works of providence first presents itself unto our minds, is the infinite wisdom whereby all things are disposed; which leads us also to the admira-

tion of the power expressed in them. Now it is usual with the Scripture to assign the things wherein power is most eminent, unto the Father, as those wherein wisdom is most conspicuously exalted, unto the Son, who is the eternal wisdom of the Father. And this sense is not unsuitable unto the text.

2. נָשִׂיא is another word that may be intended, and this denotes a bearing like a prince in government, as נָשִׂיא. And in this sense the word ought to be referred unto Christ as mediator, entrusted with power and rule by the Father. But neither the words nor context will well bear this sense. For 1. It is mentioned before, where it is said that he is "appointed heir of all;" and it is not likely that the apostle in this summary description of the person and offices of the Messiah, would twice mention the same thing under different expressions. 2. The particle τε added unto φερων, refers us to the beginning of this verse, ὅς ων—φερων τε—"who being the brightness of glory, and bearing all things." So that these things must necessarily be spoken of him in the same respect; and the former, as we have showed, relateth unto his person in respect of his divine nature, so therefore doth the latter, and his acting therein.

3. There is yet another word, which I suppose the apostle had a principal aim to express, and this is רָכַב. רָכַב is properly to *ride*, to be *carried*, to be *carried over*; and it is frequently, though not metaphorically, used concerning God himself; as Deut. xxxiii. 26, רָכַב עָמִים 'riding on the heavens;' on the *clouds*, Isa. xix. 1; on the *wings of the wind*, Ps. xviii. and lxviii. 5, whereby his majesty, authority, and government is shadowed out unto us. And hence also the word signifies to *administer*, *dispose*, *govern*, or *preside* in and over things.

Thus in Ezekiel's vision of the glorious providence of God in ruling the whole creation, it is represented by a chariot (מַרְכָּבָה) of (כְּרוּבִים) *cherubims*. The cherubim with their wheels made that chariot, over which sat the God of Israel, in his disposing and ruling of all things. And the words themselves have that affinity in signification which is frequently seen among the Hebrew roots, differing only in the transposition of one letter. And the description of him who sat above the cherubims of providence, Ezek. i. 10, is the same with that of John, Rev. iv. 7, 8. Now God in that vision is placed רָכַב, as governing, ruling, influencing all second causes, as to the orderly production of their effects, by the communication of life, motion, and guidance unto them. And though this divine administration of all things be dreadful to consider, the "rings of the wheels" being high and dreadful, chap. i. 18, and the living creature ran as the "appearance of a flash of lightning, ver. 14, as also full of entanglements, there being to appearance cross wheels, or "wheels within wheels," ver. 16, which are all said to be "rolling," chap. x. 11, yet it is carried on in an unspeakable order, without the least confusion, chap. i. 17, and with a marvellous facility, by a mere intimation of the mind and will of him who guides the whole; and that because there was a living powerful spirit, passing through all, both living creatures and wheels that moved them speedily, regularly, and effectually, as he



pleased; that is, the energetical power of divine providence, animating, guiding, and disposing the whole, as seemed good unto him.

Now all this is excellently expressed by the apostle in these words. For as that power which is in him that sits over the chariot, influencing and giving existence, life, motion, and guidance unto all things, is clearly expressed by *φέρων τα πάντα*, ‘upholding and disposing of all things,’ that is, *על-כל רכב*; so is the exercise and issuing of it forth by the spirit of life in all things to guide them certainly and regularly, by those words, *τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως*, ‘by the word of his power;’ both denoting the unspeakable facility of omnipotent power in its operations. And Kimchi on chap. vi. of Isaiah affirms, that the vision which the prophet had was of the glory of God, that glory which Ezekiel saw in the likeness of a man; which we find applied unto the Lord Christ, John xii. 41.

I shall only add, that in Ezekiel’s vision, the voice of the Quadriga of the living creatures in its motion, was as the voice *וְכָל* omnipotentis, præpotentis, sibi sufficientis, Ezek. i. 24, of the Almighty, the powerful, the all, or self-sufficient, which is also fully expressed in this of the apostle, bearing, upholding, disposing of all things.

Our next inquiry is after the manner whereby the Son thus upholdeth and disposeth of all things. He doth it by the word of his power. *Τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως*. ‘*Ῥημα* in the New Testament is used in the same latitude and extent with *דבר* in the Old. Sometimes it denotes any matter or thing, be it good or evil; as Matt. v. 11, 12, 36, xviii. 16; Mark ix. 22; Luke i. 37, ii. 15, xviii. 34. A word of blessing by providence, Matt. iv. 4, any word spoken, Matt. xxvi. 75, xxvii. 14; Luke ix. 45, of promise, Luke i. 38. And *ῥήματα βλασφημια*, ‘blasphemous words, Acts vi. 11. The word of God, the word of prophecy, Luke iii. 2; Rom. x. 17; Eph. v. 12, vi. 17; 1 Pet. i. 25. An authoritative command, Luke v. 5. In this epistle it is used variously; in this only it differs from *λογος*, that it never denotes the eternal or essential word of God. That which in this place is denoted by it, with its adjunct of *τῆς δυνάμεως*, is the *λογος ενδιαθετος*, or the divine power, executing the counsels of the will and wisdom of God; or the efficacy of God’s providence, whereby he worketh and effecteth all things according to the counsel of his will. See Gen. i. 3; Ps. cxlvii. 15, 18, cxlviii. 8; Isa. xxx. 31. And this is indifferently expressed by *ῥημα* and *λογος*. Hence the same thing which Paul expresseth by the one of them, Heb. xi. 3, *πιστει νοουμεν καταρτισθαι τους αιωνας ῥήματι Θεου*; ‘by faith we know that the heavens were made by the Word of God;’ Peter expresses by the other, 2 Pet. iii. 5, *συνεστωσαι τῷ του Θεου λογῳ*.

Now this efficacy of divine providence, is called the Word of God; to intimate, that as rulers accomplish their will by a word of command, in and about things subject to their pleasure, Matt. viii. 9, so doth God accomplish his whole mind and will in all things by his power. And therefore *τῆς δυνάμεως*, ‘of his power,’ is here added by way of difference and distinction, to show what word it is that the apostle intends. It is not *λογος ουσιωδης*, the *essential* word of God,

who is the person spoken of; nor λογος προφορικος, the word spoken by him in the revelation of himself, his mind and will; but a word that is effectual and operative, namely, the putting forth of his divine power with ease and authority, accomplishing his will and purpose in and by all things.

This in the vision of Ezekiel is the communication of a spirit of life to the cherubs and wheels, to act and move them as seems good to him by whom they are guided. For as it is very probable, that the apostle in these words, setting forth the divine power of the Son in ruling and governing the whole creation, did intend to remind the Hebrews, that the Lord Christ the Son is he who was represented in the form of a man unto Ezekiel, ruling and disposing of all things, and the עזר the *almighty*, whose voice was heard amongst the wheels; so it is most certain that the same thing is intended in both places. And this expression of upholding or disposing of all things "by the word of his power," doth fully declare this glorious providence emblematically expressed in that vision. The Son being over all things made by himself, as on a throne over the cherubims and wheels, influenceth the whole creation with his power, communicating unto it respectively subsistence, life, and motion, acting, ruling, and disposing of all, according to the counsel of his own will.

This then is that which the apostle assigns unto the Son, thereby to set out the dignity of his person, that the Hebrews might well consider all things, before they deserted his doctrine. He is one that is partaker essentially of the nature of God, being the brightness of glory, and the express image of his Father's person, who exerciseth and manifesteth his divine power, both in the creation of all things, as also in the support, rule, and disposal of all, after they are made by him. And hence will follow, both his power and authority to change the Mosaic institutions, and also his truth and faithfulness in the revelation of the will of God by him made, which it was their duty to embrace and adhere unto.

The several passages of this verse are all of them conjoined by the apostle, and used unto the same general end and purpose; but they are of such distinct senses and importance, considered absolutely and apart, that we shall in our passage select the observations which they singly afford us.

And from these last words we may learn,

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, hath the weight of the whole creation upon his hand, and disposeth of it by his power and wisdom.

2. Such is the nature and condition of the universe, that it could not subsist a moment, nor could any thing in it act regularly unto its appointed end, without the continual support, guidance, influence, and disposal of the Son of God.

We may briefly consider the sum of both these jointly, to manifest the power and care of Christ over us, as also the weak dependent condition of the whole creation in and by itself. The things of this creation can no more support, act, and dispose themselves, than they could at first make themselves out of nothing. The greatest cannot

conserve itself by its power, or greatness, or order; nor the least by its distance from opposition. Were there not a mighty hand under every one of them, they would all sink into confusion and nothing; did not an effectual power influence them, they would become a slothful heap. It is true, God hath in the creation of all things implanted in every particle of the creation, a special natural inclination and disposition, according unto which it is ready to act, move, or work regularly; but he hath not placed this nature and power in them absolutely, and independently of his own power and operation. The sun is endued with a nature to produce all the glorious effects of light and heat, that we behold or conceive; the fire to burn, the wind to blow, and all creatures also in the like manner; yet neither could sun, or fire, or wind preserve themselves in their being, or retain the principles of their operations, did not the Son of God, by a continual emanation of his eternal power, uphold and preserve them; nor could they produce any one effect by all their actings, did he not work in them, and by them. And so is it with the sons of men, with all agents whatever, whether natural and necessary, or free, and proceeding in their operations by election and choice. Hence Paul tells us, that in God "we live, and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. He had before asserted, that he had of "one blood made all nations," ver. 26; that is, all men of one, whom he first created. And that we may know that he hath not left us to stand by ourselves on that first foundation, or that we have no power or ability, being made, to do or act any thing without him, he adds, that in him, that is, in his power, care, providence, and by virtue of his effectual influence, our lives are supported and continued, that we are acted, moved, and enabled thereby to do all we do, be it never so small, wherein there is any effect of life or motion. So Daniel tells Belshazzar, that "his breath and all his ways were in the hand of God," Dan. v. 23. His breath in the support and continuance of his being; and his ways in his effectual guidance and disposal of them. Peter speaks to the same purpose in general, concerning the fabric of the heavens, sea, and earth, 2 Pet. iii. 5.

Now what is thus spoken of God in general, is by Paul particularly applied unto the Son, Col. i. 16, 17, "All things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." He did not only make all things, as we have declared, and that for himself and his own glory, but also he continues the head of them; so that by him, and by his power, they consist, are preserved in their present state and condition, kept from dissolution, in their singular existence, and in a consistency among themselves.

And the reason hereof is taken, first, from the limited, finite, dependent condition of the creation, and the absolute necessity that it should be so. It is utterly impossible and repugnant to the very nature and being of God, that he should make, create, or produce any thing without himself, that should have either a self-subsistence, or a self-sufficiency, or be independent on himself. All these are natural and essential properties of the divine nature; where they are, there is God, so that no creature can be made partaker of them:

where we name a creature, we name that which hath a derived and dependent being. And that which cannot subsist in and by itself, cannot thus act.

Secondly, The energetic efficacy of God's providence, joined with his infinite wisdom in caring for the works of his own hands, the product of his power, requires that it should be so. He worketh yet. He did not create the world, to leave it to an uncertain event; to stand by, and to see what would become of it, to see whether it would return to its primitive nothing, of which cask it always smells strongly; or how it would be tossed up and down by the adverse and contrary qualities, which were implanted in the several parts of it. But the same power and wisdom that produced it, doth still accompany it, powerfully piercing through every parcel and particle of it. To fancy a providence in God, without a continual energetical operation, or a wisdom without a constant care, inspection, and oversight of the works of his hands, is not to have apprehensions of the living God, but to erect an idol in our own imaginations.

Thirdly, This work is peculiarly assigned unto the Son, not only as he is the eternal power and wisdom of God, but also because by his interposition, as undertaking the work of mediation, he reprieved the world from an immediate dissolution upon the first entrance of sin and disorder; that it might continue, as it were, the great stage for the mighty works of God's grace, wisdom, and love to be wrought in. Hence the care of the continuance of the creation and the disposal of it, is delegated unto him, as he that hath undertaken to bring forth and consummate the glory of God in it, notwithstanding the great breach made upon it by the sin of angels and men. This is the substance of the apostle's discourse, Col. i. 15—20. Having asserted him to be the image of God, in the sense before opened and declared, and to have made all things, he affirms, that all things have also their present consistency in him, and by his power; and must have so, until the work of reconciliation of all things unto God being accomplished, the glory of God may be fully retrieved and established for ever.

1. We may see from hence the vanity of expecting any thing from the creatures, but only what the Lord Christ is pleased to communicate unto us by them. They that cannot sustain, move, or actuate themselves by any power, virtue, or strength of their own are very unlikely by and of themselves to afford any real assistance, relief, or help unto others. They all abide and exist severally, and consist together, in their order, and operation, by the word of the power of Christ; and what he will communicate by them, that they will yield and afford, and nothing else. In themselves they are broken cisterns that will hold no water; what he drops into them may be derived unto us and no more. They who rest upon them, or rest in them, without the consideration of their constant dependance on Christ, will find at length all their hopes disappointed, and all their enjoyments vanish into nothing.

2. Learn hence also the full, absolute, plenary self-sufficiency and sovereignty of the Son our Saviour. We showed before the universality of his kingdom and moral rule over the whole creation; but this is not all. A king hath a moral rule over his subjects in his kingdom;



but he doth not really and physically give them their being and existence; he doth not uphold and actuate them at his pleasure; but every one of them doth stand therein upon the same, or an equal bottom with himself. He can indeed by the permission of God, take away the lives of any of them, and so put an end to all their actings and operations in this world; but he cannot give them life, or continue their lives at his pleasure one moment, or make them so much as to move a finger. But with the Lord Christ it is otherwise; he not only rules over the whole creation, disposing of it according to the rule and law of his own counsel and pleasure; but also they all have their beings, natures, inclinations, and lives from him; by his power are they continued unto them, and all their actions are influenced thereby. And this, as it argues an all-sufficiency in himself, so an absolute sovereignty over all other things. And this should teach us our constant dependance on him, and our universal subjection unto him.

3. And this abundantly discovers the vanity and folly of them, who make use of the creation in an opposition unto the Lord Christ, and his peculiar interest in this world. His own power is the very ground that they stand upon in their opposition unto him; and all things which they use against him, consist in him. They hold their lives absolutely at the pleasure of him whom they oppose; and they act against him, without whose continual support and influence, they could neither live nor act one moment, which is the greatest madness, and most contemptible folly imaginable.

We now proceed with our apostle in his description of the person and offices of the Messiah.

This beginning of the Epistle, as hath been declared, contains a summary proposition of those things, which the apostle intends severally to insist upon throughout the whole. And these all relate to the person and offices of the Messiah, the principal subjects of this Epistle. Having therefore first declared him to be the great prophet of the New Testament; and secondly, the Lord, ruler and governor of all things, as also manifested the equity of the grant of that universal sovereignty unto him, from the excellency of his person on the account of his divine nature, and the operations thereof in the works of creation and providence; he proceeds to finish and close his general proposition of the argument of the epistle, by a brief intimation of his priestly office, with what he did therein, and what ensued thereon, in the remaining words of this verse.

And this order and method of the apostle, is required by the nature of the things themselves whereof he treats. For the work of purging sins, which as a priest he assigns unto him, cannot well be declared, without a previous manifestation of his divine nature. For it is *opus, Θεανδρικον*, a work of him who is God and man. For as God takes it to be his property to blot out our sins, so he could not have done it by himself, had he not been man also: and this is asserted in the next words.

Δι' ἑαυτου καθαρισμον ποιησαμενος των αμαρτιων ημων.—“Having by himself purged our sins.” The vulgar Latin renders these words ‘*pur-gationem peccatorum faciens*’; not without sundry mistakes. For, first,

those word δι' ἑαυτου, *by himself*, and ἡμων, *our*, are omitted ; and yet the emphasis and proper sense of the whole depends upon them. Secondly, ποιησαμενος, *having made*, is rendered in the present tense, *making*, which seems to direct the sense of the words to another thing and action of Christ, than what is here intended. And therefore the expositors of the Roman church, as Thomas, Lyranus, Cajetan, Estius, Ribera, A Lapide, all desert their own text, and expound the words according to the original. The ancients also, as Chrysostome, Theophylact and Œcumenius, lay the chief weight of their whole exposition of this place, on the words omitted in that translation.

The doctrine of purging our sins by Christ, is deep and large, extending itself unto many weighty heads of the gospel ; but we shall follow our apostle, and in this place pass it over briefly and in general, because the consideration of it will directly occur unto us in our progress.

Two things the apostle here expresseth concerning the Messiah ; and one, which is the foundation of both the other, he implieth or supposeth. First, he expresseth what he did ; he purged our sins. Secondly, how he did it, he did it by himself. That which he supposeth as the foundation of both these is, that he was the great high priest of the church ; they with whom he dwelt knowing full well, that this matter of purging sins, belonged only unto the priest.

Here then the apostle tacitly enters upon a comparison of Christ with Aaron, the high priest, as he had done before with all the propheticall revealers of the will of God, and as he named none of them in particular, no more doth he here name Aaron ; but afterwards when he comes more largely to insist on the same matter again, he expressly makes mention of his name as also of that of Moses.

And in both the things here ascribed to him as the great high priest of his church doth he prefer him above Aaron. First, in that he “purged our sins,” that is, really and effectually before God, and in the conscience of the sinner, and that for ever. Whereas the purgation of sins about which Aaron was employed, was in itself but typical, external, and representative of that which was true and real, both of which the apostle proves at large afterwards. Secondly, in that he did it by himself, or by the offering of himself, whereas whatever Aaron did of this kind, he did it by the “offering of the blood of bulls and goats,” as shall be declared.

And hence appears also the vanity of the gloss of a learned man on these words ; ‘Postquam,’ saith he, ‘morte sua causam dedisset ejus fidei per quam a peccatis purgamur, quod nec Moses fecerat, nec prophetæ’. For as we shall see that Christ’s purging of our sins, doth not consist in giving a ground and cause for faith, whereby we purge ourselves, so the apostle is not comparing the Lord Christ in these words with Moses and the prophets, who had nothing to do in the work of purging sin, but with Aaron, who by office was designed thereunto.

Let us then see what it is that is here ascribed to the Lord Christ : καθαρισμον ποιησαμενος. Καθαριζω, doth most frequently denote ‘real actual purification,’ either of outward defilements, by healing and cleansing, as Mark i. 40, vii. 19 ; Luke v. 12, or spiritual defilements of sin, by sanctifying grace, as Act xv. 9 ; 2 Cor. vii. 1 ; Eph. v. 26.

But it is also frequently used in the same sense with *καθαίρω* and *καθαίρομαι*, to 'purge by expiation or atonement,' as Heb. ix. 22, 23. And in the like variety is *καθαρισμος* also used. But *καθαρισμον ποιησαι*, 'to make a purgation,' or purification of our sins, cannot here be taken in the first sense for real and inherent sanctification. First, Because it is spoken of as a thing already past and perfected, "having purged our sins," when purification by sanctification is begun only in some, not all at any time; and is perfected in none at all in this world. Secondly, because he did it *δι' ἑαυτου*, 'by himself alone,' without the use or application of any other medium to them that are purged. Now real inherent sanctification is with "washing of water by the word," Eph v. 26, or by "regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. iii. 5. And the gloss above mentioned, that Christ should purge us from our sins in his death, by occasioning that faith whereby we are cleansed, is excluded, as was in part showed before, by the context. That is assigned to the death of Christ, as done really and effectually thereby, which was done typically of old in the legal sacrifices of the priests, as is evident from the antithesis couched in that expression "by himself." But this was not the way whereby sins were of old purged by sacrifices, namely by the begetting a persuasion in the minds of men that should be useful for that purpose, and therefore no such thing is here intended.

*Καθαρισμος* then, is such a purging as is made by expiation, lustration, and atonement. That is כפר or כפרה, *ἱλασμος* propitiation; atonement, propitiation. So is that word rendered by the LXX. Exod. xxix. 36. *τη ἡμέρα του καθαρισμου*, עֲלֵה־כִּפּוּרִים, the day of atonement, or expiation. They do indeed generally render כפר, by *ἱλασकोμαι*, and *ἐξιλασकोμαι*, 'to propitiate,' 'to appease,' to atone; but they do it also by *καθαρίζω*, to purge, as Exod. xxix. 37, and chap. xxx. 10. So also in other authors, *καθαρισμος* is used for *καθαρμα*, *περικαθαρμα*, that is expiatio, expiamentum, piaculum; expiation, atonement, diversion of guilt. So Lucian, *ρίψομεν μεν αυτον του κρημνου καθαρισμον του στρατου εσομενον*, 'We cast him down headlong for an expiation of the army,' or as one that by his death should expiate, bear, take away the guilt of the army. And such lustrations were common among the heathen, when persons devoted themselves to destruction, or were devoted by others, to purge, lustrate, bear the guilt of any, that they might go free; such was Codrus, Menœceus and the Decii, whose stories are known. This purging then of our sins, which the apostle declareth to have been effected before Christ ascended and sat down at the right hand of God, consisteth not in the actual sanctification and purification of believers by the Spirit, in the application of the blood of Christ to them, but in the atonement made by him in the sacrifice of himself, that our sins should not be imputed to us. And therefore is he said to purge our sins, and not to purge us from our sins. And wherever sins not sinners, are made the objects of any mediatory acts of Christ, that act immediately respecteth God and not the sinner, and intends the removal of sin, so as that it should not be imputed. So chap. ii. 17, of this Epistle, "he is a merciful high priest," *εις το ἱλασκεσθαι τας ἁμαρτίας του λαου*, "to reconcile the sins

of the people," that is, *ἱλασκεσθαι τον Θεον περι των ἁμαρτιων*, "to make atonement or reconciliation with God for the sins of the people." And again, He underwent death, *εις απολυτρωσιν των επι τη πρωτη διαθηκη παραβασεων*, "for the redemption of transgressions under the first covenant," that is, to pay a price for them, that transgressors might be set free from the sentence of the law. So that *καθαρισμον ποιησαμενος των ἁμαρτιων ἡμων*, is as much as "having made atonement for our sins."

And this the apostle further declareth by manifesting the way whereby he did it; that is *δι' εαυτου* "by himself," that is, by the sacrifice and offering of himself, as chap. ix. 14; Eph. v. 2. The high priest of old made atonement, and typically purged the sins of the people, by sacrificing of beasts according to the appointment of the law, Lev. xvi. This our high priest did by the sacrifice of himself, Isa. liii. 10; Heb. ix. 12. Of the nature of propitiatory or expiatory sacrifices, we must treat at large afterwards. We keep ourselves now to the apostle's general proposition, expressing briefly the sacerdotal office of Christ, and the excellency of it, in that he really purged our sins, and that by the sacrifice of himself. And this was in and by his death on the cross, with his antecedent preparatory sufferings. Some distinguish between his death and the oblation of himself. This they say he performed in heaven, when as the high priest of his church, he entered into the holiest not made with hands, whereunto his death was but a preparation. For the slaying of the beast, they say, was not the sacrifice, but the offering of its blood on the altar, and the carrying of it into the holy place. But this utterly overthrows the whole sacrifice of Christ, which indeed is the thing by them aimed at. It is true the slaying of the beast was not the whole sacrifice, but only an essential part of it, as was also the offering of its blood, and the sprinkling of it in the holy place, in the anniversary sacrifice of atonement, but not in any other. And the reason why the whole sacrifice could not consist in any one action, arose merely from the imperfection of the things and persons employed in that work. The priest was one thing, the beast to be sacrificed another, the altar another, the fire and the altar another, the incense added another, each of them limited and designed to its peculiar end, so that the atonement could not be made by any one of them, nor the sacrifice consist in them. But now in this sacrifice of Christ all these meet in one, because of his perfection. He himself was both priest, sacrifice, altar, and incense, as we shall see in our progress; and he perfected his whole sacrifice at once, in and by his death and blood-shedding, as the apostle evidently declares, chap. ix. 12, 14.

Thus by himself did Christ purge our sins, making an atonement for them by the sacrifice of himself in his death, that they should never be imputed to them that believe.

And this part of this verse will afford us also this distinct observation:—So great was the work of freeing us from sin, that it could no otherwise be effected but by the sacrifice of the Son of God himself.

Our apostle makes it his design in several places to evince that



none of those things from whence mankind usually did, or might with any hopes or probabilities expect relief in this case, would yield them any at all.

The best that the Gentiles could attain, all that they had to trust to, was but the improvement of natural light and reason, with an attendance to those seeds and principles of good and evil, which are yet left in the depraved nature of man. Under the conduct and in obedience to these, they sought for rest, glory, and immortality. How miserably they were disappointed in their aims and expectations, and what a woful issue all their endeavours had, the apostle declares and proves at large, Rom. i. 18, to the end.

The Jews who enjoyed the benefit of divine revelations, having lost for the most part the true spiritual import of them, sought for the same ends by the law, and by their own diligent observance of it. They "rested in the law," Rom. ii. 17, namely, in the hope, that by it they should obtain deliverance from sin, and acceptance with God, and "followed after it," chap. ix. 31, that is to attain righteousness and salvation by it. And this seemed to be a sufficient foundation for them to build on; for having lost the spiritual understanding of the use and end of the law, as renewed to them in the covenant of Horeb, they went back to the primitive use and end of it, on its first giving in innocency, and foolishly thought, as many more yet do, that it would do the same things for sinners, that it would have done for men, if they had not sinned in Adam, that is, have given them acceptance with God here, and eternal life hereafter. Wherefore the apostle in many places takes great pains to undeceive them, to rectify their mistake, and to prove that God had no such design in giving them the law, as that which they would impose upon him.

And first, he asserts and proves in general, that the law would deceive their expectation; and that by the deeds of the law no flesh should be justified, Rom. iii. 20, and that it would not give them life, Gal. iii. 21, or righteousness. And that they might not complain, that then God himself had deceived them in giving a law that would not serve the turn for which it was given; he declares, secondly, that they had mistaken the end for which the law was renewed unto them; which was not that it might give them life or righteousness, but that it might discover sin, exact obedience, and by both drive and compel them to look out after some other thing, that might both save them from their sin, and afford them a righteousness unto salvation. And furthermore, he thirdly, acquaints them whence it was, that the law was become insufficient for these ends, and that was because it was become weak through the flesh, Rom. viii. 3. The law was able to continue our acceptance with God, in that condition wherein at first we were created; but after that man by sin became flesh, or had a principle of enmity against God in him, bringing forth the fruits of sin continually, the law stood aside, as weakened and insufficient to help and save such an one. And these things the apostle expressly and carefully insists upon, in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians.

But, thirdly, Though the law, and an earnest endeavour after the observance of it in general, would not serve to save us from our sins, yet there were especial institutions of the law, that were appointed for

that end and purpose ; as namely, the sacrifices in particular, which were designed to make atonement for the deliverance of sinners, and to procure their reconciliation with God. These the Jews principally rested on, and trusted unto ; and indeed to expect righteousness and justification by the Mosaic sacrifices, as they did, was far more rational, than to expect it by the works of the moral law as some now do, for all good works whatever are required in the law, and so far are works of the law. In the sacrifices, there was a supposition of sin, and an appearance of a compensation to be made, that the sinner might go free ; but in the moral law, there is nothing but absolute, universal, and exact righteousness required or admitted, without the least provision of relief for them who come short therein. But yet our apostle declares, and proves, that neither were these available for the end aimed at, as we shall see at large on the ninth and tenth chapters of this Epistle.

Now within the compass of these three, natural light or reason, with ingrafted principles of good and evil, the moral law, and the sacrifices thereof, do lie and consist, all the hopes and endeavours of sinners after deliverance and acceptance with God. There is nothing that they can do, or put any confidence in, but may be referred unto one of these heads. And if all this fail them, as assuredly they will, which we might prove by reasons and demonstrations innumerable, though at present we content ourselves with the testimonies above reported, it is certain that there is nothing under heaven can yield them in this case the least relief.

Again, This is the only way for that end which is suited to the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is an infinite abyss, into which, as it lies in his own eternal breast, we cannot at all look. We can only adore it, as it breaks forth and discovers itself in the works that outwardly are of him, or in the effects of it. Thus David, in the consideration of the works of God, falls into an admiration of the wisdom whereby they were made, Psal. civ. 24, and Psal. cxxxvi. 5. The wisdom of God opens and manifests itself in its effects ; and thence according unto our measure, do we learn what doth become it, and is suitable to it. But when the Holy Ghost cometh to speak of this work of our redemption by Christ, he doth not only call us to consider singly the wisdom of God, but his various and manifold wisdom, Eph. iii. 10, and affirms that all the treasures of wisdom are hid in it, Col. ii. 3, plainly intimating, that it is a work so suited unto, so answering the infinite wisdom of God in all things throughout, that it could no otherwise have been disposed and effected. And this as well upon the account of the wisdom of God itself absolutely considered, as also as it is that property whereby God designs and effects the glorifying of all other excellencies of his nature, whence it is called various or manifold ; so that we may well conclude, that no other way of deliverance of sinners was suited unto the wisdom of God.

Secondly, This way alone answered the holiness and righteousness of God. He is a holy God, who will not suffer the guilty to go free : he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and his judgment is, that they who commit sin are worthy of death. Sin is contrary to his

nature; and his justice requireth that it go not unpunished. Besides, he is the great and supreme governor of all; and whereas as sin breaketh and dissolveth the dependance of the creature upon him, should he not avenge that defection, his whole rule and government would be disannulled. But now, if this vengeance and punishment should fall on the sinners themselves, they must perish under it eternally; not one of them could escape, or ever be freed or purged from their sins. A commutation then there must be; that the punishment due to sin, which the holiness and righteousness of God exacteth, may be inflicted, and mercy and grace showed unto the sinner. That none was able, fit, or worthy to undergo this penalty, so as to make a compensation for all the sins of all the elect; that none was able to bear it, and break through it, so as that the end of the undertaking might be happy, blessed, and glorious on all hands, but only the Son of God, we shall further manifest in our progress, and it hath been elsewhere declared.

1. And this, first, should teach us to live in a holy admiration of this mighty and wonderful product of the wisdom, righteousness, grace, and goodness of God, which found out, and appointed this way of delivering sinners, and have gloriously accomplished it in the sacrifice of the Son of God himself. The Holy Ghost every-where proposeth this unto us, as a mystery, a great and hidden mystery, which none of the great, or wise, or disputers of the world, ever did or could come to the least acquaintance withal. And three things he asserts concerning it: First, That it is revealed in the gospel, and is thence alone to be learned and attained, whence we are invited again and again to search and inquire diligently into it, to this very end, that we may become wise in the knowledge and acknowledgment of this deep and hidden mystery. Secondly, That we cannot in our own strength, and by our own most diligent endeavours, come to a holy acquaintance with it, notwithstanding that revelation that is made of it, in the letter of the word; unless moreover we receive from God the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, and revelation, opening our eyes, making our minds spiritual, and enabling us to discover these depths of the Holy Ghost in a spiritual manner. Thirdly, That we cannot by these helps attain in this life unto a perfection in the knowledge of this deep and unfathomable mystery, but must still labour to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of it, our thriving in all grace and obedience depending thereon. All these things the Scripture abounds in the repetition of. And besides, it every-where sets forth the blessedness and happiness of them, who by grace obtain a spiritual insight into this mystery, and who thus also find by experience the satisfying excellency of it with the apostle, Phil. iii. 8. All which considerations are powerful motives unto this duty of inquiring into, and admiring this wonderful mystery, wherein we have the angels themselves for our associates and companions.

2. We may also consider the unspeakable love of Christ in this work of delivering us from sin. In this the Scripture also abundantly goeth before us, setting forth, extolling, commending this love of Christ, and calling us to a holy consideration of it. Particularly it

shows it accompanied with all things that may make love expressive and to be admired. For, first, It proposeth the necessity and exigency of the condition wherein the Lord Christ gave us this relief; that was when we were sinners, when we were lost, when we were children of wrath, under the curse, when no eye did pity us, when no hand could relieve us. And if John mourned greatly, when he thought that there was none found worthy in heaven or earth to open his book of visions, and to unloose the seals thereof; how justly might the whole creation mourn and lament, if there had been none found to yield relief, when all were obnoxious to this fatal ruin! And this is an exceeding commendation of the love of Christ, that he set his hand to that work which none could touch, and put his shoulders under that burden which none else could bear, when all lay in a desperate condition. Secondly, The greatness of this deliverance: it is from wrath, and curse, and vengeance eternal; not from a trouble or a danger of a few days' continuance, not from a momentary suffering, but from everlasting wrath, under the curse of God and power of Satan in the execution of it, which necessarily attend sin and sinners. And, thirdly, The way whereby he did it; not by his word whereby he made the world; not by his power whereby he sustains and rules the things that he hath made; not by paying a price of corruptible things; not by revealing a way unto us only, whereby we ourselves might escape that condition wherein we were, as some foolishly imagine, but by the sacrifice of himself, making his soul an offering for sin, and offering up himself unto God through the eternal Spirit, by laying down his life for us; and greater love can no man manifest than by so doing. And, fourthly, The infinite condescension that he used to put himself into that condition, wherein by himself he might purge our sins. For to this purpose, when he was in the form of God, he emptied himself of his glory, made himself of no account, was made flesh, took on him the form of a servant, that he might be obedient unto death, the death of the cross. And, fifthly, The end of his undertaking for us, which was the bringing of us unto God, into his love and favour here, and the eternal enjoyment of him hereafter. All these things, I say, doth the Scripture insist frequently and largely upon, to set forth the excellency of the love of Christ, to render it admirable and amiable unto us. And these things should we lay up in our hearts and continually ponder, that we may give due acceptance and entertainment to this wonderful love of the Son of God.

The apostle having thus asserted in general the sacerdotal office of Christ, and the sacrifice that he offered, with the end of it, because that could not be done without the greatest dejection, humiliation, and abasement of the Son, that we may not conceive that he was left in, or doth yet abide under the same condition, adds the blessed event and consequent of his great work and undertaking.

*Εκαθισεν εν δεξια της μεγαλωσυνης εν υψηλοις*, "He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." These words we have already opened, as to their sense and importance. The design and meaning of the Holy Ghost in them is next to be considered. The



things to be inquired after to this end, are, First, The scope of the apostle in these words. Secondly, The manner of his expressing his intention, and the particulars therein intended. Thirdly, To what he refers in the Mosaic economy, whereby he strengthens the argument which he has in hand.

Two things the apostle in general designs in these words:

First, That the Lord Christ undertaking to purge our sins, did by the one offering of himself perfectly effect it, so discharging the whole work of his priesthood, as to the making atonement for sinners. This the blessed issue of his undertaking doth demonstrate. Immediately upon his work, he entered into the glorious condition here expressed: a signal pledge and evidence that his work was perfected, and that God was fully satisfied, and well pleased with what he had done.

Secondly, The blessed and glorious condition of the Lord Jesus after his humiliation, is expressed in these words. His Spirit did of old signify both his sufferings, and the glory that should follow, 1 Peter i. 11, as himself interpreted the Scriptures unto his disciples, Luke xxiv. 26. And this glory at the close of his work, he requested as due unto him upon compact and promise, John xvii. 5. These are the things in general designed by the apostle in these words.

Secondly, The manner in which he expresses the glory and blessed condition of the Son of God, after his purging our sins, and what is particularly intimated therein, is to be considered. Some mistakes, or groundless curiosities must first be removed, and then the real import of the words declared.

Some contend, that the left hand of old was most honourable; so that as the placing of Christ at the right hand of God denotes his honour and glory, so also it denotes an inferiority to the Father. To this purpose, they produce some sayings out of some ancient writers among the heathen, giving the preference of place or dignity unto the left hand. As these sayings are made use of by the Romanists, to answer an objection of very little moment against Peter's supremacy, taken from some ancient Episcopal seals, wherein the figure of Paul was placed on the right hand of that of Peter. But this conjecture may be easily disproved by testimonies innumerable out of approved authors among the Gentiles. And in Scripture, the right hand doth constantly denote dignity and pre-eminence. The instance of Jacob's blessing Joseph's children, testifies also the constant usage of those ancient times from the intimation of nature itself, Gen. xlviii. 17—19. And the disposal of the sheep and goats at the last day, to the right hand and left, gives the privilege to the former. So Basil, *ἡ δεξία χώρα δηλοῖ τοῦ της ἀξίας ὁμοτιμον*, 'the right hand place denoteth equality of dignity.' And Chrysostome, *εἰ γὰρ ἐλαττωσιν ἠθέλε δηλωσαι οὐκ ἀνείπεν ἐκ δεξιῶν ἀλλ' ἐξ αἰστεριῶν*, 'If he would have signified any lessening or diminution, he would not have said, Sit on my right hand, but on my left.' So that it is honour and glory which is signified by this expression, and that only.

Some, granting the right hand to denote the most honourable place, inquire whether this be spoken in reference unto God the Father him-

self, or unto others that do or may be supposed to sit on his left hand. For the first sense contends Maldonate on Matt. xvi. 19. 'For,' saith he, 'though it be impossible that the Son in absolute or essential glory should be preferred before or above the Father, yet as to his immediate rule over the church, he may more show forth his power and glory in the rule and government of all things.' Others contend, that it is spoken with respect unto sitting at the left hand, above which this is preferred. But this whole inquiry is both curious and groundless. For, first, though sitting at the right hand be a token of great glory and dignity, yet as the apostle speaks in this very case, it is manifest that He is excepted who put all things under him, 1 Cor. xv. 27. He who thus exalted him over all at his right hand, is excepted. And secondly, There is here no comparison at all, or regard to sitting on the left hand, nor is there any such comparison in other passages where that expression is used, but only the glory of Christ the Mediator is absolutely declared.

And this may be cleared by other instances. Solomon placed his mother, when she came to him, on his right hand, a token of exceeding honour; but he himself sat down on the throne of the kingdom, 1 Kings ii. 19. The church is said to be at the right hand of Christ, Ps. xlv. 9, which, as it prefers her above all others, so it takes not off her subjection unto Christ. Nero in Suetonius, when Tiridates king of Armenia came to Rome, placed him for his honour on his right hand, himself sitting on the throne of rule. And where three sit together, the middle seat is the place of chiefest honour. Hence Cato in Africa, when Juba would have placed himself in the midst between him and Scipio, removed himself to the left hand of Scipio, that Juba might not have the place of pre-eminence above Roman magistrates.

It is not unlikely but that there may be an allusion in this expression to the Sanhedrim, the highest court of judicature among the Jews. He who presided in it was called אב דין, or אב בית דין, 'the Father of judgment,' or 'Father of the house of judgment,' and sat at the right hand of the נשיא, or prince of the Sanhedrim, next unto him unto whom belonged the execution of the sentence of the court. Of this *ab din*, mention is made in the Targum, Cant. vii. 4. ואב בית דינא דדאן דינך, 'The Father of the house of judgment, who judgeth thy judgments;' agreeably to that, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

The whole expression then is plainly metaphorical, and taken from what is, or was in use amongst men, and thence translated to signify the state and condition of Christ in heaven. And this is that which the apostle in general intimates in these words, that as the greatest honour that can be done unto any one among the sons of men, is for the chief ruler to set him next himself on his right hand, so is the Son as Mediator, made partaker of the greatest glory that God hath to bestow in Heaven. It is not then the essential eternal glory of the Son of God, that he hath equal with the Father, which in these words is expressed, and whereof the apostle had spoken before; but that glory and honour which is bestowed on him by the Father, after and upon the sacrifice of himself for the expiation of sin. So then the right hand of God is not here taken absolutely, as in other places, for the power

and strength of God, but with the adjunct of *sitting at it*, it shadows out a place and eminency of glory, as he is considered on his throne of majesty; and therefore it is here termed the right hand of majesty, and not of omnipotency or power.

In particular, two things are intended in this expression.

First, The security of Christ from all his adversaries, and all sufferings for the future. The Jews knew what he suffered from God and man. Hereof he lets them know what was the reason; it was for the purging of our sins; and moreover declares, that now he is everlastingly secured from all opposition, for where he is, thither his adversaries cannot come, as John vii. 34. He is above their reach, beyond their power, secure in the throne and presence of God. Thus the fruit of the church, being secured from the rage and persecution of Satan, is said to be caught up unto God, and to his throne, Rev. xii. 5. Hence, though men do, and will continue their malice and wrath against the Lord Christ to the end of the world, as though they would crucify him afresh; yet he dies no more, being secure out of their reach at the right hand of God.

Secondly, His majesty and glory inexpressible;—all that can be given by God in heaven. God on his throne, is God in the full manifestation of his own majesty and glory: on his right hand sits the Mediator, yea, so as that he also is in the midst of the thrones, Rev. v. 6. How little can our weak understandings apprehend of this majesty! see Phil. ii. 9; Matt. xx. 21; Rom. viii. 34; Col. iii. 1; Eph. i. 20.

These are the things which the apostle sets forth in this expression. And they are plainly intimated in the context of the Psalm from whence the words are taken, Ps. cx. 1. So that it is not his rule and authority, but his safety, majesty, and glory, which accompany them, that are here intended.

Thirdly, We are to inquire to what it was in the old church state of the Jews, that the apostle had respect in this ascription of glory and majesty unto Christ; and so what it is that he preferreth him above.

It is thought by many, that the apostle in these words exalteth Christ above David, the chief king among the Jews. Of him it is said, that God would make him his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth, Ps. lxxxix. 27. His throne was high on the earth, and his glory above that of all the kings about him; but for the Lord Christ, he is incomparably exalted above him also, in that he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. But, as was said, these words denote not the rule, power, or authority of Christ, typified by the kingdom of David, but his glory and majesty, represented by the magnificent throne of Solomon. Besides, he is not treating of the kingly power of Christ, but of his sacerdotal office, and of the glory that ensued upon the discharge thereof.

That, therefore, which in these words the apostle seems to have had respect to, was the high priest's entrance into the holy place, after his offering of the solemn anniversary sacrifice of expiation. Then alone was he admitted into that holy place, or heaven below, where was the solemn representation of the presence of God, his throne, and his glory. And what did he there? He stood with all humility and lowly

reverence, ministering before the Lord, whose presence was there represented. He did not go and sit down between the cherubim, but worshipping at the footstool of the Lord, he departed. It is not, saith the apostle, so with Christ; but as his sacrifice was infinitely more excellent and effectual than theirs, so upon the offering of it, he entered into the holy place, or heaven itself above, and into the real glorious presence of God, not to minister in humility, but to a participation of the throne of majesty and glory. He is a king and priest upon his throne, Zech. vi. 13.

Thus the apostle shuts up his general proposition of the whole matter, which he intends farther to dilate and treat upon. In this description of the person and offices of the Messiah, he coucheth the springs of all his ensuing arguments, and from thence enforceth the exhortation which we have observed him constantly to pursue. And we also may hence observe,

1. That there is nothing more vain, foolish, and fruitless, than the opposition which Satan and his agents yet make to the Lord Christ and his kingdom. Can they ascend into heaven? Can they pluck the Lord Christ from the throne of God? A little time will manifest this madness, and that unto eternity.

2. That the service of the Lord Christ is both safe and honourable. As he is a good, so he is a glorious master; one that sits at the right hand of God.

3. Great is the spiritual and eternal security of them that truly believe in Christ. Of all which severally afterwards.

VER. 4.—THE design of the apostle, as we have now often shown, is to evince the necessity of abiding in the doctrine of the gospel, from the excellency of the person by whom it pleased God to reveal it unto us. This he hath done already in general, in that description which he hath given us of his person, power, works, offices, and glory; whereby he hath made it evident, that no creature whom God was pleased at any time to make use of in the revelation of his will, or the institution of his worship, was any way to be compared with him. Having proceeded thus far in general, he descends now to the consideration of particular instances, in all those whom God employed in the ministration of the law, and constitution of Mosaic worship, and takes occasion from them all to set forth the dignity and incomparable excellencies of the Lord Christ, whom in all things he exalts.

First then, he treateth concerning angels, as those who were the most glorious creatures employed in the giving of the law. The Hebrews owned, yea pleaded this in their own defence, that besides the mediation of Moses, God used the ministry of angels in the giving of the law, and in other occasional instructions of their forefathers. Some of them contend, that the last of the prophets was personally an angel, as the signification of his name imports. Holy Stephen upbraiding them with their abuse and contempt of their greatest privileges, tells them that they received the law by the disposition, ordering, or ministry of angels, Acts vii. 53. And the Targum interprets the chariots of God with the thousands of angels, Ps. lxxviii. 18, 19, of the



angels by whose ministry God taught Israel the law. This then might leave a special prejudice in their minds, that the law being so delivered by angels, must needs have therein the advantage above the gospel, and be therefore excellent and immutable.

To remove this prejudice also, and further to declare the excellency and preeminence in all things of him who revealed the gospel, the apostle takes occasion from what he had newly taught them concerning the exaltation of Jesus Christ at the right hand of God, to prove unto them out of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, that he is exceedingly advanced, and glorious above the angels themselves, of whose concurrence in the ministration of the law they boasted; and to this purpose produceth four signal testimonies one after another.

This is the design of the apostle, which he pursues and makes out unto the end of this chapter; and that we may rightly conceive of his intention, and of the meaning of the Holy Ghost in the whole, we shall, before we consider his proposition laid down in this fourth verse, or the ensuing confirmations of it, inquire in general what it is in Christ which he compareth with, and preferreth above the angels, and wherein it is that he so exalts him.

The comparison entered on between the Lord Christ and angels, must be either with respect unto their natures, or unto their dignity, office, power, and glory. If the comparison be of nature with nature, then it must be either in respect of the divine or human nature of Christ. If it should be of the divine nature of Christ, with the nature of angels, then it is not a comparison of proportion, as between two natures agreeing in any general kind of being, as do the nature of a man and a worm; but a comparison only manifesting a difference and distance without any proportion. So answereth Athanasius, Orat. 2, adv. Arian. But the truth is, the apostle hath no design to prove by arguments and testimonies the excellency of the divine nature above the angelical. There was no need so to do, nor do his testimonies prove any such thing. Beside, speaking of angels, the other part of the comparison, he treats not of their nature, but of their office, work, and employment, with their honourable and glorious condition therein. Whereas, therefore, the apostle produceth sundry testimonies, confirming the deity of the Son, he doth it not absolutely to prove the divine nature to be more excellent than the angelical, but only to manifest thereby the glorious condition of him who is partaker of it, and consequently his preeminence above angels, or the equity that it should be so.

Neither is the comparison between the human nature of Christ and the nature of angels. For that absolutely considered and in itself is inferior to the angelical; whence in regard of his participation of it, he is said to be made lower than the angels, ch. ii. 9.

The apostle then treats of the person of Christ, God and man, who was appointed and designed of God the Father, to be the revealer of the gospel, and Mediator of the New Testament. As such, he is the subject of the ensuing general proposition; as such, he was spoken of in the words immediately foregoing; and concerning him, as such, are the ensuing testimonies to be interpreted, even those which bear

testimony to his divine nature: these being produced to demonstrate the excellency of his person, as vested with the offices of the king, priest, and prophet of his church, the great revealer of the will of God in the last days.

Τοσούτω κρείττων γενομενος των αγγελων ὅσω διαφορωτερον παρ' αυτοις κεκληρονομηκεν ονομα.

Τοσούτω κρείττων γενομενος: Syr. רב כלל ויחזק, et ipse tantum præstantior fuit. Bodesian. 'And he was so much more excellent;' at tanto potior factus est. Tremel. 'And he is made so much better;' at ipse toto excellit; or as De Dieu, At hoc totum excellit, 'and he wholly excelleth,' or 'in all things he excelleth.' Vulg. 'Tanto melior factus angelis:' the translation of κρείττων by *melior* is blamed by Erasmus, Beza, Vatablus, and is generally deserted by the expositors of the Roman church. And it is hard, if not impossible, to find *melior* in any good author, used in the sense that κρείττων is here and elsewhere constantly applied unto. Ours render the word *better*, *made better*, to avoid, I believe, a coincidence with that which they express διαφορωτερον by 'more excellent:' κρείττων is properly nobilior, potentior, præstantior, excellentior; 'more powerful, able, excellent,' as to love, honour, or state and condition; as in that of Homer,

Κρείσσων γαρ βασιλευς ὅτε χωσεται ανδρι χερηϊ.

That is, πολλων αρειων, saith Eustathius, multo potentior, 'more powerful, able to prevail, or more excellent.' Γενομενος, factus, effectus; 'made, was, became.' Διαφορωτερον, differentius, 'different,' which is sometimes put absolutely for the 'best things,' or things far better than other things that differ, the best things. 'Make to differ,' to prefer, make better, 1 Cor. iv. 7. Syr. רמתי, excellentius, 'more excellent.' Διαφέρω is both to *differ* and *excel*; but the differentius of the Vulgar yields no good sense in this place. Κεκληρονομηκε, hæreditavit, sortitus est, jure hæreditario obtinuit; of the import of which word before.

'Being in so much preferred (exalted, made eminent) above angels, as he (obtained) inherited a more excellent name than they.'

There are five things considerable in, and for the exposition of these words.

First, What it is that the apostle asserts in them, as his general proposition; namely, that the Son, as the great priest and prophet of the church, was preferred above, and made more glorious and powerful than the angels; and how this was done, and wherein it doth consist.

Secondly, When he was so preferred above them; which belongs unto the explication and right understanding of the former.

Thirdly, The degree of this preference of him above the angels, intimated in the comparison; "being made by so much more excellent, as he hath," &c.

Fourthly, The proof of the assertion, both absolutely, and as to the degree intimated; and this is taken from his name.

Fifthly, The way whereby he came to have this name: he obtained it as his lot and portion, or he inherited it.

1st. He is made more excellent than the angels, preferred above

them; that is, say some, declared so to be. *Tum res dicitur fieri, cum incipit patefieri.* Frequently in the Scripture, a thing is then said to be made, or to be, when it is manifested so to be. And in this sense the word *γινεσθαι* is sometimes used, Rom. iii. 4, *Γινεσθω ὁ Θεὸς ἀληθής, πᾶς δὲ ἀνθρώπος ψευστής*, "Let God be true, and every man a liar;" that is, manifested and acknowledged so to be. So, James i. 12, *δοκιμὸς γενομένος*, he that is approved in trial, and thereby manifested to be sincere and sound. In this sense the apostle tells us, Rom. i. 3, that the Lord Christ was "declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead." The resurrection from the dead did not make him to be the Son of God, but evidently manifested and declared him so to be. According to this interpretation of the words, that which the Holy Ghost intimateth is, that whereas the Lord Christ ministered in a condition outwardly low in this world, whilst he purged our sins, yet by his sitting down at the right hand of God, he was revealed, manifested, declared to be more excellent than all the angels in heaven.

But I see no reason why we should desert the proper and most usual signification of the word, nothing in the context persuading us so do. Besides, this suits not the apostle's design, who doth not prove from the Scripture that the Lord Christ was manifested to be more excellent than the angels, but that really he was preferred and exalted above them.

So then, *κρείττων γενομένος* is as much as preferred, exalted, actually placed, in more power, glory, dignity, than the angels. This John Baptist affirms of him, *ἐμπροσθεν μου γεγενεαι, ὅτι πρῶτος μου ἦν*, "He was preferred before me, because he was before me." Preferred above him, called to another manner of office than that which John ministered in; made before or above him in dignity, because he was before him in nature and existence. And this is the proper sense of the words. The Lord Jesus Christ, the revealer of the will of God in the gospel, is exalted above, preferred before, made more excellent and glorious than the angels themselves, than all or any of them, who ministered unto the Lord in the giving of the law on Mount Sinai.

Some object to this interpretation, that he who is said to be made or set above the angels, is supposed to have been lower than they before. To which I answer, And so he was, not in respect of essence, subsistence, and real dignity, but in respect of the infirmities and sufferings that he was exposed unto, in the discharge of his work here on the earth, as the apostle expressly declares, ch. ii. 9.

2d. And this gives us light into our second inquiry on these words; namely, When it was that Christ was thus exalted above the angels.

1. Some say, that it was in the time of his incarnation; for then the human nature being taken into personal subsistence with the Son of God, it became more excellent than that of the angels. This sense is fixed on by some of the ancients, who are followed by sundry modern expositors. But we have proved before, that it is not of either nature of Christ absolutely or abstractedly that the apostle here speaketh, nor of his person, but as vested with his office, and discharging

it. And moreover the incarnation of Christ was part of his humiliation and exinanition, and is not therefore especially intended, where his exaltation and glory is expressly spoken of.

2. Some say, that it was at the time of his baptism, when he was anointed with the Spirit, for the discharge of his prophetic office, Isa. lxi. 1, 2. But yet neither can this designation of the time be allowed; and that because the main things wherein he was made lower than the angels, as his temptations, and sufferings, and death itself, did follow his baptism and unction.

3. It must therefore be the time of his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation at the right hand of God, which ensued thereon, that is designed as the season wherein he was made more excellent than the angels, as evidently appears from the text and context.

For, 1. That was the time, as we have showed before, when he was gloriously vested with that *all power* in heaven and earth, which was of old designed unto him, and prepared for him. 2. The order also of the apostle's discourse leads us to fix on this season. After he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down, &c., being made so much more excellent; that is, therein, and then he was so made. 3. The testimony in the first place produced by the apostle in the confirmation of his assertion, is elsewhere, as we shall see, applied by himself unto his resurrection and the glory that ensued, and consequently they are also in this place intended. 4. This preference of the Lord Christ above the angels, is plainly included in that grant of *all power* made unto him, Matt. xxviii. 18, expounded Eph. i. 21, 22. 5. The testimony used by the apostle in the first place, is the word that God spake unto his King, when he set him upon his holy hill of Sion, Ps. ii. 6—8, which typically expresseth his glorious instalment in his heavenly kingdom.

The Lord Christ then, who in respect of his divine nature was always infinitely and incomparably more excellent than all the angels, after his humiliation in the assumption of the human nature, with the sufferings and temptations that he underwent, upon his resurrection was exalted into a condition of glory, power, authority, and excellency, and intrusted with power over them, as our apostle here informs us.

3d. In this preference and exaltation of the Lord Christ, there is a degree intimated; being made *so much more*, &c. Now our conceptions hereabout, as to this place, are wholly to be regulated by the name given unto him. Look, saith the apostle, as the name given to the Messiah excels the name given to angels, so much doth he himself excel them in glory, authority, and power; for these names are severally given them of God, to signify their state and condition. What, and how great this difference is, we shall afterwards see, in the consideration of the instances given of it by the apostle in the verses ensuing.

4th. The proof of this assertion which the apostle first fixeth on, is taken from the name of Christ. His name, not given him by man, not assumed by himself, but ascribed unto him by God himself. Neither doth he here by the name of Christ, or the name of the angels, intend any individual proper names of the one or the other; but such



descriptions as are made of them, and titles given unto them by God, as whereby their state and condition may be known. Observe, saith he, how they are called of God, by what names and titles he owns them, and you may learn the difference between them. This name he declares in the next verse: God said unto him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." It is not absolutely his being the Son of God that is intended, but that by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, God said these words unto him, "Thou art my Son," and thereby declared his state and condition to be far above that of the angels, to none of whom he ever said any such thing, but speaks of them in a far distinct manner, as we shall see. But hereof in the next verse.

Some by this excellent name understand his power, and dignity, and glory, called his "name above every name," Phil. ii. 8, but then this can no way prove that which the apostle produceth it for, it being directly the same with that which is asserted, in whose confirmation it is produced.

5th. The last thing considerable is, how the Lord Christ came by this name, or obtained it. *Κεκληρονόμηκε*, he obtained it by inheritance, as his peculiar lot and portion for ever. In what sense he is said to be *κληρονόμος*, the heir, was before declared. As he was made the heir of all, so he inherited a more excellent name than the angels. Now he was made heir of all, in that all things being made and formed by him, the Father committed unto him, as Mediator, a peculiar power over all things, to be disposed of by him unto all the ends of his mediation. So also, being the natural and eternal Son of God, in and upon the discharge of his work, the Father declared and pronounced that to be his name; see Luke i. 35; Isa. vii. 14, ix. 6. His being the Son of God, is the proper foundation of his being called so; and his discharge of his office the occasion of its declaration. So he came unto it by right of inheritance, when he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. i. 3.

This then is the sum of the apostle's proposition, and the confirmation of it. A name given by God to that end and purpose, doth truly declare the nature, state, and condition of him or them to whom it is given. But unto Christ the Mediator, there is a name given of God himself, exceedingly more excellent than any that by him is given unto the angels; which undeniably evinceth, that he is placed in a state and condition of glory far above them, or preferred before them.

I shall only observe one or two things, concerning the Hebrews to whom the apostle wrote, and so put an end to our exposition of this verse.

First, then, This discourse of the apostle, proving the preeminence of the Messiah above the angels, was very necessary unto the Hebrews, although it was very suitable unto their own principles, and in general acknowledged by them. It is to this day a tradition amongst them, that the Messiah shall be exalted above Abraham, and Moses, and the ministering angels. Besides, they acknowledged the Scriptures of the Old Testament, wherein the apostle shows them that this truth was taught and confirmed. But they were dull and slow in

making application of these principles unto the confirmation of their faith in the gospel, as the apostle chargeth them, ch. v. 11, 12. And they had at that time great speculations about the glory, dignity, and excellency of angels, and were fallen into some kind of worshipping of them. And it may be this curiosity, vanity, and superstition, was heightened in them by the heat of the controversy between the Pharisees and Sadducees about the angels; the one denying their existence and being, the other, whom the body of the people followed, exalting them above measure, and inclining to the worship of them. This the apostle declares, Col. ii. 18. Treating of those Judaizing teachers who then troubled the churches, he chargeth them with fruitless and curious speculations about angels, and the worshipping of them. And of their ministry in the giving of the law they still boasted. It was necessary therefore to take them off from this confidence of that privilege, and the superstition that ensued thereon, to instruct them in the preeminence of the Lord Christ above them all, that so their thoughts might be directed unto him, and their trust placed in him alone. And this exaltation of the Messiah, some of their later doctors assert on Dan. vii. 9, *קוזה הויה עד די כרסין רמו*, “I beheld until the thrones were set,” ‘placed, exalted,’ as in the original Chaldee; and as all old translations, Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Arabic, render the words, (although our translation renders them, ‘until the thrones were cast down,’) affirming that one of those thrones was for the Messiah, before whom all the angels ministered in obedience.

Secondly, It may not be amiss to remark, that the Jews have always had a tradition of the glorious name of the Messiah; of which even since their utter rejection, they retain some obscure remembrance. The name which they principally magnify is *מטטרון*, *Metatron*. Ben Uzziel in his ‘Targum on Gen. v. ascribes this name to Enoch when he was translated, “he ascended into heaven in the word of the Lord,” *וקרא שמוה מיטטרון ספרא רבא*, ‘and his name was called Metatron the great Scribe.’ But this opinion of Enoch being Metatron is rejected and confuted in the Talmud. There they tell us that Metatron is *שר העולם*, ‘the prince of the world:’ or as Elias calls him in Thisbi, *שר הפנים*, ‘the prince of God’s presence.’ And in the first mention of this name which is Talmud. Tract. Saned. cap. iv. fol. 38, they plainly intimate, that they intended an uncreated angel by this expression. And such indeed must he be, unto whom may be assigned what they ascribe unto Metatron. For as Reuchlin from the Cabbalists informs us, they say *רבי של משה מטטרון*; ‘the teacher of Moses himself was Metatron.’ He it is, saith Elias, that is the angel always appearing in the presence of God, of whom it is said, “My name is in him.” And the Talmudists, that he hath power to blot out the sins of Israel: whence they call him the chancellor of heaven. And Bechai on Exod. xxiii. affirms, that this name signifies both a Lord, a messenger, and a keeper. A Lord, because he ruleth all; a messenger, because he stands always before God to do his will; and a keeper, because he keepeth Israel. I confess the etymology that he gives of this name to that purpose, is weak and foolish; as is also that of Elias, who tells us that Metatron is *בלשון יין*, in the Greek tongue:

*one sent.* But yet what is intended by all these obscure intimations is evident; the uncreated prince of glory, and his exaltation over all, with the excellency of his name, is aimed at. For the word itself, it is either a mere corruption of the Latin word Mediator, such as is usual amongst them, or a Gematrical fiction to answer ער, the Almighty, there being a coincidence in their numeral letters.

The doctrine of the preference and preeminence of Christ, is insisted on by the apostle unto the end of this chapter; and therefore I shall not treat of it, until we have gone through all the proofs of it produced; and even then but briefly; having already in part spoken of it, in our consideration of his sovereignty and lordship over all.

That which we are peculiarly instructed in by these words is, that,

All preeminence and exaltation of one above others, depends on the supreme counsel and will of God.

The instance he gives of him who is exalted over all, sufficiently confirms our general rule. He had his name, denoting his glory and excellency, by inheritance; an heritage designed for him, and given unto him in the counsel, will, and good pleasure of God; he gave him that name above every name, Phil. ii. 9. And that of his own will and pleasure; "it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell." That so in all things he might have the preeminence, Col. i. 16, 17. He foreordained him unto it from eternity, 1 Pet. i. 20, and actually exalted him according to his eternal counsel in the fulness of time, Acts ii. 36, v. 31.

This prelation then of Christ above all, depends on the counsel and pleasure of God; and he is herein a pattern of all privilege and preeminence in others.

Grace, mercy, and glory, spiritual things and eternal, are those wherein really there is any difference among the sons of men. Now that any one in these things is preferred before another, depends merely upon the sole good pleasure of God. No man in these things makes himself to differ from another, neither hath he any thing that he hath not received. God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy. And this discrimination of all things by the supreme will of God, especially spiritual and eternal, is the spring, fountain, and rule of all that glory which he will manifest, and be exalted in unto eternity.

VER. 5.—The apostle proceedeth to the confirmation of his proposition concerning the preeminence of the Lord Christ above the angels, and of his proof of it from the excellency of the name given unto him. And this he doth by sundry testimonies produced out of the Old Testament; two whereof are conjoined in this verse, as the verses are divided in our Bibles.

Τινι γαρ ειπε ποτε των αγγελων υιος μου ει συ, εγω σημερον γεγεννηκα σε;

Ειπε ποτε; Vulg. dixit aliquando, said he *sometimes*; for, *at any time*. Syr. מן מחר אמר אלהא, 'from at any time, said God.' Eloah, God, is supplied; needlessly, though better than those who would render ειπε, impersonally; was it said at any time. For it is express in the Psalm from whence the words are taken, יהוה אמר, 'the Lord said.' The Lord said unto me, בני אתה אני היום ילדתיך, 'thou my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' The ellipsis of the verb substantive

in the original which is perpetual, is supplied by the apostle, with *εἰ*, 'thou art my Son.' Further difficulty in the grammatical sense of the words there is not. And here we shall close this verse, or at least consider this testimony by itself.

Ver. 5.—*Unto which of the angels did he at any time (or ever) say, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*

Two things are considerable in these words.

1. The manner of the apostle's producing the testimony which he intended to make use of. "Unto which of the angels said he at any time."

2. The testimony itself: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

In the former, three things may be observed.

First, That the testimony which in a matter of faith he insisted on, is that of the Scripture. He refers the Jews unto that common principle which was acknowledged between them. Men had not as yet learned in such contests to make that cavilling return, which we are now used unto; how do you know those Scriptures to be the word of God? Nor indeed is it suitable unto common honesty, for men to question the credit, and prostitute the authority of their own most sacred principles, for no other end, but to prejudice their adversaries. But our apostle here confidently sends the Hebrews to the acknowledged rule of their faith and worship; whose authority he knew they would not decline, Isa. viii. 21.

Secondly, That the apostle argues negatively from the authority and perfection of the Scripture in things relating to faith and the worship of God. It is nowhere said in the Scripture to angels; therefore they have not the name spoken of, or not in that manner wherein it is ascribed to the Messiah. This argument, saith an expositor of great name in this place, seems to be weak, and not unlike unto that which the heretics make use of in like cases. And therefore answers, that the apostle argues negatively, not only from the Scripture, but from tradition also. But this answer is far more weak than the argument is pretended to be. The apostle deals expressly in all this chapter from the testimony of Scripture; and to that alone do his words relate: and therein doth he issue the whole controversy he had in hand; knowing that the Jews had many corrupt traditions expressly contrary unto what he undertook to prove; particularly, that the law of Moses was eternally obligatory, against which he directly contends in the whole epistle. An argument then taken negatively from the authority of the Scripture in matters of faith, or what relates to the worship of God, is valid and effectual, and here consecrated for ever to the use of the church by the apostle.

Thirdly, That the apostle either indeed grants, or else for argument's sake condescends unto the apprehension of the Hebrews, that there is a distinction of degrees and preeminence amongst the angels themselves. To confirm, therefore, his general assertion of the dignity and preeminence of Christ above them all, he provokes them to instance in any one of them, who either indeed, or in their apprehen-



sion, was promoted above others, to whom such words as these were ever spoken. "To which of the angels, said he;" his assertion respects not only the community of them, but any, or all of the chief, or princes among them. There are *שרים הראשונים*, Dan. x. 13, chief princes among the angels. And of them Michael, the prince of the people of God, is said to be *אחד*, *One*; that is not in order, but the chief in dignity, their head and leader. Now, saith the apostle, to which of any of these, or of the rest of them, were these words spoken?

We proceed now to the testimony itself produced. Three things are required to make it pertinent unto his purpose, and useful unto the end for which he makes mention of it.

First, That he of whom he speaks was peculiarly intended therein.

Secondly, That there be in it an assignation of a name unto him made by God himself, which thereon he might claim as his peculiar inheritance.

Thirdly, That this name, either absolutely, or in its peculiar manner of appropriation unto him, is more excellent than any that was ever given unto angels, as a sign of their dignity, authority, and excellency.

And these things, for the clearing of the apostle's argument, must particularly be insisted on.

First, The words produced do peculiarly belong to him to whom they were applied. That is, it is the Messiah who is prophesied of in the second Psalm from whence they are taken. This with all Christians is put beyond dispute, by the application of it in several places to him, as Acts iv. 25—27, xiii. 33; Heb. v. 5. It is certain also, that the Jews always esteemed this Psalm to relate to the Messiah; they do so to this day. Hence the Targum on the Psalm expressly applies it to him, thus rendering these words, 'O beloved, as a Son to his Father, thou art pure to me as in the day wherein I created thee.' So are the words perverted by the Targumist, not knowing what sense to ascribe to them, which is frequent with him. But it is manifest that the constant opinion of the ancient Jews, was that this Psalm principally intended the Messiah, nor did any of them of old dissent. Some of their later masters are otherwise minded, but therein they discover their obstinacy and iniquity.

Thus Rabbi Solomon Jarchi, in his comment on this Psalm, in the Venetian edition of the great Masoretical Bibles, affirms, that whatever is sung in this Psalm, our masters interpreted of Messiah the King; 'but,' saith he, 'according to the sound of the words, and for the confutation of the heretics,' (that is Christians,) 'it is convenient that we expound it of David.' So wickedly corrupt and partial are they now in their interpretations of the Scripture. But these words are left out in the Basil edition of the same notes and comments, by the fraud, it may be, of the Jews employed in that work, so to hide the dishonesty of one of their great masters. But the confession of the judgment of their fathers or predecessors in this matter, is therein also extant. And Aben Ezra, though he would apply it to David, yet speaks doubtfully whether it may not better be ascribed to the Messiah.

But this was not enough for the apostle, that those with whom he dealt acknowledged these words to be spoken concerning the Messiah,

unless they were so really, that so his argument might proceed *ex veris*, as well as *ex concessis*, from what was true, as on what was granted. This then we must next inquire into.

The whole Psalm, say some, seems principally, if not only to intend David. He having taken the hill and tower of Sion, and settled it for the seat of his kingdom, the nations round about tumultuated against him, and some of them, as the Philistines, presently engaged in war against him for his ruin, 2 Sam. v. 17. To declare how vain all their attempts should be, and the certainty of God's purpose in raising him to the kingdom of Israel, and for his preservation therein against all his adversaries, with the indignation of God against them, the Holy Ghost gave out this Psalm for the comfort and establishment of the church in the persuasion of so great a mercy. And this is borrowed of Rashi.

But suppose the Psalm to have a farther respect than to David and his temporal kingdom, and that it doth point at the Messiah under the type of David, yet then also whatever is spoken in it, must first and properly be understood of David. So that if the words insisted on by the apostle do prove that the Lord Christ was made more excellent than the angels, they prove the same concerning David also, concerning whom they were spoken in the first place.

*Ans.* 1. There is no cogent reason why we should acknowledge David and his kingdom to be at all intended in this Psalm. The apostles we see apply it to the Lord Christ without any mention of David, and that four several times: twice in the Acts, and twice in this Epistle. The Jews acknowledge that it belongs to the Messiah. Besides there are sundry things spoken in the Psalm, that could never truly and properly be applied to David. Such are the promises, ver. 8, 9, and the invitation of all men to "put their trust and confidence in him," ver. 12. And we have a rule given us by the Holy Ghost, that where anything seems to be spoken of any one, to whom it doth not properly belong, there the person is not at all to be understood, but the Lord Christ himself immediately. This rule Peter gives us in his interpretation of the sixteenth Psalm, and his application of it to the Lord Jesus, Acts ii. 29—31. So that there is no necessity to grant that there is any reference in these words to any type at all. But,

Secondly, We grant that David was a type of Christ, and that as he was king of the people of God. Hence he is not only often signally called the Son of David, but David also, Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25; Hos. iii. 5. And the throne and kingdom promised to David for ever and ever, that it should be as the sun, and established for ever as the moon, Psal. lxxxix. 36, 37, that is, while the world endures, had no accomplishment but in the throne and kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ. Thus also many other things are said of him and his kingdom, which in propriety of speech can no way be applied unto him, but as he was a type of Christ, and represented him to the church. We may then grant, as that about which we will not contend, that in this Psalm, consideration was had of David and his kingdom, but not absolutely, but only as a type of Christ. And hence two things will follow.

First, That some things may be spoken in the Psalm, which no way respect the type at all. For when, not the type, but the person or thing signified, is principally aimed at, it is not necessary that every thing spoken thereof, should be also applicable properly unto the type itself; it being sufficient that there was in the type somewhat that bare a general resemblance unto him, or to that which was principally intended. So, on the contrary; where the type is principally intended, and an application made to the thing signified only, by way of general allusion; there it is not required that all the particulars assigned unto the type, should belong unto, or be accommodated unto the thing typified; as we shall see in the next testimony cited by the apostle. Hence, though in general, David and his deliverance from trouble, with the establishment of his throne, might be respected in this Psalm, as an obscure representation of the kingdom of Christ, yet sundry particulars in it, and among them this mentioned by our apostle, seems to have no respect unto him, but directly and immediately to intend the Messiah.

Secondly, If it be supposed that what is here spoken, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," is also to be applied unto David; yet it is not ascribed to him personally and absolutely, but merely considered as a type of Christ. What then is principally and directly intended in the words, is to be sought for in Christ alone. It being sufficient to preserve the nature of the type, that there was in David any resemblance or representation of it.

Thus, whether David be admitted as a type of Christ in this Psalm or not, the purpose of the apostle stands firm, that the words were principally and properly spoken of the Messiah, and unto him. And this is the first thing required in the application of the testimony insisted on.

Secondly, It is required that in the testimony produced, a signal name be given unto the Messiah, and appropriated unto him, so as that he may inherit it for ever as his own; neither men nor angels having the same interest with him in it. It is not being called by this or that name in common with others, that is intended; but such a peculiar assignation of a name unto him, as whereby he might for ever be distinguished from all others. Thus many may be beloved of the Lord and be so termed; but yet Solomon only was peculiarly called יְדִידִי, *Jedidiah*, and by that name was distinguished from others. In this way it is that the Messiah hath this name assigned unto him. God decreed from eternity that he should be called by that name; he spake unto him and called him by that name: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." He is not called the Son of God upon such a common account as angels and men, the one by creation, the other by adoption; but God peculiarly, and in a way of eminence, gives this name unto him.

Thirdly, This name must be such, as either absolutely, or by reason of its peculiar manner of appropriation to the Messiah, proves his pre-eminence above the angels. Now the name designed is the Son of God: 'Thou art my Son,' not absolutely, but with the exegetical adjunct of his generation, 'this day have I begotten thee.' Chrysost.

Hom. 22. on Gen. vi. positively denies that the angels in Scripture are any where called the sons of God. Hence some conjecture, that the translation of the LXX. is changed since that time ; seeing it is evident that they are so called in the Greek Bibles now extant. However, in the original, they are called the sons of God, Job i. 6, ch. ii. 1, ch. xxxviii, 7 ; Psal. lxxxix. 6. Believers are also called the sons of God, Rom. viii. 16 ; Gal. iv. 6 ; 1 John iii. 1 : and magistrates, gods, Psal. lxxxii. 1. 6 ; John x. 34. It doth not, therefore, appear how the mere assigning of this name to the Messiah, doth prove his preeminence above the angels, who are also called by it.

*Ans.* Angels may be called the sons of God upon a general account, and by virtue of their participation in some common privilege ; as they are by reason of their creation, like Adam, Luke iii. ult. and constant obedience, Job i. 6. But it was never said unto any angel personally upon his own account, ‘Thou art the son of God.’ God never said so unto any of them, especially with the reason of the appellation annexed, ‘this day have I begotten thee.’ It is not then the general name of a son, or the sons of God, that the apostle instanceth in, but the peculiar assignation of this name unto the Lord Jesus on his own particular account, with the reason of it annexed, ‘this day have I begotten thee,’ which is insisted on. So that here is an especial appropriation of this glorious name unto the Messiah.

Fourthly, The appropriation of this name unto him in the manner expressed, proves his dignity and preeminence above all the angels. For it is evident that God intended thereby to declare his singular honour and glory, giving him a name to denote it, that was never by him assigned unto any mere creature, as his peculiar inheritance ; in particular, not unto any of the angels : not one of them can lay any claim unto it, as his peculiar heritage from the Lord.

And this is the whole that was incumbent on the apostle to prove by the testimony produced. He manifests him sufficiently to be more excellent than the angels, from the excellence of the name which he inherits, according to his proposition before laid down. There is indeed included in this reasoning of the apostle, an intimation of a peculiar filiation and sonship of Christ. Had he not been so the Son of God, as never any angel or other creature was, he never had been called so, in such a way as they are never so called. But this the apostle at present doth not expressly insist upon, only he intimates it as the foundation of his discourse.

To conclude then our considerations of this testimony, we shall briefly inquire after the sense of the words themselves, absolutely considered ; although, as I have shown, that doth not belong directly unto the present argument of the apostle.

Expositors are much divided about the precise intention of these words, both as they are used in the Psalm, and variously applied by the apostles. But yet generally the expositions given of them are pious, and consistent with each other. I shall not insist long upon them, because, as I said, their especial sense belongeth not unto the design and argument of the apostle.

That Christ is the natural and eternal Son of God, is agreed at this



day by all Christians, save the Socinians. And he is called so, because he is so. The formal reason why he is so called, is one and the same; namely, his eternal Sonship; but occasions of actually ascribing that name unto him, there are many. And hence ariseth the difficulty that is found in the words. Some think those words, 'This day have I begotten thee,' do contain the formal reason of Christ's being properly called the Son of God, and so to denote his eternal generation. Others think they express only some outward act of God towards the Lord Christ, on the occasion whereof he was declared to be the Son of God, and so called. The former way went Austin with sundry of the ancients. The היום, the *hodie*, or *this day* here, was with them the same as the *nunc stans*, as they call it, of eternity; and the ולדתי, 'I have begotten thee,' denotes, as they say, the proper natural generation of the Son, by an inconceivable communication of the essence and substance of the Godhead by the person of the Father unto him. And this doctrine is true, but whether here intended or not, is by some greatly questioned.

Others therefore take the words to express only an occasion of giving this name at a certain season to the Lord Christ, when he was revealed or declared to be the Son of God. And some assign this to the day of his incarnation, when he declared him to be his Son, and that he should be so called, as Luke i. 35; some to the day of his baptism, when he was again solemnly from heaven proclaimed so to be, Matt. iii. 17; some to the day of his resurrection, when he was declared to be the Son of God with power, Rom. i. 3; and Acts xiii. 33; some to the day of his ascension, whereunto these words are applied. And all these interpretations are consistent and reconcileable with each other, inasmuch as they are all means serving unto the same end; that of his resurrection from the dead being the most signal amongst them, and fixed on in particular by our apostle in his application of this testimony unto him, Acts xiii. 33.

And in this sense alone the words have any appearance of respect unto David as a type of Christ, seeing he was said as it were to be begotten of God when he raised him up, and established him in his rule and kingdom. Neither indeed doth the apostle treat in this place of the eternal generation of the Son, but of his exaltation and preeminence above angels.

The word also היום constantly in the Scripture denotes some signal time, one day, or more. And that expression, 'This day have I begotten thee,' following immediately upon that other typical one, 'I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion,' seems to be of the same import, and in like manner to be interpreted. Thus far I then choose to embrace the latter interpretation of the words; namely, that the eternal generation of Christ, on which his filiation or sonship, both name and thing doth depend, is to be taken only declaratively, and that declaration to be made in his resurrection and exaltation over all that ensued thereon. But every one is left unto the liberty of his own judgment herein.

And this is the first testimony, whereby the apostle confirms this assertion of the preeminence of the Lord Christ above the angels, from the name that he inherits as his peculiar right and possession.

For the further confirmation of the same truth, he adds another testimony of the same import, in the words ensuing.

Και παλιν, εγω εσομαι αυτω εις πατερα, και αυτος εσται μοι εις υιον. Vulg. Et rursum, ego ero illi in patrem, et ipse erit mihi in filium. 'I will be unto him for a Father, and he shall be to me for a Son.' So also the Syriac: לֹאֲבָא וְלִבְנָא, *in patrem*, and *in filium*, not *pro patre*, *et pro filio*, as some render the words. Erasmus worse than they: Ego ero ei loco patris, et ille erit mihi loco filii, 'Instead of a Father, and instead of a Son,' or 'in the place,' which agrees not with the letter, and corrupts the sense. Beza, Ego ero ei pater, et ipse erit mihi filius, who is followed by ours. "And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

Και παλιν, *and again*; that is, in another place, or *again* it is said to the Son, what is nowhere spoken unto the angels. Εγω εσομαι, לו אָבִי אֶחָדָה לְבֶן, לאב וְהוּא יְהִי־לִי לְבֶן, the prefixed לו doth not denote a substitution or comparison, but the truth of the thing itself. So it is said of Rebecca, וְהָיָה לִי לְאִשָּׁה, 'she was unto him,' not for, or instead, or in the place of, but 'his wife.' And in the words of the covenant, Jer. xxxi. 33. 'I will be to them לֵאלֹהִים, and they shall be to me לְעַם;' not, 'I will be unto them instead of God, and they shall be unto me instead of a people;' but, 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people.' And the same is the signification of these words, 'I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son.'

This is the second testimony produced by the apostle to prove the preeminence of the Lord Christ above the angels, from the excellency of the name given unto him. One word, one witness, the testimony being that of God, and not of man, had been sufficient to have evinced the truth of his assertion. But the apostle adds a second here, partly to manifest the importance of the matter he treated of, and partly to stir them up to a diligent search of the Scripture, where the same truths, especially those that are of most concern unto us, are stored up and down in sundry places, as the Holy Ghost had occasion to make mention of them. This is that mine of precious gold which we are continually to dig for and search after, if we intend to grow and to be rich in the knowledge of God in Christ, Prov. ii. 3, 4. Expositors do generally perplex themselves and their readers about the application of these words unto the Lord Christ. Cajetan for this cause, that this testimony is not rightly produced nor applied as it ought, rejects the whole epistle, as not written by the apostle, nor of canonical authority. Such instances do even wise and learned men give of their folly and self-fulness every day. The conclusion that he makes, must needs be built on these two suppositions. First, That whatever any man might or could apprehend concerning the right application of this testimony, that he himself might and could so do; for otherwise he might have acknowledged his own insufficiency, and have left the solution of the difficulty unto them to whom God should be pleased to reveal it. Secondly, That when men of any generation cannot understand the force and efficacy of the reasonings of the penmen of the Holy Ghost, nor discern the suitableness of the testimonies they make use of, unto the things they produce them in the confirmation of, they

may lawfully reject any portion of Scripture thereon. The folly and iniquity of which principles or suppositions are manifest.

The application of testimonies out of the Old Testament in the New, depends as to their authority on the veracity of him that maketh use of them ; and as to their cogency in argument on the acknowledgment of them on whom they are pressed. Where we find this concurring, as in this place, there remains nothing for us, but to endeavour a right understanding of what is in itself infallibly true, and unquestionably cogent unto the ends for which it is used.

Indeed the main difficulty, which in this place expositors generally trouble themselves withal, ariseth purely from their own mistake. They cannot understand how these words should prove the natural sonship of Jesus Christ, which they supposed they are produced to confirm, seeing that it is from thence that he is exalted above the angels. But the truth is, the words are not designed by the apostle unto any such end. His aim is only to prove, that the Lord Christ hath a name assigned unto him more excellent, either in itself, or in the manner of its attribution, than any that is given unto the angels, which is the medium of this first argument to prove him, not as the eternal Son of God, nor in respect of his human nature, but as the revealer of the will of God in the gospel, to be preferred above all the angels in heaven, and consequently in particular above those whose ministry was used in the giving of the law.

Two things then are necessary to render this testimony effectual to the purpose for which it is cited by the apostle ; first, that it was originally intended of him to whom he doth apply it ; secondly, that there is a name in it assigned unto him more excellent than any ascribed to the angels.

For the first of these, we must not wave the difficulties that interpreters have either found out in it, or cast upon it. The words are taken from 2 Sam. vii. 14, and are part of the answer returned from God unto David by Nathan, upon his resolution to build him an house. The whole oracle is as followeth, ver. 11, "The Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house." Ver. 12, "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom ;" (or, as 1 Chron. xvii. 11. "And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired, that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons, and I will establish his kingdom.") Ver. 13, "He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." (1 Chron. xvii. 12, 13, "He shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne for ever.") Ver. 14, "I will be his Father, and he shall be my son : if he commit iniquity, I will chastise him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men." Ver. 15, "But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee." (1 Chron. xvii. 13, "I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son ; and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee.") Ver. 16, "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever."

(1 Chron. xvii. 14,) "But I will settle him in mine house, and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne shall be established for evermore."

This is the whole divine oracle, from whence the apostle takes the testimony under consideration; and the difficulty wherewith it is attended ariseth from hence, that it is not easy to apprehend how any thing at all in these words should be appropriated unto the Lord Christ; seeing Solomon seems in the whole to be directly and only intended. And concerning this difficulty, there are three opinions among interpreters.

1. Some cutting that knot, which they supposed could not otherwise be loosed, affirm that Solomon is not at all intended in these words, but that they are a direct and immediate prophecy of Christ, who was to be the son of David, and to build the spiritual house or temple of God. And for the confirmation of this assertion, they produce sundry reasons from the oracle itself; as

1st. It is said, that God would raise up to David a seed, or son; intimating, that he was not as yet born, being foretold to be raised up; whereas Solomon was born at the time of this prophecy.

2d. It is also affirmed, that this son or seed should reign and sit upon the throne of David after his decease, and after he was gathered unto his fathers; whereas Solomon was made king, and sat upon the throne whilst David was yet alive, and not entered into rest with his fathers.

3d. The throne of this son is to be established for ever, or as the same promise is expressed, Psal. lxxxix. 36, "Whilst the sun and moon continue." The throne of Solomon and his posterity failed within a few generations.

4th. The title there given unto him who is directly prophesied of, shows him, as our apostle intimates, to be preferred above all the angels; and none will say that Solomon was so, who, as he was inferior to them in nature and condition, so by sin he greatly provoked the Lord against himself and his posterity.

But yet all these observations, though they want not some appearance and probability of reason, come short of proving evidently what they are produced for, as we may briefly manifest. For,

1st. It doth not appear that Solomon was born at the time of the giving forth of this oracle; if we must suppose that God intimated in it unto David, that none of the sons which he then had should succeed him in his kingdom; yea, it is manifest from the story that he was not. Besides, raising up doth not denote the birth or nativity of the person intended, but his designation or exaltation to his throne and office, as is the usual meaning of that expression in the Scripture; so that Solomon might be intended, though now born, yea and grown up, if not yet by the providence of God marked and taken out from amongst his brethren to be king, as afterwards he was.

2. Although a few days before the death of David, to prevent sedition and division about titles and pretensions to the kingdom, Solomon by his appointment was proclaimed king, or heir to the crown, yet he was not actually vested with the whole power of the kingdom, until



after his natural decease. Moreover also, David being then very weak and feeble, and rendered unable for public administration, the short remainder of his days after the inauguration of Solomon, needed not to be observed in the prophecy.

The other two remaining reasons must be afterwards spoken unto. And for the present removal of this exposition, I shall only observe, that to affirm Solomon not at all to be intended in this oracle, nor the house or temple which afterwards he built, is to make the whole answer of God by the prophet unto David to be equivocal. For David inquired of Nathan about building an house, or material temple unto God. Nathan returns him answer from God that he shall not do so, but that his son should perform that work. This answer David understands of his immediate son, and of a material house, and thereupon makes material provision for it, and preparation in great abundance, upon the encouragement he received in this answer of God. Now if neither of these were at all intended in it, neither his son nor the material temple, it is evident that he was led into a great mistake, by the ambiguity and equivocation of the word; but we find by the event that he was not led into any such mistake; God approving and accepting of his obedience in what he did. It remains then that Solomon, first and immediately is intended in these words.

2. Some on the other hand affirm the whole prophecy so to belong to, and so to be fulfilled in Solomon, and in him alone, that there is no direct respect therein unto our Lord Jesus Christ. And the reason for their assertion they take from those words which immediately follow those insisted on by the apostle, namely, "If he commit iniquity I will chastise him with the rod of men;" which cannot be applied unto him who did no sin, neither was there guile found in his mouth. They say, therefore, that the apostle applies these words unto Christ, only by way of an allegory; thus he deals with the law of not muzzling the ox which treadeth out the corn, applying it to the provision of carnal things to be made for the dispensers of the gospel. As he also in another place representeth the two Testaments in the story of Sarah and Hagar.

That which principally is to be insisted on for the removal of this difficulty, and which will utterly take it out of our way, will fall in with our confirmation of the third interpretation to be proposed. For the present, I shall only answer, that as the words cited by the apostle do principally concern the person of Christ himself, yet being spoken and given out in form of a covenant, they have respect also to him as he is the Head of the covenant, which God makes with all the elect in him. And thus *whole mystical Christ*, head and members, are referred to in the prophecy; and therefore David, in his repetition and pleading of this oracle, Psal. lxxxix. 30, changeth those words, "if he commit iniquity," into "if his children forsake my law." Notwithstanding then a supposition of transgression in him, concerning whom these words are spoken, the Lord Christ may be intended in them; such failings and transgressions as disannul not the covenant, often falling out on their part, for whom he undertaketh therein. But I offer this only in majorem cautelam, to secure the testimony insisted on unto our

apostle's intention. The difficulty itself will be afterwards clearly assailed.

3. We say therefore with others, that both Solomon and the Lord Christ are intended in this whole oracle; Solomon literally and first, as the type; the Lord Christ principally and mystically, as he who was typified, figured, and represented by him. And our sense herein shall be farther explained and confirmed in the ensuing considerations.

1. That there never was any one type of Christ and his offices that entirely represented him, and all that he was to do. For as it was impossible that any one thing or person should do so, because of the perfection of his person, and the excellency of his office, which no one thing that might be appointed to prefigure him as a type, because of its limitedness and imperfection, could fully represent; so had any such been found out, that multiplication of types which God in his infinite wisdom was pleased to make use of, for the revelation of him intended in them, had been altogether useless and needless. Wherefore, according as God saw good, and as he had made them meet and fit, so he designed one thing or person to figure out one thing in him, and another for another end and purpose.

2. That no type of Christ was, in all things that he was or did, a type of him, but only in that particular wherein he was designed of God so to be, and wherein he hath revealed him so to have been. David was a type of Christ, but not in all things that he was and did. In his conquests of the enemies of the church, in his throne and kingdom he was so; but in his private actions, whether as a man, or as a king or captain, he was not so. The like must be said of Isaac, Melchisedec, Solomon, and of all other personal types under the Old Testament, and much more of other things.

3. That not all things spoken of him that was a type, even in those respects wherein he was a type, are spoken of him as a type, or have any respect unto the thing signified, but some of them may belong unto him in his personal capacity only. And the reason is, because he, who was a type by God's institution, might morally fail in the performance of his duty, even then and in those things, when and wherein he was a type. Hence somewhat may be spoken of him as to his moral performance of his duty, that may no way concern the antitype, or Christ prefigured by him. And this wholly removes the difficulty mentioned in the second interpretation of the words, excluding the Lord Christ from being directly in the oracle, upon that expression, "If he sin against me;" for those words relating to the moral duty of Solomon, in that wherein he was a type of Christ, namely, the rule and administration of his kingdom, may not at all belong to Christ, who was prefigured by God's institution of things, and not in any moral deportment in the observance of them.

4. That what is spoken of any type, as it was a type, and in respect of its institution to be such, doth not really and properly belong unto him, or to that which was the type, but unto him who was represented thereby. For the type itself, it was enough that there was some resemblance in it of that which was principally intended; the things belonging unto the antitype being affirmed of it analogically on account

of the relation between them by God's institution. Hence that which follows on such enunciations, doth not at all respect or belong to the type, but only to the antitype. Thus at the sacrifice of expiation, the scape goat is said to bear and carry away all the sins of the people into a land not inhabited ; not really, and in the substance of the matter, but only in an instituted representation : for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Much less may the things that ensue upon the Lord Christ's real bearing and taking away of our sins be ascribed to the devoted beast. So is it in this case. The words applied by the apostle to prove the Son to have a more excellent name than the angels, and consequently to be preferred above them, do not at all prove that Solomon, of whom they were spoken merely as he was a type, should be esteemed to be preferred above all angels, seeing he did only represent him who was so, and had these words spoken unto him, not absolutely, but with respect unto that representation. And this removes the fourth objection made in the behalf of the first interpretation, excluding Solomon from being at all intended in the prophecy ; for what was spoken of him as a type, required not a full accomplishment in his own person, but only that he should represent him who was principally intended.

5. That there is a two-fold perpetuity mentioned in the Scripture, the one limited and relative, the other absolute ; and both these are applied unto the kingdom of David. First, there was a perpetuity promised unto him and his posterity in the kingdom, as of the priesthood of Aaron, that is a limited perpetuity, namely, during the continuance of the typical state and condition of that people ; whilst they continued, the rule by right belonged to the house of David. There was also an absolute perpetuity promised to the kingdom of David, to be made good only in the kingdom and rule of the Messiah : and both these kinds of perpetuity are expressed in the same words, giving their sense according as they are applied. If applied to the successors of David, as his kingdom was a type of that of Christ, they denote the limited perpetuity before mentioned, as that which respected an adjunct of the typical state of that people, that was to be regulated by it, and commensurate unto it. But as they were referred to the kingdom of Christ represented in the other, an absolute perpetuity is expressed in them. And this takes away the third reason, excluding Solomon from being intended in these words ; the perpetuity promised being unto him limited and bounded.

These considerations being premised, I say, the words insisted on by the apostle, " I will be unto him a father, and he shall be unto me a son," belonged first and next unto Solomon, denoting that fatherly love, and care, and protection, that God would afford unto him in his kingdom, so far forth as Christ was represented by him therein ; which requires not that they must absolutely, and in all just consequences from them, belong unto the person of Solomon. Principally therefore they intend Christ himself, expressing that eternal unchangeable love which the Father bore unto him, grounded on the relation of Father and Son.

The Jews, I confess, of all others, do see least of any thing typical

in Solomon. But the reason of it is, because that his sin was the occasion of ruining their carnal earthly glory and wealth, which things alone they lust after. But the thing was doubtless confessed by the church of old, with whom Paul had to do; and therefore we see, that the writer of the book of the Chronicles, written after the return of the people from their captivity, when Solomon's line had failed, and Zerubabel of the house of Nathan was governor amongst them, yet records again this promise, as that which looked forward, and was yet to receive its full accomplishment in the Lord Christ. And some of the rabbins themselves tell us, that Solomon, because of his sin, had only the name of peace, God stirring up adversaries against him: the thing itself is to be looked for under Messiah Ben David.

The allegation of these words by the apostle being thus fully and at large vindicated, I shall now briefly inquire into the sense and meaning of the words themselves.

It was before observed, that they are not produced by the apostle to prove the natural sonship of Jesus Christ, nor do they signify it, nor were they urged by him to confirm directly and immediately this truth, that he is more excellent than the angels; of whom there is nothing spoken in them, nor in the place from whence they are taken. But the apostle insists on this testimony, merely in confirmation of his former argument, for the preeminence of the Son above angels, taken from that more excellent name which he obtained by inheritance; which being the name of the Son of God, he hereby proves that indeed he was so called by God himself.

Thus then do these words confirm the intention of the apostle. For to which of the angels said God at any time, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." The words contain a great and signal privilege: they are spoken unto and concerning the Messiah, and neither they, nor any thing equivalent unto them, were ever spoken of any angel; especially the name of the Son of God, so emphatically, and in way of distinction from all others, was never assigned unto any of them. And this, as hath been already shown, proves an eminency and preeminence in him, above all that the angels attain unto. All this, I say, follows from the peculiar signal appropriation of the name of the Son of God unto him; and his especial relation unto God therein expressed.

We may briefly adjoin the intention of the words as in themselves considered, and so complete the exposition of them. Now God promiseth in them to be unto the Lord Christ as exalted into his throne, a Father, in love, care, and power, to protect and carry him on in his rule unto the end of the world. And therefore upon his ascension he says, that he went unto his God and Father, John xx. 17, and he rules in the name and majesty of God; Mic. v. 4. This is the import of the words: they intend not the eternal and natural relation that is between the Father and Son, which neither is, nor can be the subject of any promise, but the paternal care of God over Christ in his kingdom, and the dearness of Christ himself unto him.

If it be asked on what account God would thus be a Father unto Jesus Christ, in this peculiar manner, it must be answered, that the ra-



dical fundamental cause of it lay in the relation that was between them from his eternal generation; but he manifested himself to be his Father, and engaged to deal with him in the love and care of a Father, as he had accomplished his work of mediation on the earth, and was exalted unto his throne and rule in heaven.

And this is the first argument of the apostle, whereby he proves that the Son, as the revealer of the mind and will of God in the gospel, is made more excellent than the angels, whose glory was a refuge to the Jews in their adherence to legal rights and administrations, even because they were given unto them by the disposition of angels.

According unto our proposed method, we must in our progress draw hence also some instructions for our own use and edification. As,

First, Every thing in the Scripture is instructive.—The apostle's arguing in this place is not so much from the thing spoken, as from the manner wherein it is spoken; even that also is highly mysterious. So are all the concernments of it. Nothing in it is needless, nothing useless. Men sometimes perplex themselves to find out the suitableness of some testimonies produced out of the Old Testament, unto the confirmation of things and doctrines in the New, by the penmen of the Holy Ghost; when all the difficulty ariseth from a fond conceit, that they can apprehend the depth and breadth of the wisdom that is laid up in any one text of Scripture, when the Holy Ghost may have a principal aim at those things which they are not able to dive into. Every letter and tittle of it is teaching, and every thing that relates unto it is instructive in the mind of God. And it must be so, because,

1. It proceeds from infinite Wisdom, which hath put an impression of itself upon it, and filled all its capacity with its blessed effects. In the whole frame, structure, and order of it, in the sense, words, coherence, expression, it is filled with wisdom, which makes the commandment exceeding broad and large, so that there is no absolute comprehension of it in this life. We cannot perfectly trace the footsteps of infinite Wisdom, nor find out all the effects and characters of itself, which it hath left upon the word. The whole Scripture is full of wisdom, as the sea is of water, which fills and covers all the parts of it. And,

2. Because it was to be very comprehensive. It was to contain directly or by consequence, one way or other, the whole revelation of God unto us, and all our duty unto him, both which are marvellous, great, large, and various. Now this could not have been done in so narrow a room, unless every part of it, and all the concerns of it, with its whole order, had been filled with mysteries, and expressions or intimations of the mind and will of God. It could not hence be, that any thing superfluous should be put into it, or any thing be in it, that should not relate to teaching and instruction.

3. It is that which God hath given unto his servants, for their continual exercise day and night in this world. And in their inquiry into it he requires of them their utmost diligence and endeavours. This being assigned for their duty, it was convenient unto divine Wisdom and Goodness to find them blessed and useful work in the whole

Scripture, to exercise themselves about, that every-where they might, meet with that which might satisfy their inquiry, and answer their industry. There shall never be any time or strength lost or mispent that is laid out according to the mind of God in and about his word. The matter, the words, the order, the contexture of them, the scope, design, and aim of the Holy Ghost in them, all and every one of them, may well take up the utmost of our diligence: all are divine. Nothing is empty, unfurnished, or unprepared for our spiritual use, advantage, and benefit. Let us then learn hence,

1. To admire, and as one said of old, to adore the fulness of the Scripture, or of the wisdom of God in it. It is all full of divine wisdom, and calls for our reverence in the consideration of it. And indeed a constant awe of the majesty, authority, and holiness of God in his word, is the only teachable frame. Proud and careless spirits see nothing of heaven or divinity in the word; but the humble are made wise in it.

2. To stir up and exercise our faith and diligence to the utmost in our study and search of the Scripture. It is an endless storehouse, a bottomless treasure of divine truth. Gold is in every sand. All the wise men in the world may every one for himself learn somewhat out of every word of it, and yet leave enough still behind them for the instruction of all those that shall come after them. The fountains and springs of wisdom in it are endless, and will never be dry. We may have much truth and power out of a word, sometimes enough, but never all that is in it. There will still be enough remaining to exercise and refresh us anew for ever. So that we may attain a true sense, but we can never attain the full sense of any place; we can never exhaust the whole impression of infinite wisdom that is on the word. And how should this stir us up to be meditating in it day and night; and many the like inferences may hence be taken. Learn also,

Secondly, that it is lawful to draw consequences from Scripture assertions, and such consequences rightly deduced are infallibly true, and *de fide*. Thus, from the name given unto Christ, the apostle deduceth by just consequence his exaltation and preeminence above angels. Nothing will rightly follow from truth, but what is so also; and that of the same nature with the truth from whence it is derived. So that whatever by just consequence is drawn from the word of God, is itself also the word of God, and of truth infallible. And to deprive the church of this liberty in the interpretation of the word, is to deprive it of the chief benefit intended by it. This is that on which the whole ordinance of preaching is founded, which makes that which is derived out of the word, to have the power, authority, and efficacy of the word accompanying it. Thus though it be the proper work and effect of the word of God to quicken, regenerate, sanctify and purify the elect, and the word primarily and directly is only that which is written in the Scriptures, yet we find all these effects produced in and by the preaching of the word, when perhaps not one sentence of the Scripture is verbatim repeated. And the reason hereof is, because whatsoever is directly deduced, and delivered according to the mind

and appointment of God from the word, is the word of God, and hath the power, authority, and efficacy of the word accompanying it.

Thirdly, The declaration of Christ to be the Son of God, is the care and work of the Father.—He said it, he recorded it, he revealed it. This indeed is to be made known by the preaching of the gospel; but that it shall be done, the Father hath taken the care upon himself. It is the design of the Father in all things to glorify the Son, that all men may honour him, even as they honour the Father. This cannot be done, without the declaration of that glory which he had with him before the world was, that is the glory of his eternal sonship. This he will therefore make known and maintain in the world.

Fourthly, God the Father is perpetually present with the Lord Christ in love, care, and power, in the administration of his office, as he is Mediator, Head, and King of the church—He hath taken upon himself to stand by him, to own him, to effect every thing that is needful unto the establishment of his throne, the enlargement of his kingdom, and the ruin and destruction of his enemies. And this he will assuredly do to the end of the world.

1. Because he hath promised so to do. Innumerable are the promises on record that are made unto Jesus Christ to this purpose. God hath engaged to hold him in his hand, and to hide him as a polished shaft in his quiver, to give him a throne, a glorious kingdom, an everlasting rule and government, and the like. Now what he hath promised in love and grace, he will make good with care and power. See Isa. xlix. 5—9, l. 7—9.

2. All these promises have respect unto the obedience of the Lord Christ in the work of mediation, which being performed by him rightly, and to the utmost, gives him a peculiar right to them, and makes that just and righteous in the performance, which was mere sovereign grace in the promise. The condition being absolutely performed on the part of Christ, the promise shall be certainly accomplished on the part of the Father. By this is the covenant of the Redeemer completed, ratified, and established; the condition of it on his part being performed unto the uttermost, there shall be no failure in the promises, Isa. liii. 11, 12.

3. The Lord Christ makes it his request, that he may enjoy the presence and power of his Father with him in his work, and the administration of his mediation; and the Father always hears him. Part of his covenant with his Father, was like that of Barak who was a type of him, with Deborah the prophetess, who spake in the name of the Lord, Judges iv. 8. “If thou wilt go with me, I will go,” against all the enemies of the church, Isa. l. 8, 9. And accordingly upon his engagement to go with him, he requests his presence; and in the assurance of it, professeth that he is not alone, but that his father is with him, John viii. 16. To this purpose, see his requests, John xvii.

4. The nature of his work and kingdom require it. God hath appointed him to reign in the midst of his enemies; and mighty opposition is made on all hands to his whole design, and to every parti-

cular act of it. The whole work of Satan, sin, and the world, is both to obstruct in general the progress of his kingdom, and to ruin and destroy every particular subject of it. And this is carried on continually with unspeakable violence and unsearchable stratagems. This makes the presence of the authority and power of the Father necessary to him in his work. This he asserts as a great ground of consolation to his disciples, John x. 28, 29. There will be great plucking, great contending to take believers out of the hand of Christ, one way or other, to make them come short of eternal life; and though his own power be such as is able to preserve them, yet he lets them know also for their greater assurance and consolation, that his Father, who is over all, is greater, more powerful than all, greater than he himself in the work of mediation, John xiv. 28, is also engaged with him in their defence and preservation. So also is he as to the destruction of his adversaries, all opposing power whatever, Psal. cx. 5, 6. The Lord stands by him, on his right hand, to smite and tread down his enemies; and all that arise against his design, interest and kingdom, be they never so many, never so great, he will ruin, and make every one of them his footstool. See Micah v. 4.

Ver. 6.—The apostle proceeds to the confirmation of the same important truth, by another testimony; wherein we shall meet with some difficulty, both in the manner of the citation, and in the import of the testimony itself.

Ver. 6.—Ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτοτόκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην, λέγει· καὶ προσκυνήσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἀγγέλοι Θεοῦ.

V. L. et cum introducit primogenitum in orbem terræ, dicit et adoret eum omnes Angeli Dei: omitting *πάλιν*, again.

Syr. *דבר דין אמת דמגל*; Rursum autem cum inducit; ‘and again when he bringeth in,’ *εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην*, *εἰσάγει*, into the world.

*Πάλιν*, again, is omitted in the Arabic, as in the Vulgar Latin.

Beza; Rursum autem cum inducit primogenitum in orbem terrarum, dicit, et adoret (Eras. adorabunt) eum omnes Angeli Dei; which is exactly expressed by ours. “And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”

There is not much difficulty in the words themselves; *ὅταν δὲ*, cum autem, quando autem; ‘but when.’

*Πάλιν*, Rursum, “again,” as in the former verse. What sense it is here used in, and with what word it is to be joined, shall be afterwards declared.

*Εἰσαγάγῃ* inducit, or inducet, or introducit; ‘he bringeth in, or leadeth in, or shall bring in,’ of which difference also afterwards.

*Τὸν πρωτοτόκον*, the first-begotten, the first-born. He before whom none is born; not necessarily implying that others should be born after. Under the law there was a sacrifice for the *πρωτότοκος*, first-begotten, so called when as yet none were begotten after him, and when it was



very uncertain whether ever any should be so of the same womb or not; and doubtless it often fell out that none were so.

Εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην, חבל, the habitable world, or חבל ארץ, Prov. viii. The public place of habitation, where the creatures of God do dwell. The word is no where used absolutely in Scripture in any sense but for this habitable world. Only sometimes it hath a restrained sense, denoting the Roman Empire, as Luke ii. 1. According to the usual language of those days, wherein the people of Rome or their emperors were styled *Rerum*, and *Orbis terrarum*, *Domini*; and sometimes indefinitely denotes any part of the world as habitable, Luke xvii. 6, xix. 27, xxi. 26. And therefore oftentimes hath ὅλη, the whole, joined with it, when it is extended universally to the habitable earth.

Προσκυνῆσαίωσαν; Heb. וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ, imperative in Hithpael, from שָׁחַ, to incline, to bow down. The LXX. constantly render that word by προσκυνεω. And προσκυνεω is probably derived from κυω, and thence κυνεω, osculator, to ‘kiss;’ which also is sometimes used for to adore, or worship; as, παντες γονυ πεπτηωτες μοι κυνεοντι δεσποτην; that is, saith Eustathius, προσκυνουσι με, ὡς δεσποτην; they worship me as their Lord; for being joined with πεπτηωτες, bowing, or falling down, it expresseth the whole use and signification of προσκυνεω. How kissing was of old a sign, token, and pledge of worship, especially to bow down and kiss the ground, I have elsewhere declared. And this derivation of the word, I prefer far before that which makes it primitively to signify: more *canum adulari*; as if taken from the crouching of dogs.

In the New Testament it is no where used, but for that religious worship which is due to God alone. And when it is recorded of any that they did προσκυνειν, or perform the duty and homage denoted by this word, unto any but God, it is recorded as their idolatry, Rev. xiii. 12. 16. 2. And unto this sense was it restrained of old by the Spartans, who denied that it was εν νομῳ, lawful, for them ανθρωπον προσκυνειν, that is, to fall down to, or to adore a man; Herodot. in Polym.

And in this sense it is exceedingly restrained from the use and import of שָׁח, yea, and from that of וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ, in Hithpael, though that always signifies a bowing down with respect and reverence; for it is employed to denote civil as well as religious worship. But for several sorts of religious worship diversified by its objects, the Scripture knows nothing. The word properly denotes to bow down, and when it is referred unto God, it respects the inward reverence and subjection of our minds, by metonymy of the adjunct. See it for civil respect, Gen. xxvii. 29, xxxiii. 6.

Αγγελοι, עֲלֵיָא, Elohim is rendered angels by the LXX. Gen. xxxi. 24; Job xxxviii. 7; Psal. viii. 6, xevi. 8, cxxxvii. 1, of which interpretation of the word, we shall treat in the ensuing Exposition.

This is the second argument used by the apostle to confirm his assertion of the preference of the Son above angels; and it is taken from the command of God given unto them to worship him. For without controversy, he who is to be worshipped, is greater than they whose duty it is to worship him.

In the words we must consider, 1. The apostle's preface; 2. His proof. And in the latter must weigh, 1. The sense of it. 2. The suitableness of it to his present purpose.

His preface, or the manner of his producing of this second testimony is this: *ὅταν δὲ παλιν εισαγαγῇ—λεγει*; which words have been exposed unto a variety of interpretations. For if *παλιν*, be joined with *εισαγαγῇ*, which immediately follows; they are to be rendered, "and when he bringeth in again into the world;" if with *λεγει*, which follows it after the interposition of sundry other words, then it is to be rendered as by our interpreters, "and again, when he brings; he saith."

Moreover, it is not clear in what sense Christ is called *πρωτοτοκος*, the first-born, who is elsewhere termed *μονογενης του Πατρος*, the only begotten Son of the Father.

We must also inquire what is the introduction, or bringing in here intended; how and when performed; and also what is the world whereunto he was brought. The difficulties about all which must be severally considered.

1. *Παλιν*, again, may be joined with *εισαγαγῇ*; and then the sense of the words must run as above intimated; namely, "when he bringeth in again the first-born into the world." And it is evident, that most expositors, both ancient and modern, embrace this sense. So do Chrysostome, Theodoret, Ambrose, Œcumenius, Thomas, Lyra, Cajetan, Ribera, Camero, Gomarus, Estius, A Lapide, and our Mede, with many others.

But about what this bringing in again, or second bringing in of the first-born into the world should be, they are greatly divided.

The ancients refer it to his incarnation, affirming somewhat harshly, that he was brought before into the world, when all things were made by him.

2. Others refer it to the resurrection, which was as it were a second bringing of Christ into the world, as David was brought into his kingdom again, after he had been expelled by the conspiracy and rebellion of Absalom.

3. Others refer it unto his coming forth in the effectual preaching of the gospel after his ascension, whereby he was brought forth in another manner, and with another kind of power, than that which he appeared in in the days of his flesh.

4. Some suppose the personal reign of Christ on the earth for a thousand years with his saints, is intended in these words, when God will "bring him again" with glory into the world, of which judgment was Mede, and now many follow him.

5. Others again, and they the most, assign the accomplishment of what is here asserted, to the general judgment, and the second coming of Christ in the glory of the Father, with all the holy angels attending him to judge the quick and the dead.

6. Some of the Socinians refer them unto the triumphant ascension of Christ into heaven, after his resurrection; he having, as they fancy, once before been taken into it, there to be instructed in the mind and will of God.

Now, all these assertions concerning the bringing in of Christ into the world, have a truth in them absolutely considered ; but whether any of them be here intended by the apostle, we must inquire by an examination of the common foundation that all their authors proceed upon, with the reasons given for its confirmation. Now this is that which we observed before, namely, that in the construction of the words, *παλιν*, *again*, is to be joined with *εισαγαγῆ*, *he bringeth in*, and so to be rendered, *when he brings in again* or *a second time*, the first-born ; which must needs point to a second coming of Christ, of one kind or other : and to this purpose they say,

1. That the trajection of the words in the other sense, is hard and difficult, and not to be admitted but upon very cogent reasons. It is to suppose that the apostle by *ὅταν δε παλιν*, *when again*, intends *παλιν δε ὅταν*, *again when* ; and besides, the interposition of the many words between it, and *λεγει*, *he saith*, will not admit that they should be conjoined in sense and construction.

But this reason is not cogent : for,

1. Most of the ancient translations acknowledge this transposition of the words : so the Syriac, reading thus, “ And again when he bringeth in ; ” so the vulgar Latin and the Arabic, omitting the term *again*, as not designing any new thing, but merely denoting a new testimony. And they are followed by Valla, Erasmus, Beza, and the best of modern translators.

2. Such trajections are not unusual, and that in this place hath a peculiar elegance. For the word *παλιν*, *again*, being used in the head of the testimony foregoing, this transposition adds to the elegance of the words : and that there was cause for it, we shall see afterwards.

3. The apostle having immediately before used the word *παλιν*, *again*, as his note of producing a second testimony, and placing it here in the entrance of a third, it must needs be used equivocally, if the trajection opposed be not allowed.

2. They deny that the angels worshipped Christ at his first coming into the world ; that is, that they are recorded so to have done, and therefore, it must needs be his second coming that is intended, when he shall come in glory with all his holy angels, openly worshipping him, and performing his commands.

This reason is especially suited unto the fifth opinion before mentioned, referring the words to the coming of Christ at the day of general judgment, and is unserviceable to any of the rest. But yet neither is this satisfactory, for the question is not whether it be any where recorded, that the angels worshipped Christ at his first entrance into the world, but whether the Lord Christ upon his incarnation was not put into that condition, wherein it was the duty of all the angels of God to worship him. Now, this being at least interpretative, a command of God, and the angels expressly always doing his will, the thing itself is certain, though no particular instances of it are recorded. Besides, the angels’ attendance on his birth, proclamation of his nativity, and celebrating the glory of God on that account, seem to have been a performance of that duty, which they had received command

for. And this is allowed by those of the ancients who suppose that the second bringing of Christ into the world, was upon his nativity.

3. They say, that this bringing in of the first-begotten into the world, denotes a glorious presenting of him in his rule, and enjoyment of his inheritance.

But, 1. This proves not, that the words must respect the coming of Christ unto judgment, to which end this reason is insisted on, because he was certainly proclaimed with glory to be the Son, Lord and heir of all upon his resurrection, and by the first preaching of the gospel. And 2. No such thing indeed, can be rightly deduced from the words. The expression signifies no more, but an introduction into the world, a real bringing in, without any intimation of the way or manner of it.

4. It is argued in the behalf of the same opinion from the Psalm from whence these words are taken, that it is a glorious reign of Christ and his coming unto judgment, that is set forth therein; and not his coming and abode in the state of humiliation. And this reason Camero affirms to prove undeniably, that it is the coming of Christ unto judgment that is intended.

But the truth is, the consideration of the scope of the Psalm doth quite reject the opinion which is sought to be maintained by it. For, 1. (ver. 1.) upon the reign of the Lord therein set forth, both Jews and Gentiles, the earth and the multitude of the isles, are called to rejoice therein; that is, to receive, delight in, and be glad for the salvation brought by the Lord Christ unto mankind, which is not the work of the last day. 2. Idolaters are deterred from their idolatry, and exhorted to worship him, ver. 7. a duty incumbent on them before the day of judgment. 3. The church is exhorted upon his reign to abstain from sin, and promised deliverance from the wicked and oppressors; all of which things, as they are unsuited to his coming at the day of judgment, so they expressly belong unto the setting up of his kingdom in this world.

And hereby it appears, that that opinion which indeed seems with any probability to assert a second coming of Christ into the world to be intended in these words, is inconsistent with the scope of the place from whence the testimony is taken, and consequently the design of the apostle himself.

The other conjectures mentioned will easily be removed out of the way.

Unto that of the ancients assigning this bringing in of Christ into the world unto his incarnation; we say it is true, but then that was his first bringing in, and being supposed to be intended in this place, the words can be no otherwise rendered, but that *παλιν*, *again*, must be esteemed only an intimation of the citation of a new testimony.

Neither can the resurrection of the Lord Christ be assigned as the season of the accomplishment of this word, which was not indeed a bringing of him into the world, but rather the first step towards his leaving of it; neither did he at his death leave the world utterly, for though his soul was separated from his body, yet his body was not separated from his person; and therein he continued on the earth.

The coming of Christ to reign here on earth a thousand years is, if



not a groundless opinion, yet so dubious and uncertain, as not to be admitted a place in the analogy of faith, to regulate our interpretation of Scripture, in places that may fairly admit of another application.

The figment of the Socinians, that the Lord Christ during the time of his forty days' fast was taken into heaven, which they lay as a supposition unto their interpretation of this place, I have elsewhere shewed to be irrational, anti-scriptural, allied to the fictions of Mahomet, and derogatory to the honour of our Lord Jesus, as he is the eternal Son of God.

From what hath been spoken, it is evident that the trajection proposed may be allowed, as it is by most of the ancient and modern translations. And so the word *παλιν*, *again*, relating unto *λεγει*, *he saith*, denotes only the introduction of a new proof, and doth not intimate a second bringing in of the Lord Christ. And unto what hath already been spoken, I shall only add, that such an intention in the words as hath been pleaded for would be so far from promoting the apostle's design, that it would greatly weaken and impair it. For the matter he had in hand was to prove the preeminence of the Lord Christ above the angels, not absolutely, but as he was the revealer of the gospel; and if this was not so, and proved to be so by this testimony whilst he was employed in that work in the world, it is nothing at all to his purpose.

Having cleared this difficulty, and showed that no second coming of Christ is intended in this word, but only a new testimony to the same purpose with those that are produced before, the intention of the apostle in his prefatory expression, may be farther opened, by considering what that world is whereunto the Father brought the Son, and how, and when he did so, and the manner of it.

There are two opinions about the world, whereunto Christ is said to be brought by the Father; the one is, that of the Socinians, asserted, as by others of them, so by Slichtingius in his comment on this place; and by Grotius after them in his annotations. *Οικουμενη*, saith Grotius, 'est regio illa superna quæ ab angelis habitatur, ut ipse mox scriptor noster ad hæc sua verba respiciens dicit,' cap. ii. 5. 'It is,' saith he, 'that region above, which is inhabited by the angels, that is intended; and our author declares as much in that respect which he hath to these words,' chap. ii. 5. In like manner Slichtingius, 'Per terram istam, non esse intelligendam hanc quam mortales incolimus, sed cœlestem illam quam aliquando immortales affecti incolemus, et res ipsa, et D. autor sequenti capite, ver. 5, aperte declarat.' That is, by the earth, not the earth but the heaven is to be understood. But,

1. This suits not at all with the purpose and design of the apostle, which is plainly to prove that the Lord Christ then, when he spake to us, and revealed the will of God, and in that work, was above the angels, which is not at all proved by showing what befel him after his work was accomplished.

2. It receives no countenance from that other place of ch. ii. 5, whither we are sent by these interpreters. For that the apostle is there treating of a matter quite of another nature, without any respect

unto these words, shall be there declared. Neither doth he absolutely there mention *οικουμενην*, *the world*, but with the addition of *μελλουσαν*, *to come*; what this means, we shall inquire upon the place.

3. *Οικουμενη* signifies properly *the habitable earth*, and is never used absolutely in the Scripture but for the habitable world, or men dwelling in it; and causelessly to wrest it unto another signification, is not to interpret, but to offer violence to the text.

2d, By *οικουμενη* then, *the world*, or *habitable earth*, with them that dwell therein, and nothing else is intended; for as the word hath no other signification, so the Psalmist in the place from whence the ensuing testimony is taken, expounds it by the multitude of the isles, or the nations lying abroad in the wide earth. This is the world designed, even that earth wherein the rational creatures of God converse here below. Into this was the Lord Christ brought by the Father.

We are therefore next to inquire wherein the Father's bringing of the Son into this world did consist. We have seen formerly, that some have assigned it to one thing in particular, some another; some to his incarnation and nativity, some to his resurrection, some to his mission of the Spirit, and to the propagation of his kingdom that ensued. The opinion about his coming to reign in the world a thousand years, as also that of his coming at the general judgment, we have already excluded. Of the others, I am apt to think that it is not any one particular exclusive of the other, that the apostle intendeth or designeth. That which was intended in the Old Testament, in the promises of his coming into the world, is that which is here expressed by the phrase of bringing him in. See Mal. iii. 2. "The Lord whom ye seek shall come, but who may abide the day of his coming?" Now it was not any one special act, nor any one particular day, that was designed in that and the like promises. But it is the whole work of God in bringing forth the Messiah by his conception, nativity, unction with the Spirit, resurrection, sending the Holy Ghost, and preaching the gospel, which is the subject of those promises. And their accomplishment it is which those words express, "When he brings the first-born into the world;" that is, after he had kept his church under the administration of the law given by angels in the hand of Moses the Mediator, in expectation of the coming of the Messiah, when he bringeth him forth unto, and carries him on in his work unto the accomplishment of it, he says, "Let all the angels of God worship him." And herein most of the former senses are comprised.

And this interpretation of the words completely answers the end of apostle in the citation of the ensuing testimony, namely, to prove that in the discharge of his work of revealing the will of God, he was such an one as by reason of the dignity of his person, had all religious worship and honour due unto him from the angels themselves.

This sense also we are led unto by the Psalm whence the ensuing testimony is taken, Psal. xcvii. The exultation which the first verse of the Psalm requires and calls for is not unlike that which was in the name of the whole creation expressed at his nativity, Luke ii. 11.

And the four following verses are an allegorical description of the work that the Lord Christ should make, in and by the preaching of the gospel; see Mal. iii. 2—4, ch. iv. 1; Matt. iii. 10; Luke ii. 24. And hereon ensues that shame and ruin which was brought upon idols and idolaters thereby, ver. 7, and the joy of the whole church in the presence of Christ, ver. 8, attended with his glorious reign in heaven, as a consequent on the accomplishment of this work, ver. 9, which is proposed as a motive unto obedience, and a matter of confidence and rejoicing unto the church. And this is the Father's bringing of the Son into the world, described by the Psalmist, and intended by the apostle.

It remains that we inquire why, and in what sense, Christ is here called *πρωτοτοκος*, primogenitus, or '*the first-born*.' The common answer is, *Non quod post illum alii, sed quod ante illum nullus*: 'Not that any was born after him,' in the same way, 'but that none was born before him;' which, as we have showed before, will agree well enough with the use of the word. And this is applied both to the eternal generation of his divine person, and to the conception and nativity of his human nature.

But if we suppose that his person and eternal generation may be intended in this expression, we must make *πρωτοτοκος*, or the '*first-born*,' to be the same with *μονογενης*, or '*only begotten*,' which may not be allowed; for Christ is absolutely called the only begotten of the Father in his eternal generation: his essence being infinite, took up the whole nature of divine filiation; so that it is impossible that with respect thereunto, there should be any more sons of God. But *πρωτοτοκος*, or *first-born*, is used in relation unto others; and yet, as I showed before, it doth not require that he who is so should have any other brethren in the same kind of sonship. But because this is by some asserted, namely, that Christ has many brethren in the same kind of sonship, whereby he is himself the Son of God, and is on that account called the first-born, which is an assertion greatly derogatory to his glory and honour, I shall in our passage remove it, as a stumblingblock out of the way.

Thus Slichtingius on the place, '*Primogenitum eum nomine Dei Filium appellat, innuens hoc pacto plures Dei esse filios etiam ad Christum respectu habito; scilicet ut ostenderet non ita Christum esse Dei Filium, quin alii etiam eodem filiationis genere contineantur, quamquam filiationis perfectione et gradu Christo multo inferiores.*' And again, '*Primogenitus dicitur Christus quod eum Deus ante omnes filios, eos nimirum qui Christi fratres appellantur, genuerit; eo scilicet modo quo Deus filios gignere solet; eos autem gignit quos sibi similes efficit: primus est Christus qui Deo ea sanctitate similis fuit, qualem in novo fœdere præcipit.*'

But these things agree neither with the truth, nor with the design of the apostle in this place, nor with the principles of them by whom they are asserted. It is acknowledged that God hath other sons besides Jesus Christ, and that with respect unto him, for in him we are adopted, the only way whereby any one may attain unto the privilege

of sonship; but that we are sons of God, with, or in the same kind of sonship with Jesus Christ, is,

1. False; because, 1. Christ in his sonship is *μονογενης*, 'the only begotten Son of God;' and therefore it is impossible that God should have any more sons in the same kind with him; for if he had, certainly the Lord Christ could not be *μονογενης*, 'his only begotten Son.' 2. The only way of filiation, the only kind of sonship that believers share in, is that of adoption: in any other kind of sonship they are not partakers. Now, if Christ be the Son of God in this kind, he must of necessity, antecedently unto his adoption, be a member of another family, that is, of the family of Satan and the world, as we are by nature, and from thence be transplanted by adoption into the family of God, which it is blasphemy to imagine. So that neither can believers be the sons of God with that kind of sonship which is proper to Christ, he being the only begotten of the Father; nor can the Lord Christ be the Son of God with the same kind of sonship as believers are, which is only by adoption, and their translation out of one family into another. So that either to exalt believers into the same kind of sonship with Christ, or to depress him into the same rank with them, is wholly inconsistent with the analogy of faith, and the principles of the gospel. 3. If this were so, that the Lord Christ and believers were the sons of God by the same kind of sonship, only differing in degrees, (which also are imaginary, for the formal reason of the same kind of sonship is not capable of variation by degrees,) what great matter is in the condescension mentioned by the apostle, ch. ii. 11, that he is not ashamed to call them brethren; which yet he compares with the condescension of God, in being called their God, ch. xi. 16.

2. This conceit, as it is untrue, so it is contrary to the design of the apostle. For to assert that the Messiah is the Son of God in the same way with men, doth not tend at all to prove him more excellent than the angels, but rather leaves us just ground of suspecting their preference above him.

3. It is contrary unto other declared principles of the authors of this assertion. They elsewhere affirm, that the Lord Christ was the Son of God on many accounts, as first and principally, because he was conceived and born of a virgin by the power of God. Now surely all believers are not partakers with him in this kind of sonship. Again, they say he is the Son of God, because God raised him from the dead, to confirm the doctrine that he had taught, which is not so with believers. Also they say he is the Son of God, and so called upon the account of his sitting at the right hand of God, which is no less his peculiar privilege than the former. So that this is but an unhappy attempt to lay hold of a word for an advantage, which yields nothing in the issue but trouble and perplexity.

Nor can the Lord Christ, which is affirmed in the last place, be called the Son of God, and the first-born, because in him was that holiness which is required in the new covenant; for both all believers under the Old Testament had that holiness and likeness unto God in their degrees, and that holiness consists principally in regeneration, or



in being born again by the word and Spirit out of a corrupted state of death and sin, which the Lord Christ was not capable of. Yea, the truth is, the holiness and image of God in Christ, was in the kind of it that which was required under the first covenant; an holiness of perfect innocence, and perfect righteousness in obedience. So that this last invention hath no better success than the former.

It appeareth, then, that the Lord Christ is not called the first-begotten, or the first-born, with any such respect unto others, as should include him and them in the same kind of filiation.

To give, therefore, a direct account of this appellation of Christ, we may observe, that indeed the Lord Christ is never absolutely called the first-begotten, or first-born, with respect either to his eternal generation, or to the conception and nativity of his human nature. In respect of the former, he is called the Son, and the only begotten Son of God; but no where the first-born, or first-begotten. And in respect of the latter, indeed, he is called the first-begotten Son of the virgin, because she had none before him, but not absolutely the first-born, or first-begotten, which title is here and elsewhere ascribed unto him in the Scripture. It is not therefore the thing itself, of being the first-born, but the dignity and privilege that attended it, which are designed in this appellation. So, Col. i. 15, he is said to be *πρωτοτοκος πασης κτισεως*, ‘the first-born of the creation,’ which is no more, but he that hath power and authority over all the creatures of God.

The word which the apostle intends to express is *בכור*, which oft-times is used in the sense now pleaded for, namely, to denote not the birth in the first place, but the privilege that belonged thereto. So Ps. lxxxix. 27, God is said to make David his *בכור*, ‘first-born,’ which is expounded in the next words, “higher than the kings of the earth.” So that the Lord Christ being the first-born, is but the same which we have insisted on, of his being heir of all, which was the privilege of the first-born. And this privilege was sometimes transmitted unto others that were not the first-born, although the natural course of their nativity could not be changed, Gen. xxi. 10, xlix. 3, 4, 8. The Lord Christ, then, by the appointment of the Father, being entrusted with the whole inheritance of heaven and earth, and with authority to dispose of it, that he might give out portions to all the rest of God’s family, is, and is called, the first-born thereof.

There remains now but one word more to be considered for the opening of this introduction of the ensuing testimony, and that is *λεγει*, ‘he saith;’ that is, ‘God himself saith;’ they are his words which shall be produced. Whatever is spoken in the Scripture in his name, it is his speaking, and he continueth to speak it unto this day. He speaks in the Scripture unto the end of the world. This is the foundation of our faith, that which it riseth from, and that which it is resolved into—God speaketh. And I suppose we need no interposition of church or tradition, to give authority or credit unto what he says or speaks.

This, then, is the sum of these words of the apostle:—Again, in another place, where the Holy Ghost foretels the bringing forth into the

world, and amongst men, him that is the Lord and Heir of all, to undertake his work, and to enter into his kingdom and glory, the Lord speaks to this purpose, "Let all the angels of God worship him."

To manifest this testimony to be apposite unto the confirmation of the apostle's assertion, three things are required.

1. That it is the Son who is intended and spoken of in the place from whence the words are taken, and so designed as the person to be worshipped.

2. That they are angels that are spoken unto, and commanded to worship him.

3. That on these suppositions, the words prove the preeminence of Christ above the angels.

For the two former, with them that acknowledge the divine authority of this Epistle, it is sufficient in general to give them satisfaction. The place is applied unto Christ, and this passage unto the ministering of angels, by the same Spirit who first wrote that Scripture. But yet there is room left for our inquiry how these things may be evidenced, whereby the strength of the apostle's reasonings with them who were not yet convinced of the infallibility of his assertions, any farther than they were confirmed by testimonies out of the Old Testament, and the faith of the ancient church of the Hebrews in this matter, may be made to appear; as also a check given to their boldness, who upon pretence of the impropriety of these allegations, have questioned the authority of the whole Epistle.

And our first inquiry must be, whence this testimony is taken. Many of the ancients, as Epiphanius, Theodoret, Euthymius, Procopius, and Anselm, conceive the words to be cited from Deut. xxxii. 43, where they expressly occur in the translation of the LXX. *Εὐφραν-  
θητε οὐρανοὶ ἅμα αὐτῷ, καὶ προσκυνήσατωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ,* 'Rejoice ye heavens with him, and let all the angels of God worship him.' But there are two considerations that put it beyond all pretensions that the words are not taken from this place of the LXX.

1. Because, indeed, there are no such words in the original text, nor any thing spoken that might give occasion to the sense expressed in them; but that whole verse is inserted in the Greek version quite besides the scope of the place. Now, though it may perhaps be safely granted, that the apostles in citing the Scripture of the Old Testament, did sometimes use the words of the Greek translation then in use, yea, though not exact according to the original, whilst the sense and meaning of the Holy Ghost was retained in them; yet, to cite that from the Scripture as the word and testimony of God, which indeed is not therein, nor was ever spoken by God, but by human failure and corruption had crept into the Greek version, is not to be imputed to them. And indeed, I no way question, but that this addition unto the Greek text in that place, was made after the apostle had used this testimony. For it is not unlikely, but that some considering of it, and not considering from whence it was taken, because the words occur not absolutely and exactly in the Greek any where, inserted it into that place of Moses, amidst other words of a similar sound, and some-

what alike in import; such as immediately precede and follow the clause inserted.

2. The Holy Ghost is not treating in that place about the introduction of the first-born into the world, but about quite another matter, as is evident upon the first view of the text; so that this testimony is evidently not taken from this place, nor would, nor could the apostle make use of a testimony liable to such just exceptions.

Later expositors generally agree, that the words are taken out of Ps. xcvii. 7, where the original is rendered by the LXX. *προσκυνησατε αυτω παντες αγγελοι αυτου*, which, with a very small variation in the words, and none at all in the sense, is here expressed by the apostle, "And let all the angels of God worship him."

The Psalm hath no title at all in the original, which the Greek version noteth, affirming that it is *ανεπιγραφος παρ' Εβραιους*; but it adds one of its own, namely, *ψαλμος τω Δαβιδ οτε η γη αυτου καθιστατο*, 'A Psalm of David, when his land was restored.' Hence, it is referred by some to the time of his return unto Jerusalem, after he had been expelled the kingdom by Absalom; by others, with more probability, to the time of his bringing the ark into the tabernacle from the house of Obed-edom, when the land was quieted before him. And unquestionably in it, the kingdom of God was shadowed out under the type of the kingdom of David; which kingdom of God was none other but that of the Messiah.

It is evident that this Psalm is of the same nature with that which goes before, yea, a part of it, or an appendix unto it. The first words of this take up and carry on what is affirmed in the tenth verse, or close of that; so that both of them are but one continued Psalm of praise. Now, the title of that Psalm, and consequently this, is *שיר שני*, 'A new Song,' which Psalms, as Rashi confesseth, are to be referred to the world to come, that is, to the time and kingdom of the Messiah. So Kimchi affirms, that this Psalm, and that following, respect the time when the people shall be delivered from the captivity out of all nations, that is, the time of the Messiah. And Rakenati affirms, that the last verse of it, "He cometh to judge the earth," can respect nothing but the coming and reign of the Messiah. Thus they, out of their traditions.

Some of the ancients, I confess, charge them with corrupting this Psalm in the version of the 10th verse, affirming that the words sometimes were *ο κυριος εβασιλευσεν απο του ξυλου*, 'The Lord reigned from the tree,' denoting, as they say, the cross. So Justin Martyr, in his Dialogue with Trypho. And after him the same words are recorded by Tertullian, Ad. Judæ. cap. 10; Ad. Marci. lib. 3; and Augustin. Enarr. in Ps. xcv. And though the fraud and corruption pretended be improbable, indeed, impossible, nor are the words mentioned by Justin acknowledged by the Targum, or any Greek translator, or Hierome; yet it is evident, that all parties granted the Messiah and his kingdom to be intended in the Psalm, or there had been no need or colour for the one to suspect the other of corruption about it. It is, then, evident, that the ancient church of the Jews, whose tradition is herein

followed by the modern, acknowledged this Psalm to contain a description of the kingdom of God in the Messiah, and on their consent doth the apostle proceed. And the next Psalm, which is of the same import with this, is entitled by the Targumist, תְּשֻׁבָּה נְבוֹאָה, 'A Prophetical Psalm,' namely, of the kingdom and reign of the Messiah.

But the matter of the Psalm itself makes it manifest, that the Holy Ghost treateth in it about God's bringing in the first-born into the world, and the setting up of his kingdom in him. A kingdom is described, wherein God would reign, which should destroy idolatry and false worship; a kingdom wherein the isles of the Gentiles should rejoice, being called to an interest therein; a kingdom that was to be preached, proclaimed, declared unto the increase of light and holiness in the world, with the manifestation of the glory of God unto the ends of the earth; every part whereof declareth the kingdom of Christ to be intended in the Psalm, and consequently that it is a prophecy of the bringing in of the first-begotten into the world.

2. Our second inquiry is, whether the angels be intended in these words. They are, as was before observed, כְּלֵי־אֱלֹהִים, *omnes dii*; and are so rendered by Hierome, 'Adorate eum omnes dii;' and by ours, 'Worship him all ye gods.' The preceding words are, 'Confounded be all they that serve graven images, מַחֲחִלִּים בְּאֱלִילִים, that boast themselves in, or of idols,'—*vanities, nothings*, as the word signifies; whereon ensues this apostrophe, 'Worship him, כְּלֵי־אֱלֹהִים, all ye gods.' And who they are, is our present inquiry.

Some, as all the modern Jews, say, that it is the gods of the Gentiles, those whom they worship, that are intended; so making אֱלֹהִים and אֱלִילִים, *gods* and *vain idols*, to be the same in this place:—But,

1. It cannot be, that the Psalmist should exhort the idols of the heathen, some whereof were devils, some dead men, some inanimate parts of the creation, unto a reverential worshipping of God reigning over all. Hence, the Targumist, seeing the vanity of that interpretation, perverts the words, and renders them, 'Worship before him all ye nations which serve idols.'

2. אֱלֹהִים, *Elohim*, is so far in this place from being exegetical of אֱלִילִים, *gods*, or *vain idols*, that it is put in direct opposition to it, as is evident from the words themselves.

3. The word *Elohim*, which most frequently denoteth the true God, doth never alone, and absolutely taken, signify false gods or idols, but only when it is joined with some other word discovering its application; as *his god*, or *their gods*, or *the gods of this or that people*; in which case it is rendered by the LXX. sometimes εἰδωλον, an idol; sometimes χειροποιητον, 'an idol made with hands, (sometimes βδελυγμα,) an abomination;' but here it hath no such limitation or restriction.

Whereas therefore there are some creatures, who by reason of some peculiar excellency and likeness unto God, or subordination unto him in his work, are called gods, it must be those, or some of them that are intended in the expression; now these are either magistrates or angels.

First, Magistrates are somewhere called *Elohim*, because of the representation they make of God in his power, and their peculiar



subordination unto him in their working. The Jews indeed contend, that no other magistrates but only those of the Great Sanhedrim are any where called gods: but that concerns not our present inquiry. Some magistrates are so called, but none of them are here intended by the Psalmist, there being no occasion administered unto him of any such apostrophe unto them.

Secondly, Angels also are called *Elohim*; λεγομενοι Θεοι, 1 Cor. viii. 5. They have the name of God attributed unto them, as we have showed before in some instances. And these alone are they whom the Psalmist speaks to. Having called on the whole creation to rejoice in the bringing forth of the kingdom of God, and pressed his exaltation upon things on the earth, he turns to the ministering angels, and calls them to the discharge of their duty unto the king of that kingdom. Hence the Targumist in the beginning of Psal. xvi, which is indeed the beginning of this, expressly mentioneth אנלי מרומא, 'his high angels,' joining in his praise and worship, using the Greek word αγγελος, for distinction sake; as on the same account it often occurs in the Targum.

We have thus evinced, that the Psalm treats about the bringing in of the first-born into the world; as also that they are the ministering angels who are here commanded to worship him.

For the command itself, and the nature of it, it consisted in these two things. 1. A declaration of the state and condition of the Messiah, which is such, as that he is a meet object of religious adoration unto the angels, and attended with peculiar motives to the discharge of their duty. The former he hath from his divine nature, the latter from his work, with his state and dignity that ensued thereon. 2. An intimation of the pleasure of God to the angels, not that divine worship was absolutely due to the Son of God, which they knew from the first instant of their creation; but that all honour and glory were due to him on the account of his work and office, as Mediator and King of his church.

3. It remaineth only that we show, that this testimony thus explained was suitable unto the apostle's design and purpose, and did prove the assertion in the confirmation whereof it is produced. Now this is a matter of so full and clear an evidence, that it will not at all detain us. For it is impossible that there should be any more clear or full demonstration of this truth, that the Lord Christ had an unspeakable pre-eminence above the angels, than this, that they are all appointed or commanded by God himself to adore him with divine and religious worship. We may now therefore consider what observations the words will afford us for our own instruction. It appears then from hence,

1. That the authority of God speaking in the Scripture, is that alone which Divine faith rests upon, and is to be resolved into 'He saith.'—It was the begetting of faith in some of the Hebrews, and the increase or establishment of it in others, that the apostle aimed at. That which he proposeth to them as the object of their faith, that which they were to believe, was that excellency of the person and kingly authority of the Messiah, wherein they had not as yet been instructed. And hereof he endeavours not to beget an opinion in them, but that faith which cannot deceive, or be deceived. To this end he

proposeth that unto them, which they ought to submit to, and which they may safely rest in. For as faith is an act of religious obedience, it respects the authority of God requiring it, and as it is a religious infallible assent of the mind, it regards the truth and veracity of God as its object. On this alone it rests, 'God saith.' And in whatever God speaks in the Scripture, his truth and authority manifest themselves to the satisfaction of faith, and nowhere else doth it find rest.

2. That for the begetting, increasing, and strengthening of faith, it is useful to have important fundamental truths confirmed by many testimonies of Scripture: 'Again he saith.'—Any one word of God is sufficient to establish the most important truth to eternity, so as to hang the salvation of all mankind thereon; neither can anything impeach or weaken what is so confirmed. No more is required in any case to make faith necessary on our part as a duty of obedience, and infallible as to the event, but that God hath by any means, by any one word, revealed that to which he requires our assent. But God dealeth not upon strict terms. Infinite condescension lies at the bottom of all wherein he hath to deal with us. He respects not what the nature of the thing strictly requires, but what is needful to our infirmity and weakness. Hence he multiplies his commands and promises, and confirms all by his oath, swearing to his truth by himself, to take away all pretence of distrust and unbelief. For this cause he multiplies testimonies to the truths wherein the concerns of his glory and our obedience do lie; as might be manifested by the consideration of instances innumerable. Thus in his name deals the apostle in this place. And this is useful to faith. For,

1. What it may be is obscure in one, is cleared in another; and so what doubts and fears remain on the consideration of one testimony are removed by another, whereby the souls of believers are carried on unto a full assurance. And therefore because such is our weakness that there is need hereof in ourselves, such is the goodness of God that there is no want of it in the word.

2. Faith discerns hereby the weight that God lays upon its embracing of the truth so testified unto. He knows our concern in it, and thereon urgeth us with its acceptance. This awakens and excites faith to attention and consideration, the eminent means of its growth and increase. It knows that it is not for nothing that the Holy Ghost thus presseth his truth upon it, and attends the more diligently upon his urgency.

3. Every testimony hath something single in it, and peculiar to it. Though many bear witness to the same truth, yet such is the fulness of the Scripture, and such the wisdom of God laid up therein, that every one of them hath also somewhat of its own, somewhat singular, tending to the enlightening and establishment of our minds. This faith makes a discovery of, and so receives peculiar profit and advantage thereby.

And this should teach us to abound in the study and search of the Scriptures, that we may thereby come to establishment in the truth. God hath thus left us many testimonies to each important truth, and he hath not done it in vain; he knows our need of it; and his

condescension in so doing, when he might have bound us up to the strictest terms, of closing with the least intimation of his will, is for ever to be admired. For us to neglect this great effect and product of the wisdom, grace, and love of God, is unspeakable folly. If we think we need it not, we make ourselves wiser than God ; if we think we do, and neglect our duty herein, we are really as unwise as the beasts that perish. Want of this fortifying of faith, by a diligent search after the testimonies given unto the truth proposed unto it to be believed, is the cause that so many every day turn away from it, and therewithal make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. Let us then never think ourselves safe in the knowledge and profession of any truth, but while we continue sincerely in the investigation of all the confirmation that God hath given it in his word. The opposition made to every truth is so various, and from so many hands, that not the least contribution of evidence unto it can be neglected with safety.

3. The whole creation of God hath a great concern in God's bringing forth Christ into the world, and his exaltation in his kingdom.—Hence in the Psalm from whence these words are taken, all the principal parts of it are called on to triumph and rejoice therein : the earth and the multitude of the isles, the heaven, and all people, are invited to this congratulation ; neither is any thing excluded but idols and idolaters, whose ruin God intends in the erection of the kingdom of Christ. And this they have ground for.

1. Because in that work consisted the principal manifestation of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God. The whole creation is concerned in the glory of the Creator. In his exaltation doth their honour, interest, and blessedness consist. For this end were they made, that God might be glorified. The more that is done by any means, the more is their end attained.

Hence the very inanimate parts of it are introduced by a *προσωποποιῖα*, 'rejoicing, exulting, shouting, and clapping their hands,' when the glory of God is manifested ; in all which, their suitableness and propensity to their proper end is declared ; as also by their being burdened and groaning under such an estate and condition of things, as doth any way eclipse the glory of their Maker. Now in this work of bringing forth the first-born, is the glory of God principally and eminently exalted. For the Lord Christ is the brightness of his glory, and in him all the treasures of wisdom, grace, and goodness, are laid up and hid. Whatever God had any other ways before parcelled out, of and concerning his glory by the works of his hands, is all, and altogether, and with an unspeakable addition of beauty and excellency, repeated in Christ.

2. The whole creation receiveth a real advancement and honour in the Son's being made the first-born of every creature, that is the especial heir and Lord of them all. Their being brought into a new dependance on the Lord Christ, is their honour, and they are exalted by becoming his possession. For after that they had lost their first original dependence on God, and their respect unto him grounded on his pronouncing of them exceeding good, that is, such as became his wisdom and power to have made, they fell under the power of the

devil, who became prince of this world by sin. Herein consisted the vanity and debasement of the creature, to which it was never willingly, or of its own accord subject. But God setting up the kingdom of Christ, and making him the first-born, the whole creation hath a right to a new glorious Lord and Master. And however any part of it may be violently for a season detained under its old bondage, yet it hath grounds of an earnest expectation of a full and total deliverance into liberty by virtue of this primogeniture of Christ Jesus.

3. Angels and men the inhabitants of heaven and earth, the principal parts of the creation, on whom God hath in an especial manner stamped his own likeness and image, are hereby made partakers of such inestimable benefits, as indispensably call for rejoicing in a way of thankfulness and gratitude. This the whole gospel declares, and therefore it needs not our particular improvement in this place.

And if this be the duty of the whole creation, it is easy to discern in what a special manner it is incumbent on them that believe, whose benefit, advantage, and glory was principally intended in this whole work of God. Should they be found wanting in this duty, God might as of old call heaven and earth to witness against them. Yea, thankfulness to God, for the bringing forth of the first-born into the world, is the sum and substance of all that obedience, which God requires at the hands of believers.

4. The command of God is the ground and reason of all religious worship. The angels are to worship the Lord Christ the Mediator, and the ground of their so doing is God's command; he saith, "Worship him all ye angels."

Now the command of God is two fold: 1. Formal and vocal; when God gives out a law or precept unto any creature superadded to the law of its creation: such was the command given unto our first parents in the garden, concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and such were all the laws, precepts, and institutions, which he afterwards gave unto his church, with those which to this day continue as the rule and reason of their obedience. 2. Real and interpretative, consisting in an impression of the mind and will of God upon the nature of his creatures, with respect unto that obedience which the state, condition, and dependance on him requireth. The very nature of an intellectual creature made for the glory of God, and placed in a moral dependance upon him, and subjection unto him, hath in it the force of a command, as to the worship and service that God requireth at their hands. But this law in man, being blotted, weakened, impaired through sin, God hath in mercy unto us collected, drawn forth, and disposed all the directions and commands of it in vocal formal precepts recorded in his word; whereunto he hath superadded sundry new commands to the institutions of his worship. With angels it is otherwise. The ingrafted law of their creation requiring of them the worship of God and obedience to his whole will, is kept and preserved entire; so that they have no need to have it expressed in vocal formal commands. And by virtue of this law they were obliged to constant and everlasting worship of the eternal Son of God, as being created and upheld in an universal dependance upon him. But now when God



brings forth his Son into the world, and placeth him in a new condition of being incarnate, and becoming so the head of his church, there is a new modification of the worship that is due to him brought in, and a new respect of things not considered in the first creation. With reference hereunto, God gives a new command unto the angels, for that peculiar kind of worship and honour, which is due unto him in that state and condition which he had taken upon himself.

This the law of their creation in general directed them unto; but in particular required not of them. It enjoined the worship of the Son of God in every condition, but that condition was not expressed. This God supplies by a new command, that is such an intimation of his mind and will unto them, as answers unto a vocal command given unto men, who by that means only may come to know the will of God. Thus in one way or other, command is the ground and cause of all worship. For,

1. All worship is obedience; obedience respects authority, and authority exerts itself in commands. And if this authority be not the authority of God, the worship performed in obedience unto it, is not the worship of God, but of him or them whose commands and authority are the reason and cause of it. It is the authority of God alone that can make any worship to be religious, or the performance of it to be an act of obedience unto him.

2. God would never allow that the will and wisdom of any of his creatures should be the rise, rule, or measure of his worship, or any part of it, or any thing that belongs unto it. This honour he hath reserved unto himself, neither will he part with it unto any other. He alone knows what becomes his own greatness and holiness, and what tends to the advancement of his glory. Hence the Scripture abounds with severe interdictions and comminations against them, who shall presume to do or appoint any thing in his worship besides or beyond his own institution.

3. All prescriptions of worship are vain, where men have not strength to perform it in a due manner, nor assurance of acceptance when it is performed. Now both these are, and must be from God alone; nor doth he give strength and ability for any thing in his worship but what himself commands; nor doth he promise to accept any thing but what is of his own appointment, so that it is the greatest folly imaginable to undertake any thing in his worship and service, but what his appointment gives warrant for.

And this should teach us in all that we have to do in the worship of God, carefully to look after his word of command and institution. Without this, all that we do is lost, as being no obedience unto God. Yea, it is an open setting up of our own wills and wisdom against him, and that in things of his own especial concernment, which is intolerable boldness and presumption. Let us deal thus with our rulers amongst men, and obey them not according to their laws but our own fancies, and see whether they will accept our persons? And is the great and holy God less to be regarded? Besides, when we have our own inventions, or the commands of other men as the ground or reason of our doing any thing, we have nothing but our own or their warrant for

its acceptance with God; and how far this will secure us, it is easy to judge.

We might hence also farther observe,

V. That the Mediator of the new covenant is in his own person God blessed for ever, to whom divine or religious worship is due from the angels themselves. As also that,

VI. The Father, upon the account of the work of Christ in the world, and his kingdom that ensued on it, gives a new commandment unto the angels to worship him, his glory being greatly concerned therein. And that,

VII. Great is the church's security and honour, when the head of it is worshipped by all the angels in heaven. As also that,

VIII. It can be no duty of the saints of the New Testament to worship angels, who are their fellow servants in the worship of Jesus Christ.

VER. 7.—HAVING in one testimony from the Scripture, expressing the subjection of angels unto the Lord Christ, signally proved this main design, the apostle proceedeth to the farther confirmation of it in the same way, and that by balancing single testimonies concerning the nature and offices of angels, with some others concerning the same things in the Lord Christ of whom he treats. And the first of these relating unto angels, he lays down in the next verse.

VER. 7.—Και προς μεν τους αγγελους λεγει 'Ο ποιων τους αγγελους αυτου πνευματα, και τους λειτουργους αυτου πυρος φλογα.

There is not much of difficulty in the words: *προς αγγελους*, 'unto the angels.' Syr. מלכא לך, 'of or concerning the angels.' לך is often used for לך, and on the contrary, and *προς* for *περι*, so that *προς τους αγγελους*, 'to the angels,' is as much as *περι των αγγελων*, 'of or concerning the angels,' 'but as concerning the angels,' or 'and of the angels he saith;' for these words are not spoken unto the angels, as the following words are directly spoken unto the Son; he is the person as well spoken to, as spoken of, but so are not the angels in the place from whence this testimony is taken, wherein the Holy Ghost only declareth the providence of God concerning them.

Λεγει, he saith, that is, God the Father saith, or the Holy Ghost in the Scripture saith, as was before observed.

*Τους λειτουργους*. *Λειτουργος*, is *minister publicus*, a 'public minister,' or agent, from *ληιτος*, which is the same with *δημοσιος*, as Hesychius renders it 'public.' He that is employed in any great or public work is *λειτουργος*. Hence, of old, magistrates were termed *λειτουργοι θεων*, as they are by Paul, *διακονοι Θεου*, Rom. xiii. 4. "The ministers of God." And chap. viii. 2, of this Epistle, he calls the Lord Jesus in respect of his priestly office, *των αγιων λειτουργον*, 'the public minister of holy things;' and himself, in respect of his apostleship, *λειτουργον Ιησου Χριστου*, Rom. xv. 16, "a minister of Jesus Christ." So the name is on this account *æquipollent* unto that

of angels ; for as that denoteth the mission of those spirits unto their work, so doth this their employment therein.

This testimony is taken from Psal. civ. 5, where the words are to the same purpose. עָשָׂה מִלֵּאכָיו רוּחוֹת מְשֻׁרָתָיו אֵשׁ לֶהֱטֹא. The translation now in the Greek is the same with that of the apostle, only for πυρος φλογα, 'a flame of fire,' some copies have it πυρ φλεγον, 'a flaming fire,' more express to the original ; and the change probably was made in the copies from this place of the apostle ; Symmachus, πυρ λαξρον, 'a devouring fire.'

VER. 7.—*But unto (of) the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire, or flaming fire.*

The apostle here entereth upon his third argument to prove the preeminence of the Lord Christ above angels, and that by comparing them together, either as to their natures, or as to their employments, according as the one and the other is set forth, declared and testified to in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. And this first place which he refers unto angels, we shall now explain and vindicate. And in so doing, inquire both who they are of whom the Psalmist speaks, and what it is that he affirmeth of them.

There is a threefold sense given of the words of the Psalmist, as they lie in the Hebrew text.

1. The first is that of the modern Jews, who deny that there is any mention made of angels ; affirming the subject that the Psalmist treats of to be the winds, with thunder and lightning, which God employs as his messengers and ministers to accomplish his will and pleasure. So he made the winds his messengers when he sent them to raise a storm on Jonah, when he fled from his presence ; and a flaming fire his minister, when by it he consumed Sodom and Gomorrah ; and this opinion makes רוּחוֹת, which it interprets 'winds,' and אֵשׁ לֶהֱטֹא, 'a flaming fire,' to be the subject of the proposition, of which it is affirmed that God employs them as his messengers and ministers.

That this opinion, which is directly contradictory to the authority of the apostle, is also contrary to the design of the Psalmist, to the sense of the words, to the consent of the ancient Jews, and so no way to be admitted, shall afterwards be made to appear.

2. Some aver that the winds and meteors are principally intended, but yet so, as that God affirming that he makes the winds his messengers, doth also intimate that it is the work and employment of his angels above to be his messengers also ; and that because he maketh use of their ministry to cause those winds and fires, whereby he accomplisheth his will. And this they illustrate by the fire and winds caused by them on mount Sinai, at the giving of the law.

But this interpretation, whatever is pretended to the contrary, doth not really differ from the former ; denying angels to be intentionally spoken of, only looking in a respect unto them, not to seem to contradict the apostle ; and therefore this will be disproved together with that which went before.

3. Others grant, that it is the angels of whom the apostle treats, but as to the interpretation of the words, they are of two opinions.

Some make spirits to be the subject of what is affirmed, and angels to be the predicate. In this sense, God is said to make those spiritual substances inhabitants of heaven his messengers, employing them in in his service, and them whose nature is a flaming fire, that is, the seraphims to be his ministers, and to accomplish his pleasure. And this way, after Austin, go many expositors, making the term 'angels' here merely to denote an employment, and not the persons employed. But as this interpretation also takes off from the efficacy and evidence of the apostle's argument, so we shall see that there is nothing in the words themselves, which should lead us to embrace it.

It remains therefore, that it is the angels who are here spoken of, as also that they are intended and designed by that name, which denotes their persons and not their employment.

1st. That angels are primarily intended by the Psalmist, contrary to the first opinion of the modern Jews, and the second mentioned leaning thereunto, appears,

1. From the scope and design of the Psalmist. For designing to set out the glory of God in his works of creation and providence, after he had declared the framing of all things by his power, which come under the name of heaven, ver. 2, 3, before he proceeds to the creation of the earth, passing over, with Moses, the creation of angels, or couching it with him under the production of light, or of the heavens, as they are called in Job; he declareth his providence and sovereignty in employing his angels between heaven and earth, as his servants for the accomplishment of his pleasure. Neither doth it at all suit his method or design, in his enumeration of the works of God, to make mention of the winds and tempests, and their use in the earth, before he had mentioned the creation of the earth itself; which follows in the verse next unto this; so that these senses are included by the context of the Psalm.

2. The consent of the ancient Jews lies against the sentiments of the modern; both the old translations either made or embraced by them, expressly refer the words unto angels. So doth that of the LXX. as is evident from the words; and so doth the Targum thus rendering the place, דעבד אונגרוי סרהובין ה'ך רוחא שמשוי תקיפין ה'ך אשא מצלהבא, 'who maketh his messengers or angels swift as spirits, and his ministers strong or powerful, as a flaming fire.' The supply of the note of similitude makes it evident that they understood the text of angels, and not of winds; and of making angels as spirits, and not of making winds to be angels or messengers, which is inconsistent with their words.

3. The word מלאכים, doth usually denote the angels themselves, and no reason can be given why it should not do so in this place.

2d. Moreover it appears that that term is the subject of the proposition. For,

1. The apostle, and the LXX. fixing the articles before αγγελους, and λειτουργους, 'angels,' and 'ministers,' do plainly determine the subject spoken of. For although some variety may perhaps be ob-



served in the use of articles in other places, so that they do not always determine the subject of the proposition, as sometimes confessedly they do, as John i. 1, iv. 24; yet in this place, where in the original all the words are left indefinitely, without any prefix to direct the emphasis unto any one of them, the fixing them in the translation of the apostle, and LXX. must necessarily design the subject of them, or else by the addition of the article, they leave the sense much more ambiguous than before, and give occasion to a great mistake in the interpretation of the words.

2. The apostle speaks of angels, "Unto the angels he saith;" and in all other testimonies produced by him, that whereof he treats, hath the place of the subject spoken of, and not of that which is attributed unto any thing else. Neither can the words be freed from equivocation, if angels in the first place denote the persons of the angels, and in the latter their employment only.

3. The design and scope of the apostle require this construction of the words; for his intention is to prove by this testimony, that the angels are employed in such works and services, and in such a manner as that they are no way to be compared with the Son of God, in respect of that office which as mediator he hath undertaken, which the sense and construction contended for alone doth prove.

4. The original text requires this sense, for according to the common use of that language, among words indefinitely used, the first denotes the subject spoken of, which is angels here; עֲשֵׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחִים, 'making his angels spirits;' and in such propositions oft-times some note of similitude is to be understood, without which the sense is not complete, and which, as I have shown, the Targum supplieth in this place.

From what hath been said, I suppose it is made evident, both that the Psalmist expressly treats of angels, and that the subject spoken of by the apostle is expressed in that word, and that following of ministers.

Our next inquiry is after what is affirmed concerning these angels and ministers spoken of; and that is, that God makes them spirits and a flame of fire. And concerning the meaning of these words, there are two opinions.

First. That the creation of angels is intended in the words: and that the nature whereof they were made is expressed in them. He made them spirits, that is, of a spiritual substance; and his heavenly ministers quick, powerful, agile, as a flaming fire. Some carry this sense farther, and affirm that two sorts of angels are intimated; one of an aerial substance like the wind, and the other igneal or fiery; denying all pure intelligences without mixture of matter, as the product of the school of Aristotle.

But this seems not to be the intention of the words: nor is the creation of the angels, or the substance whereof they consist, here expressed. For,

1. The analysis of the Psalm formerly touched on, requires the referring of these words to the providence of God employing of the angels, and not to his power in making them.

2. The apostle in this place hath nothing to do with the essence and nature of the angels, but with their dignity, honour, and employment, on which accounts he preferreth the Lord Christ before them. Wherefore,

Secondly. The providence of God, in disposing and employing of angels in his service is intended in these words; and so they may have a double sense.

1. That God employeth his angels and heavenly ministers in the production of those *winds*, רווח and *fire*, אש להט, thunder and lightning, whereby he executeth many judgments in the world.

2. A note of similitude may be understood to complete the sense, which is expressed in the Targum on the Psalm: "He maketh," or sendeth 'his angels like the winds, or like a flaming fire;' maketh them speedy, spiritual, agile, powerful, quickly and effectually accomplishing the work that is appointed unto them.

Either way this is the plain intention of the Psalm, that God useth and employeth his angels in effecting the works of his providence here below, and that they were made to serve the providence of God in that way and manner. This, saith the apostle, is the testimony which the Holy Ghost gives concerning them, their nature, duty, and work wherein they serve the providence of God. But now, saith he, consider what the Scripture saith concerning the Son, how it calls him God, how it ascribes a throne and a kingdom unto him, (testimonies whereof he produceth in the next verses,) and you will easily discern his preeminence above them.

But before we proceed to the consideration of the ensuing testimonies, we may make some observations on that which we have already passed through: as,

I. Our conceptions of the angels, their nature, office, and work, is to be regulated by the Scripture.

The Jews of old had many curious speculations about angels, wherein they greatly pleased, and greatly deceived themselves. Wherefore the apostle, in his dealing with them, calls them off from all their foolish imaginations, to attend to those things which God hath revealed in his word concerning them. This the Holy Ghost saith of them, and therefore this we are to receive and believe, and this alone: For,

1. This will keep us unto that becoming sobriety in things above us, which the Scripture greatly commends, and which is exceedingly suited to right reason. The Scripture minds us, μη υπερφρονειν παρ' ο δει φρονειν, αλλα φρονειν εις το σωφρονειν, Rom. xii. 3, 'To keep ourselves within the bounds of modesty, and to be wise to sobriety.' And the rule of that sobriety is given us for ever, Deut. xxix. 28. הַסֵּתֶר לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַגִּלּוֹת לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ, "Secret things belong to the Lord our God, but revealed things to us and our children." Divine revelation is the rule and measure of our knowledge in these things, and that bounds and determines our sobriety. And hence the apostle, condemning the curiosity of men on this very subject about angels, makes the nature of their sin to consist in exceeding these bounds, by an inquiry into things unrevealed; and he makes the rise of that evil

to lie in pride, vanity, and fleshliness, and the tendency of it to be unto false worship, superstition and idolatry, Col. ii. 18. Neither is there any thing more averse from right reason, nor more condemned by wise men of former times, than a curious humour of prying into those things wherein we are not concerned; and for whose investigation we have no certain, honest, lawful rule or medium, And this evil is increased where God himself hath given bounds to our inquiries, as in this case he hath.

2. This alone will bring us unto any certainty and truth. While men indulge their own imaginations and fancies, as too many in this matter have been apt to do, it is sad to consider how they have wandered up and down, and with what fond conceits they have deceived themselves and others. The world hath been filled with monstrous opinions and doctrines about angels, their nature, offices, and employments: some have worshipped them, others pretended I know not what communion and intercourse with them; in all which conceits there hath been little of truth, and nothing at all of certainty. Whereas if men, according to the example of the apostle, would keep themselves to the word of God, as they would know enough in this matter for the discharging of their own duty, so they would have assurance and evidence of truth in their conceptions, without which pretended high and raised notions, are but a shadow of a dream, worse than professed ignorance.

II. We may hence observe, That the glory, honour, and exaltation of angels, lies in their subserviency to the providence of God.—It lies not so much in their nature, as in their work and service. The intention of the apostle is to show the glory of angels and their exaltation, which he doth by the induction of this testimony, reporting their serviceableness in the works wherein they are employed by God. God hath endowed the angels with a very excellent nature; furnished them with many eminent properties of wisdom, power, agility, perpetuity; but yet what is thus glorious and honourable herein, consists not merely in their nature itself, and in its essential properties, all which abide in the horridest and most to be detested part of the whole creation, namely, the devils; but in their conformity and answerableness unto the mind and will of God, that is in their moral, not merely natural endowments. These make them amiable, glorious, excellent. Unto this their readiness for and compliance with the will of God, that God having made them for his service, and employing them in his work, their discharge of their duty therein, with cheerfulness, alacrity, readiness, and ability, is that which renders them truly honourable and glorious. Their readiness and ability to serve the providence of God, is their glory.

1. The greatest glory that any creature can be made partaker of, is to serve the will, and set forth the praise of its Creator. That is its order and tendency towards its principal end, in which two, all true honour consists. It is glorious even in the angels to serve the God of glory; what is there above this for a creature to aspire to? what that its nature is capable of? Those among the angels, who, as it seems, attempted somewhat farther, somewhat higher, attained nothing but an endless ruin in shame and misery. Men are ready to fancy strange

things about the glory of angels, and do little consider, that all the difference in glory that is in any of the parts of God's creation, lies merely in willingness, ability, and readiness to serve God their Creator.

2. The works wherein God employs them in a subservience to his providence, are in an especial manner glorious works. For the service of angels, as it is intimated unto us in the Scripture, it may be reduced to two heads. For they are employed either in the communication of protection and blessings to the church, or in the execution of the vengeance and judgments of God against his enemies. Instances to both these purposes may be multiplied; but they are commonly known. Now these are glorious works. God in them eminently exalts his mercy and justice, the two properties of his nature, in the execution whereof he is most eminently exalted; and from these works ariseth all that revenue of glory and praise which God is pleased to reserve to himself from the world; so that it must needs be very honourable to be employed in these works.

3. They perform their duty in their service in a very glorious manner with great power, wisdom, and uncontrollable efficacy. Thus one of them slew 145,000 of the enemies of God in a night; another destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven. Of the like power and expedition are they in all their services; in all things to the utmost capacity of creatures answering the will of God. God himself, it is true, sees that in them, and in their works, which keeps them short of absolute purity and perfection, which are his own properties; but as to the capacity of mere creatures, and for their state and condition, there is a perfection in their obedience, and that is their glory.

Now, if this be the great glory of angels, and we poor worms of the earth are invited as we are into a participation with them therein, what unspeakable folly will it be in us, if we be found negligent in labouring to attain thereunto. Our future glory consists in this, that we shall be made like unto angels; and our way towards it is to do the will of our Father on earth, as it is done by them in heaven. Oh in how many vanities doth vain man place his glory! Nothing so shameful that one or other hath not gloried in, while the true and only glory of doing the will of God, is neglected by almost all. But we must treat again of these things upon the last verse of this chapter.

Ver. 8, 9.—Having given an account of what the Scripture teacheth and testifieth concerning angels, in the following verses he sheweth how much other things; and far more glorious, are spoken to and of the Son, by whom God revealed his will in the gospel.

Ver. 8, 9.—Προς δε τον υιον· Ὁ ἔθρονος σου, ὁ Θεος, εἰς τον αιωνα του αιωνος· ῥαβδος ευθυτητος ἢ ῥαβδος της βασιλειας σου· Ηγαπησας δικαιοσυνην, και εμισησας ανομιαν, δια τουτο εχρισε σε ὁ Θεος, ὁ Θεος σου, ελαιον αγαλλιασεως παρα τους μετοχους σου. M. S. T. ἢ ῥαβδος ευθυτητος; and for ανομιαν, αδικιαν.

Προς δε τον υιον, *but unto the Son.* Syr. אמר בראך על, *but of the Son*



he saith; which is necessarily supplied as to the apostle's design. In the Psalm, the words are spoken by way of apostrophe to the Son; and they are recited by the apostle as spoken of him; that is, so spoken to him as to continue a description of him, and his state or kingdom.

Ὁ θρονος σου, ὁ Θεος, εἰς τον αἰωνα του αἰωνος, Psal. xlv. 7, is the place from whence the words are taken. כסאך אלהים עולם ועד. The LXX. render these words as the apostle. Aquila, ὁ θρονος σου Θεε εἰς αἰωνα και ετι: Θεε, for ὁ Θεος: 'Thy throne O God for ever and yet.' Symmachus, ὁ θρονος σου, ὁ Θεος, αἰωνιος και ετι, 'Thy throne O God is everlasting and yet;' and that because it is not said לעולם, but עולם, absolutely; ὁ Θεος, Θεε, as in the translation of Aquila.

כסא is a kingly throne; nor is it ever used in Scripture for מושב, a common seat. Metonymically it is used for power and government, and that frequently. The LXX. almost constantly render it by θρονος, and θρονος is ελευθεριος καθεδρα συν υποποδιω, Athenæ. lib. 5. 'A free open seat with a footstool.' And such a throne is here properly assigned unto the Lord Christ, mention of his footstool being immediately subjoined. So God says of himself, 'Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool;' as the heathen termed heaven, Διως θρονον, 'the throne of God.'

Thy throne, O God, עולם ועד, In seculum et usque; in sempiternum et perpetuo; in seculum seculorum. The duration denoted by the conjunction of both these words, is mostly an absolute perpetuity, and a certain uninterrupted continuance where the subject spoken of admits a limitation. Many of the Greek interpreters render ετι by ετι, attending to the sound rather than the use and signification of the word; so is yet in our language. This we express by *for ever and ever*.

Ραβδος ευθυτητος ἡ ραβδος βασιλειας σου; the variation of ἡ ραβδος in the first place before mentioned, takes off from the elegance of the expression, and darkens the sense; for the article prefixed to the last ραβδος declares that to be the subject of the proposition.

The words of the Psalmist are, שבט מישר שבט מלכותך, Shebet is Virga and Sceptrum, and in this place it is rendered by Aquila, σκηπτρον, a rod, a staff, a sceptre; always a sceptre when referred to rule, as in this place it is called, 'the sceptre of the kingdom.'

A sceptre מישר, from ישר rectus fuit, to be right, straight; upright principally in moral sense; ευθυτητος, of uprightness. Ευθυτης is properly such a rectitude as we call straight, opposed to crooked; and metaphorically only is it used for moral uprightness, that is, equity and righteousness. Syr. שבטא פשיטא. Boderianus, Sceptrum erectum, 'a sceptre lifted up, or held upright.' The Paris edition, Sceptrum protensum, 'a sceptre stretched out;' and the stretching out of the sceptre was a sign and token of mercy, Esth. v. 2. Tremellius, Virga recta, which answers mishor in both its acceptations. Erpenius to the same purpose, Sceptrum rectum, 'a right sceptre.'

Thou hast loved righteousness and hated רשע, ανομιαν, αδικιαν, iniquity, unrighteousness wickedness; δια τουτο, על-כן, propterea propter quod, quare, ideo, idcirco; 'wherefore, for which cause.' Some copies of the LXX. and Aquila, read επι τουτω, so that δια τουτο seems to have

been taken into the LXX. from this rendering of the words by the apostle.

Ἐχρίσε σε ὁ Θεός, ὁ Θεός σου, ελαιον αγαλλιασεως, תָּהֵאֵלֵךְ אֵלֶיךָ מִשְׁחָא שֶׁמֶן, *God, thy God, hath anointed thee.* The words in Greek and Hebrew are those from whence the names of Christ and Messiah are taken, which are of the same import and signification, the anointed One. And the same is expressed by the Targumist. Aquila has ἐλεῖψε.

*Hath anointed thee, ελαιον αγαλλιασεως*, the instrument in doing of the thing intended, expressed by the accusative case; whereof there are other instances in that language. Of old the LXX. read ελαιον αγαλῆσμον, ‘with the oil of delight, or ornament;’ so that ελαιον αγαλλιασεως came also into the Greek version from this place of the apostle, and is more proper than the old reading, ‘the oil of rejoicing, joy, or gladness.’

Παρα τοὺς μετοχοὺς σου, תְּרַבְּרָא before, or above those that partake with thee: thy fellows or companions. So Symmachus, τοὺς ἑταίρους σου.

Ver. 8, 9.—*But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever, the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, wherefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

This testimony is produced by the apostle in answer to that foregoing concerning angels. Those words, saith he, were spoken by the Holy Ghost of the angels, wherein their office and employment under the providence of God is described. These are spoken by the same Spirit, of the Son, or spoken to him; denoting his existence before the prophecies themselves.

There is little or no difficulty to prove that this testimony belongs properly to him, to whom it is applied by the apostle. The ancient Jews granted it, and the present doctors cannot deny it. One of them says indeed, וְהוּא הַמְּשִׁיחַ עַל דָּוִד אִם עַל הַמְּשִׁיחַ ‘This Psalm is spoken of David or the Messiah.’ These are the words, and this is the opinion of Aben Ezra, who accordingly endeavours to give a double sense of the chief passages in this Psalm; one as applied unto David, another as applied unto the Messiah, which he inclines to. Jarchi turns it into an allegory, without any tolerable sense throughout his discourse. But though it might respect them both, yet there is no pretence to make David the subject of it; the title and whole contexture of it excluding such an application.

The Targum applied the Psalm wholly to the Messiah, which is somewhat a better evidence of the conception of the ancient Jews, than the private opinion of any later writer can give us. And the title of the Psalm in that paraphrase, would make it a prophecy given out in the days of Moses, for the use of the Sanhedrim; which manifests of what account it was of old in their creed concerning the Messiah.

Some Christian interpreters have so far assented unto the latter

rabbins, as to grant that Solomon was primarily intended in this Psalm as a type of Christ ; and that the whole was an Epithalamium, or marriage song, composed upon his nuptials with the daughter of Pharaoh. But there want not important reasons against this opinion. For,

1. It is not probable that the Holy Ghost should celebrate that marriage, which, as it was antecedently forbidden by God, so consequently it was never blessed by him, she being among the number of those strange women which turned his heart from God, and was cursed with barrenness. And it deserves to be noticed, that the first foreign breach that came upon his family, and upon all his magnificence, was also from Egypt, where his transgression began.

2. There is scarce any thing in the Psalm that can with propriety of speech be applied unto Solomon. Two things are especially insisted on in the former part of the Psalm ; first, the righteousness of the person spoken of in all his ways and administrations, and then the perpetuity of his kingdom. How the first of these can be attributed unto him, whose transgressions and sins were so public and notorious ; or the latter to him who reigned but forty years, and then left his kingdom, broken and divided, to a wicked foolish son, it is hard to conceive.

As all then grant that the Messiah is principally, so there is no cogent reason to prove that he is not solely intended in this Psalm. I will not contend but that sundry things treated of in it, might be obscurely typified in the kingdom and magnificence of Solomon ; yet it is certain, that most of the things mentioned, and expressions of them, do so immediately and directly belong unto the Lord Christ, as that they can in no sense be applied unto the person of Solomon ; and such are the words insisted on in this place by our apostle, as will be made evident in the ensuing explication of them.

We must then, in the next place, consider what it is that the apostle intends to prove and confirm by this testimony, whereby we shall discover its suitableness unto his design. Now this is not, as some have supposed, the deity of Christ, nor doth he make use of that directly in this place, (though in the next verse he uses it as a medium to prove his preeminence above the angels,) although the testimonies which he produceth do eminently mention his divine nature. But that which he designs to evince is this only, that he whom they saw for a time made lower than the angels, ch. ii. 10, was yet in his whole person, and as he discharged the office committed to him, so far above them, as that he had power to alter and change those institutions which were given out by the ministry of angels. And this he doth undeniably by the testimonies alleged, as they are compared together. For whereas the Scripture testifies concerning angels, that they are all servants, and that their chief glory consists in the discharge of their duty as servants ; unto him a throne, rule, and everlasting dominion, administered with glory, power, righteousness, and equity, are ascribed. Whence it is evident, that he is exceedingly exalted above them, as is a king on his throne above the servants that attend him, and do his pleasure.

And this is sufficient to manifest the design of the apostle, as also the evidence of his argument from this testimony. The exposition of the words belongs properly to the place from whence they are taken. But yet that we may not leave the reader unsatisfied as to any particular difficulty that may seem to occur in them, this exposition shall be here also inserted.

The first thing to be attended to in them, is the compellation of the first person spoken unto, *O God: thy throne, O God.*

Some would have *Elohim* (ὁ Θεός) to be a name common to God with others, namely angels and judges, and in that large acceptation to be here ascribed to the Lord Christ; so that although he be expressly called *Elohim*, and ὁ Θεός, yet that proves him not to be God by nature, but only to be so termed in respect of his office, dignity, and authority; and this is contended for by the Socinians. But this gloss is contrary to the perpetual use of the Scripture; for no one place can be instanced in, where the name *Elohim* is used absolutely, and restrained unto any one person, wherein it doth not undeniably denote the true and only God. Magistrates are indeed said to be *Elohim* in respect of their office, but no one magistrate was ever so called, nor can a man say without blasphemy to any of them, 'Thou art *Elohim* or God.' Moses also is said to be *Elohim*, a god, but not absolutely, but a God to Pharaoh, and to Aaron; that is, in God's stead doing and performing in the name of God what he had commanded him. These places Jarchi produceth in his comment, to countenance this sense, but in vain.

It is then the true God that is spoken to in this apostrophe, *Elohim*, 'O God.' This being granted Erasmus starts a new interpretation of the whole words, though he seemeth not to approve of his own invention: ὁ Ἰσχυρὸς σου ὁ Θεός, 'It is uncertain,' saith he, 'whether the meaning be *Thy throne, O God*, or *God is thy throne for ever*.' In the first way, the word is an apostrophe to the Son, in the latter it expresseth the person of the Father. And this interpretation is embraced and improved by Grotius, who granting that the word *Elohim* used absolutely signifieth as much as *Elohe Elohim*, 'The God of gods,' would not allow that it should be spoken of Christ, and therefore renders the words, 'God shall be thy seat for ever,' that is, shall establish thee in thy throne. And this evasion is also fixed on by Aben-Ezra, from Hagaon, כִּסֵּאֲךָ יֵכֵן אֱלֹהִים, 'God shall establish thy throne.' If men may be allowed thus to thrust in what words they please into the text, leading to another sense than what itself expresseth, there will not much be left certain in the whole book of God. However, in this present instance, we have light enough to rebuke the boldness of this attempt. For the interpretation insisted on is, 1. Contrary to all old translations, whose language would bear a difference in the word, expressing it in the vocative case, 'O God.' 2. Contrary to the received sense of Jews and Christians of old, and especially of the Targum on the Psalm, which renders the words, 'Thy throne, O God, is in heaven for ever.' 3. Contrary to the texture and design of the apostle's discourses, as may appear from the



consideration of the preceding enarration of them. 4. Leaves no tolerable sense unto the words; neither can they who embrace it declare in what sense God is the throne of Christ. 5. Is contrary to the constant use of the expression in all the Scripture; for wherever there is mention of the throne of Christ, somewhat else, and not God, is intended thereby. 6. The word (*SHALL ESTABLISH*) supplied by Grotius from Saadias and Aben-Ezra, to induce a sense to his exposition, makes a new text, or leads the old utterly from the intention of the words. For whereas it cannot be said, that God is the throne of Christ, nor was there any need to say, that God was for ever and ever, which two things must take up the whole intention of the words, if God the Father be spoken of; the adding of *shall establish* or *confirm* into the text, gives it an arbitrary sense, and such as by the like suggestion of any other word (as *shall destroy*) may be rendered quite of another import.

It is Christ then, the Son, that is spoken to and denoted by that name *Elohim*, 'O God,' as being the true God by nature, though what is here affirmed of him be not as God, but as the king of his church and people; as in another place, God is said to redeem his church with his own blood.

Secondly. We may consider what is assigned to him, which is his kingdom; and that is described, 1. by the *insignia regalia*, the royal ensigns of it, namely his throne and sceptre. 2. By its duration—it is for ever. 3. His manner of administration, it is with righteousness—his sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. 4. His furniture or preparation for this administration—he loved righteousness and hated iniquity. 5. By an adjunct privilege—unction with the oil of gladness: Which, 6. is exemplified by a comparison with others: it is so with him—above his fellows.

The first *insigne regium* mentioned is his throne, whereunto the attribute of perpetuity is annexed—it is for ever. And this throne denotes the kingdom itself. A throne is the seat of a king in his kingdom, and is frequently used metonymically for the kingdom itself, and that applied unto God and man; see Dan. vii. 9; 1 Kings viii. 25. Angels indeed are called *thrones*, Col. i. 16; but that is either metaphorically only, or else in respect of some especial service allotted to them; as they are also called *princes*, Dan. x. 13, yet being indeed *servants*, Rev. xxii. 9; Heb. i. 14. These are no where said to *have thrones*; the kingdom is not theirs but the Son's. And whereas our Lord Jesus Christ promiseth his apostles that they shall at the last day sit on thrones judging the tribes of Israel, as it proves their participation with Christ in his kingly power, being made kings unto God, Rev. i. 5, and their interest in the kingdom which it is his pleasure to give them, so it proves not absolutely that the kingdom is theirs, but his on whose throne theirs do attend.

Neither doth the throne simply denote the kingdom of Christ, or his supreme rule and dominion; but the glory also of his kingdom, being on his throne, he is in the height of his glory. And thus because God manifests his glory in heaven, he calls that his throne, as the earth is

his footstool, Isa. lxvi. 1. So that the throne of Christ is his glorious kingdom, elsewhere expressed by his sitting down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Secondly. To this throne eternity is attributed; it is עולם ועד, 'for ever and ever.' So is the throne of Christ said to be in opposition unto the frail mutable kingdoms of the earth. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth and for ever," Isa. ix. 7. "His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," Dan. vii. 14; Micah iv. 7; Psa. lxxii. 7, 17; Psa. cxlv. 13. It shall neither decay of itself, nor fail through the opposition of its enemies; for he must reign until all his enemies are made his footstool, 1 Cor. xv. 24—27. Nor is it any impeachment of the perpetuity of the kingdom of Christ, that at the last day he shall deliver it up to God the Father," 1 Cor. xv. 24, seeing that then shall be an end of all rule. It is enough that it continue until all the ends of rule be perfectly accomplished; that is, until all the enemies of it be subdued, and all the church be saved, and the righteousness, grace, and patience of God, be fully glorified; whereof afterwards.

Thirdly. The second *insigne regium*, is his sceptre. And this, though it sometimes also denote the kingdom itself, Gen. xlix. 10; Numb. xxiv. 17; Isa. xiv. 5; Zech. x. 11: yet here it denotes the actual administration of rule, as is evident from the adjunct of uprightness annexed to it. And thus the sceptre denotes both the laws of the kingdom, and the efficacy of the government itself. So that which we call a righteous government, is here called a sceptre of uprightness.

Now the means whereby Christ carrieth on his kingdom, are his word and Spirit, with a subserviency of power in the works of his providence, to make way for the progress of his word to avenge its contempt. So the gospel is called, "The rod of his strength," Psa. cx. 2. See 2 Cor. x. 4—6. "He smites the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slays the wicked with the breath of his lips," Isa. xi. 4. And these are attended with the sword of his power and providence, Psa. xlv. 3; Rev. xix. 15, or his rod, Psa. ii. 8, or sickle, Rev. xiv. 18. In these things consists the sceptre of Christ's kingdom.

Fourthly. Concerning this sceptre it is affirmed, that it is a sceptre of uprightness. *Ευθυτης*, or *מישר*, denotes either the *nature* of the sceptre, that is straight and right, or the *use* of it, that it is lifted up or stretched out, as was showed in the opening of the words. In the first sense it denoteth righteousness, in the latter mercy. According to the first sense, the following words, "Thou hast loved righteousness," discover the habitual root of his actual righteous administration. According to the latter, there is a progress made in them to a farther qualification of the rule of Christ, or of Christ in his rule. But the former sense is rather to be embraced; the latter metaphor being more strained, and founded only in one instance that I remember in the

Scripture, and that not taken from among the people of God, but strangers and oppressors, Esther v. 2.

The sceptre then of the kingdom of Christ is a sceptre of righteousness, because all the laws of his gospel are righteous, holy, just, full of benignity and truth, Titus ii. 11, 12. And all his administration of grace, mercy, justice, rewards, and punishments, according to the rules, promises, and threats of it, in the conversion, pardon, sanctification, trials, afflictions, chastisements, and preservation of his elect; in his convincing, hardening, and destruction of his enemies; are all righteous, holy, unblameable, and good, Isa. xi. 4—6, xxxii. 1; Ps. cxlv. 17; Rev. xv. 3, 4, xvi. 5; and as such will they be gloriously manifested at the last day, 2 Thess. i. 10, though in this present world they are reproached and despised.

Fifthly, The habitual frame of the heart of Christ in his regal administrations—He loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity. This shows the absolute completeness of the righteousness of Christ's kingdom, and of his righteousness in his kingdom. The laws of his rule are righteous, and his administrations are righteous, and they all proceed from an habitual love to righteousness, and hatred of iniquity in his own person. Among the governments of this world, oft-times the very laws are tyrannical, unjust, and oppressive; and if the laws are good and equal, yet oft-times their administration is unjust, partial, and wicked; or when men do abstain from such exorbitancies, yet frequently they do so upon the account of some self-interest and advantage, like Jehu, and not out of a constant, equal, unchangeable love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity; but all these are absolutely complete in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. For whereas the expression both in the Hebrew and the Greek seems to regard the time past, "thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity," yet the constant present frame of the heart of Christ in his rule is denoted thereby; for the Greek translation exactly followeth and expresseth the Hebrew. Now there being no form of verbs in that language expressing the present time, there is nothing more frequent in it than to denote that which is present and abiding, by the præterperfect tense, as it doth in this place.

Sixthly, The consequence of this righteous rule in Christ, is his anointing with the oil of gladness; wherein we may consider, 1. The Author of the privilege conferred on him; that is, *God, his God*. 2. The privilege itself—unction with the oil of gladness. 3. The connection of the collation of this privilege with what went before; *wherefore*, or for which cause.

1. For the Author of it, it is said to be God—ὁ Θεός, ὁ Θεός σου, 'God, thy God.' Many both ancient and modern expositors do suppose, that ὁ Θεός, in the first place, or *God*, is used in the same sense as ὁ Θεός in the verse foregoing, and that it ought to be rendered 'O God,' and the words to be read therefore, 'O God, thy God hath anointed thee;' but as no old translation gives countenance to this conception, so that reduplication of the name of God, by an application of it in the second place, as 'God my God—God thy God—God

the God of Israel,' being frequent in the Scripture, there is no cogent reason why we should depart in this place from that sense of the expression. The name God, in the first place denotes him absolutely who conferred this privilege on the Lord Christ, that is God; and in the second place, a reason is intimated of the collation itself, by an appropriation of God to be his God in a peculiar manner.

God is said to be the God of the Son, upon a threefold account: 1. In respect of his divine nature; as he is his Father, so his God, whence he is said to be God of God; as having his nature communicated unto him by virtue of his eternal generation, John i. 14. 2. In respect of his human nature, as he was made of a woman, made under the law, so God also was his God, as he is the God of all creatures, Ps. xvi. 2, xxii. 1. 3. In respect of his whole person, God and man, as he was designed by his Father to the work of mediation; in which sense he calls him his God and his Father, John xx. 17. And in this last sense is it, that God is here said to be his God; that is, his God in especial covenant, as he was designed and appointed to be the Head and King of his church. For therein did God the Father undertake to be with him, to stand by him, to carry him through with his work, and in the end to crown him with glory. See Isa. xlix. 1—11, l. 4—9.

2. For the privilege itself, it is unction with the oil of gladness. There may be a double allusion in these words: 1. To the common use of oil and anointing, which was to exhilarate and make the countenance appear cheerful at feasts and public solemnities, Ps. civ. 15; Luke vii. 37, 38. 2. To the especial use of it in the unction of kings, priests, and prophets, Exod. xxx. That the ceremony was typical, is evident from Isa. lxi. 1, and it denoted the collation of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, whereby the person anointed was enabled for the discharge of the office he was called unto. And in this sense there is commonly assigned a threefold unction of Christ. 1. At his conception, when his human nature was sanctified by the Holy Spirit, Luke i. 35, and radically endowed with wisdom and grace in which he grew up, Luke ii. 40, 52. 2. At his baptism and entrance into his public ministry, when he was in an especial manner furnished with those gifts of the Spirit, which were needful for the discharge of his prophetic office, Matt. iii. 16; John i. 32, 33. 3. At his ascension, when he received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, to pour him forth upon his disciples, Acts ii. 33. Now, though I acknowledge the Lord Christ to have been thus anointed, and that the communication of the gifts and graces of the Spirit unto him in fulness, is called his unction; yet I cannot grant that any of them are here directly intended. But that which the apostle seems here to express with the Psalmist, is the glorious exaltation of Jesus Christ, when he was solemnly instated in his kingdom. This is that which is called the making of him both Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 36, when God raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, 1 Pet. i. 21. He is called Christ, from the unction of the Spirit; and yet here, in his exaltation, he is said in an especial manner to be made Christ, that is, taken gloriously into the possession of all the offices and their full adminis-



tration, whereunto he was anointed and fitted by the communication of the gifts and graces of the Spirit unto him. It is, I say, the joyful glorious unction of his exaltation, when he was signally made Lord and Christ, and declared to be the anointed one of God that is here intended; see Phil. ii. 9, 11, which also appears,

1. From the adjunct of this unction—He is anointed with the oil of gladness; which denotes triumph and exaltation, freedom from trouble and distress. Whereas, after those antecedent communications of the Spirit unto the Lord Christ, he was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, and exposed to innumerable evils and troubles.

2. The relation of this privilege granted to the Lord Christ unto what went before—He loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, expressed by עֲלֵךְ, and *δια τουτο*, (the third thing considerable in this last clause of the testimony,) doth plainly declare it. The Lord Christ's love to righteousness and hatred to iniquity, proceeded from his unction with the graces and gifts of the Spirit; and yet they are plainly intimated here to go before this anointing with the oil of gladness, which is therefore mentioned as the consequent of his discharge of his office in this world, in like manner as his exaltation every-where is, Phil. ii. 9, 11; Rom. xiv. 9. And if this anointing denote the first unction of Christ, then must he be supposed to have the love to righteousness mentioned from elsewhere, as antecedent thereunto, which is not so. Wherefore these words, עֲלֵךְ, and *δια τουτο*, do declare at least a relation of congruency and conveniency unto an antecedent discharge of office in the Lord Christ, and are of the same import with *δτο*, Phil. ii. 9, and so can respect nothing but his glorious exaltation, which is thus expressed.

The last thing considerable in the words, is the prerogative of the Lord Christ in this privilege—He is anointed above his fellows. Now these fellows, companions, or associates of the Lord Christ, may be considered either generally as all those that partake with him in this unction, which are all believers, who are co-heirs with him, and thereby heirs of God, Rom. viii. 17, or more especially as those who were employed by God, in the service, building, and rule of his church, in their subordination unto him; such as were the prophets of old, and afterwards the apostles, Eph. ii. 20. In respect to both sorts, the Lord Christ is anointed with the oil of gladness above them; but the latter sort are especially intended, concerning whom the apostle gives an especial instance in Moses, ch. iii. affirming the Lord Christ in his work about the church, to be made partaker of more glory than he. In a word, he is incomprehensibly exalted above angels and men.

And this is the first testimony whereby the apostle confirms his assertion of the preeminence of the Lord Christ above angels, in that comparison which he makes between them; which also will afford the ensuing observations.

1. The conferring and comparing of Scriptures, is an excellent means of coming to an acquaintance with the mind and will of God in them.—Thus dealeth the apostle in this place: he compareth what is spoken of angels in one place, and what of the Son in another, and from thence manifesteth what is the mind of God concerning them.

This duty lies in the command we have to search the Scriptures, John v. 39, *ερευνάτε τὰς γραφάς*, make a diligent investigation of the mind of God in them, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; what God hath declared the mind of the Spirit in one place, with what in like manner he hath manifested in another. God, to try our obedience, and to exercise our diligence unto a study in his word day and night, Ps. i. 2, and our continual meditation thereon, 1 Tim. iv. 15, (*ταῦτα μελέτα, ἐν τοῦτοις ἰσθί*, 'Meditate on these things, be wholly in them,') hath planted his truths with great variety up and down his word; yea, here one part, and there another of the same truth, which cannot be thoroughly learned, unless we gather them together into one view. For instance, in one place God commands us to circumcise our hearts, and to make unto ourselves new hearts, that we may fear him; which at first consideration seems so to represent it not only as our duty, but also within our power, as though we had no need of any help from grace for its accomplishment. In another, he promiseth absolutely to circumcise our hearts, and to give us new hearts to fear him, as though it were so his work, as not to be our concern to attempt it. But now these several places being spiritually compared together, make it evident, that as it is our duty to have new and circumcised hearts, so it is the effectual grace of God that must work and create them in us. And the like may be observed in all the important truths that are of divine revelation. And this,

1. Discovers the root of almost all the errors and heresies that are in the world. Men whose hearts are not subdued by faith and humility unto the obedience of the truth, lighting on some expressions in the Scripture, that, singly considered, seem to give countenance to some such opinion as they are willing to embrace; without farther search they fix it on their minds and imagination, until it is too late to oppose any thing to it. For when they are once fixed in their persuasions, those other places of Scripture, which they should with humility have compared with that whose seeming sense they cleave unto, and thus have learned the mind of the Holy Ghost in them all, are considered by them to no other end, but only that they may pervert them, and free themselves from the authority of them. This, I say, seems to be the way of the most of them, who pertinaciously cleave unto false and foolish opinions. They rashly take up a seeming sense of some particular places, and then obstinately make that sense the rule of interpreting all other Scriptures whatever. Thus in our own days, we have many who, from the outward sound of those words, John i. 9, "He is the true light, which lighteneth every man that comes into the world," having taken up a rash, foolish, and false imagination, that Christ is that light which is remaining in all men, and therein their guide and rule, do from thence either wrest the whole Scripture to make it suit and answer that supposition, or else utterly slight and despise it; when, if they had compared this Scripture with other Scriptures, which clearly explain and declare the mind of God in the things which concern the person and mediation of the Lord Christ, with the nature and works of natural, and saving spiritual light, and submitted to the authority and wisdom of God in

them, they might have been preserved from their delusion. It shows also,

2. The danger that there is unto men unskilled and unexercised in the word of truth, when without the advice, assistance, or directions of others who are able to guide them, and instruct their inquiry after the mind of God, they hastily embrace opinions, which it may be some one text or other of Scripture doth seemingly give countenance unto. By this means do men run themselves into the fore-mentioned danger every day; especially where any seducing spirit applies himself unto them, with swelling words of vanity, boasting of some misunderstood word or other. Thus have we seen multitudes led by some general expressions in two or three particular places of Scripture, into an opinion about a general redemption of all mankind, and of every individual thereof; when if they had been wise, and able to have searched those other Scriptures innumerable, setting forth the eternal love of God to his elect, his purpose to save them by Jesus Christ, the nature and end of his oblation and ransom, and compared them with others, they would have understood the vanity of their hasty conceptions.

3. From these things, it appears, what diligence, patience, waiting, wisdom in searching the Scriptures, is required of all men, who intend to come unto the acknowledgment of the truth thereby. And unto this end, and because of the greatness of our concern therein, doth the Scripture itself abound with precepts, rules, directions, to enable us to a right and profitable discharge of our duty. They are too many here to be inserted. I shall only add, that the diligence of heathens will rise up in judgment, and condemn the sloth of many that are called Christians in this matter. For whereas they had no certain rule, way, or means to come to the knowledge of the truth, yet they ceased not with indefatigable diligence and industry to inquire after it, and to trace the obscure footsteps of what was left in their own natures, or implanted on the works of creation. But many, the most of those to whom God hath granted the inestimable benefit and privilege of his word, as a sure and infallible guide, to lead them into the knowledge of all useful and saving truth, do openly neglect it, not accounting it worthy their searching, study, and diligent examination. How woefully this will rise up in judgment against them at the last day, it is not difficult to conceive. And how much greater will be their misery, who under various pretences for their own corrupt ends, do deter, yea and drive, others from the study of it.

II. It is the duty of all believers to rejoice in the glory, honour, and dominion of Jesus Christ.—The church in the Psalm takes by faith a prospect at a great distance of his coming and glory; and thereon breaks out in a way of exultation and triumph into those words, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever." And if this were a matter of such joy to them, who had only an obscure vision and representation of the glory which many ages after was to follow, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12, what ought the full accomplishment and manifestation of it to be unto them that believe now in the days of the gospel. This made them of old rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even because they saw

and heard the things which kings, wise men, and prophets, desired to see, and saw them not, God having prepared some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. ch. xi. 40. For,

1. Herein God is glorified.—The kingdom of Christ is the glory of God ; thereby is his name and praise exalted in the world ; and therefore upon the erection and setting of it up, are all his people so earnestly invited to rejoice and triumph therein, Psal. xcv. 1—3, xevi. 1—4, xcvii. 1, 2, &c. This I say is the cause of eternal joy unto all his saints, that God is pleased to glorify himself, and all the infinite excellencies of his nature, in the kingdom and rule of Jesus Christ.

2. Herein doth the honour and glory of Christ as Mediator consist, which is a matter of great rejoicing unto all that love him in sincerity. He tells his disciples, John xiv. 28, that if they loved him, they would rejoice, because (said he) he went unto the Father. They considered only their own present condition and distress, being filled with sorrow, because he had told them of his departure from them ; but saith he, Where is your love to me ? Ought you not to have that in your hearts, as well as care of yourselves ? For your condition I shall take care, and provide for your security ; and if you love me, you cannot but rejoice, because I go to my Father, to receive my kingdom. That he who loved us, that gave himself for us, that underwent every thing that is reproachful or miserable for our sakes, is now exalted, glorified, enthroned in an everlasting immoveable kingdom, above all his enemies, secure from all opposition, is a matter of inexpressible joy, if we have any love unto him.

3. Our own concern, security, safety, present and future happiness, lie herein : our *all* depends upon the kingdom and throne of Christ. He is our King, if we are believers ; our King to rule, govern, protect, and save us ; to uphold us against opposition, to supply us with strength, to guide us with counsel, to subdue our enemies, to give us our inheritance and reward, and therefore our principal interest lies in his throne, and in the glory and stability thereof. While he reigneth, we are safe, and in our way to glory. To see by faith this King in his beauty, upon his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple, to see all power committed unto him, all things given into his hands, and herein disposing of all, and ruling all things for the advantage of his church, must needs cause them to rejoice, whose whole interest and concern lies therein.

4. The whole world, all the creation of God, are concerned in this kingdom of Christ. Except his cursed enemies in hell, the whole creation is benefited by his rule and dominion ; for as some men are made partakers of saving grace and salvation thereby, so the residue of that race by and with them, do receive unspeakable advantages in the patience and forbearance of God ; and the very creature itself is raised, as it were, into a hope and expectation thereby of deliverance from that state of vanity whereunto now it is subjected, Rom. viii. 20, 21. So that if we are moved with the glory of God, the honour of Jesus Christ, our own and only eternal interest, with the advantage of the whole creation, we have cause to rejoice in this throne and kingdom of the Son.



III. It is the divine nature of the Lord Christ, that gives eternity, stability, and unchangeableness to his throne and kingdom. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever."—Concerning this, see what hath formerly been delivered about the kingdom of Christ.

IV. All the laws, and the whole administration of the kingdom of Christ by his Word and Spirit, are all equal, righteous and holy. "His sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness."—The world indeed likes them not; all things in his rule seem to it weak, absurd and foolish, 1 Cor. i. 20—23, but they are otherwise, the Holy Ghost being judge, and such they appear unto them that do believe; yea, whatever is requisite to make laws and administrations righteous, it doth all concur in those of the Lord Jesus Christ. As,

1. Authority—a just and full authority for enacting is requisite to make laws righteous. Without this, rules and precepts may be good materially, but they cannot have the formality of law, which depends on the just authority of the Legislator, without which nothing can become a righteous law. Now the Lord Christ is vested with sufficient authority for the enacting of laws and rules of administration in his kingdom. All authority, all power in heaven and earth, is committed to him, as we have before proved at large. And hence those that will not see the equity of his rule, shall be forced at last to bow under the excellency of his authority. And it were to be wished, that those who undertake to make laws and constitutions in the kingdom of Christ, would look well to their warrant. For it seems that the Lord Christ, unto whom all power is committed, hath not delegated any to the sons of men, but only that whereby they may teach others to do and observe what he hath commanded, Matt. xxviii. 20. If moreover they shall command or appoint aught of their own, they may do well to consider by what authority they do so, seeing that is of indispensable necessity unto the righteousness of any law whatever.

2. Wisdom is required to the making of righteous laws. This is the eye of authority, without which it can act nothing rightly or equally. Effects of power without wisdom, are commonly unjust and tyrannical, always useless and burdensome. The wisdom of law-makers is that which hath principally given them their renown. So Moses tells the Israelites, that all nations would admire them, when they perceived the wisdom of their laws, Deut. iv. Now the Lord Christ is abundantly furnished with wisdom for this purpose. He is the foundation-stone of the church, that hath seven eyes upon him, Zech. iii. 9. A perfection of wisdom and understanding in all affairs of it; being anointed with the Spirit unto that purpose, Isa. xi. 3, 4. Yea, in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 3, it having pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell, Col. i. 19, so that there can be no defect in his laws and administrations on this account. He is wise of heart, and knows perfectly what rules and actings are suited to the glory of God, and to the condition of the subjects of his kingdom; and what tendeth to their spiritual and eternal advantage. He knows how to order all things unto the great end, which in his government he aimeth at. And thence do all his laws and administrations become righteous. And this also well

deserves their consideration, who take upon them to appoint laws and rules within his dominion unto his subjects, for the ends of his rule, and substance of his worship. Have they wisdom sufficient to enable them so to do? Doth the Spirit of the Lord Christ rest upon them, to make them of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord? Are they acquainted with the state and condition, the weakness, temptations, graces of all the people of Christ? If they are not, how know they but that they may command and appoint things greatly to their disadvantage, when they think to profit them? It seems a great self-assuming for men to suppose themselves wise enough to give laws to the subjects of Christ, in things directly appertaining to his kingdom.

3. They are righteous, because they are easy, gentle, and not burdensome. The righteousness and uprightness here mentioned, doth not denote strict, rigid, severe justice, extending itself unto the utmost of what can be required of the subjects to be ruled; but equity mixed with gentleness, tenderness, and condescension, which if it be absent from laws, and they breathe nothing but severity, rigour, and arbitrary impositions, though they may not be absolutely unjust, yet they are grievous and burdensome. Thus Peter calls the law of commandments contained in the ordinances of old, "a yoke which neither their fathers nor themselves were able to bear," Acts xv. 10; that is could never obtain rest or peace in the precise rigid observance required of them. But now for the rule of Christ, he tells us, that his yoke is easy, and his burden light, Matt. xi. 30, and that his commandments are not grievous, 1 John v. 3. And this gentleness and easiness of the rule of Christ consisteth in these three things:

1. That his commands are all of them reasonable, and suited unto the principles of that natural obedience we owe to God; and so not grievous unto any thing in us, but that principle of sin and darkness which is to be destroyed. He hath not multiplied precepts merely arbitrary, and to express his authority; but given us only such as are in themselves good, and suitable unto the principles of reason, as might be evinced by the particular consideration of his institutions. Hence our obedience unto them is called our reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1.

2. His commands are easy, because all of them are suited to that principle of the new nature, or new creature, which he worketh in the hearts of all his disciples. It likes them, loves them, delights in them, which makes them easy unto it. The Lord Christ rules, as we said, by his word and Spirit: these go together in the covenant of the Redeemer, Isa. lix. 20, 21. And their work is suited and commensurate one to the other. The Spirit creates a new nature fitted for obedience according to the Word; and the Word gives out laws and precepts suited unto the inclination and disposition of that nature; and in these two consist the sceptre and rule of Christ. This suitableness of principle and rule one to the other, makes his government easy, upright, and righteous.

3. His commands are easy because he continually gives out sup-

plies of his Spirit, to make his subjects to yield obedience to them. This is that which above all other things sets a lustre upon his rule. The law was holy, just, and good of old ; but whereas it exhibited not strength unto men to enable them to obedience, it became unto them altogether useless and unprofitable, as to the end they aimed at in its observance. It is otherwise in the kingdom of Christ. Whatever he requires to be done by his subjects, he gives them strength by his Spirit and grace to perform it ; which makes this rule easy, righteous, equal, and altogether lovely. Neither can any of the sons of men pretend to the least share or interest in this privilege.

4. This rule and administration of Christ's kingdom is righteous, because useful and profitable. Then are laws good, wholesome, and equal, when they lead unto the benefit and advantage of them that do observe them. Laws about slight and trivial things, or such as men have no benefit or advantage by observing, are justly esteemed grievous and burdensome. But now all the laws, and the whole rule of the Lord Christ are every way useful and advantageous to his subjects. They make them holy, righteous, such as please God and are useful to mankind. This is their nature, this their tendency ; " whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," they are all engenerated in the soul, by and in the observance of these laws of Christ's rule. They free the soul from the power of lust, the service of sin, fear of death, hell, and the world ; they guide it in the truth, make it fruitful amongst mankind, and amiable unto God himself.

5. Their end manifests them to be righteous. The worth and equity of laws are taken off when low and unworthy ends are proposed to induce men to observe them. But these of the Lord Christ direct unto the highest end, propose and promise the most glorious rewards. So that whatsoever may be done or suffered in adherence unto them, bears no proportion to that exceeding rich and eternal reward which they are attended withal, which renders them highly righteous and glorious. And many other considerations of the like nature may be added. And hence a three-fold corollary may be taken :

1. That our submission to this sceptre of the Lord Christ, our obedience to the laws of his kingdom, and the administration thereof, is very righteous, equal, and reasonable. What can be farther desired to render it so, or to provoke us unto it ?

2. That the condemnation of those that refuse the reign of Christ over them, that will not yield obedience unto his laws, is most just and righteous. On these accounts will their mouths be stopped for ever, when he comes to deal with them who know not God, and obey not the gospel.

3. It is our wisdom to content ourselves with the laws of Christ, in things that belong unto his kingdom. They alone, as we have seen, have those properties which make our obedience useful or profitable. Whatever else we do, in reference unto the same end with them, is needless and fruitless drudging.

V. The righteous administrations of the Lord Christ in his government, proceed all from his own habitual righteousness and love thereunto—See this declared by the prophet Isa. xi. 1—7.

VI. God is a God in especial covenant with the Lord Christ, as he is Mediator, God thy God.—Of this covenant I have treated largely elsewhere ; and therefore shall not here insist upon it.

VII. The collation of the Spirit on the Lord Christ, and his glorious exaltation, are the peculiar works of God the Father. “God, thy God, hath anointed thee.”—It was God the Father who designed and appointed him unto his work, who actually sent him, and set him forth in the fulness of time ; and therefore on him was it incumbent both to furnish him unto his work, and to crown him upon its performance. And herein these several acts, partly eternal, partly temporal, are considerable. 1. The engagement of the eternal will, wisdom, and counsel of the Father with the Son about his work, Prov. viii. 22, 23, 30, 31 ; Isa. xl. 10—12. 2. His fore-ordination of his coming, by an eternal-free act of his will, 1 Peter i. 20. Acts ii. 23. 3. His covenant with him to abide by him in the whole course of his work, Isa. xlix. 6—9, ch. i. 7—9. 4. His promise of him from the foundation of the world, often reiterated and repeated Gen. iii. 15. 5. His actual mission and sending of him in his incarnation, Zech. ii. 8—10. 6. The exerting of his almighty power unto that purpose and effect, Luke i. 35. 7. His giving of him command and commission for his work, John, x. 18, xx. 21. 8. Furnishing him with all the gifts and graces of his Spirit, to fit him and enable him to his work, Isa. xi. 2, 3, lxi. 1, 2 ; Matt. iii. 16, 17 ; John i. 32, 33 ; Col. i. 19. 9. Abiding by him in care, love, power, and providence, during the whole course of his obedience and ministry, Isa. xlix. 2, 8. 10. Speaking in him, working by him, and in both bearing witness unto him, Heb. i. 1 ; John v. 19—22. 11. Giving him up unto death, Rom. viii. 32 ; Acts ii. 23. 12. Raising him from the dead, 1 Pet. i. 21 ; Acts ii. 24, 13. Giving all power, authority, and judgment unto him, John v. 22 ; Matt. xxviii. 18. 14. Exalting of him by his assumption into heaven, and glorious session at his right hand, Acts ii. 32, 33 ; Phil. ii. 9, 10. 15. Giving him to be the head over all the church, and subjecting all things under his feet, Eph. i. 20—22. 16. In all things crowning him with eternal glory and honour, John, xvii. 5 ; Heb. ii. 9. All these, and sundry other particulars of the like nature, are assigned unto the Father, as part of his work, in reference unto the mediation of the Son. And amongst them his exaltation with the oil of gladness, hath an eminent place. And this we are taught, that in this whole work we might see the authority, counsel, and love of the Father, that “so our faith and hope through Jesus Christ might be in God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory,” 1 Peter i. 21.

VIII. The Lord Jesus Christ is singular in this unction.—This is that which the apostle proves in sundry instances, and by comparing him with others, who in the most eminent manner were partakers of it. And this we are in the consideration of, as the particulars of it do occur. Neither shall I at present farther insist on the ensuing ob-



servations, because I will not longer detain the reader from the context, namely, that

IX. All that serve God in the work of building the church, according to his appointment, are anointed by his Spirit, and shall be rewarded by his power, Dan. xii. 3.

X. The disciples of Christ, especially those who serve him in his church faithfully, are his companions in all his grace and glory.

VER. 10, 11, 12.—IN the following verses, the apostle by another illustrious testimony taken out of Psalm cii. confirms his principal assertion in the words ensuing.

VER. 10. Καὶ συ κατ' αρχας, Κυριε, την γην εθεμελιωσας, και εργα των χειρων σου εισιν οἱ ουρανοι.

Ver. 11. Αυτοι απολουνται, συ δε διαμενεις· και παντες ὡς ἱματιον παλαιωθησονται.

Ver. 12. Καὶ ὡσει περιβολαιον ἐλιξεις αυτους, και αλλαγησονται· συ δε ὁ αυτος ει, και τα ετη σου ουκ εκλειψουσι.

In the last verse for ἐλιξεις one copy hath ἀλλαξεις, to answer unto ἀλλαγησονται. And M. S. T. ἐλιξεις αυτους ὡς ἱματιον.

The words are the same in the Greek Bibles as in this place of the apostle, nor is there any footstep of any other old translation of them in the Psalm. The Syriac differs little, και it renders וְהָיָה, 'and again,' to show that και is no part of the testimony cited, but serves only to the introduction of another, ver. 11. For αυτοι απολουνται, 'they shall perish,' עָבְרוּ, 'they shall pass away,' alluding to that of 2 Pet. iii. 10, οἱ ουρανοι ῥοιζηδον παρελευσονται, 'the heavens shall pass away with a noise;' συ δε διαμενεις, 'but thou abidest, thou continuest,' וְאַתָּה קַיָּם, et tu stans es, et tu stas, et tu stabilis es, and 'thou standest, thou art standing;' answering to the Hebrew, תָּעַמַד in the Psalm. 'Ἐλιξεις αυτους,' 'thou shalt roll them up.' תָּרַם, which words interpreters render variously, though to the same purpose: *involves*, Boderianus, 'roll them,' *complicabis*, Tremellius, 'fold them,' *duplicabis*, D' Dieu, 'double them up.' And it is manifest that the translator reads ἐλιξεις, and not ἀλλαξεις; and I doubt not but the same word was inserted into the translation of the Psalm from this place of the apostle, συ δε ὁ αυτος ει, 'thou art the same, or thou art, I am.' וְאַתָּה אֵת דְּאֵתְךָ; Boderianus, Et tu sicut existens es, 'and thou art as thou existest.' Tremel. Tu autem sicut es, eris, 'but thou shalt be as thou art.' Properly, 'and thou, as thou art, art;' that is, 'art the same.'

The translation of the apostle in all things material, answereth the original in the Psalm, ver. 26, 27, συ Κυριε, 'thou, O Lord,' is supplied out of the verse foregoing, 'I said, O my God.' לְפָנַי הָיָה, 'of old,' before it was, that is, κατ' αρχας, or בְּרֵאשִׁית, 'in the beginning.' And our translation needed not to have used any difference of expression in the Psalm and in this place of the apostle, as they do; there, 'of old,' here, 'in the beginning.' 'Thou hast founded,' not laid the foundation of, 'the earth. And the heavens are the works'

מַעֲשֵׂה, 'the work,' which the Greek renders 'works,' because of their variety, 'of thy hands.'

'They shall perish,' וְאֵתָהּ תַעֲמִיד, 'but thou shalt stand.' or dost abide. The word used in our translation of the Psalm, 'endure,' doth ill answer the original, but the margin gives relief. Psal. 'Yea all of them shall wax old like a garment;' here, 'and they shall all wax old as doth a garment.' A little variety without difference, and that needless, the Greek text exactly expressing the Hebrew. 'And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up,' וְהִלַּכְתָּם, 'shalt thou change them.' The change of a vesture whereunto the change of the heavens is compared, being by folding up, and laying aside, at least from former use; the apostle, instead of ἀλλάξεις, 'thou shalt change,' renders the word by ἐλίσσεις, 'thou shalt fold,' or roll them up: וְאַתָּה הוּא, et tu ipse, 'and thou art he;' καὶ σὺ ὁ αὐτός, 'and thy years shall have no end;' shall not fail, וְלֹא יִכָּחַשׁ, 'shall not consume.'

There is no question but that these words do sufficiently prove the preeminence of him of whom they are spoken, incomparably above all creatures whatever. Two things therefore are questioned by the enemies of the truth, contained in them. 1. Whether they were originally spoken at all of Christ, which the present Jews deny. 2. Whether they are spoken all of Christ, which is questioned by the Socinians. These inquiries being first satisfied, the words shall be opened, and the force of the apostle's argument from thence declared.

1. That what is spoken in this Psalm doth properly respect the Messiah, is denied by the present Jews. That it was owned by the ancient Hebrews is sufficiently evident from hence, that the apostle dealing with them on their own principles, urgeth them with the testimony of it. The Psalm also itself gives us light enough unto the same instruction. It is partly euctical, partly prophetical; both parts suited unto the condition of the church when the temple was wasted, and Sion lay in the dust during the Babylonish captivity. In the prophetical part there are three things signal.

1. The redemption of the people, with the re-edification of the temple, as a type of that spiritual temple and worship which was afterwards to be erected. As ver. 13, "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Sion, for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come." And ver. 15, "When the Lord shall build Sion, he shall appear in his glory."

2. The calling of the Gentiles to the church and worship of God, ver. 15, "The heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory." Ver. 21, 22, "To declare the name of the Lord in Sion, and his praise in Jerusalem, when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms to serve the Lord."

3. Hereby the creation of a new people, a new world, is brought in: ver. 18, "This shall be written for the generation to come, (the world to come,) and the people that shall be created (the new creation of Jews and Gentiles) shall praise the Lord." These are the heads of the prophetical part of the Psalm; and they all respect things which are every-where peculiarly assigned unto the Son who was to be incarnate; or, which is all one, they respect the days of the Messiah.

1. The redemption and deliverance of the church out of trouble is

his proper work. Wherever it is mentioned, it is he who is intended, lxxxix. 18, so signally, Zech. ii. 8—13, and other places innumerable.

2. The bringing in of the Gentiles is acknowledged by all the Jews to respect the time of the Messiah, it being he who was to be “a light unto the Gentiles, and the salvation of God unto the ends of the earth.”

3. Also the generation to come, and people to be created, the Jews themselves interpret of the עולם הבא, ‘world to come,’ or the new state of the church under the Messiah. These two last put together, the gathering of the people, and the world to come, created for the praise of God, makes it evident that it is the Son whom the Psalmist hath respect unto.

Grotius in this place affirms, that the apostle accomodates unto the Messiah what was spoken of God. And he thinks it a sufficient argument to prove, the words were not spoken of the Messiah, because they were spoken of God: whereas they are produced by the apostle to prove his excellency from the properties and works of his divine nature. And he adds as the sense of the words as accommodated unto Christ, “Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth,” that is, “the world was made for thy sake.” But this interpretation, or violent distortion of the words destroys itself. For if they are spoken of God absolutely, and not of the Messiah, to whom they are accommodated, how can it be said the world was made for his sake, and not by him? Both senses of the words cannot be true. But this is indeed plainly to deny the authority of the apostle.

It appeareth then, that many things in this Psalm are spoken directly and immediately of the Son, though it be probable also that sundry things in it are affirmed distinctly of the person of the Father. And hence, it may be, are those frequent variations of speech from the second to the third person, that occur in this Psalm.

2. As to the second inquiry, the Socinians, who grant the divine authority of this Epistle, and therefore cannot deny but that these words some way or other belong unto the Lord Christ, yet plainly perceiving that if they were wholly understood of him, there is an end of all their religion; (the creation, not of a new, but of that world which was made of old, and which shall perish at the last day, being here ascribed unto him;) fix here upon a new and peculiar evasion. Some words, they say, of this testimony belong unto Christ, (so much will they yield to the authority of the apostle,) but not all of them; whereby they hope to secure their own error. Now because if this pretence hold not, this testimony is fatal to their persuasion, I hope it will not be unacceptable, if in our passage we do consider the distribution they make of the words according to their supposition, and the arguments they produce for the confirmation of their exposition, as they are managed by Crellius or Slichtingius in their comment on this place.

1. He says, that this testimony doth so far belong unto Christ, as it pertaineth to the scope of the writer of the epistle. ‘This Scripture,’ saith he, ‘as appears from ver. 4. is to prove, that after Christ sat down at the right hand of God, he was made more excellent than the

angels; whereto the affirming that he made heaven and earth doth no way conduce.'

*Ans.* 1. Suppose that to be the scope of the apostle which is intimated; how doth this author know that it suits not his purpose to show that the Lord Christ is God, by whom heaven and earth were made, seeing it is manifest that himself thought otherwise, or he had not produced this testimony thereof. 2. The testimony is not unsuited unto the scope pretended. For whereas in the administration of his office, the Son was apparently for a while made lower than the angels, he may in these words discover the equity of his after exaltation above them, in that in his divine nature and works he was so much more excellent than they. 3. The true and proper design of the apostle we have before evinced, which is to prove the excellency of the person by whom the gospel was revealed, and his preeminence above men and angels, which nothing doth more unquestionably demonstrate than this, that by him the world was created; whence the assignation of a divine nature unto him doth undeniably ensue.

2. To promote this observation, he adds a large discourse about the use and application of testimonies out of the Old Testament in the New, and says, 'that they are made use of by the writers of it, either because of some agreement and likeness between the things intended in the one and the other, or because of some subordination. In the former way, that which is spoken of the type, is applied unto the antitype; and sometimes for likeness sake, that which was spoken of one thing is applied unto another; as Matt. xv. 7, 8, our Saviour applies those words of Isaiah to the present Jews, which were spoken of their forefathers.'

*Ans.* That which is spoken in the first place of an instituted type, is also spoken of the antitype or things prefigured by it, so far as it is represented by the type; so that one thing teaches another, and thereon the words have a double application;—first to the type, ultimately to the antitype. But herein such testimonies as this have no concernment. 2. The Scripture sometimes makes use of allegories, illustrating one thing by another, as Gal. iv. 21—24. Neither hath this any place here. 3. That what is spoken of one, should because of some similitude be affirmed to be spoken of another, and nothing agree properly unto him, is untrue, and not to be exemplified with any seeming instance. 4. The words of Isaiah, ch. xxix. 13, which our Saviour makes use of, Matt. xv. 7—9, were a prophecy of the Jews who then lived, as our Saviour both expressly affirms, and the context in the prophet doth plainly declare.

'Some things,' he adds, 'are applied unto others than they are spoken of, because of their subordination to him or them of whom they are spoken. Thus things that are spoken of God are applied unto Christ, because of his subordination to him; and of this,' saith he, 'we have an instance in Acts xiii. 47, where the words spoken of the Lord Christ, Isa. xlix. 6, "I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation to the ends of the earth;" are applied unto the apostles, because of their subordination unto Christ. And in this case the words have but one sense, and belong primarily



unto him of whom they are first spoken, and are secondarily applied unto the other.'

*Ans.* According to this rule, there is nothing that ever was spoken of God, but it may be spoken of and applied unto any of his creatures, all things being in subordination unto him. At least it may be so in that wherein they act under him, and are in a peculiar subordination to him. And yet neither can such a subordination, according to this man's opinion, be applied unto Christ, who in the creation of heaven and earth was in no other subordination to God, than any other things not yet made or existing; so that this rule, that what is spoken of God is applied unto them who are in subordination unto him, as it is false in itself, so it is no way suited to the present business; Christ being in this man's judgment in no subordination to God when the world was made, being absolutely in all respects in the condition of things that were not. Nor doth the instance given at all prove or illustrate what is pretended. The apostle in the citing of those words to the Jews, doth not in the least apply them to himself, but only declares the ground of his going to preach the gospel unto the Gentiles; which was, that God had promised to make him whom he preached, to be a light, and to bring salvation unto them also.

Wherefore he adds, 3. what is direct to his pretension, 'that all the words, or things signified by them in any testimony, which are first spoken of one, and then are, for some of the causes mentioned, (that is, conveniency, similitude, or subordination,) applied unto another, are not to be looked on as proper to him to whom they are so applied; but so much of them is to be admitted as agrees to the scope of him by whom the testimony is used, as in the testimony produced, ver. 7. "I will be unto him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son;" the words immediately following are, "if he shall offend against me, I will chastise him with the rod of men;" which words being spoken of Solomon, can no way be applied unto Christ.'

*Ans.* What is spoken of any type and of Christ jointly, is not so spoken for any natural conveniency, similitude, or subordination, but because of God's institution, appointing the type so to represent and shadow out the Lord Christ, that what he would teach concerning him should be spoken of the type whereby he was represented. Now no person that was appointed to be a type of that, being in all things a type, it is not necessary that whatever was spoken of him was also spoken of Christ, but only what was spoken of him under that formal consideration of an instituted type. This we showed to have been the case with Solomon, of whom the words mentioned were spoken, as he bare the person of Christ; other things being added in the same place, that belonged unto him in his own personally moral capacity. And therefore those things (as that, "if he offend against me") are not at all mentioned by the apostle, as not being spoken of him as a type. And this plainly overthrows the pretension of our commentator; for if the apostle would not produce the very next words to the testimony by him brought, because they did not belong unto him of whom he spake, it proves undeniably that all those which he doth so urge and produce were properly spoken of him. And I cannot reach the strength

of this inference, because in a place where all that was spoken was not spoken of Christ, the apostle makes use of what was so spoken of him, and omits that which was not; therefore of that which he doth produce in the next place, somewhat does belong to him, and somewhat does not. If any thing be offered to this purpose, it must be in an instance of a testimony produced, in the words whereof, which are produced, and not in what may follow in the same chapter and Psalm, there is that affirmed, which doth now no more belong unto Christ, than the making of heaven or earth belongeth to this writer, which is the case in hand.

Having premised these general considerations, he makes application of them in particular to his interpretation of this testimony used by the apostle.

‘These words,’ saith he, ‘being first expressly spoken of God, and being here by this writer referred unto Christ, we must consider what in them makes to his scope and purpose, what is agreeable to the nature and condition of Christ, who certainly was a man; and such certainly is not he which the Psalm speaks of, about the creation of heaven and earth. And this was well known to them with whom the apostle had to do.’

But any one may perceive that these things are spoken gratis, and upon the supposition that Christ was a mere man, and not God by nature; when the words themselves ascribing a pre-existence to the world, and omnipotency unto him, do prove the contrary. What is the scope of the apostle in the whole discourse under consideration, hath been shown, as also how directly this whole testimony tends to the proof of what he had proposed. It is true, that the words are spoken of him who is God, but no less true, the apostle being judge, that it is the Son of God who is that God. It is true, that he also was man, and nothing is ascribed unto him but what belongs unto him, who was man, but not as he was man. And such was the creation of heaven and earth.

The opinion of these men is, that whereas two things are mentioned in the words,—the creation of the world, which was past; and the dissolution or destruction of it, which was to come, that the latter is assigned unto Christ, but not the former: and for this division of the words, which confessedly is not in the least intimated by the apostles, he gives these reasons.

1. ‘All the words of the Psalm being manifestly spoken of the high God, and no word in the Psalm declaring Christ to be that God, yet of necessity, if these words be applied unto Christ, he must be supposed to be the high God there spoken of. But if this divine writer had taken this for granted, he had been eminently foolish to go about to prove by arguments and testimonies, that the Creator does excel all creatures. He should use, in a matter no way doubtful, witnesses no way necessary.’

This is the first reason whereby he would prove that the apostle did not apply the words to Christ, though he himself plainly says that he does; for his preface to them is, “But to the Son he said.” Or that if he doth so, he doth it wondrous foolishly, for such liberty do poor

worms take to themselves. That the Psalm so speaketh of the high God, that it directly and peculiarly intends Christ the Son of God, hath been in part declared, and shall farther afterwards be evinced. And the eulogium in these words given unto him proves him to be so. And though he affirms that it was a foolish thing in the apostle to prove from the works of him that is God, that he is above the angels, the most glorious of made creatures, yet God himself most frequently from these his works, his omniscience, omnipresence, and other attributes declared in them, proves his excellency in comparison of idols, which have no existence but in the imagination of men. See Isa. xli. 20, 21, &c.

By this testimony, then, the Holy Ghost with infinite wisdom proves, that he who was made less for a little while than the angels in one respect, was absolutely, and in his own person, infinitely above them, as being the Creator of heaven and earth.

He adds, secondly, 'Those Hebrews to whom he wrote, were either persuaded that Christ was God, the Creator of heaven and earth, or they were not. If they were, what need of all these arguments and testimonies? One word might have dispatched this whole controversy, by affirming that Christ was the Creator, and that angels were creatures between whom there could be no comparison, nor any reason to fear that the law given by the administration of angels should be preferred to the gospel whereof he was the author. If we shall say the latter, that they did not yet believe it, how do we suppose that he takes a great deal of pains to little purpose? for he assures and takes for granted, that that was true which was alone in question. What need he then to prove by so many arguments, that Christ was more excellent than the angels, and to take that for granted which would have put it out of question, namely, that he was God who made heaven and earth?'

*Ans.* This dilemma hath as much force against the other testimonies produced in this chapter or elsewhere by the apostle, as it hath against this; so that the using of it doth scarce argue that reverence to the holy word of God which is required of us. But the truth is, grant whether of the suppositions you please, nothing of inconvenience as unto the apostle's argumentation will ensue. Let it be granted that they did believe, and that expressly that Christ was God, have believers no need to have their faith confirmed by testimonies out of the word, that may not so readily occur to themselves? Have they no need to be strengthened in the faith, especially in such points as were in those days greatly opposed, as was this of the eternal glory of the Messiah, concerning which the believing Hebrews had to do with learned and stubborn adversaries continually. And if the apostle might have ended the whole controversy, by plainly affirming that he was the Creator of all things, and the angels creatures, might he not as well have ended the dispute about his preeminence above angels with one word, without citing so many testimonies to prove it? But would he then have unfolded the mysteries of the Old Testament to the Hebrews, which was his design, had he manifested that he taught nothing but what was before revealed, though obscurely, to Moses and the pro-

phets, which he aimed to do, thereby to strengthen and confirm in the faith those that did believe, and convince gainsayers? Again, suppose some of them to whom he wrote did not yet expressly believe the deity of Christ, as the apostles themselves did not for a while believe his resurrection, could any more convincing way be fixed on to persuade them thereunto, than by reminding them of those testimonies of the Old Testament, wherein the attributes and works of God are ascribed unto him? Nor was it now in question whether Christ was God or not; but whether he were more excellent than the angels that gave the law. And what more effectual course could be taken to put an end to that inquiry, than by proving that he made the heaven and earth; that is, producing a testimony wherein the creation of all things is assigned unto him? It is beyond the wisdom of man to invent a more conclusive proof of preeminence.

3. He adds, 'That Christ might be spoken of in this place, either in respect of his human nature, or of his divine; if of the former, to what end should he make mention of the creation of heaven and earth? Christ, as a man, and as made above the angels, made not heaven and earth. If as God, how could he be said to be made above the angels?'

But the answer is easy:—Christ is said to be made above, and more excellent than the angels, neither absolutely as God, nor absolutely as man, but as he was God-man, the Mediator between God and man; in which respect, as Mediator for the discharge of one part of his office, he was a little while made lower than they; and so the creation of heaven and earth does demonstrate the dignity of his person, and the equity of his being made more excellent than the angels in his office. And this fully removes his following exceptions, that the remembering of his deity could be no argument to prove that the humanity was exalted above the angels; for it is not an argument of the exaltation of his humanity, but the demonstration of the excellency of his person, that the apostle hath in hand.

4. He allegeth, 'That it is contrary to the perpetual use of the Scripture, to affirm absolutely of Christ that he created any thing. When any creation is ascribed unto him, it is still applied to him as the immediate cause, and said to be made by him, or in him; he is no where absolutely said to create. And if he created the world, why did not Moses as plainly attribute that unto him, as the writers of the New Testament do the new creation?'

*Ans.* Were it affirmed in this place only that Christ made all things, yet the words being plain and evident, and the thing itself agreeable to the Scriptures in other places, and not repugnant to any testimony therein contained, there is no pretence for them who truly reverence the wisdom and authority of the Holy Ghost in the word, to deny the words to be spoken properly and directly. Indeed if we may take that course, there will be nothing left sacred, and ἀκίνητον in the Scripture. Besides, we have shown already the vanity of that distinction, of God's making things by Christ, as though it denoted any subordination in causality; nor will the Socinians themselves admit of any such thing, but confute that notion in the Arians. But this is not the only place wherein it is affirmed that Christ made all



things that are in the heaven and the earth; John i. 1, 2; Col. i. 16; ver. 3 of this chapter, with sundry other places affirm the same. For what they exact of Moses, did we not believe that God knew what revelation of himself became that dark dispensation better than they, we might consider it. But yet there are even in Moses himself many, and in his expositors, the prophets, more testimonies of the creation of the world by the Word, that is, the Son of God, which have elsewhere been opened and vindicated.

5. He concludes, 'That the order and method of the apostle's procedure, do evince, that this creation of heaven and earth is not attributed unto him. For we see that he proves the excellency of Christ above angels from his name, that he is by the way of eminence called the Son of God; and then he proceeds to his adoration by angels. And in the third place, he goes on to the kingly honour and throne of Christ; after which, he produceth the testimony we insist upon, and then adds the end of that kingdom which Christ now administereth in the earth. To what end in this discourse should he mention the creation of heaven and earth, when if that be omitted all the series of the discourse agrees and hangs well together? For having declared the kingdom of Christ, with the continuance of his person for ever, he asserts an eminent effect of the kingdom in the abolition of heaven and earth, and then the end of that kingdom itself.'

But this analysis of the apostle's discourse, agreeth not to the mind of the apostle, or his design in the place, nor to the principles of the men that formed it, nor is indeed any thing but vain words, to persuade us that the apostle did not say that which he did say, and which is written for our instruction. First, It is not agreeable to their own principles; for it placeth the naming of Christ, the Son of God, and his adoration by the angels, as antecedent to his being raised to his kingly throne, both which, especially the latter, they constantly make consequent unto it, and effects of it. Nor is it at all agreeable to the apostle's design, which is not to prove by these testimonies directly that Christ was exalted above angels; but to show the dignity and excellency of his person who was so exalted, and how reasonable it is that it should be so; which is eminently proved by the testimony under consideration. For the proof of this excellency, the apostle produceth those testimonies that are given unto him in the Old Testament, and that as to his name, his honour and glory, and his works, in this place. Neither is there any reason of ascribing the destruction of heaven and earth unto the kingly power of Christ, excluding his divine power in their creation; for the abolition of the world, if such is to be, or the change of it, is no less an effect of infinite power than the creation of it; nor doth it appertain to the kingdom of Christ, but by accident, as do the other works of the providence of God.

These exceptions then being removed, before we proceed to the interpretation of the words, we shall see what evidence may be added unto what we have already offered from the Psalm, to evince and prove that this whole testimony doth belong unto him, which, were there no other (as there are many) testimonies to this purpose, were abundantly sufficient to determine this controversy.

1. We have the authority of the apostle for ascribing it unto him. The word *and*, in the beginning of the verse, relates confessedly to, "but unto the Son he saith," ver. 8, as if he had said, "but unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:" and to the Son he said, "Thou, O God, in the beginning hast founded the earth." 2. Again, the whole testimony speaks of the same person, there being no colour of thrusting into the text any other person not intended in the beginning; so that if any part of what is spoken do belong to Christ, the whole of necessity must do so. To suppose that in this sentence, "Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth," and thou "shalt fold them up as a garment," that one person is understood in the first place, another in the latter, no such thing being intimated by the Psalmist or the apostle, is to suppose what we please, that we may attain what we have a mind to. One person is here certainly and only spoken to. If this be the Father, the words concern not Christ at all, and the apostle was deceived in his allegation of them; if the Son, the whole is spoken of him, as the apostle affirms. Nor, 3. Can any reason be assigned why the latter words should be attributed to Christ, and not the former. They say it is because God by him shall destroy the world, which is the thing in the last words spoken of; but where is it written, that God shall destroy the world by Christ? If they say in this place, I say then Christ is spoken to, and of in this place; and if so, he is spoken of in the first words, and *thou Lord*, or not at all. Besides, to whom do those closing words belong, "but thou art the same, and thy years fail not?" If these words are spoken of Christ, it is evident that all the foregoing must be so also; for his enduring the same, and the not failing of his years, that is, his eternity, is opposed to the creation and temporary duration of the world. If they say, that they belong to the Father primarily, but are attributed unto Christ, as that of changing or abolishing the world, because the Father doth it by him, I desire to know what is the meaning of these words, 'Thou art the same by Christ?' and, 'Thy years fail not by Christ?' Is not the Father eternal but in the man Christ Jesus? If they say that they belong not at all to Christ, then this is the sum of what they say; the beginning of the words, and the close of them, if spoken of Christ, would prove his infinite power, eternity, and divine nature: one passage there is in the words which we suppose will not do so; therefore we will grant that the passage concerneth him, but not the beginning nor end of the testimony, though spoken undeniably of the same person. And whether this becomes men professing a reverence of the word of God, is left to themselves to judge. Besides, should we grant all these suggestions to be true, the apostle by his citing of this testimony would prove nothing at all to his purpose, no not any thing toward that which they affirm him to aim at; namely, that he was more excellent than the angels. For whence out of these words shall any such matter be made to appear? They say in that by him God will fold up the heavens as a vesture; but, first, no such thing is mentioned nor intimated. He who made them, is said to fold them; and if they say that from other places it may be

made to appear that it shall be done by Christ; then as this place must be laid aside as of no use to the apostle, so indeed there is nothing ascribed to Christ, but what the angels have a share in, and that probably the most principal; namely, in folding up the creation as a garment, which is a work that servants are employed in, and not the King, or Lord himself. Indeed, he that shall without prejudice consider the apostle's discourse, will find little need of arguments to manifest whom he applies this testimony unto. He calls him *Κυριος*, 'in the beginning,' using that word which perpetually in the New Testament denotes the Lord Christ, as plainly expounding the text so far as to declare of whom it speaks. Nor doth this testimony ascribe any thing to him, but what in general he had before affirmed of him, namely, that by him the worlds were made; nor was it ever heard of, that any man in his right wits should cite a testimony to confirm his purpose, containing words that were never spoken of him to whom he applies them; words in which there is scarce any thing which can tolerably be applied unto him, and a testimony the greater part of which would declare him to be that which he is not at all; so that the words, as used to his purpose, must needs be both false and ambiguous. Who then can but believe on this testimony of the apostle, that Christ the Lord made heaven and earth; and if the apostle intended not to assert it, what is there in the text, or near it, as a buoy to warn men from running on a shelf, there where so fair a harbour appears unto them? From all that hath been said, it is evident that this whole testimony belongs to Christ, and is asserted by the apostle so to do.

We now proceed to the interpretation of the words. The person spoken of, and spoken to in them, is the Lord: *συ Κυριε*, 'thou, Lord.' The words are not in the Psalm in this verse; but what is spoken is referred unto *Υς*, 'my God.' I said, "O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days;" comforting himself under the consideration of the frailty and misery of his life, with the thoughts and faith of the eternity and power of Christ. For be our lives never so frail, yet as to life eternal, because he liveth, we shall live also; and he is of power to raise us up at the last day, John xiv. 19; 1 Cor. xv.; and that is the ground of all our consolation against the brevity and misery of our lives. Whereby it also further appears, that it is the Lord Christ whom the Psalmist addresses himself unto; for from the absolute consideration of the omnipotence and eternity of God, no consolation can be drawn. And indeed the people of the Jews openly affirmed, that they could not deal immediately with God, but by a Mediator, which God eminently approved in them, wishing that such a heart would always abide in them, Deut. v. 25—29. Accordingly, he suffered them not to approach his typical presence between the cherubims, but by a typical mediator, their high priest; so also were they instructed in their real approach unto God, that it was not to be made immediately to the Father, but by the Son, whom in particular the apostle declares the Psalmist in this place to intend.

Concerning this person, or the Lord, he affirms two things, or attributes two things unto him: 1. The creation of heaven and earth.

2. The abolition or change of them. From that attribution, he proceeds to a comparison between him and the most glorious of his creatures, and that as to duration or eternity; frailty and change in and of himself, one of the creatures, being that which in particular he addresseth himself to the Lord about.

2. The time or season of the creation is first intimated: *κατ' ἀρχαίς*, for *ἐν ἀρχῇ*, that is, בְּרֵאשִׁית, 'in the beginning,' or as the word is here, לְפָנֵינוּ, of old,' before they were or existed. They had their being and beginning from thee; of old they were not, but in thy season thou gavest existence or being unto them.

VER. 10.—*Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands.*

Two things are observable in this expression of the creation of all things: 1. The distribution made of them into heaven and earth, being distinctly mentioned. In the consideration of the works of God, to admire his greatness, power, and wisdom in them, or to set forth his praise for them, it is usual in the Scripture to distribute them into parts, the more to fix the contemplation of the mind upon them, and to excite it unto faith, admiration, and praise. So dealeth the Psalmist with the works of God's providence, in bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, Psal. cxxxvi. He takes, as it were, the whole of that curious work into its several pieces, and subjoins that inference of praise to every one of them. "for his mercy endureth for ever." And so he dealeth with the works of creation, Psal. xix. and sundry other places. 2. What is peculiar in the expressions with respect unto each of them. Of the earth, it is said "he founded it," because of its stability and unmoveableness, which is the language of the Scripture; "he set it fast," he established it, that it should not be moved for ever. It may also be the whole fabric of heaven and earth is compared to an edifice or building, whereof the earth, as the lowest or most depressed part, is looked on as the foundation of the whole; but the stability, unmoveableness, and firmness of it is that which the word expresseth, and which is most properly intended. 3. Of the heavens, that they are the works of his hands; alluding to the curious frame and garnishing of them with all their host of glorious lights with which they are adorned. The שְׁפָרָה, Job xxvi. 13, the beautifulness, adorning, or garnishing of the heavens, in the curious, glorious forming and fashioning of them, is that which in a way of distinction the Psalmist aims to express in these words, "the heavens are the works of thy hands;" that which thy hands, thy power with infinite wisdom hath framed, so as to set off, and give lustre and beauty to the whole fabric; as a master workman doth the upper and more noble parts of his building. This is the first thing assigned to the Lord in this testimony of his glory.

The second is the change or abolition of them. Most suppose that the heavens and the earth at the last day shall only be changed, altered, or renewed, as to their quality and beauty; some that they shall be utterly destroyed, consumed, and abolished. The discussing



of that doubt belongs not directly to the interpretation or exposition of this place; neither sense of the words conducing particularly to the apostle's purpose and design in reciting this testimony. It is enough to this argument that the work which was of old in the creation of the world, and that which shall be in the mutation or abolition of it, which is no less an effect of infinite power than the former, is ascribed unto the Lord Christ. Whatever the work be, he compares them to a garment no more to be used, or at least not to be used in the same kind wherein it was before; and the work itself to the folding up or rolling up of such a garment, intimating the greatness of him by whom this work shall be performed, and the facility of the work unto him. The whole creation is as a garment, wherein he shows his power clothed unto men; whence in particular he is said to clothe himself in light as with a garment. And in it, is the hiding of his power; hid it is, as a man is hid with a garment; not that he should not be seen at all, but that he should not be seen perfectly, and as he is. It shows the man, and he is known by it; but also it hides him, that he is not perfectly or fully seen. So are the works of creation unto God; he so far makes them his garment or clothing, as in them to give out some instances of his power and wisdom; but he is also hid in them, in that by them no creatures can come to the full and perfect knowledge of him. Now when this work shall cease, and God shall unclothe or unveil all his glory to his saints, and they shall know him perfectly, see him as he is, so far as a created nature is capable of that comprehension, then will he lay them aside and fold them up, at least as to that use, as easily as a man lays aside a garment that he will wear or use no more. This lies in the metaphor.

On this assertion he insinuates a comparison between this glorious fabric of heaven and earth, and him that made them, as to durability and stability, which is the thing he treats about, complaining of his own misery or mortality. For the heavens and the earth, he declares, that they are in themselves of a flux and perishing nature; *המה, αυτοι, isti*, 'they shall perish.' The word immediately relates to the heavens, but by the figure *Zeugma*, comprehends and takes in the earth also: "The earth and the heavens shall perish." This fading nature of the fabric of heaven and earth, with all things contained in them, he sets forth, first, by their future end, "they shall perish:" secondly, their tendency unto that end, "they wax old as a garment." By their perishing, the most understand their perishing to their present condition and use, in that alteration or change that shall be made of them; others, their utter abolition. And to say the truth, it were very hard to suppose that an alteration only, and that to the better, a change into a more glorious condition should be thus expressed, *יאבדו*; that word, as the Greek *απολουνται* also, being always used in the worst sense, for a perishing by a total destruction. Their tendency unto this condition, is their waxing old as a garment. Two things may be denoted in this expression, : 1. The gradual decay of the heavens and earth waxing old, worse, and decaying in their worth and use. 2. A near approximation or drawing nigh to their end and period. In this sense, the apostle in this Epistle affirms, that the

dispensation of the covenant which established the Judaical worship and ceremonies, did wax old and decay, ch. viii. 13. Not that it had lost any thing of its first vigour, power, and efficacy, before its abolition. The strict observance of all the institutions of it by our Saviour himself, manifests its power and obligation to have continued in its full force. And this was typified by the continuance of Moses in his full strength and vigour until the very day of his death. But he says, it was old and decayed when it was *εγγυς αφανισμου*, 'near to a disappearance,' to its end, period, and to an utter uselessness, as then it was; even as all things that naturally tend to an end, do it by age and decays. And in this, not the former sense, are the heavens and earth said to wax old, because of their tendency to that period, which either in themselves, or as to their use, they shall receive; which is sufficient to manifest them to be of a changeable perishing nature. And it may be, that it shall be with these heavens and earth at the last day, as it was with the heavens and earth of Judaical institutions, (for so are they frequently called, especially when their dissolution is spoken of,) in the day of God's creating the new heavens and the earth in the gospel according to his promise. For though the use of them and their power of obliging to their observance was taken away and abolished, yet are they kept in the world as abiding monuments of the goodness and wisdom of God in teaching his church of old. So may it be with the heavens and earth of the old creation, though they shall be laid aside at the last day from their use as a garment, to clothe and teach the power and wisdom of God to men, yet may they be preserved as eternal monuments of them.

In opposition hereunto, it is said of Christ that *he abideth, he is the same, and his years fail not*. One and the same thing is intended in all these expressions; even his eternal and absolutely immutable existence. Eternity is not amiss called a *nunc stans*, a present existence, wherein or whereunto nothing is past or future; it being always wholly present in and to itself. This is expressed in that *אתה תעמד*, 'thou standest, abidest, endurest, alterest not, changest not.' The same is also expressed in the next words: *אתה הוּא*, *ὁ αὐτός ἐστι*, 'thou art he,' or art the same, or, as the Syriac hath it, 'the same that thou art.' There is an allusion in these words unto, if not an expression of that name of God, *I am*; that is, who is of himself, in himself, always absolutely and unchangeably the same. And this, *אתה הוּא*, *tu ipse*, the Hebrews reckon as a distinct name of God. Indeed, *יהוה*, *יהוה הוּא*, *אתה הוּא*, *ὁ ὤν*, *αὐτός ἐστι*, are all the same name of God, expressing his eternal and immutable self-subsistence.

The last expression also, though metaphorical, is of the same import: "Thy years fail not." He who is the same eternally, properly hath no years, which are a measure of transient time, denoting its duration, beginning, and ending. This is the measure of the world, and all things contained therein. Their continuance is reckoned by years. To show the eternal subsistence of God in opposition to the frailty of the world, and all things created therein, it is said, "his years fail not;" that is, theirs do, and come to an end: of his being and existence there is none.

How the apostle proves what he intended by this testimony, hath

been declared in the opening of the words, and the force of it under his purpose lies open to all. We may now divert to those doctrinal observations which the words offer unto us. As,

I. All the properties of God, considered in the person of the Son the head of the church, are suited to give relief, consolation, and support to believers in all their distresses.—This truth presents itself to us from the use of the words in the Psalm, and their connexion in the design of the Psalmist. Under the consideration of his own mortality and frailty, he relieves himself with thoughts of the omnipotence and eternity of Christ; and takes arguments from thence to plead for relief.

And this may a little further be unfolded for our use in the ensuing observations.

1. The properties of God are those whereby God makes himself known to us, and declares both what he is, and what we shall find him to be in all that we have to deal with him. He is infinitely holy, just, wise, good, powerful, &c. And by our apprehension of these things, are we led to that acquaintance with the nature of God, which in this life we may attain, *Exod. xxxiv. 5—7*.

2. God oftentimes declares and proposeth these properties of his nature unto us for our support, consolation, and relief in our troubles, distresses, and endeavours after peace and rest to our souls, *Isa. xl. 27—31*.

3. That since the entrance of sin, these properties of God absolutely considered, will not yield that relief and satisfaction unto the souls of men, which they would have done and did, while man continued obedient unto God, according to the law of his creation. Hence Adam upon his sin, knew nothing that should encourage him to expect any help, pity, or relief from him, and therefore fled from his presence and hid himself. The righteousness, holiness, purity, and power of God, all infinite, eternal, unchangeable, considered absolutely, are no way suited to the advantage of sinners in any condition, *Rom. i. 32; Heb. i. 12*.

4. These properties of the divine nature are in every person of the Trinity entirely; so that each person is so infinitely holy, just, wise, good, and powerful, because each person is equally partaker of the whole divine nature and being.

5. The person of the Word, or the eternal Son of God, may be considered either absolutely as such, or as designed in the counsel, wisdom, and will of the Father, by and with his own will and consent, unto the work of mediation between God and man, *Prov. viii. 22, 27—31*. And in him, as such, it is that the properties of the nature of God are suited to yield relief to believers in every condition. For,

1st, It was the design of God in the appointment of his Son to be Mediator, to retrieve the communion between himself and his creature that was lost by sin. Now man was so created at first, as that every thing in God was suited to be a reward unto him, and in all things to give him satisfaction. This being wholly lost by sin, and the whole representation of God to man having become full of dread and terror, all gracious intercourse in a way of special love on the part of God,

and spiritual willing obedience on the part of man, was intercepted and cut off. God designing again to take sinners into a communion of love and obedience with himself, it must be by representing unto them his blessed properties, as suited to their encouragement, satisfaction, and reward. And this he doth in the person of his Son, as designed to be our Mediator, Heb. i. 2, 3. For,

2d, The Son is designed to be our Mediator, and the head of his church, in a way of covenant, wherein there is an engagement for the exerting of all the divine properties of the nature of God, for the good and advantage of them for whom he hath undertaken, and whom he designed to bring again into favour and communion with God. Hence believers do no more consider the properties of God in the person of the Son absolutely, but as engaged in a way of covenant for their good, and as proposed unto them for an everlasting and satisfactory reward. This is the ground of his calling upon them so often to behold, see, and consider him, and thereby to be refreshed. They consider his power, as he is mighty to save; his eternity, as he is an everlasting reward; his righteousness, as faithful to justify them; all his properties as engaged in covenant for their good and advantage. Whatever he is in himself, that he will be to them in a way of mercy. Thus do the holy properties of the divine nature become a means of support unto us, as considered in the person of the Son of God. And this is,

1. A great encouragement unto believing. The Lord Christ, as the wisdom of God, inviting sinners to come in unto him, and to be made partakers of him, lays down all his divine excellencies as a motive thereunto, Prov. viii. 14, 15, &c. For on the account of them, he assures us that we may find rest, satisfaction, and an abundant reward in him. And the like invitation doth he give to poor sinners, Isa. xlv. 22. "look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." They may justly expect salvation in him who is God, and in whom all divine attributes are proposed to their benefit; as they find who come unto him, ver. 24, 25. The consideration hereof prevents all the fears, and answers all the doubts of them that look up unto him.

2. An instruction how to consider the properties of God by faith for our advantage; that is, as engaged in the person of the Son of God for our good. Absolutely considered they may fill us with dread and terror, as they did them of old, who concluded when they thought they had seen God, or heard his voice, that they should die. Considered as his properties, who is our Redeemer, they are always relieving and comforting, Isa. liv. 4, 5.

II. The whole old creation, even the most glorious parts of it, hastening unto its period, at least of our present interest in it, and use of it, calls upon us not to fix our hearts on the small perishing shares which we have therein, especially since we have him who is omnipotent and eternal for our inheritance.—The figure or fashion of this world, that lovely appearance which it hath at present unto us, the apostle tells us, is passing away; it is hastening unto its period, it is a fading, dying thing, that can yield no true satisfaction.



III. The Lord Christ the mediator, the head and spouse of the church, is infinitely exalted above all creatures whatever, in that he is God over all, omnipotent and eternal.

IV. The whole world, the heavens and earth, being made by the Lord Christ, and being to be dissolved by him, is wholly at his disposal, to be ordered for the good of them that do believe.—And therefore,

V. There is no just cause of fear unto believers, from any thing in heaven or earth, seeing they are all of the making, and at the disposal of Jesus Christ.

VI. Whatever our changes may be, inward or outward, yet Christ changing not, our eternal condition is secured, and relief provided against all present troubles and miseries.—The immutability and eternity of Christ is the spring of our consolation and security in every condition.

The sum of all is that,

VII. Such is the frailty of the nature of man, and such is the perishing condition of all created things, that none can ever obtain the least stable consolation, but what ariseth from an interest in the omnipotency, sovereignty, and eternity of the Lord Christ.—This, I say, is that which the words insisted on as they are used in the Psalm do instruct us in; and this therefore we may a little farther improve.

This is that which we are instructed in by the ministry of John Baptist, Isa xl. 6—8, “The voice cried, All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth and the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of God bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” All is grass, fading grass; though it bloom and appear goodly for a little season, yet there is no continuance, no consistency in it. Every wind that passeth over it, causeth it to wither: this is the best of flesh; of all that in and by ourselves, we are, we do, we enjoy or hope for. The crown of the pride of man, and his glorious beauty, is but a fading flower, Isa. xxviii. 1. What joy, what peace, what rest can be taken in things that are dying away in our hands, that perish before every breath of wind that passeth over them? Where then shall this poor creature so frail in itself, in its actings, in its enjoyments, seek for rest, consolation, and satisfaction? in this alone, that the word of the Lord abideth for ever; in the eternally abiding word of God; that is, the Lord Jesus Christ as preached in the Gospel: so Peter applies these words, 1 Pet. i. 25. By an interest in him alone, his eternity and unchangeableness, may relief be obtained against the consideration of this perishing, dying state and condition of all things. Thus the Psalmist tells us, that “verily every man living in his best estate is altogether vanity,” Psal. xxxix. 5, and thence takes the conclusion now insisted on, ver. 7, “and now Lord, seeing it is thus:” seeing this is the condition of mankind, what is thence to be looked after? what is to be expected? nothing at all, not the least of use or comfort. “What wait I for? my hope is in thee;” from thee alone as a God eternal, pardoning, and saving, do I look for relief.

Man indeed in this condition seeks oftentimes for satisfaction from himself, from what he is, and doth, and enjoys; and what he shall leave after him; comforting himself against his own frailty, with an eternity that he fancieth to himself in his posterity, and their enjoyments of his goods and inheritance. So the Psalmist tells us, Psal. xlix. 11; "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places unto all generations; and they call their lands after their own names." They see indeed "that all men die, wise men and fools," ver. 10, and cannot but from thence observe their own frailty. Wherefore they are resolved to make provision against it; they will perpetuate their posterity and their inheritance. This they make use of to relieve them in their inmost imaginations, but what censure doth the Holy Ghost pass upon this contrivance, ver. 12, "Nevertheless," saith he, notwithstanding all these imaginations, "man being in honour abideth not, he is like the beasts that perish;" which he farther proves, ver. 17—20, showing fully that he himself is no way concerned in the imaginary perpetuity of his possessions; which as they are all of them perishing things, so himself dies and fades away, while he is in the contemplation of their endurance. And the truth proposed may be farther evidenced by the ensuing considerations.

1. Man was made for eternity. He was not called out of nothing to return unto it again. When he once is, he is for ever; not as to his present state, that is frail and changeable; but as to his existence in one condition or other. God made him for his eternal glory, and gave him therefore a subsistence without end. Had he been created to continue a day, a month, a year, a thousand years, things commensurate unto that space of time might have afforded him satisfaction. But he is made for ever.

2. He is sensible of his condition. Many indeed endeavour to cast off the thoughts of it: they would fain hope that they shall be no longer than they are here. In that case they could find enough as they suppose to satisfy them in the things that are like themselves. But this will not be, they find a witness in themselves to the contrary, somewhat that assures them of an after reckoning; and that the things which they do now, will be called over in another world. Besides, the conviction of the word, with them that enjoy it, puts the matter out of question. They cannot evade the testimony it gives unto their eternal subsistence.

3. Hence men are exposed to double trouble and perplexity. First, That whereas their eternal subsistence, as to the enjoyment of good or bad, depends upon their present life, that that is frail, fading, perishing. They are here now, but when a few days are come and gone, they must go to the place from whence they shall not return. They find their subsistence divided into two very unequal parts, a few days and eternity, and the latter to be regulated by the former. This fills them with anxiety, and makes them sometimes weary of life, sometimes hate it, always most solicitous about it, and to bewail the frailty of it. Secondly, That no perishing thing will afford them relief or support in this condition. How should it? They and these are parting every

moment, and that for eternity. There is no comfort in a perpetual taking leave of things that are beloved. Such is the life of man as unto all earthly enjoyments. It is but a parting with what a man hath; and the longer a man is about it, the more trouble he hath with it. The things of this creation will not continue our lives here, because of our frailty; they will not accompany us into eternity, because of their own frailty; we change and they change, we are vanity and they are no better.

4. An interest in the omnipotence, sovereignty, and eternity of the Lord Christ, will yield a soul relief and satisfaction in this condition. There is that in them, which is suited to relieve us under our present frailty, and to give satisfaction to our future eternity. For,

1. What we have not in ourselves, by an interest in Christ we have in another. In him we have stability, and unchangeableness: for what he is in himself he is unto us, and for us. All our concerns are wrapped up and secured in him. He is ours, and though we in our own persons change, yet he changeth not, nor our interest in him which is our life, our all. Though we die, yet he dieth not; and because he liveth, we shall live also. Though all other things perish and pass away, that we here make use of, yet he abideth a blessed and satisfying portion unto a believing soul. For as we are his, so all his is ours; only laid up in him, and kept for us in him. So that under all discouragements that may befall us from our own frailty and misery, and the perishing condition of outward things, we have sweet relief tendered us in this, that we have all good things treasured up for us in him. And faith knows how to make use of all that is in Christ to the comfort and support of the soul.

2. When our frailty and changeableness have had their utmost effect upon us; when they have done their worst upon us, they only bring us to the full enjoyment of what the Lord Christ is unto us, that is an excellent great reward, and a full satisfaction unto eternity. Then shall we live for ever in that which we now live upon, being present with him, beholding his glory, and made partakers of it, so that both here, and hereafter, there is relief, comfort, and satisfaction for believers laid up in the excellencies of the person of Jesus Christ. And this should teach us,

1. The misery of those who have no interest in him, and have therefore nothing to relieve themselves against the evils of any condition. All their hopes are in this life, and from the enjoyments of it. When these are once past, they will be eternally and in all things miserable; miserable beyond our expression or their apprehension. And what is this life? a vapour that appeareth for a little while. What are the enjoyments of this life? dying, perishing things, and unto them, fuel to lust and so to hell. Suppose they live twenty, thirty, forty, sixty years, yet every day they fear, or ought to fear, that it will be their last. Some die oft every day from first to last, of the utmost extent of the life of man; so that every day may be the last to any one, and whose then will be all their treasures of earthly things? and the relief which men have against the tormenting fears that the frailty of their condition doth expose them unto, is no whit better than their troubles.

It is sinful security, which gives the fulness of their misery an advantage to surprise them, and themselves an advantage to aggravate that misery, by the increase of their sin. In the meantime *spes sibi quisque*, 'every one's hope is in himself alone,' which makes it perpetually like the giving up of the ghost. Surely the contentment that dying man can take in dying things, is very contemptible. We must not stay to discover the miseries of the life of man, and the weakness of the comforts and joys of it. But whatever they be, what becomes of them, when they have serious thoughts of their present frailty and future eternity? This following eternity is like Pharaoh's lean kine, which immediately devours all the fat pleasures of this present life, and yet continues as lean and miserable as ever. The eternal misery of men will not be in the least eased, yea, it will be greatedened by the enjoyments of this life, when once it hath devoured them. And this is the portion of them that have no interest in the eternity and immutability of the Son of God. Their present frailty makes them continually fear eternity; and their fear of eternity imbitters all things that they should use for the relief of their frailty; and that security which they provide against, both increaseth their misery, by sin here, and suffering hereafter,

2. This also will teach us how to use these earthly things; how dying persons should use dying creatures. That is, to use them for our present service and necessity, but not as those that look after rest or satisfaction in them, which they will not afford us, Use the world, but live on Christ.

3. Not to despond under a sense of our present frailty; we see what blessed relief is provided against our fainting on that account.

Ver. 13.—The next verse contains the last testimony produced by the apostle for the confirmation of the preeminence of the Lord Christ above angels, in the words ensuing.

Ver. 13.—*Προς τινα δε των αγγελων ειρηκε ποτε. Καθου εκ δεξιων μου, εως αν θω τους εχθρους σου υποποδιον των ποδων σου;*

'There is no difference about the reading of these words. As they are here expressed by the apostle, so are they in the translation of the LXX., and the original text is exactly rendered by them.

VER. 13.—*But unto which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make (put, place) thine enemies thy footstool, (the footstool of thy feet.)*

The usefulness of this testimony for the confirmation of the dignity and authority of the Messiah, is evidenced by the frequent quotation of it in the New Testament; as by our Saviour himself, Matt. xxii. 44; by Peter, Acts ii. 34, 35; and twice by our apostle in this place, and 1 Cor. xv. 25.

As the words are here used, we may consider the introduction of the testimony, and the testimony itself.

The introduction of the testimony is by way of interrogation.



“Unto which of the angels said he at any time?” And herein three things may be observed.

1. That in the interrogation, a vehement negation is included; ‘he said not at any time to any one of the angels;’ he never spake these words, or the like, concerning them: there is no testimony unto that purpose recorded in the whole book of God. The way of expression puts an emphasis upon the denial. And the speaking here relates unto what is spoken in the Scripture, which is the only means of our knowledge, and rule of our faith in these things.

2. That he makes application of this testimony to every angel in heaven severally considered. For whereas he had before sufficiently proved the preeminence of the Messiah above the angels in general, to obviate their thoughts about the especial honour and dignity of any one or more angels, or angels in a singular manner, such as indeed they conceived, he applies the present testimony to every one of them singly and individually considered. “Unto which of the angels said he at any time?”

3. A tacit application of this testimony unto the Son, or the Messiah; unto the angels he said not, but unto the Son he said, “Sit thou on my right hand.”

That the testimony itself doth clearly prove the intention of the apostle, provided the words were originally spoken of him, or to him, unto whom they are applied, is beyond all exceptions. For they contain an eulogium of him of whom they are spoken, and an assignation of honour and glory to him, beyond what at any time was or can be ascribed unto any angel whatever. It remains, therefore, that this be first proved, and then the importance of the testimony itself explained.

1. For those that believe the gospel, the authority of the Lord Christ and his apostles applying this testimony unto him, is sufficient for their conviction. By our Saviour, as was observed, it is applied unto the Messiah in *Thesi*, Matt. xxii. 42—44, and had not this been generally acknowledged by the Scribes and Pharisees, and by the whole church of the Jews, as it had not been to his purpose to have mentioned it, so they had not been reduced unto that conviction and shame by it as they were. The apostles apply it unto the true Messiah in *hypothesi*; and herein doth our faith rest.

2. But a considerable part of the controversy which we have with the Jews, relating much unto this Psalm, we must yet farther clear the application of it unto the Messiah from their exceptions.

Of the Targum or Chaldee paraphrase, there are two copies, one printed in Arias’ Bible, the other in the Basil Edition by Buxtorf. The title of the Psalm in both of them is, עַל יַד דָּוִד הַיְשִׁבְחָהּ, ‘a song by the hand of David.’ And the beginning of it is thus rendered by the former of them, ‘The Lord said by his word that he would give me the kingdom, because I studied the doctrine of the law of his right hand; wait thou until I make thine enemies thy footstool.’ By the other thus, ‘The Lord said by his word, that he would appoint me the Lord of all Israel; but he said unto me again, ‘Stay for Saul who is of the tribe of Benjamin, until he die, for a kingdom will not

admit of a companion; and after that I will make thine enemies thy footstool.'

Besides what appears from other considerations, it is hence sufficiently evident that this Targum was made after the Jews began to be exercised in the controversy with Christians, and had learned to corrupt by their glosses all the testimonies given in the Old Testament unto the Lord Christ, especially such as they found to be made use of in the New. Their corrupting of the sense of the Holy Ghost in this place, by a pretended translation, is openly malicious against evident light and conviction. The Psalm they own from the title to be written by David, but they would have him also to be the subject of it, or to be spoken of in it. And therefore those words, "The Lord said unto my Lord," they translate, 'The Lord said unto me;' which assertion is contrary to the text, and false in itself: for whoever the penman of the Psalm was, he speaks of another person—"The Lord said unto my Lord:" say they, 'The Lord said unto me;' and thereunto are annexed those imaginations about studying the law, and waiting for the death of Saul, which in no case belongs to the text or matter in hand.

Others, therefore, to avoid this rock, affirm, that the Psalm speaks of David, but was not composed by him, being the work of some other, who calls him *Lord*. So David Kimchi on the place. And this he endeavours to prove from the inscription of the Psalm, מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד; that is, saith he, 'A Psalm spoken to David,' for it denotes the third, and not the second case or variation of nouns.

But this is contrary to the use of that prefix throughout the whole book of Psalms; and if this observation might be allowed, all Psalms with this title, לְדָוִד, *le David*, which are the greatest part of those composed by him, must be adjudged from him, contrary to the received sense and consent of Jews and Christians. But fully to manifest the folly of this pretence, and that the author of it contradicted his own light out of hatred unto the gospel, there are sundry Psalms with this title, לְדָוִד, *le David*, which are expressly affirmed to be composed and sung by him unto the Lord: as Psalm xviii. whose title is, 'To the chief Musician, לְדָוִד יְהוָה לְדָוִד, where the prefix is repeated, 'To David the servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the words of this Song.' So directly do the modern rabbins contradict their own light, out of hatred unto the gospel.

It is evident, then, that David is not treated of in this Psalm, in that he being the penman of it, calleth him his Lord, concerning whom he treats. Besides, to omit other instances of like cogency, how or when did God swear unto David that he should be a priest, and that for ever after the order of Melchizedek? The Jews knew well enough that David had nothing to do with the priesthood; so that David had no concern in this Psalm, but only as he was the penman of it. He was not herein so much as a type of the Messiah, but speaks of him as his Lord.

Wherefore others of them, as Jarchi, and Lipman, and Nizzachon affirm, that it is Abraham who is spoken of in this Psalm, of whom the one says it was composed by Melchizedek, the other by his ser-

vant, Eliezer of Damascus. But the fondness of these presumptuous figments is evident. Melchizedek on all accounts was greater than Abraham, above him in degree, dignity, and office, as being a king and priest of the high God, and therefore blessed him, and received tithes of him, and on no account could call him his Lord. Eliezer did so, being his servant, but how could he ascribe unto him the sitting at the right hand of God? how the sending forth the rod of his power from Sion? how the being a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, or indeed any one thing mentioned in the Psalm? These things deserve not to be insisted on, but only to manifest the woeful pretences of the present Judaical infidelity.

It appears from the dialogue of Justin Martyr with Trypho, that some of them of old applied this Psalm to Hezekiah. But not one word in it can rationally be conceived to respect him, especially that which is spoken about the priesthood utterly excludes him; seeing his great grand-father, a man of more power than himself, was smitten with leprosy, and lost the administration of his kingdom for one single attempt to invade that office, 2 Chron. xxvi.

It remains then that this Psalm was written concerning the Messiah, and him alone, for no other subject of it can be assigned. And this use in our passage we may make of the Targum, that whereas those words, "The Lord said," do not intend a word spoken, but the stable purpose or decree of God, as Ps. ii. 7, its author hath rendered them, אמר "במִימְרֵי", 'The Lord said in or by his Word;' that is his Wisdom, his Son, with whom and to whom he speaks, and concerning whom his decree and purpose is here declared.

It remaineth only that we consider the objections of the Jews against our application of this Psalm unto the Messiah. And these are summed up by Kimchi in his exposition of the text. 'The heretics,' saith he, 'expound this Psalm of Jesus; and in the first verse, they say the Father and Son are designed; and they read *Adonai* with *Camets* under *Nun*, in which use the true God is signified by that name. And verse the third, in עֵמֶךְ, they read *Chirick* under *Ain*, so making it signify *with thee*. And what is there said of the beauty of holiness, they ascribe unto that which is from the womb. But in all copies that are found, from the rising of the sun to the going down of it, *Chirick* is with *Nun* in *Adoni*, and *Patha* with *Ain* in *Hammeka*. And Gerolmus (Hierome) erred in his translation. And for the error, if the Father and Son be the Godhead, how doth one stand in need of the other? and how can he say unto him, *Thou art a priest*? He is a priest who offers sacrifice, but God doth not.' Of the like nature are the rest of his exceptions unto the end of his notes on that Psalm. To this Lipman adds a bitter and blasphemous discourse about the application of those words, *from the womb*, ver. 3, unto the womb of the blessed virgin.

*Ans.* Our cause is not at all concerned in these mistakes, whether of Jews or Christians. For the Jews, their chief enmity lies against the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore whatever testimony is produced concerning him, they presently imagine that it is for the proof of his divine nature. This lies at the bottom of these excep-

tions of Kimchi. Hence he conceives, that our argument from this place lies in the word אדני, *Adonai*, and the pointing it with *Camets*, so making it to be the proper name of God, when we acknowledge that it is *Adoni* pointed with *Chirick*, and signifies *my Lord*. So it is rendered by the evangelist, Matt. xxii. 45, so by the LXX. and by Hierome, *Domino meo*. And the argument of our Saviour lies not in the word אדני, but that he being the Son of David was also then the Lord of David, which he could no otherwise be but upon the account of his divine nature.

In the words reflected on by Kimchi, it is confessed that there have been mistakes amongst translators and expositors. Those words, עמך, נדבה, are rendered by the LXX. *μετα σου ἡ αρχη*, and by the Vulgar from them, *tecum principium*, 'with thee is the beginning,' which hath misled many expositors. But Kimchi knew that Hierome had translated them, 'Populi tui duces spontanei,' 'Thy people shall be willing leaders:' giving both the significations of נדבה, though one would suffice, 'Thy people are,' or 'shall be willing.' But this pertains not to the cause under consideration.

In like manner have those other words been misrendered by the same translation, מרחם משחר לך טל ילדוך, *εκα γαστρος προ ξωσφορου εγεννησα σε*, say the LXX.; and the Vulgar, 'Ex utero ante luciferum genui te,' 'from the womb before the morning star have I begotten thee;' which gave occasion to many uncouth expositions, in Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Epiphanius, Austin, and others. But the words are rightly rendered, "the dew of thy birth is from the womb of the morning;" and express the rise and flourishing of the kingdom of the Messiah. These things prove, indeed, that it is dangerous to interpret the Scripture without heedful attention to the original text; but that the Messiah is not intended in this Psalm, they prove not.

For what they farther object on our supposition of the divine nature of Christ, that there was no need that God should promise his assistance to God, it is but an open effect of their ignorance or malice. Assistance is not promised the Messiah as God, but as made man for our sakes; and so as a priest did he offer that sacrifice, without an interest wherein both they and we must eternally perish.

To conclude this discourse, we have many of their own masters concurring with us in assigning this Psalm unto the Messiah; and to that purpose they freely express themselves, when their minds are taken off from the consideration of the difference that they have with Christians. Thus the author, ספר אבקה רוכל, in his signs of the coming of the Messiah: 'Armillus shall stir up all the world,' saith he, 'to war against the Messiah, יאזו ה"קא אינו מצרינו למלחמה אלא אומר, לישב לימיני, whom the holy God shall not compel to war, but shall only say unto him, Sit thou at my right hand, referring unto this place.' So Saadias Gaon on Dan. vii. 13, יהו משיח צדקנו כדכתיב נאם, 'This is Messiah our righteousness, as it is written, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand."' They affirm the same in Midrash Tehillim, on Ps. xviii. 35, ר' יודן אמר לעתיד, 'לבא הק"ב מושיב מלך משיח לימיני שך נאם יהוה לאדני שב לימיני' Rabbi Joden said, In the world to come, the holy blessed God shall cause



Messiah the King to sit on his right hand, as it is written, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand." And to the same purpose are the words of R. Moses Haddarsan in Bereshith Rabba, on Gen. xviii. 1, ר' ברכיה בשם ר' לוי פתח ותתן לי מנן ישעך וימין, הסעדי לעתיד לבא הק"ב מושיב למלך המשיח לימיני שך נאם יהוה לאדני שב לימיני ואברהם ישב על שמאלו ופני אברהם מברכמות ואומר בן בני ישב על הימין ואני ישב על השמאל הק"ב מפסו ואומר לו בן בך על ימיני ואני על ימין הוי יענותך חרבני. 'Rabbi Berechia, in the name of Rabbi Levi, opened that which is spoken, "Thou shalt give me the shield of thy salvation, and thy right hand shall sustain me," Ps. xviii. 36. In the world to come, the holy blessed God shall cause Messiah the King to sit on his right hand, as it is written, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand." And Abraham shall sit at his left hand; and the face of Abraham shall be pale, and he shall say, The Son of my son sits on the right hand, and I on the left. But God shall appease him, and say unto him, The Son of thy son sits at my right hand, and I am at thy right hand, as it is written, Thy loving kindness shall increase me.' And so on Psalm xvii. Rabbi Joden, in the name of R. Chijah, שנתמר לימיני המשיח למלך מושיב לבא הק"ב מושיב למלך המשיח לימיני שנתמר, נאם יהוה לאדני, 'The holy blessed God shall place Messiah the King at his right hand, as it is said, "The Lord said unto my Lord."'

Thus setting aside the mixture of their follies and impieties wherein we are not concerned, we have a sufficient suffrage from the Jews themselves, for our assigning of this prophetic Psalm to the Messiah, which is enough to stop the mouths of their modern gainsayers, who are not able to assign any other person unto whom it should belong. Having then removed their objections, we may return unto the interpretation of the words.

The matter intended in the first part of these words, or sitting at the right hand of God, hath been somewhat spoken unto already, and I shall add but little in the further explanation of it in this place.

Some things controverted on these words, we may well omit the consideration of; as whether were the more honourable place of old, the right hand or the left. Besides, they have been sufficiently spoken unto already on ver. 3. For whereas there is no mention made any where of sitting at the left hand of God, as was observed, there is no comparison to be feigned between the one and the other. Besides, the pretence that the left hand was the most honourable place of old, which has been insisted on by some, who had a desire to vent new observations of old matters to little purpose, is most vain. And Bellarmine shows what good leisure he had in managing of controversies, when he spent more time and labour in answering an objection against the pope's supremacy, from Peter's being placed in old seals on the left hand of Paul, than of many texts of Scripture, plainly overthrowing his pretensions.

Neither shall we consider their claim unto this testimony, who understanding the human nature of Christ to be only intended and spoken to, affirm that its sitting at the right hand of God consists in a real communication of all divine properties and attributes unto that

nature ; a pretence very remote from the apostle's design, and from the import of the words.

For the introductory preface of this testimony, "Unto which of the angels said he at any time," we have already considered it. In the testimony itself we must consider,

1. The person speaking—the Lord.
2. The person spoken unto—my Lord.
3. The nature and manner of this speaking—said.
4. The thing spoken—Sit on my right hand.
5. The end hereof as to work and operation—make thine enemies thy footstool.
6. The limitation of it as unto duration—until.

1. The person speaking is the Lord—"The Lord said." In the Greek, both the person speaking, and the person spoken to, are expressed by the same name, *Κυριος*, 'Lord;' only the person spoken unto is not absolutely called so, but with relation to the Psalmist, *Κυριω μου*, 'to my Lord.' David calls him his Lord, Matt. xxii. 43. But in the Hebrew, they have different denominations. The person speaking is Jehovah, *יהוה*; that is, 'God the Father:' for though the name be often used where the son is distinctly spoken of, and sometimes in the same place each of them are mentioned by that name, as Gen. xix. 24; Zech. ii. 8, 9; because of their equal participation of the same divine nature signified thereby, yet where Jehovah speaketh unto the Son, or of him as here, it is the person of the Father that is distinctly denoted thereby; according as was shown at the entrance of this Epistle.

2. The person spoken unto is the Son, *אדון*, 'the Lord, David's Lord:' in what respect, we must now inquire. The Lord Christ the Son is; in respect of his divine nature, of the same essence, power, and glory, with the Father, John x. 30. Absolutely therefore, and naturally in that respect, he is capable of no subordination to the Father, or exaltation by him, but what depends on and flows from his eternal generation, John v. 26. By dispensation, he humbled himself, and emptied himself of this glory, Phil. ii. 7, 8, not by a real parting with it, but by the assumption of human nature into personal union with himself, being made flesh, John i. 14, wherein his eternal glory was clouded for a season, John xvii. 5, and his person humbled to the discharge of those acts of his mediation which were to be performed in the human nature, Phil. ii. 9, 10. This person of Christ is here spoken unto, not in respect of his divine nature only, which is not capable of exaltation or glory by the way of free gift or donation, nor in respect of his human nature only, which is not the King and Head of the church; but with respect unto his whole person, wherein the divine nature exerting its power and glory, with the will and understanding of the human nature, is the principle of those *theandrical* acts, whereby Christ ruleth over all in the kingdom given him of his Father, Rev. i. 17, 18. As he was God, he was David's Lord, but not his son; as he was man, he was David's son, and so absolutely could not be his Lord. In his person, as he was God and man, he was his Lord and his son: which is the intention of our Saviour's question, Matt. xxii. 45.

3. For the nature and manner of this speaking, when and how God said it, four things seem to be intended in it. 1. The eternal decree of God concerning the exaltation of the Son incarnate. So David calls this word the decree, the statute, or eternal appointment of God, Psal. ii. 7. This is *λογος ενδιαθετος*, ‘the internal and eternal Word,’ or speaking of the mind, will, and counsel of God, referred unto by Peter, 1 Epist. i. 20. God said this in the eternal purpose of his will, to and concerning his Son. 2. The covenant and compact that was between the Father and Son about and concerning the work of mediation, is expressed also in this saying. That there was such a covenant, and the nature of it, I have elsewhere declared; see Prov. viii. 30, 31; Isa. liii. 10–12; Zech. vi. 12, 13; John. xvii. 4–6. In this covenant, God said unto him, “Sit thou at my right hand;” which he also pleaded in and upon the discharge of his work, Isa. l. 8, 9; John xvii. 4, 5. 3. There is also in it the declaration of this decree and covenant, in the prophecies and promises concerning their accomplishment and execution, given out from the foundation of the world, Luke i. 40; 1 Pet. i. 11, 12; Gen. iii. 15. “He said it by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.” And in this sense David only recounts the prophecies and promises that went before, Luke xxiv. 25–27. And all these are comprised in this speaking here mentioned, “Thus the Lord said unto him.” And all these were past, when recorded by David. But he yet looks forward by a spirit of prophecy into the actual accomplishment of them all, when upon the resurrection of Christ, and the fulfilling of his work of humiliation, God actually invested him with the promised glory; which is the fourth thing intended in the expression, Acts ii. 33, 36, v. 33; 1 Pet. i. 20, 21. All these four things centre in a new revelation now made to David by the spirit of prophecy. This he here declares as the stable purpose, covenant, and promise of God the Father, revealed unto him:—“The Lord said.”

And this also gives us an account of the manner of this expression, as to its imperative enunciation, “Sit thou.” It hath in it the force of a promise, that he should do so, as it respected the decree, covenant and declaration thereof, from the foundation of the world; God engaging his faithfulness and power for the effecting of it in its appointed season, speaks concerning it as a thing instantly to be done. And as those words respect the glorious accomplishment of the thing itself, so they denote the acquiescence of God in the work of Christ, and his authority in his glorious exaltation.

4. The thing spoken about, is Christ’s sitting at the right hand of God: wherein that consists hath been declared in verse 3. In brief, it is the exaltation of Christ into the glorious administration of the kingdom granted unto him, with honour, security, and power; or, as in one word our apostle calls it, his reigning, 1 Cor. xv. 25, concerning which we have treated already at large.

And herein we shall acquiesce, and not trouble ourselves with the needless curiosity and speculation of some about these words. Such is that of Maldonat on Matt. xvi. before remarked on ver. 3. Saith he, “Cum Filius dicitur sedere ad dextram Patris, denotatur comparatio virtutis Filii et Patris, et potentia Filii major dicitur ratione functionis

officii et administrationis ecclesiæ. Paterque videtur fecisse Filium quodammodo se superiorem, et donasse illi nomen etiam supra ipsum Dei nomen quod omnes Christiani tacite significant cum audito nomine Jesu detegunt caput, audito autem nomine Dei, non item." Than which nothing could be more presumptuously nor foolishly spoken. For there is not in the words the least intimation of any comparison between the power of the Father and the Son, but only the Father's exaltation of the Son unto power and glory expressed. But as was said, these things have been already considered.

5. There is in the words the end aimed at in this sitting down at the right hand of God, and that is, the making of his enemies the footstool of his feet. This is that which is promised to him in the state and condition whereunto he is exalted. For the opening of these words we must inquire.

1. Who are these enemies of Christ.
2. How they are to be made his footstool.
3. By whom.

For the first, we have shown that it is the glorious exaltation of Christ in his kingdom that is here spoken of; and therefore the enemies intended must be the enemies of his kingdom, or enemies unto him in his kingdom; that is, as he sits on his throne carrying on the work designed, and the ends of it. Now the kingdom of Christ may be considered two ways. First, in respect of the internal spiritual power and efficacy of it, in the hearts of his subjects. Secondly, with respect unto the outward glorious administration of it in the world. And in both these respects, it hath enemies in abundance; all and every one whereof must be made his footstool. We shall consider them apart.

The kingdom, rule, or reigning of Christ, in the first sense, is the authority and power which he puts forth for the conversion, sanctification, and salvation of his elect. As he is their King, he quickens them by his Spirit, sanctifies them by his grace, preserves them by his faithfulness, raiseth them from the dead at the last day by his power, and gloriously rewardeth them unto eternity in his righteousness. In this work the Lord Christ hath many enemies; as the law, sin, Satan, the world, death, the grave, and hell. All these are enemies to the work and kingdom of Christ, and consequently to his person, as having undertaken that work.

1. The law is an enemy unto Christ in his kingdom, not absolutely, but by accident, and by reason of the consequents that attend it, where his subjects are obnoxious unto it. It slays them, Rom. vii. 9—11, which is the work of an enemy; is against them and contrary unto them, Col. ii. 14, and contributes strength to their other adversaries, 1 Cor. xv. 56, which discovers the nature of an enemy.

2. Sin is universally, and in its whole nature, an enemy unto Christ, Rom. viii. 7. Sinners and enemies are the same, Rom. v. 8, 10; Col. i. 21. It is that which makes special, direct, and immediate opposition to the quickening, sanctifying, and saving of his people, Rom. vii. 21, 23; James i. 14, 15; 1 Pet. ii. 11.

3. Satan is the sworn enemy of Christ, the adversary that openly,



constantly, avowedly opposeth him in his throne, Matt. xvi. 18; Eph. vi. 12; 1 Pet. v. 8. And he exerts his enmity by temptations, 1 Cor. vii. 5; 1 Thess. iii. 5; accusations, Rev. xii. 10; persecutions, Rev. ii. 10: all which are the works of an enemy.

4. The world is also a professed enemy of the kingdom of Christ, John xv. 18, in the things of it, the men of it, the rule of it: it sets itself against the work of the Lord Christ on his throne. The things of it as under the curse, and subject to vanity, are suited to alienate the hearts of men from Christ, and so act an enmity against him, James iv. 4; 1 John ii. 15—17; 1 Tim. vi. 9—11; Matt. xiii. 22. The men of the world act the same part, Matt. x. 22, xxiv. 9. By examples, by temptations, by reproaches, by persecutions, by allurements, they make it their business to oppose the kingdom of Christ. And to that end is the rule of it for the most part directed or overruled, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25.

5. Death is also an enemy; so it is expressly called, 1 Cor. xv. 26. It designs the execution of the first curse against all believers; and therein contributes aid and assistance unto all other adversaries; giving up itself to the service of Satan, and therefore said to be in his power, ch. ii. 14, of this Epistle; and borrows a sting of sin, 1 Cor. xv. 56, to make itself the more terrible and sharp.

6. The grave is an adversary also. It fights against the faith of the subjects of Christ, by reducing their mortality into corruption, and holding fast the dead until they are powerfully rescued from the jaws of it.

7. Lastly, Hell is that enemy in a subordination whereunto all these others do act. They all aim to bring men into hell, which is an eternal enemy where it prevails. This attends the workings and successes of those other adversaries, to consume and destroy, if it were possible, the whole inheritance of Christ, Rev. vi. 8. All these are enemies to Christ in his work and kingdom, with every thing that contributes aid or assistance unto them, every thing that they make use of in the pursuit of their enmity against him.

Now, all these enemies, as far as they oppose the spiritual internal carrying on of the work of Christ, must be made the footstool of his feet.

The expression is metaphorical, and is to be interpreted and applied variously, according to the nature and condition of the enemies with whom he hath to do. The allusion in general is taken from what was done by Joshua his type, towards the enemies of his people, Josh. x. 24. To show the ruin of their power, and his absolute prevalency against them, he caused the people to set their feet upon their necks: see 2 Sam. xxii. 39; Ps. viii. 6. To have his enemies then brought under his feet, is to have an absolute complete conquest over them. And their being made his footstool, their perpetual and unchangeable duration in that condition, under the weight of whatever burden he shall be pleased to lay upon them.

This being that which is to be done, we may consider how it is accomplished. Now this whole work of conquest and prevalency over all his enemies is done,

1. Meritoriously.
2. Exemplarily.
3. Efficiently.

1. Meritoriously.—By his death and blood-shedding, he hath procured the sentence of condemnation in the cause depending between him and them, to be pronounced against them ; so that they shall have no more right to exert their enmity against him or his. He hath given them all their death's wounds, and leaves them to die at his pleasure, 1. So hath he prevailed against the law, Gal. iii. 13 ; Col. ii. 14 ; Rom. vii. 6. He hath removed that strength which it gave to sin, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, so that it hath no right to disquiet or condemn any of his subjects for the future. And, 2. Against sin, Rom viii. 2, 3, so that it should not reign in, nor condemn his, any more. And, 3. Satan also, Heb. ii. 14, 15, as to all pretence of liberty, or right unto any part of his cursed work. And, 4. So likewise the world, John xvi. 33 ; Gal. i. 4. And against, 5. Death, Heb. ii. 14, 15 ; 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, with 6. The grave ; and, 7. Hell, or the wrath to come, 1 Thess. i. 10. They are all meritoriously conquered in his death and resurrection ; and all this he hath done for his church.

2. Exemplarily.—All these adversaries peculiarly exercised their enmity against, and tried their strength and power upon his own person. The law brought its curse upon him, Gal. iii. 13 ; sin its guilt, 2 Cor. v. 21 ; Rom. viii. 2, 3. Satan put forth all his power against him, Col. ii. 15, as also did the world, in all sorts of things and persons, in all kinds of opposition and persecutions. Death also he tasted of, Heb. ii. 9 ; and lay in the grave, descending into the lower parts of the earth, Eph. iv. 9. And he was not unassaulted by the pains of hell, when he bare our iniquities, Isa. liii. 5, 6, 10. Now all of them did he absolutely conquer in his own person. For he satisfied the law, removed the curse, and took it away, Rom. viii. 3 ; made an end of sin, Dan. ix. 24 ; destroyed the devil, Heb. ii. 14 ; and triumphed over him, Col. ii. 15 ; subdued the world, John xvi. 33 ; conquered death, Acts ii. 24 ; and the grave, ver. 27, and hell also. And thus in his own person hath he set an example of what shall be done in and for the whole church.

3. It is done efficiently in, by, and for his whole church, and this in three instances. 1. Initially in their union with himself. When, and as he unites any of them unto himself, he begins the conquest of all enemies in them, and for them, giving them a right to the complete, total, and final victory over them all. 2. Gradually he carries them on in their several seasons towards perfection, treading down their enemies by degrees under them. And, 3. Perfectly at the last day ; when having freed them from the law and sin, trodden down Satan, prevailed against the world, recovered them from death, rescued them from the grave, and delivered them from hell ; he shall be himself perfectly victorious in them, and they made completely sharers in his victory ; wherein the making of all his enemies his footstool consisteth.

Secondly, The kingdom of Christ respects his administration of it visibly in this world, in the profession and obedience of his subjects unto him ; and this also, with the opposition made to it, is respected

in this expression. God the Father, in the exaltation of Jesus Christ, hath given unto him all nations for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession, Ps. ii. 8. Upon this grant, a two-fold right ensued. 1. A right to call, gather, and erect his church, in any nation,—in any part of the world; to give unto it his laws and ordinances of worship, to be owned and observed by them in a visible and peaceable manner, Matt. xxviii. 18—20. 2. A right, power, and authority to dispose of, and order all nations and persons, for the good, benefit, and advantage of his kingdom. In pursuit of this grant and right, erecting his church, and therein his visible kingdom in the world, great opposition is made unto him by all sorts of persons, stirred, excited, and instigated thereunto by Satan. And as this enmity was first acted against himself in his own person, Ps. ii. 1—3, so it hath continued against him in his church in all ages and places, and will do so unto the end of the world. The world understands not his right, hates his government, and would not have him to reign. Hence hath been all that rage which hath been executed upon the professors of his name. Kings, rulers, potentates, counsellors, the multitude, have set themselves against him. They are many of them, and have been his enemies. Great havoc and destruction have they made of his subjects all the world over, and continue to do so in most places to this very day. Especially in these latter ages, after other means failed him, Satan hath stirred up a fierce, cruel, subtle adversary unto him, whom he hath foretold his disciples of, under the name of antichrist, the beast, and false prophet. After the ruin of many others, this enemy, by various subtleties and pretences, hath drawn the world into a new combination against him, and is at this day become the greatest and most pernicious adversary that he hath in this world. Now, the aim and design of all these, is to dethrone him, by the ruin of his kingdom, which he hath set up in the world. And this in every age they have hoped to accomplish, and continue to do so to this day, but in vain. For as hitherto his kingdom and interest in the world hath been maintained against all their enmity and opposition, and they have been frustrated and brought to destruction one after another; so by virtue of this promise he shall reign in security and glory, until all their hearts be broken, their strength ruined, their opposition finished, and they brought under his feet to all eternity, as our apostle declares, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25. And this may suffice to declare the meaning of these words.

Thirdly, We are to consider by whom these enemies of Christ shall be made thus his footstool. “I will make them,” saith God the Father unto him. And this expression wanteth not its difficulty. For is it not the work of Christ himself, to subdue and conquer his enemies? Is it not said that he shall do so? So doing is he described in the Revelations with glory and power, ch. xix. 11—14, from Isa. lxiii. 2—6. Whom should this work more become, or to whom should it more belong, than him who was persecuted and opposed by them? And doth it not directly belong to his kingly power? Whence is it, then, that he is here described as one resting in glory and security at his Father’s right hand, while he subdues his enemies.

*Ans.* There is no doubt but that the work of subduing the enemies of the mediation and kingdom of Christ, is immediately wrought by himself. All prophecies of him, all promises made unto him, the nature of his office, do all require that so it should be; and so the apostle directly expresseth it, 1 Cor. xv. 25. But yet there are sundry reasons why that work, which is immediately wrought by the Son, may, by the way of eminence, be ascribed unto the Father, as we see this to be.

First, Power and authority to subdue and conquer all his enemies, is given unto the Lord Christ by the Father, in the way of reward; and it is therefore said to be his work, because the authority for it is from him; see Isa. liii. 12; John v. 27; Phil. ii. 9; Rom. xiv. 9. This power then, I say, of subduing all his enemies, being granted unto the Lord Christ in the love of the Father, as a reward for the travail of his soul, which he underwent in his work on the earth, is ascribed unto the Father as his. And this expression signifies no more, but that as God hath given him authority for it, so he will abide by him in it, until it be accomplished, And on this account he takes it on himself as his own.

Secondly, The work of subduing enemies, is a work of power and authority. Now, in the economy of the Holy Trinity, among the works that outwardly are of God, those of power and authority are peculiarly ascribed unto the Father; as those of wisdom, or wisdom in the works of God, are unto the Son, who is the eternal Wisdom of the Father. And on this account the same works are ascribed unto the Father and the Son. Not as though the Father did them first, or only used the Son as an immediate instrumental cause of them; but that he worketh by him as his own eternal and essential Wisdom, John v. 17, 19. But there is also more in it, as the Son is considered as Mediator, God and man, for so he receives and holds his especial kingdom by grant from his Father, and therefore the works of it may be said to be his.

VI. The last thing remaining for the exposition of these words, is the consideration of the apparent limitation of this administration of the kingdom of Christ, in his sitting at the right hand of God: *ἕως αὐ, until*; “until I make thine enemies,” &c.

First, It is confessed, and may be proved by instances, that those particles thus used, are sometimes exclusive of all things to the contrary before the time designed in them, but not assertive of any such thing afterwards. In that sense, no limitation of the duration of the kingdom of Christ is here intimated; but only his secure and glorious reign unto the accomplishment of his work in the subduing of his enemies is asserted. The only time of danger is, while there is opposition; but this, saith God, I will carry it through unto the end. And this sense is embraced by many, to secure thereby the promises that are made to the Lord Christ of the perpetuity of his kingdom. So Isa. ix. 7, “Of the increase of his government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and justice, from henceforth even for ever.” His kingdom shall not be destroyed, “but stand for ever,” Dan ii. 24; it is an everlasting kingdom, ch. vii. 27.



Others suppose that this perpetuity of the kingdom of Christ is not absolutely exclusive of all limitation, but that these two things only are intimated in those prophecies and promises.

1. That his kingdom shall not be like the kingdoms of the earth, obnoxious to change and mutation by intestine divisions, or outward force, or secret decays, by which means all the kingdoms of the earth have been ruined, and brought to nought. In opposition hereunto, the kingdom of Christ is asserted to be perpetual, as that which no opposition shall ever prevail against, no means ever impair; which yet hinders not but that a day may be fixed for its end.

2. The continuance of it unto the total full accomplishment of all that is to be performed, in it or by it, in the eternal salvation of all his subjects, and final destruction of all his enemies, is in these and the like places foretold; but yet when that work is done, that kingdom and rule of his may have an end.

And in this sense, the term of limitation here expressed, seems to be expounded by the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 24, "At the end, he shall deliver up the kingdom unto God the Father." For although those words may admit of another interpretation, namely, that he shall give up an account unto the Father of the accomplishment of the whole work committed unto him as king of his church, which he may do, and not cease from holding the same kingdom still; yet as they are further interpreted by the Son's coming into a new subjection unto the Father, that God may be all in all, as ver. 28, they seem to imply directly the ceasing of his kingdom.

Though this matter be not indeed without its difficulty, yet the different opinions about it seem capable of a fair reconciliation; which we shall attempt in the ensuing propositions.

1. The Lord Christ, as the Son of God, shall unto all eternity continue in the essential and natural dominion over all creatures, and they in their dependance upon him, and subjection unto him. He can no more divest himself of that dominion and kingdom, than he can cease to be God. Suppose the being of any creatures, and that subjection unto him, which is the rise of this kingdom, is natural and indispensable.

2. As to the economical kingdom of Christ over the church, and all things in order to the protection and salvation thereof, the immediate ends of it will cease. All his saints being saved, all his sons brought unto glory, all his enemies subdued, the end of that rule which consisted in the guidance and preservation of the one, in the restraint and ruin of the other, must necessarily cease.

3. The Lord Christ shall not so leave his kingdom at the last day, as that the Father should take upon himself the administration of it. Upon the giving up of his kingdom, whatever it be, the apostle doth not say, the Father shall rule or reign, as though he should exercise the same kingdom, but that God shall be all in all; that is, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, without the use or intervention of such ways or means as were in use before, during the full continuance of the dispensatory kingdom of Christ, shall fill and satisfy all his saints, support and dispose of the remnant creation.

4. This ceasing of the kingdom of Christ, is no way derogatory unto his glory, or the perpetuity of his kingdom; no more than his ceasing to intercede for his people is to that perpetuity of his priesthood, which he hath by oath confirmed unto him. His prophetic office also seems to cease, when he shall teach his people no more by his Word and Spirit.

5. In three respects, the kingdom of Christ may be said to abide unto eternity. First, In that all his saints and angels shall eternally adore and worship him, on the account of the glory which he hath received as the King and Head of the church, and be filled with joy in beholding of him, John xvii. 22, 24. Secondly, In that all the saints shall abide in their state of union unto God through him as their Head; God communicating of his fulness to them through him, which will be his eternal glory, when all his enemies shall be his footstool. Thirdly, In that, as the righteous Judge of all, he shall to all eternity continue the punishment of his adversaries.

And this is the last testimony insisted on by the apostle to prove the preeminence of Christ above angels, and consequently above all that were used or employed of old in the disposition and administration of the law, which was the thing he had undertaken to make good. And therefore in the close of this chapter, having denied that any of these things are spoken concerning angels, he shuts up all with a description of their nature and office, such as was then known and received among the Jews; before the consideration whereof, we must draw out, from what hath been insisted on, some observations for our own instruction, which are these that follow.

I. The authority of God the Father in the exaltation of Jesus Christ as the Head and Mediator of the church, is greatly to be regarded by believers.—He says unto him, “Sit thou at my right hand.” Much of the consolation and security of the church, depends on this consideration.

II. The exaltation of Christ is the great pledge of the acceptance of the work of mediation performed in the behalf of the church.—Now, saith God, “Sit thou at my right hand;” the work is done wherein my soul is well pleased.

III. Christ hath many enemies unto his kingdom.—Saith God, I will deal with all of them.

IV. The kingdom and rule of Christ is perpetual and abiding, notwithstanding all the opposition that is made against it.—His enemies rage indeed, as though they would pull him out of his throne; but it is altogether in vain. He hath the faithfulness and power, the word and right hand of God, for the security of his kingdom.

V. The end whereunto the Lord Jesus Christ will assuredly bring all his enemies, let them bluster while they please, shall be unto them miserable and shameful, to the saints joyful, to himself victorious and triumphant.

It is the administration of the kingdom of Christ in the world, that this truth principally respects. Great is the enmity of this world against it, great the opposition that is, and hath always been made unto it; but this will be the assured issue of it, ruin to the enemies,

joy to the saints, glory to Christ. This is that which is represented unto us in the prophecy of Gog. That prophecy is a recapitulation of all the enmity that is acted in the world against the interest of Christ. What his counsel is, the prophet declares, Ezek. xxxviii. 11, "I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages; I will go up to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates." They look upon the church of Christ as a feeble people, that hath no visible power or defence, and therefore easy to be destroyed; this encourageth them to their work. Who or what can deliver them out of their hand? With this resolution they come upon the breadth of the earth, and compass the land of the saints, and the beloved city, Rev. xx. 9. They go about their work with glory and terror, as if they would do it in a day. So they have done in all ages, so they continue to do to this day; and what is the issue? This city which they look on as an unwall'd town, no way defensible or tenable, is not yet taken by them, nor ever shall be; but there they fall before it, one after another, and their bones lie under the walls of the city which they oppose. They fall upon the mountains of Israel, and leave a stink behind them, the shame and reproach of their names unto eternity. Sometimes they seem to have prevailed, and to have done their work, but still the issue is, that they die, or are destroyed and go down to the pit, and come under the feet of Christ, leaving the city untaken. Disappointment, shame, and everlasting punishment, is their portion; and they find at last by experience, that this feeble folk whom they so despise, are wise, and have their habitation in a rock. This pledge we have already of the truth proposed; that all who have formerly risen up in enmity to the kingdom of Christ, are dead, gone, perished under his feet, and have left their work undone, as far from accomplishment as the first day they undertook it: the same shall be the lot of those that are, and those that follow, to the end of the world. And when they have all done their utmost, then shall the end be, then shall all their misery be completed, the joy of the saints filled, and the glory of Christ exalted.

For the enemies themselves, what can be more shameful unto them, than to be so stupid, as not to learn from the experience of so many hundred of years to give over a work wherein never any prospered? more miserable, than to engage in that design, wherein they must necessarily fall and be ruined? more woful, than to work out their own eternal destruction under the wrath of Christ, in a business wherein they had no success? And what profit is it, if for the present they grow a little rich for the gain of oppression, if there be a worm in it that will devour both it and them? What advantage, if they drink a little precious blood, and find sweetness in it, if it make them sick, and swell, and die. The beloved city still abides, and their misery shall never end.

For the saints, what more joyful thing can there be, than for them to take a view of these things; to look backwards, and see all the Nimrods of the earth that have opposed the kingdom of Christ, lying in shame and misery, with their necks under the footstool of his feet? There they may see Pharaoh lie, and Nebuchadnezzar, Nero, Domitian,

Dioclesian, with all their multitudes, and all that have walked in their steps, brought down to the sides of the pit, in shame and eternal misery for their opposition to the kingdom of Christ. There are they fallen, and perished all of them, who laid their swords under heads, and fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living.

And the like prospect may they take of what is to come. They may by faith see Babylon fallen, the whole conspiracy that is in the world against them and their Lord disappointed, and all his enemies that shall arise even to the consummation of all things, brought to ruin. How may they triumph in a glorious prospect of this certain and unavoidable issue of the opposition that is made to the kingdom of their Redeemer? And this must be the issue of these things. For,

1. God hath promised unto the Lord Christ, from the foundation of the world, that so it should be. It was part of his eternal covenant and compact with him, as hath been declared. And after the first promise of breaking the serpent's head, and prevailing therein against the enmity of his seed, no season of the church passed, where the promises of the same success and issue were not renewed; and hereunto do the writings of Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets, bear witness. And hereof it was that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied so expressly unto the old world before the flood, Jude 14, 15. Other prophecies and promises to the same purpose, occur every-where in the Scripture. And this God also, in several ages, for the greater pledge of his veracity, typified; as in the victory of Abraham over the four kings, representing the great monarchies of the world, wherein he had a pledge that he should be heir of the world in his seed; in the conquest of Canaan, the seat and inheritance of the church by Joshua; in the successes and victories of David, and by many signal instances given in the visible ruin of the most potent opposers of his interest in the world. And it cannot be that this word of God should be of none effect.

2. The Lord Christ expects this issue and event of all things, and shall not be frustrated in his expectation. Having received the engagement and faithful promises of his Father, he rests in the foresight of its accomplishment. And thence it is that he bears all the affronts that are put upon him, all the opposition that is made unto him, and to his kingdom, with patience, long-suffering, and forbearance. When we consider the injuries, reproaches, oppressions, persecutions, blasphemies, that he is exposed to in his ways, his servants, his Spirit, and worship, we are ready to admire at his patience (as we ought to do) that he breaks not forth against his enemies as a consuming fire. But he knows the time and season that is allotted for the execution of vengeance upon them; and nothing of their pride, rage, boasting, or triumphing against him, shall ever provoke him to anticipate their ruin; so secure he is of their destruction in the appointed season, and so certain of their day that is coming.

3. He is himself furnished with authority and power for the accomplishment of this work, when and as he pleaseth. He hath not only assurance of the Father's concurrence, but is himself also thoroughly armed and furnished with power to destroy all his enemies even in a



moment. And he will not fail to put forth his power in the appointed season: he "will bruise them all with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." If all his enemies should at once combine themselves against him, should the world receive the utmost contribution of craft, subtlety, and strength, that hell is able to afford to it, what is it all to stand before the incomprehensible power of Jesus Christ? See Rev. vi. 16, 17.

4. His glory and honour require that it should be so. This is a thing that he is very tender in. God hath raised him up, and given him glory and honour, and care must be taken that it be not lost or impaired. Now if his enemies should go free, if they could by any means subduct themselves from under his power, or be delivered from his wrath, where would be his glory, where his honour? Here they reproach him, blaspheme him, despise him, persecute him: Shall they escape and go free? Shall they always prosper? What then would he do to his great name? The glory of Christ indispensably requires that there be a season, a day appointed for the eternal ruin of all his stubborn adversaries.

5. His saints pray that it may be so; and that both upon his account and their own. Upon his, that his glory, which is dearer to them than their lives, may be vindicated and exalted; upon their own account, that their miseries may be ended, that the blood of their fellow-servants may be revenged, that the whole church may be delivered, and all their promises fulfilled. Now he will not disappoint their prayers, nor frustrate their expectations in any thing, much less in those that are of so great importance. He will avenge his elect, he will avenge them speedily.

6. His enemies deserve it unto the utmost; so that as well his justice as his glory, and interest, and people, are concerned in their destruction. In the most of them, their outrage against him is notorious, and visible in the eyes of men and angels; in all of them there is a cruel, old, lasting enmity and hatred, which he will lay open and discover at the last day, that all shall see the righteousness of his judgments against them. God hath given him a kingdom, appointed him to reign; they declare that he shall not do so, and endeavour their utmost to keep him from his throne, and that with scorn, despite, and malice; so that while God is righteous, and the sceptre of Christ's kingdom a sceptre of righteousness, they call aloud for their own destruction.

The uses of this truth in the comfort of the disciples of Christ, against all fears, despondencies, and other effects of unbelief, with the terror of wicked men are obvious unto all.

VER. 14.—The apostle has proved the preeminence of the Son as Mediator of the New Testament above all the angels, from those attributions of honour and glory that are made unto him in the Scriptures, the like whereunto are nowhere made or given unto angels. And now that he may not appear to argue merely negatively from what is not said concerning them, he adds in this last verse such a description of their natures and office, or work and employment, as shows that indeed

no such thing can be rightly spoken or affirmed concerning them, as he both before manifested to be spoken and recorded concerning the Son.

VER. 14.—Οὐχι παντες εἰσι λειτουργικα πνευματα, εἰς διακονιαν αποστελλομενα δια τους μελλοντας κληρονομειν σωτηριαν.

There is no difference in the reading, nor much about the translation of those words. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to minister to (unto a ministry for) them that shall inherit salvation." This was the common received doctrine of the church concerning angels, suitable unto the Scripture, and to the purpose of the apostle, as manifesting that they had no interest in the glory before ascribed unto the Son.

Sundry things are here expressed concerning angels, which we must briefly pass through the consideration of. As,

1. Their nature. They are πνευματα, רוחות, *Ruchoth, spirits*. Spiritual subsistencies, not qualities or natural faculties, as the Sadducees imagined; and which by an homonymy of the name, Maimonides, More Nebuch. p. ii. cap. 3, admits also to be angels, but falsely, and without authority from Scripture or reason. This is their nature, this the Hebrews acknowledge so to be; they are created spirits, not to be compared with, or equalled unto him that made and created all things.

2. Their office. They are πνευματα λειτουργικα, 'ministering spirits,' so they are termed, Psal. ciii. 21, "Praise the Lord all his hosts." משרתיו, LXX. λειτουργοι αυτου, 'his ministers doing his will.' Hence in general the Jews call them, משרתים, 'ministers,' and among other titles assign this unto God, that he is, יוצר משרתים, 'the Creator of ministering spirits or angels.' And expressly in the Talmud they are called, מלאכי דשירותא, as more frequently by the Rabbins in the Hebrew dialect, מלאכי השרת, 'angels of ministry,' above whom that the Messiah was to be, we have formerly shown from themselves.

Now, what kind of office or ministry it is that is ascribed unto them, the word itself doth in part declare. שרת, is to minister principally about holy things; nor is it above once applied unto any other ministry. And such a ministry it signifies, as is performed with honour and ease, and is opposed unto עבד, which is to minister with labour and burden. So the ministry of the Levites in bearing the burden of the tabernacle, is called עבדה, a 'ministry with labour,' Numb. viii. 25. When the more easy and honourable employment, which was attended by them who by reason of their age were exempted from bearing of burdens, is called שרת, ver. 26, and Deut. xviii. 7. Such is the ministry of angels. It is in and about holy things, and unto themselves honourable and easy. And this שרת, is rendered λειτουργια, which expresseth sometimes such a general ministry as compriseth the whole service and worship of the church, Acts xiii. 2, λειτουργουντων αυτων τω Κυριω, 'as they ministered unto the Lord;' that is attended unto the performance of all the duties of the church.

This then in general is the office of the angels; they are מלאכי השרת or רוחות; πνευματα λειτουργικα, 'ministering spirits,' that wait on God

in and about his holy services for the good of the church; which also in the like manner ministereth unto God in its own state and condition. And hence it is that the church and they do make up one family, Ephes. iv. 15, and that they are all fellow servants in the same family with them that keep the testimony of Jesus, Rev. xxii. 9.

And of this some of the later Jews have retained the tradition. Whence is that of Maimonides, More Nebuch. part ii. cap. 6, which he citeth out of the Talmud. אין הק"ב עושה דבר עד שנמלך בפמליא של מעלה. 'The holy blessed God doth nothing unless he consult with his superior family.' Only not knowing the rise of the word פמליא, nor what it should signify; he tells us פמליא היא המכהה בלשון יון, that in the Greek tongue it signifies an host; whereas it is purely the Latin familia without the least alteration. And the description of this superior part of the family of God is given us, Dan. vii. 10. "Thousand thousands did minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." In which words Pseudo-Dionysius, Gregory, and Aquinas, with sundry of the schoolmen, have coined a distinction of angels into ministrantes, those that minister unto God, and assistentes, those that stand before him. Whereas the whole intention of the expression is, that all the angels stood ministering before him, as John declares the matter, Rev. v. 11. And therefore the apostle expressly here affirms that they are all ministering spirits, cutting off one member of their distinction. Neither is there more intended in the ministry of that upper part of the family of God than is expressed concerning the lower part of it of old, Deut. xviii. 5, "God chose the priests and the Levites לעמד לשרת, to stand and to minister in the name of the Lord." The same persons were both assistentes and ministrantes, they stood to minister before the Lord.

Now, because of this standing and ministering of angels, that is their waiting on God in a readiness to do his will, they may be said in some sense to be the throne of God, from whence he executeth justice and judgment; for as he is called ישב הכרובים, Ps. lxxx. 1, "He that dwelleth between the cherubims;" as also Ps. xcix. 1; so the Jews say, that the thrones mentioned Dan. vii. were שרים העליונים, 'the higher princes,' or angels, as Abarbinel on the place. This, then, is their office, they are all ministering spirits.

3. Their execution of their office in their actual employment, is here also expressed. They are ministering spirits, *αἱ διακοναὶ ἀποστέλλομεναι*, 'sent out unto a ministry;' sent out, that is, they are daily so, continually so, the word denoting the present time, which is *always*. They stand before the presence of God, and are continually sent out by him, sometimes some, sometimes others, always those that are sufficient for his work.

Now, as we observed before, that λειτουργία denotes the whole family service of God, which in general is ascribed unto these children and servants of his, in the upper part thereof, they being πνεύματα λειτουργικά, 'ministering spirits;' so here the execution of their work is expressed by two words, which comprise the whole ministry of the church; ἀποστολή and διακονία, 'apostleship' and 'labouring ministry,' and therein the harmony is still preserved, that is between both

parts of the family of God. And as in the service of the church, the ministers thereof do not minister unto men, but unto the Lord, for and in the behalf of men, Acts xiii. 2, so is it with these spirits also, they are sent out to minister for the good of men, but it is the Lord unto whom they minister; his ministers they are, not ours, Ps. ciii. 21, though in their ministry, belonging unto the same family with believers, they are their fellow servants. As all the servants of a king, though otherwise greatly differenced, agree in this, that they are all servants unto the same person. And these two words express both their honour, that they are immediately sent out from the presence of God, they are his apostles, as also their obedience and diligence, they undertake *διακονίαν*, a 'ministry,' to be discharged with care and due observance of him by whom they are sent.

4. There is expressed the restriction of their ministry unto the especial object of their work and employment; it is for them that shall be heirs of salvation; *δια τους μελλοντας κληρονομειν σωτηριαν*, 'for them,' for their sakes, for their good, in their behalf, 'who shall inherit salvation.' Elect believers are heirs at present, and hereafter shall inherit, or actually obtain salvation, by virtue of their heirship. Yet the apostle speaketh not of them as elect, nor yet absolutely as believers; but as of heirs, which they obtain by the privilege of adoption. This gives them heirship, and an interest in the family of God. And the ministry of the superior part of the family in behalf of the lower, respects them as such, that is, as adopted, as children, as heirs, as co-heirs with Christ, Rom. viii. 16, 17. This privilege, I say, amongst others innumerable and inexpressible, we have by our adoption, that being admitted into the family of God, those blessed angels, whose special ministry respects that family, have us under their constant care.

It is true, that the ministry of angels is not always absolutely restrained unto the church or family of God: they are employed also in the government of the world. So the angel that was sent unto Daniel affirms, that in the first year of Darius, he stood to confirm and strengthen him, Dan. xi. 1, that is, to assist him in the wielding of his new gotten empire. As also, ch. x. 13, 20, 21, he declares how he acted in opposition to the prince of Persia, and stirred up the prince of Grecia; that is, how he should do so in the appointed time. And so also doubtless, are they employed about other affairs in the world, from whence much good redounds unto many who yet belong not to the family of God. But yet two things we may here observe: First, That though this ministry of theirs was not immediately, yet it was ultimately for the church. For their sakes were those mighty empires first raised, and afterwards razed to the ground. And this is that which they consider in their ministry; see Zech. i. 8—11. And thence it appears that the prince of the kingdom of Persia, who withstood the angel, was not any angel of God, but the king of Persia himself, who laboured to obstruct the work committed to him. Secondly, That the apostle treats in this place of that immediate respect which the ministry of the angels had unto the church, because in that regard alone he carries on his comparison between them and the Son, that only being unto his purpose in hand.



But it may be objected, that this their ministry will not clearly evince their inferiority and subordination unto Christ, seeing he himself also was sent, and that for the good of them who shall inherit salvation, and is thence called the apostle of our profession. But the differences between him and them in their being sent, are so great and manifest, that his superiority unto them, and preeminence above them, is not in the least thereby impeached. He was sent by his own voluntary previous choice and condescension: they are so, in pursuit of the state and condition of their creation. He was sent to minister in the form of a servant, only for a short season, in the days of his flesh; they continue to be so from the beginning to the end of the world. He was sent unto that great and mighty work of mediation, which none was worthy to undertake, none able to go through withal but himself alone, as being the only begotten Son of God; they are sent about the ordinary concerns of the saints: He as the Son, they as servants: He as the Author of the whole work of the redemption and salvation of the church, they as subordinate assistants in the particular promotion of it. The general agreement then of his and their being sent for the good of the church, hath so many and so great differences in the manner, causes, and ends of it, that it no way takes off from the evidence of their subordination and subjection unto him. And with this demonstration the apostle closeth the argument he had so long insisted on.

Of the nature of this ministry of angels for the good of them that shall inherit salvation, because it belongs not directly unto the present design of the apostle, and would in the full consideration of it cause a long diversion from the work in hand, I shall not treat although it be a matter singularly deserving our meditation. For the present it may suffice us to observe, that in the government and protection of his saints here below, both as to the dispensation of grace and providence, God is pleased to make use of the ministry of angels, wherein much of their honour and our safety doth consist. For a close of the whole, we may only observe the way and manner whereby the apostle proposeth this doctrine of the ministry of angels unto the Hebrews; 'are they not?' saith he, he speaks of it as a matter well known unto them, and acknowledged by them. Their nature, their dignity, their office was declared in the Old Testament. Thence were they instructed, that as to their *nature* they were spirits; in *dignity*, thrones, principalities, and powers; in *office*, ministers unto God, sent out for the good of his church. And therefore these things the apostle in sundry places takes for granted, as those that were already known and received in the church of God, Rom. viii. 32; Eph. i. 20, 21; Col. i. 16. This doctrine then I say, was propagated from the Jews unto the Christians. And from them also came forth much of that curiosity and superstition about angels, which afterwards infected the minds of many in the Christian church. For after they were forsaken of God, and began to give up themselves unto vain speculations, there was not any thing wherein the vanity of their minds did more early manifest itself, than in their imaginations about angels, wherein they exercise themselves unto this day. For to omit their monstrous figments about the original of devils, most of whom they affirm to have

been begotten by Adam on Lilith, before God formed Eve, and many to have issued from Adam and Eve severally whilst they lived separate, an hundred and fifty years after the death of Abel, as later follies; it is certain that some of them began to vent curiosities about angels in the apostles' time, Col. ii. 18, and to express their fancies about their names, orders, degrees, and employments. And this they continue yet to do, although they peremptorily deny that they are to be invocated or prayed unto, wherein they are outdone by others. Names they have invented for them innumerable, and those many of them uncouth and insignificant. Orders also or degrees they assign unto them, some four, some five, some seven, some nine, some thirteen, according as it hath seemed good unto this or that great master among them. From them the Pseudo-Dionysius about the fourth or fifth century after Christ, took the occasion and rise of his operose figment about the celestial hierarchy, though he mixed their inventions with many Peripatetical and Pythagorean notions. Aristotle proportioned the number of the intelligencies unto the spheres of the heavens, more he granted not. The Pythagoreans and Platonics asserted all things here below to be influenced by the planets in their orbs, the inferior receiving a communication of virtue from the higher, and imparting it unto those beneath. So they interpreted the exsection of Saturn by Jupiter, as that of Cælum by Saturn, to be the interception of their procreative influence, that it should not immediately be communicated unto things below but by them. Out of all these fancies did Dionysius raise his hierarchy. From the Jews he took the disposition of his angels into orders of superiority and rule; from Aristotle their number, placing an order instead of a single intelligence, to answer what is taught in the Scripture concerning their multitude; and from the Pythagorean Platonics, the communication of light, knowledge, and illumination from God by the highest to the lowest series or order, and from them to men on earth. And on this foundation, such as it is, are built the discourses of many commentators on this place; in their inquiries, whether angels of the superior orders are sent forth to minister for the good of believers; which is denied by many, though by some later expositors, as Estius, Ribera, Tena, A Lapide, it is granted, and proved not without much ado. So hard is it sometimes for men to cast down scare-crows of their own setting up.

It remaineth only that we close our whole discourses on this chapter with some observations for our own use and instruction from this last verse, as,

1. The highest honour of the most glorious spirits in heaven, is to minister unto the Lord in the service whereunto he appoints them. This is the office, this the work of angels; and this is their honour and glory. For what greater honour can a creature be made partaker of, than to be employed in the service of his Creator; what greater glory than to stand in the presence and to do the will of the King of heaven? If it be an honour on earth to stand before princes, dying perishing men, and that unto men in nature and kind equal unto those before whom they stand; what is it for them, who by nature are at

an infinite distance from the glory of God, to stand before him who lives for ever and ever? And surely it will be inconceivably woful unto poor souls at the last day, to find how they despised in this world, a share and interest in that service, which is and ever was the glory and honour of angels.

2. Such is the love and care of God towards his saints labouring here below, that he sends the most glorious attendants on his throne to minister unto him, in taking care of them. He who gave his only Son for them, will not spare to send his holy angels unto them. Heaven and earth shall be witnesses of his care of them, and of the value that he puts upon them.

Now this being a matter of so great importance as it is unto the church's consolation, and the doctrine directly taught in the text, we may a little farther inquire into it, in answer unto these two questions.

First, Wherefore God is pleased to use the ministry of angels in the dispensation of his care and good-will unto the church, the heirs of salvation, seeing he can by an almighty facility, exert all the effects of it by his own immediate power.

Secondly, Unto what especial end and purpose doth God make use of the ministry of angels for the good of them that believe?

For the first of these, the principal account of it is to be resolved unto his own sovereign will, wisdom, and pleasure. Thus are we always to live in a holy admiration of him, whenever we consider any of his works or ways, Rom. xi. 33. Herein are we to rest, and to put a stop unto all our inquiries: "So it pleased him," Matt. xi. 25, and "he giveth no account of his matters," Job. xxxiii. 12, 13. This we are to acquiesce in, as the great reason of all God's dispensations and ways, even his own infinite wisdom and sovereign pleasure. He alone knows what becomes his own goodness and greatness, and of creatures not one, but as he is pleased to reveal it. For, "can we find out the Almighty unto perfection? can we by searching find out God?" Job xi. 7. How shall poor limited finite creatures come to know what becometh the infinite Holy One to do, any otherwise but as himself declareth that he hath done it? And then we know that the work is holy and wise, and such as becometh infinite perfection, because he hath done it. Herein then we principally rest, as to the meetness and condecency of the ministry of angels; God hath appointed it. Whereunto we may add those other reasons which the Scripture suggests unto us, as,

1. God doth it for the preserving and manifestation of the glorious order of his kingdom. God is pleased to rule his creation as a supreme Lord and King. Hence there is so often mention made in the Scripture, that he is the king, the only potentate, the Lord of lords, and King of kings; as also of his throne, his kingdom, dominion, reign, and government. And God doth this, that he might thereby give an understanding of his sovereignty unto his creatures, and make way thereby for the manifestation of his glory. Now unto a kingdom there are three things essential; rule, obedience, and order. In this kingdom, the sovereign rule is in the hand of God alone, the kingdom or monarchy is his. Obedience is the work and duty of the

whole creation, every thing according to its nature, capacity, and condition. The glory of both these lies in order. Hereof there are two parts: first, that which respects the being of the creatures in their dependance on God: secondly, that which respects their operation in obedience unto him. God hath in infinite wisdom endowed the works of his hands with such various natures, whereon their uses do depend, as that they are placed thereby in several ranks, series, and orders, in an useful subserviency unto one another, so far as they are advantaged thereby in their common and absolute subjection to himself. This is the order of their being; the order of their operation is such as they are fitted for by their natures, and whereby they set out the glory of this kingdom of God. Thus he takes the angels, being fitted thereunto in that place which they hold in the order of nature and being, unto the next and immediate attendance unto the throne of his kingdom. There they wait upon him, to receive and execute his commands in all the affairs of his kingdom. So are they every-where described in the Scripture, Ps. lxxviii. and ciii; Dan. vii; Rev. v; Isa. vi., and elsewhere. And by this ministry of angels doth God insinuate unto us the glory and order of his kingdom. His glorious and fiery throne being attended with millions of these mighty angels, ready to accomplish his will. And whereas God hath erected *imperium in imperio*, 'a kingdom in a kingdom,' like the wheels within the wheels in Ezekiel's vision; namely, the economical dispensatory kingdom of Christ in his œcumenical kingdom over the whole creation; and hath annexed thereunto the principal manifestation of his glory, rule, and dominion, those blessed ministers do principally attend the affairs thereof. And thus, though God can govern and dispose of all things *solo nutu*, by the almighty immediate emanations of his own power, yet for the manifestation of the glory of his kingdom, especially of that rule which is committed unto the Lord Christ, he useth the ministry of his creatures, in that order which his infinite wisdom had disposed them unto at the first creation.

2. God is pleased to do this, to exercise the obedience of the angels themselves, and that upon a three-fold account. First, to keep, preserve, and rule them fitly to their state and condition. Being creatures, they have a natural and necessary dependance on God their Creator; and being intellectual creatures, they have a moral dependance on him, according to a law and rule, with reference unto the utmost end whereunto they were created. This requires their constant obedience unto the will of God, without which they leave and forsake the law of their creation and condition, and also deviate from the end for which they were made. Wherefore, to exercise them unto and in this their obedience, God makes use of their ministry and service in his government of the church. And this they shall continue to do unto the end of the world, when the course of their obedience being accomplished, they shall be everlastingly satiated with the contemplation of God's infinite excellencies, and enjoyment of him as their reward. Secondly, that in them he might give an example of ready obedience unto the church. These angels of God, being in their nature excellent, and great in power, always ready, watchful and free



from all diversions or avocations, eminent in light and holiness, as always beholding the face of God, and filled with his grace, are proposed unto us in their obedience and readiness to do the will of God, as an example and pattern which we are to imitate to our utmost, though we are never able perfectly to express. And thence are we directed by our Saviour to pray, that we may do the will of God on earth, as it is done by them in heaven. Thirdly, that they themselves may be made partakers of this singular honour and glory, to serve the most high God in his most glorious work, the preservation and salvation of his church; for that this is their honour was before declared.

3. God employeth them in an especial manner in this ministry, for the good of them that are heirs of salvation, to manifest unto them the greatness and glory of the work of the gathering, preserving, and redemption of his church; with the value that he puts upon all the fruits of the death of his Son Jesus Christ, and upon all the concerns of his mediation. For, as of themselves they desire to look particularly into these things, which in general appear so glorious unto them, 1 Pet. i. 12, that their delight in the wisdom and love of God may be more and more increased; so by God's dealings with his church, in whose behalf they are employed, they learn therein the manifold wisdom of God, and riches of his grace, Eph. iii. 10. And thus in all their employment about the saints, wherein they are sent out to minister for their good, they learn much of the wisdom and love of God, and are thereby excited to honour applaud, glorify, and praise, him. Somewhat of this they shall see in the least and meanest work toward any believer that is committed unto them. And they eternally rejoice in the overflowings of the love and grace of God, taking care of all the concerns of the poorest and meanest of his servants.

4. This is done, that God may in an especial manner give glory and honour unto Jesus Christ thereby. "This is his will, that all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father," John v. 23. He hath therefore raised him up, and given him honour and glory; and in particular, exalted him far above the angels, putting them in subjection unto him as their head, prince, ruler, and governor, Eph. i. 21, 22. Neither is it a mere show of glory, or a titular kingdom and dominion that he hath given to Jesus Christ, but a real and absolute sovereignty, wherein all things subject unto him are at his absolute disposal; and therefore must the angels themselves be at his service in the affairs of his kingdom, and so they acknowledge themselves to be the fellow servants of them that keep his testimony, Rev. xxii. 9. Now, the heart and love of Jesus Christ is greatly upon that part of his church and people which are labouring with sin, affliction, and persecution, here below, Heb. ii. 17, ch. iv. 15. It is then greatly for his honour and glory, (which in all things the Father aimeth at, Col. i. 18, 19,) that the glorious angels should be employed for the good and in the behalf of all his poor labouring saints. This honour is done to Jesus Christ in heaven, when all the attendants of the throne of God do see the care that is taken about the meanest that believe in him.

5. The love and care and condescension of God unto his saints is hereby manifested to the saints themselves. God employeth the

angels for their good, that they may know how he careth for them, and be comforted thereby, Psal. xci. 10. The saints of God have mean and low thoughts of themselves, as it becomes them to have. They know and confess that they are less than all the mercies of God, and unworthy that he should have any regard of them. Such thoughts as these, their mean terrene condition, and their manifold sins and failings do fill them withal. Of the glorious angels, their thoughts and apprehensions are high and honourable. Their nature, their state and condition, their power and greatness, their holiness and enjoyment of the presence of God, do all present them unto their minds under a notion of much excellency and glory. Hence, some weak, superstitious, and curious minds have been drawn to adore them with religious worship and adoration; the saints know sufficiently the folly hereof. But yet when they consider that God is pleased to use, employ, and send out these glorious spirits to take care of them, to do them good, to watch over them and round about them, to keep them from evil: this fills them with a holy admiration, both of the infinite love and condescension of God towards them, and also of the excellency of the mediation of the Lord Christ, who hath brought them into this condition of favour, from both which, much spiritual comfort and rejoicing in the Lord do arise. And for this end also doth God choose to do that mediately, by the ministry of angels, which otherwise by an inconceivable facility he could do by his own immediate power.

6. A blessed intercourse, society, communion, and fellowship is hereby maintained and kept up between the several parts of the family of God; that of angels above, and this of believers below. It hath been formerly declared, how the angels in heaven, and all elect believers were reduced into one family, when God reconciled the things in heaven, and earth unto himself, and brought them all into subjection unto, and dependence upon one common head, Christ Jesus, Eph. i. 10. From hence are angels and men reduced into one family; the family in heaven and earth; the angels by transition, men by adoption. Now it is the will of God, for the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, the immediate head of this family, that there should be an intercourse and an helpful communion between the several parts of it; for to this end we are brought into the society of the innumerable company of angels, Heb. xii. 22. Now, because our goodness, our usefulness, our helpfulness is confined and limited unto the saints that are in the earth, Psal. xvi. 3, not extending itself unto God, or to any of his holy ones above, we cannot help, assist, counsel, nor advise the angels, nor do they in any thing stand in need of our aid or assistance. And since the communication of our minds unto them, by way of religious subjection, adoration, faith, trust, affiance, is absolutely forbidden unto us; it remaineth that this fellowship and society must be maintained by the aid, help, and assistance which they are able to afford unto us, and which we stand in need of. And on this account doth God employ them about the affairs and concernments of believers, that so, a becoming fellowship may be kept up in the family of Christ, and an usefulness between the several parts thereof.

7. God makes use of the ministry of angels in the service of the

church, to reproach, awe, restrain, and torment the devil. It is a continual reproach cast upon Satan, when he sees those unto whom he is like in nature, and with whom he was sometime a companion in glory, willingly, cheerfully, triumphantly obeying the will of God in the service of Christ, having by his wickedness cast out himself from the same honourable employment, and mancipated himself to the vilest services that any part of the creation of God is cast down unto. The whole work of the angels is a continual reproach unto Satan for his sin and folly. It cries unto him, 'This might have been thy work, this might have been thy condition;' the gnawing of which consideration, is no small part of his torment and present restless vexation. They also put an awe upon him in all his attempts. He knows well their power, their authority, their commission, and that it is not for him to contend with them. With one word they can at any time defeat him: "The Lord rebuke thee, Satan, the Lord rebuke thee." And he knows not where he may meet with them in his attempts. And this keeps him in continual awe and perpetual uncertainty of success in all that he undertakes or goes about. And hereby God also in many things frustrates his endeavours, restrains his power, and disappoints his malice. It is inconceivable what havoc he would make of the lives, and liberties, and estates of the saints, did not these watchers from the Holy One disappoint him. And all these things add to his torment. Much of his present punishment consists in the endless workings of wrath, envy, malice, bloodthirstiness, and rage. Now, as these, wherever they are found but in the least degree, are tormenting passions, so where they are all in their height, rage, and fury, and are not by any considerable vent abated or slacked, what can be worse in hell itself, but only the immediate wrath of God? But thus it is with Satan from this ministry of angels. He sees the church and every member of it, all of whom he seeks to devour, encamped about, protected and defended by this heavenly host, so that he cannot in any measure have his will at them, nay, that he cannot touch the soul of any one of them, nor cause a hair of the head of any one of them to perish. This fills him with self-devouring rage, envy, and wrath. And thus doth God by this way accomplish his judgment upon him. And these are some of the reasons which the Scripture intimates unto us, why the Lord is pleased thus to make use of the ministry of angels; which may suffice for an answer to the first question before proposed.

II. The second is, unto what ends and purposes doth God make use of the ministry of angels, for the good of them that do believe.

The thing itself we suppose in both these questions. It is so directly asserted in the words of the apostle, and so many instances are given of it elsewhere in the Scripture, that it needs not any special confirmation. It will also be farther declared in our enumeration of the ends and purposes of it ensuing. As,

I. In general, God doth it to communicate by them the effects of his care and love unto the church by Jesus Christ. This God represented unto Jacob in the vision that he gave him of the ladder which stood upon the earth, and whose top reached unto heaven, Gen. xxviii. 12, 13. For although the Jews say somewhat to the purpose, when

they affirm this ladder to have denoted the dependance of all things here below on them above, under the rule of the providence of God, yet they say not all that was signified thereby. Our Saviour tells us John i. 52, "That from thence his disciples should see heaven opened, and angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Plainly alluding unto this vision of Jacob. For those words, *ἐπὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, 'Upon the Son of man,' cannot denote merely the object of angelic ministration, that they should be exercised in their work about his person, but also, that by him, by means of his mediation, the angels ascend and descend in the work of ministering unto the saints. It is true, the great instance of their ministry was given in and about the person of Christ as head of the church. They declared his conception and nativity, Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35, ii. 11, 12. They ministered unto him after his temptation, Matt. iv. 11. They strengthened him in his agony, Luke xxii. 43. They were witnesses of his resurrection and ascension, Luke xxiv. 4; Acts i. 10, 11. But by him, and on his account, they perform the offices of their mission towards others also, even all the heirs of salvation; but this still upon the account of Christ. They ascend and descend on his mediation, sent by his authority, aiming at his glory, doing his work, carrying on his interest, as in the following particulars will appear: For,

1. They are sent in an extraordinary manner, to make revelations of the will of God, about things tending unto the obedience and spiritual advantage of them that do believe. Hereof we have many instances in the Old Testament, especially in God's dealing with the patriarchs before the giving of the law. For although the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God himself, did often appear unto them, as to Abraham, Gen. xviii. 1, 2, xix. 24, and unto Jacob, chap. xxxii. 24, whom he calls *המלאך ה'נא*, Gen. xlvi. 2, yet God also made frequent use of created angels, in the revelation and discovery of his mind and will unto them, as is evident from many passages in their story. That he used their ministration in the giving of the law, we have before abundantly shown, the Holy Ghost declaring and affirming of it, Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18; Acts vii. 53. The like also he continued to do in the visions of them granted unto the prophets that ensued unto the end of that dispensation, especially unto Ezekiel and Zechariah. So also the same was done unto the New Testament, as to omit others we have an especial instance, Rev. i. 1. How far God is pleased to continue this ministration of angels unto this day, is hard to determine. For as many have pretended unto revelations by angels, which have been mere delusions of Satan, or imaginations of their own brains: so to say, that God doth not, or may not send his angels unto any of his saints to communicate his mind unto them, as to some particulars of their own duty, according unto his word, or to foreshow unto them somewhat of his own approaching work, seems, in my judgment, unwarrantably to limit the Holy One of Israel. Howbeit, such things in particular are to be duly weighed with sobriety and reverence.

2. God by them suggests good motions into the minds of his saints. As the devil sets himself on work to tempt them unto evil, by suggestions suited unto the principles of sin within them; so God employs his holy angels to provoke them to that which is good, by



suggesting that unto them which is suitable unto the principle of spiritual life and grace which is in them. And as it is difficult to discover the suggestions of Satan in most cases, from the workings of our own minds, and our unbelief in them, partly because of their conaturalness one to the other, and partly because his impressions are not sensible, nor produce any effects, but as they mix themselves with our own darkness and lusts; so it is no less difficult, distinctly to take notice of these angelical motions, upon the like account, on the other hand. For being suitable unto the inclinations of that principle of grace which is in the hearts of believers, and producing no effect but by them, they are hardly discerned. So that we may have the benefit of many angelical suggestions of good things, which we ourselves take no notice of. And if it be inquired, how these good motions from angels, are or may be distinguished from the motions of the Holy Ghost and his actings in believers, I answer, that they are differenced sundry ways; as, 1. These angelical are *ab extra*, from without; angels have no inbeing in us, no residence in our souls, but work upon us as an external principle, whereas the Holy Spirit abideth with us and dwelleth in us, and works *ab intra*, from within the very principles of our souls and minds. Whence it follows, 2. That these angelical motions consist in occasional impressions on the mind, fancy, and imagination, by advantages taken from outward objects and present disposition of the mind, rendering it meet to receive such impressions, and so disposing it to affect the heart, the will, and the affections; whereas the Holy Ghost closeth in his operations with all the faculties of the soul, really and immediately exciting every one of them to gracious actings according to their nature and quality. Whence also it appears, 3. That angelical motions communicate no strength, power, or ability unto men to act, do, or perform the good which they guide or direct unto. Only they provoke and stir up men to act and exert the strength which they have, in the duties that they are minded of. But the Holy Ghost in his motions doth really communicate spiritual grace, strength, and power unto the faculties of the soul, enabling them unto a right performance of the duties proposed unto them. And 4. whereas angelical impressions are transient, and abide not at all in themselves, but only in the effects which the mind warned and excited by them doth produce, there is a constant, abiding, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of believers, enabling them to will and to do, according unto his good pleasure. And this is a second part of the ministry of angels in particular, the benefit whereof we are oftener made partakers of, than perhaps we are aware. And these motions, which are an effect of their ministry, the Sadducees of old took to be angels, denying all spiritual subsistences from whom they should proceed.

3. God sends forth his angels unto his ministry, for the good of believers, to preserve them from many dangers, and ruinous casualties, that would otherwise befall them. Much of the design of Psal. xci. is to acquaint us therewithal; for though the charge of angels is expressed only in ver. 11 and 12, yet as the expression there of keeping us in all our ways, that we stumble not, is comprehensive of all the dangers which we are or may be exposed to, so the same

work of theirs respects all the evils and casualties enumerated in the beginning of the Psalm. And to this purpose also is it said, that the angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, as they did about Elisha of old; namely, to preserve them from the dangers that they are exposed to. Nor is this impeached by the observations of the evils, troubles, calamities, and miseries that befall the people of God; for God hath not given his angels a commission to act *ad ultimum virium*, to the utmost of their strength, *viis et modis*, for the preservation of his, but only to act according to his especial good pleasure; and this they always do. Now, it is the will of God, that his saints should be exercised with various troubles and calamities, for the trial of their faith and obedience. But yet in the ordering and management of these calamitous accidents or troubles, they have no less benefit by the ministry of angels than they have in respect of those from which they are preserved by them. For in as much as they also are designed and ordered for their good, their being exposed to them in their seasons, their support under them during their continuance, and their deliverance from them in the appointed time thereof, are all signal mercies which they receive by the ministry of angels.

4. By this ministry of angels, doth God in particular preserve us from the sudden and violent incursions of Satan. Satan in the Scripture is called a serpent, from his subtlety and lying in wait to do mischief; and a lion, from his rage, and fury, and spoiling, from his lurking-places. And as the one, and the other, he continually seeks the harm, mischief, and ruin of the whole man; not only of our souls in sin and desert of punishment, but of our bodies in our lives, health, and welfare. Hence we find so many in the gospel troubled with bodily infirmities, from the assaults and oppressions of Satan. And what he prevails to do against any one, that he is continually attempting against all the seed of Abraham. Hereunto also belong all those hurtful terrors, affrightments, and surprisals which he endeavoureth by himself and his agents to cast upon us. Had he his liberty, he would make our whole lives to be filled with disappointments, horrors, vain fear, and perplexities, if he could proceed no farther. Now in all these designs, it is more probable that he is prevented by the ministry of angels. We find in the first of Job, that in all the devil's walks in the earth for the executing of his malice, the angels still observe him when he comes with his accusations against the saints into the presence of the Lord. And hereon depends the safety and security of our lives, without which Satan would by all means continually attempt to fill them with terrors, vexations, losses, and troubles. Not one of us should escape him any better than Job did, when God for a season suspended his protection over his relations, possessions, and enjoyments.

5. They are in their ministry appointed to be witnesses of the obedience, sufferings, and worship of the disciples of Christ, that they may give testimony unto them before God, and in the great assembly of the last day, so glorifying God for the grace bestowed upon them, and the assistance afforded unto them. Thus Paul tells us that the apostles, in their preaching and sufferings, were made a spectacle

unto angels, 1 Cor. iv. 9. The holy angels of God looked on, rejoicing to behold how gloriously they acquitted themselves in the work and ministry committed unto them. And to this end doth he charge Timothy before the elect angels, to look unto and discharge aright the duties of an evangelist, 1 Tim. v. 21, because they were appointed of God to be witnesses of his faithfulness and diligence therein. And it is not improbable that he hath respect unto the presence of angels in the assemblies of the saints for the worship of God, when he enjoins modesty and sobriety unto women in them, on their account, 1 Cor. xi. 10. And from that particular instance, a general rule may be drawn, for the observance of comeliness and order in all our assemblies; namely, from the presence of these holy witnesses at all our solemn worship. For church assemblies are the court, the dwelling-place, the throne of Jesus Christ, and therefore in them he is in an especial manner attended by these glorious ministers of his presence. And therefore, although a holy regard unto God and our Lord Jesus Christ himself, be the first and principal motive unto a right and holy acquitment of ourselves, in all our obedience, sufferings, and worship; yet in subordination thereto, we may have also respect unto the angels, as those who are employed by him to be witnesses of our ways and carriage. Such a respect, I mean, as may administer occasion to them to glorify God in Christ on our behalf, that so all the honour may finally redound to him alone.

6. God useth the ministry of angels, to avenge his elect of their enemies and persecutors, to render unto them a recompense and vengeance even in this world, in due and appointed season. Thus by an angel, he destroyed the army of Sennacherib, when he intended and threatened the destruction of Jerusalem. And by an angel, he smote Herod in the midst of his pride and persecution, Acts, xii. 23. And this ministry of theirs is in a special manner pointed to in several places in the Revelation, where the judgments of God are foretold to be executed for the persecutions of the world. And this work they wait for, in a holy admiration of the patience of God towards many a provoking generation; and are in a continual readiness to discharge it unto the uttermost, when they shall receive their commission so to do, Dan. vii.

7. They carry the souls departed into Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22.

8. Lastly, The ministry of angels respects the general resurrection and day of judgment. The Lord Christ is every-where described coming to judgment at the last day, attended with all his holy and glorious angels, Matt. xxiv. 31, chap. xxv. 31; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8; Jude 14, 15. And great shall be their work towards the elect in that day, when the Lord Christ shall be admired even by them, in all those that do believe. For although the work of the resurrection, like that of the creation, is to be effected by the immediate operation of almighty power, without the intervention of any secondary finite agents, limited in their power and operation; yet many things preparatory thereto, and consequents thereof, shall be committed unto the ministry of angels. By them are the signs and tokens of it to be proclaimed unto the world; to them is the sounding of the last trumpet, and ge-

neral summons given out unto all flesh to appear before Jesus Christ, committed; with all the glorious solemnity of the judgment itself. And as they bear and accompany the departing souls of the saints into the receptacles of their rest in heaven, so doubtless also shall they accompany them in their joyful return unto their beloved old habitations. By them also will the Lord Christ gather them together from all parts wherein their redeemed bodies have been reduced into dust; and so also at length by them bring all the heirs of salvation triumphantly into the full possession of their inheritance.

And thus much may suffice to have spoken about the ministry of angels here mentioned by the apostle; by all which it farther appears, that neither in their nature, nor their office they are any way to be compared with the Son of God in his ministry towards the church. Some deductions also for our especial use and instruction may here be added from what hath been spoken. As,

1. That we ought to be very careful to use sobriety in our speculations and meditations about this matter. Herein doth the caution of the apostle take place in an especial manner, that we should be wise unto sobriety, Rom. xii. 3, and not to think ourselves wise above that which is written. This some neglecting of old, and endeavouring to intrude themselves into the things which they had not seen, Col. ii. 13, that is, boasting of the knowledge and acquaintance with angels, which they had no ground for, nor any safe instruction in, fell into pride, curiosity, superstition, and idolatry, as the apostle in that place declareth. And almost in all ages of the church, men have failed on this account. The curiosity of the Jews we did in some measure before manifest. To them in their imaginations succeeded the Gnostics, whose portentous *Æones* and genealogies of inferior deities, recounted by Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, Epiphanius, and others of the ancients, were nothing but wicked and foolish imaginations about angels. Unto them succeeded those about the beginning of the fourth century, who flatly worshipped angels, and had conventicles, or private meetings for that purpose, who are expressly condemned in the thirty-fifth canon of the council of Laodicea, An. 364, in these words, "Ὅτι οὐ δεῖ χριστιανούς ἐγκαταλείπειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἀπιεῖναι, καὶ ἀγγέλους ὀνομαζέειν καὶ συνάξεις ποιεῖν; ἅπερ ἀπηγορεύεται· εἰ τις οὖν εὗρεθῇ ταύτῃ τῇ κεκρουμένῃ εἰδωλολατρείᾳ σχολάζων ἐστω ἀναθεμα. ὅτι ἐγκατέλιπε τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ εἰδωλολατρεῖα προσήλθεν;" wherein they plainly adjudge that practice to be idolatry and apostasy from Jesus Christ. After these, about the end of the fourth, or beginning of the fifth century, he vented his curious speculations about their hierarchy, orders, and operations, who personated Dionysius, the Areopagite, of whom we spake before. From them all did that sink of idolatry, superstition, and heresies, the church of Rome, derive her present speculations, adoration, worship, and invocation of angels. But as these things are all of them without, besides, and against the word in general, so they are in particular expressly prejudged and condemned, by the apostle in the place to the Colossians before mentioned. And of such kind of needless, useless, unprofitable, dangerous speculations we are to beware; and many of them I could in particular recite but that I would not



teach them unto any, by condemning them before all; but yet,

2. Danger should not deter us from duty.—Because some have miscarried in this matter, we ought not therefore wholly to neglect it, there being so great a concern of the glory of God, and our own good enwrapped therein. Had others erred or wandered indeed, because they had neither way to walk in, nor guide to attend to, it had been sufficient to restrain us from attempting any thing in this matter; but whereas it is evident that they wilfully neglected the way, or pressed farther than the paths of it led them, and despised their guide, following their own imagination instead thereof, shall others be discouraged in the duty, whereas they may avoid their miscarriages? Wary indeed this may and ought to make us in our inquiries, but not neglective of our duties. We have the word of God for our way and guide, if we go not besides it, if we go not beyond it, we are as safe when we treat of angels as if we treated of worms. We have seen in part of what signal use their ministry is as unto our good, and the glory of Jesus Christ. And it is pride to the height, not to inquire after what may be known, because there are many things that we may not know nor comprehend. If that take place, it will debar us from all search into the mysteries of the gospel. For upon our utmost attainments, we know but in part. God's revelation is the object of our knowledge. So far as that is made and given, so far we may inquire and learn. Besides, it is the height of ingratitude not to search after what may be known of this great privilege and mercy, whereof we are made partakers in the ministry of angels. God hath neither appointed nor revealed it for nothing. He expects a revenue of praise and glory for it; and how can we bless him for it, when we know nothing of it? This ministry then of angels, is that which with sobriety we are in a way of duty to inquire into.

3. Let us on this account glorify God and be thankful. Great is the privilege, manifold are the blessings and benefits that we are made partakers of by this ministry of angels. Some of them have been before recounted. What shall we render for them, and to whom? Shall we go and bow ourselves down to the angels themselves, and pay our homage of obedience to them? They all cry out with one accord, See you do it not, we are your fellow-servants. What shall we then do? Why, say they, worship God. Glorify and praise him, who is the God of all angels; who sends them, who employs them, unto whom they minister in all that they do for us. Let us bless God, I say, for the ministry of angels.

Moreover, these words afford us other instructions, which I shall only name, and put a close unto our discourses on this chapter: as,

III. The Socratical fancy of one single guardian angel attending every one; as it is, if admitted, a real impeachment of the consolation of believers, so it is a great inducement to superstition and idolatry.—The farther evidence of this truth, I remit unto what hath been already delivered about the ministry of angels in general.

IV. Believers obtain heaven by inheritance, and free gift of their Father, and not by any merit of their own.—Heirs among men claim their inheritance *jure nascendi*, because they are born unto it, not be-

cause they deserve it better than others. Believers look for theirs *jure adoptionis*, by right of adoption, whereby they become sons, heirs of God, and co-heirs with Jesus Christ.

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## CHAPTER II.

IN this second chapter, the apostle declares what his design and special aim was, with respect unto them to whom he wrote. It was not merely their instruction, or the information of their minds and judgments that he intended; though that also was in his eye, and necessary to his principal purpose. They had by their instability and fainting in trials, administered occasion to him of other discourse. Besides, he foresaw that they had great difficulties and temptations to contend withal, and was jealous lest they should miscarry under them, as he also was over other professors, 1 Cor. xv. 34. His principal end, therefore, in this whole Epistle, as hath been declared, was to prevail with the Hebrews unto stedfastness in the faith of the gospel, and to diligence in attending to all those ways and means whereby they might be established. The foundation of his exhortations unto this purpose, he lays in the incomparable excellence of the Author of the Gospel. Hence just and cogent inferences to constancy in the profession of his doctrine, and obedience to him, both absolutely, and in respect of the competition set up against it by Mosaic institutions, do naturally flow. And these considerations the apostle divides into several parts, interposing in great wisdom, between the handling of them, those exhortations which pressed towards his especial end before mentioned. And this course he proceeds in for several reasons. For,

First, He reminds them and us in general, that in handling of the doctrines of the gospel concerning the person and offices of Jesus Christ, we should not satisfy ourselves in a bare speculative notion of them, but should endeavour to get our hearts excited by them to faith, love, obedience, and stedfastness in our profession. This use of these doctrines he immediately makes. Instances unto this purpose he gives us in this chapter, upon his foregoing declaration of the excellencies of Christ, and the glory of his kingdom, that so his hearers might not be barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of him.

Secondly, As to the Hebrews in particular, he had, as it were, so overwhelmed them with that flood of divine testimonies which he had poured out in the beginning of his Epistle, and with that heavenly glorious declaration which he had made of the person of the Messiah, that he thought it needful to give them time to consider what was the tendency of that sublime discourse, and what was their especial concern therein.

Thirdly, As the apostle interposeth his exhortation in this place, to be an application of what was before delivered, so by it he leads them on to the consideration of arguments of another nature, though of the same use and tendency, taken from the sacerdotal or priestly office of

Christ, and the works or effects thereof. And herein doth a great part of the apostolical wisdom, in the various intertexture of doctrines and exhortations in this Epistle consist; that as every exhortation flows naturally from the doctrine that doth precede it, so always the principal matter of it leads directly to some other doctrinal argument, which he intends next to insist upon. And this we shall see evidenced in the transition that he makes from the exhortation laid down in the beginning of this chapter, unto the sacerdotal office of Christ, ver. 6—8.

The first verses then of this chapter are purely parænetical, or hortatory, with a mixture of some considerations serving to make the exhortation weighty and cogent.

VER. 1.—THE first verse contains the exhortation itself intended by the apostle, those following the especial enforcements of it.

VER. 1. Δια τουτο δει περισσοτερως ἡμας προσεχειν τοις ακουσξεισι, μηποτε παραρβωμεν.

Περисσοτερως, Abundantius; V. L. Arias, *more abundantly*; Eo amplius, Beza, *so much the more*. דִּיהֲרֵא, Syr. *Magis, the rather*: Ut magis, ut abundantius, *as the rather, as more abundantly*: Summa attentione, Arab. *with all attention*. The word denotes somewhat more than ordinary in the act it relates to, or the persons to whom it is applied. And diligence being especially required in attention to any thing, or in those that attend, which extends itself unto the whole deportment of the mind in that work, (if that be respected herein which we shall consider,) it may be not unmeetly rendered, *more diligently, directly; more abundantly*.

Προσεχειν. Observare, V. L. *to observe*, improperly: Adhibere, Ar. M. a word of an imperfect sense, unless supplied with *our minds, or understandings, or diligence*: Adhibere animum, adhibere diligentiam; but immediately affecting the object, as adhibere auditis, it gives no perfect sense: Attendere, Beza, ‘to attend unto, to give heed.’ דְּהִירָא וְדִירָא, simus cauti, attenti; Syr. *that we be wary, or heedful*. Προσεχω, is usually in other authors when it refers to persons, ausculto, or obtempero; ‘to hearken, attend, and give heed to any one with an observant or obedient mind.’ And sometimes it signifies *to hope*, or place trust or confidence in him that is attended to. It is also used for to assent, to agree, or subscribe to what is spoken by another. In the New Testament it is principally used in two senses. 1. To beware, or look to ourselves, as to things or persons that might hurt us; and then it is attended with απο or επι, as Matt. vii. 15, x. 17, xvi. 6, 11, 12; Luke xii. 1. Or so to beware, or to look diligently unto our own concerns absolutely, Luke xvii. 3, xxi. 34; Matt. vi. 1; Acts xx. 28. 2. To attend with diligence and submission of mind unto the words of another, or unto any business that we are employed in, Acts viii. 6, xvi. 14; 1 Tim. i. 4, iv. 1, 13; Titus i. 14. So it is said of the Samaritans, that they much heeded Simon Magus, προσεχον αυτω παντες, Acts viii. 10. And it is the same word, whereby the reverential obedience of that people unto the preaching of Philip is expressed, ver. 6. An attendance then with a mind ready for obedience, is that which the word imports.

Τοις ακουσθεῖσι, Auditis, *to the things heard.* במדע דשמען, Syr. In eo quod audivimus; *in that which we have heard.* To the things heard, that is, *by us*, who are required to attend unto them.

Παραρρύνωμεν. This word is no where else used in the New Testament. In other authors, it is as much as præterfluo, *to run by.* So Xenoph. Cyropæd. lib. 4. πειν ἀπο τοῦ παρρέοντος ποταμοῦ, *to drink of the river running by.* Perefluamus, V. L. ne forte perefluamus, *lest perhaps we should run out.* Μηποτε, *ne forte, lest perhaps,* improperly; it respects times and seasons, *lest at any time.* דלָא נפֿל, *ne forte cadamus, decidamus; lest we fall, fall down,* that is, *perish.* So is the word also interpreted by Chrysostome, μηποτε παραρρύνωμεν; τουτεστι, μη ἀπολωμεθα, μη ἐκπεσωμεν, *that we perish not, that we fall not.* And he confirms this sense from that saying in the Proverbs, ch. iii. 21, *υἱέ μη παραρρήγῃς,* ‘My son, fall not.’ So he interprets the word. In the original it is, לֹא יִלָּךְ, ‘let them not depart;’ the word respecting not the person spoken unto, but the thing spoken of. Nor do the LXX. in any other place render ἵνι, *by παραρρῆω,* but by ἐκλείπω, as in the next chapter, ver. 21, and words of the like signification, ‘to decline, draw back, give over by negligence or weariness.’ Other ancient translations read, *Ne decidamus ab honestate,* ‘that we fall not from honesty;’ and *Et nequaquam rejicias,* ‘and by no means to reject.’ What sense of the word is most proper to the place, we shall afterwards consider.

VER. 1.—*Therefore (for this cause) the more abundantly ought we to attend (or give heed) to the things heard (by us) lest at any time we should flow out (or pass away.)*

Δια τούτο, ‘for this cause,’ as much as *διο*, ‘therefore, wherefore.’ There is in the words an illation from the precedent discourse; and the whole verse is a hortatory conclusion from thence. From the proposition that he hath made of the glory and excellency of the Author of the gospel, he draws this inference, “Therefore ought we;” for the reason and causes insisted on. And thus the word παραρρύνωμεν, ‘flow out,’ expresseth their losing by any ways or means the doctrine of the gospel wherein they had been instructed, and the benefits thereof. Seeing the gospel hath such a blessed author, we ought to take care that we forfeit not our interest in it. But if we take παραρρύνωμεν in the sense chosen by Chrysostome, to express the fall and perishing of them that attend not as they ought unto the word, (which interpretation is favoured by the Syriac translation,) then the word, ‘therefore, for this cause,’ respects the commination or threatening included therein. As if the apostle had said, ‘therefore ought you to attend;’ that is, look to it, that you do attend, lest you fall and perish. I rather embrace the former sense, both because the interpretation of the word used by Chrysostome is strained, as also because the apostle doth evidently in these words enter upon an exhortation unto obedience, upon his former discourse about the person of Christ. Indeed without a special regard thereunto, there is no foundation for such a threatening unto disobedience, as is pretended to be in the words; of which yet farther afterwards.



Δει ἡμας, 'ought we;' the persons unto whom he makes the application of his doctrine, and directs his exhortation. Some think that Paul joins himself here with all the Hebrews, upon the account of cognation and country, as being himself also a Hebrew, Phil. iii. 8, and therefore affectionately respecting of them, Rom. ix. 3. But the expression is to be regulated by the words that follow; 'all we' who have heard the gospel preached, and made profession thereof. And the apostle joins himself with them, not that there was any danger on his part, lest he should not constantly obey the word, or as if he were of them whose wavering and instability gave occasion to this caution: but, 1. To manifest that the duty which he exhorts them unto, is of general concern unto all to whom the gospel is preached, so that he lays no singular burden on them; and 2. That he might not as yet discover unto them any jealousy of their inconstancy, or that he had entertained any severe thoughts concerning them. For such apprehensions are apt to render exhortations suspected; the minds of men being ready enough to disregard that which they are persuaded unto, if they suspect that undeserved blame lies at the bottom of the exhortation. Similar condescension upon the like account, we may see in Peter, 1 Pet. iv. 3.

These are the persons spoken unto. That which is spoken to them consists in an exhortation unto a duty, and an especial enforcement of it. The exhortation and duty in the first words, "the more abundantly to attend unto the things heard;" and the enforcement in the close of them, "lest at any time we should flow out."

In the exhortation is expressed an especial circumstance of it, the duty itself, and the manner of its performance.

The first is included in that word, "more abundantly," which may refer either to the causes of the attendance required, or to the manner of its performance. In the words as they lie in the text, *δια τουτο περισσοτερως* δει ἡμας προσεχειν, the word *περισσοτερως*, 'more abundantly,' is joined unto *δια τουτο*, 'therefore, for this cause,' and seems immediately to respect it; and so to intimate the excellent and abundant reason that we have to attend unto the gospel. But if we transpose the words, and read them as if they lay thus, *Δει ἡμας περισσοτερως προσεχειν*, then the word, *περισσοτερως*, 'more abundantly,' respects the following word, *προσεχειν*, 'to attend unto,' and so expresseth somewhat of the manner of the performance of the duty proposed. And so our translators report the sense, "We ought to give the more diligent heed," or give heed the more diligently. The reader may embrace whether sense he judgeth most agreeable to the scope of the place. The former construction of the word, expressing the necessity of our attention to be intimated from the cogency of the reasons thereof before insisted on, is not without its probability. And this the meaning of the word agrees unto, whether we take it absolutely (for so, as Chrysostome observes, it may be taken, though of itself it be of another form) or comparatively, in which form it is. Take it absolutely, and the apostle informs them that they have abundant cause to attend unto the things spoken or heard, because of him that spake them; for concerning him alone came that voice from the excellent glory, "This

is my beloved Son, hear him." So also in the other sense, the apostle is not comparing the manner of their attending unto the doctrine of the law, (which certainly they ought to have done with all diligence,) and their attendance unto the gospel, but shows the reasons which they had to attend unto the one and the other, as the following verses clearly manifest. This, then, may be that which the apostle intimates in this word, namely, that they had more abundant cause, and a more excellent reason for their attending unto the doctrine of the gospel, than they had unto that of the law; on this account, that he by whom the gospel was immediately preached unto us, was the Son of God himself. But the other application of the word is more commonly received, wherein it intends the duty enjoined.

In reference unto the duty exhorted unto, there is expressed the object of it, *τοῖς ακουσθεῖσι*, 'the things heard.' Thus the apostle chooseth to express the doctrine of the gospel, with respect unto the way and manner whereby it was communicated unto them, namely, by preaching, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing is of the word preached," Rom. x. 14, 15. And herein doth he magnify the great ordinance of preaching, as every-where else he maketh it the great means of begetting faith in men. The Lord Christ himself first preached the gospel, Acts i. 1, and ver. 4, of this chapter. Concerning him it was said from heaven, "Hear him," Matt. xvii. 5, as he who revealed the Father from his own bosom, John i. 18. From him the gospel became the word heard. When he had finished the course of his personal ministry, he committed the same work unto others, sending them as the Father sent him. They also preached the gospel, and called it the Word, that is, that which they preached. See 1 Cor. i. So in the Old Testament it is called שמעה, Isaiah liii. 1, *auditus*, 'a hearing,' or, 'that which was heard,' being preached. So that the apostle insists on, and commends unto them, not only the things themselves wherein they had been instructed, but also the way whereby they were communicated unto them, namely, by the great ordinance of preaching, as he farther declares, ver. 4. This, as the means of their believing, as the ground of their profession, they were diligently to remember, consider, and attend unto.

The duty itself directed unto, and the manner of its performance, are expressed in the word *προσεχειν*, to 'attend,' or give heed. What kind of attendance is denoted by this word, was in part before declared. An attendance it is, with reverence, assent, and readiness to obey. So Acts xvi. 14, "God opened the heart of Lydia, *προσεχειν τοῖς λαλουμένοις*, 'to attend unto the things that were spoken,' not to give them the hearing only; there was no need of the opening of her heart for the mere attention of her ear; but she attended with readiness, humility, and resolution to obey the word. The effect of which attention is expressed by the apostle, Rom. vi. 17. To attend, then, unto the word preached, is to consider the author of it, the matter of it, the weight and concern of it, the ends of it, with faith, subjection of spirit, and constancy, as we shall with our apostle more at large afterwards explain.

The duty exhorted unto being laid down, a motive or enforcement

unto it is subjoined, taken from the danger that would ensue from the neglect thereof. And this is either from the sin or punishment that would attend it, according unto the various interpretations of the word *παράρρυνωμεν*, 'flow out,' or 'fall,' before mentioned. If it signifies to fall or perish, then the punishment of the neglect of this duty is intimated. We shall perish as water that is poured on the earth. Thereunto is the frail life of man compared, 2 Sam. xiv. 14. This sense of the word is embraced by few expositors, yet hath it great countenance given unto it by the ensuing discourse, ver. 2, and 3, and for that reason is not unworthy of our consideration. For the design of the apostle in those verses is to prove, that they shall deservedly and assuredly perish, who should neglect the gospel. And the following particles, *εἰ γὰρ*, 'and if,' in ver. 2, may seem to relate unto what was before spoken, and so to yield a reason why the unbelievers should so perish as he had intimated; which, unless it be expressed in this word, the apostle had not before at all spoken unto. And in this sense the caution here given is, that we should attend unto the word of the gospel, lest by our neglect thereof, we bring upon ourselves inevitable ruin, and perish as water that is spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.

But the truth is, that the word *ποτε* prefixed, will not be well reconciled unto this sense and interpretation; unless we should suppose it to be redundant and insignificant, and so *μη ποτε παρὰρρυνωμεν*, 'lest at any time we should flow out,' should be the same with *μη παρὰρρυνωμεν* 'absolutely, that we fall not.' But there is no just reason to render that word so useless. Allow it therefore significant, and it may have a double sense: 1. To denote an uncertain time; quando, aliquando, at any time. 2. A conditional event; forte, ne forte, lest it should happen. In either of these senses will it allow the words to be expounded of the punishment that shall befall unbelievers, which is most certain both as to the time and the event. Neither doth the apostle in the next verses threaten them that neglect the gospel, that at some time or other they may perish, but lets them know that their destruction is certain, and that from the Lord.

It is then our sinful losing of the word and the benefits thereof, which the apostle intendeth. And in the next verses he doth not proceed to prove what he had asserted in this verse, but goes on to other arguments to the same purpose, taken from the unquestionable event of our neglect of the word, and losing the benefits thereof. The especial reason therefore why the apostle thus expresseth our losing of the doctrine of the gospel by want of diligent attendance unto it, is to be inquired after. Generally the expression is looked on as an allusion unto leaking vessels, which suffer the water that is poured into them one way, to run out many. As he speaks in the Comedian, who denied that he could keep secret some things, if they were communicated unto him. *Plenus rimarum sum, huc atque illuc effluo*: 'I am full of chinks, and flow out on every side.' And the word relates unto the persons, not to the things, because it contains a crime. It is our duty to retain the word which we have heard; and therefore it is not said that the word flows out, but that we as it were pour it out. And this crime

is denoted by the addition of *παρα* to *ρueiv*. For as the simple verb denotes the passing away of any thing, as water, whether it deserve to be retained or not; so the compound doth the losing of that perversely which we ought to have retained.

But we may yet inquire a little farther into the reason and nature of the allegory. The word or doctrine of the Scripture is compared to showers and rain, Deut. xxxii. 2, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, as the showers upon the grass." Hence the same word מורה signifies a teacher, and rain, so that translators do often doubt of its special sense, as Psal. lxxxiv. 7, ברכות יעשה מורה, 'the rain filleth the pools,' as in our translation; others, as Hierome and Arias Montanus render them, benedictionibus operietur docens, 'the teachers shall be covered with blessings;' both the words being ambiguous. So also Isa. xxx. 20, מורה, which we translate, 'thy teachers,' is by others rendered, thy showers, or rain. So those words, Joel ii. 23, כיתה לצדקה which our translators render in the text, 'he hath given you the former rain moderately;' in the margin they render, 'a teacher of righteousness.' And the like ambiguity is in other places. And there is an elegant metaphor in the word. For as the drops of rain falling on the earth do water it and make it fruitful, whilst it takes no notice of it, so doth the doctrine of the word insensibly make fruitful unto God the souls of men, upon whom it doth descend. And in respect unto the word of the gospel, it is, that the Lord Christ is said to "come down as the showers on the mown grass," Psal. lxxii. So the apostle calls the preaching of the gospel unto men, the "watering of them," 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. And compares them unto whom it is preached unto "the earth that drinketh in the rain," Heb. vi. 7. In pursuit of this metaphor it is, that men are said to pour out the word preached unto them, when by their negligence they lose all the benefits thereof. So when our Saviour had compared the same word unto seed, he sets out men's falling from it by all the ways and means whereby seed cast into the earth may be lost, or become unprofitable, Matt. xiii. And as he shows that there are various ways and means whereby the seed that is sown may be lost and perish, so there are many times and seasons, ways and means, wherein and whereby we may lose and pour out the water or rain of the word which we have received. And these the apostle regards in that expression, "lest at any time."

We are now entered on the practical part of the epistle, and that which is of great importance unto all professors at all times; especially unto such as are by the good providence of God called into the condition wherein the Hebrews were, when Paul thus treated with them; that is, a condition of temptation, affliction, and persecution. And we shall therefore the more distinctly consider the useful truths that are exhibited unto us in these words, which are these that follow.

I. Diligent attention unto the word of the gospel is indispensably necessary unto perseverance in the profession of it. Such a profession I mean as is acceptable unto God, or will be useful unto our own souls. The profession of most of the world is a mere non-renunciation of the



gospel in words, whilst in their hearts and lives they deny the power of it every day. A saving profession is that which expresseth the efficacy of the word unto salvation, Rom. x. 10. This will never be the effect of a lifeless attendance unto the word. And therefore we shall first consider what is required unto the giving heed to the gospel here commended unto us; and there are in it, amongst other things, these that follow.

1. A due valuation of the grace tendered in it, and of the word itself on that account. Προσχεῖν denotes such an attendance unto any thing, as proceeds from an estimation and valuation of it answerable unto its worth. If we have not such thoughts of the gospel, we can never attend unto it as we ought. And if we consider it not as that wherein our chief concern lies, we consider it not as we ought at all. The field wherein is the pearl of price is so to be heeded, as to be valued above all other possessions whatsoever, Matt. xiii. 45, 46. They who esteemed not the marriage feast of the king above all avocations and worldly occasions, were shut out as unworthy, Matt. xxii. 7. If the gospel be not more to us than all the world besides, we shall never continue in an useful profession of it. Fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, wives and children, must all be despised in comparison of it, and competition with it. When men hear the word, as that which puts itself upon them, attendance to which they cannot decline without present or future inconveniencies, without considering that all the concerns of their souls lie bound up in it, they will easily be won utterly to neglect it. According as our esteem and valuation of it is, so is our heeding of it, and attendance unto it, and no otherwise. Harkening unto the word as unto a song of him that hath a pleasant voice, which may please or satisfy for the present, is that which profits not men, and which God abhors, Ezek, xxxiii. 32. If the ministration of the gospel be not looked on as that which is full of glory, it will never be attended unto. This the apostle presseth, 2 Cor. iii. 8, 9. Constant high thoughts then of the necessity, worth, glory, and excellency of the gospel, as on other accounts, so especially on account of the author of it, and the grace dispensed in it, is the first step in that diligent heeding of it, which is required of us. Want of this was that which ruined many of the Hebrews to whom the apostle wrote. And without it we shall never keep our faith firm unto the end.

2. Diligent study of it, and searching into the mind of God in it, that so we may grow wise in the mysteries thereof, is another part of this duty. The gospel is the wisdom of God, 1 Cor. i. 24. In it are laid up all the stores and treasures of that wisdom of God, which ever any of the sons of men shall come to an acquaintance with in this world, Col. ii. 2, 3. And this wisdom is to be sought for as silver, and to be searched after as hid treasures, Prov. ii. 4, that is, with pains and diligence like unto that of those who are employed in that inquiry. Men with indefatigable pains and danger pierce into the bowels of the earth, in the search of those hid treasures that are wrapt up in the vast womb of it. Silver and treasures are not gathered by every lazy passenger on the surface of the earth; they must dig, seek, and search,

who intend to be made partakers of them, and they do so accordingly ; and so must we do for these treasures of heavenly wisdom. The mystery of the grace of the gospel is great and deep, such as the “ angels desire to bow down and look into,” 1 Pet. i. 12, which the prophets of old, notwithstanding the advantage of their own especial revelations, inquired diligently after, ver. 11. Whereas now if any pretend, though falsely, to a revelation, they have immediately done with the word, as that which by the deceit of their imaginations they think beneath them, which indeed is only distant from them, and is really above them. As if a man should stand on tip-toe on a mole-hill, and despise the sun appearing newly above the horizon as one beneath him. Diligent sedulous searching into the word belongs unto this heeding of it, Psal. i. 1. Or a labouring by all appointed means to become acquainted with it, wise in the mystery of it, and skilled in its doctrine. Without this, no man will hold fast his profession. Nor doth any man neglect the gospel, but he that knows it not, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. This is the great principle of apostasy in the world, men have owned the gospel, but never knew what it was, and therefore leave the profession of it foolishly, as they took it up lightly. Studying of the word is the security of our faith.

3. Mixing the word with faith is required in this attention. See chap. iv. 2. As good not hear as not believe. Believing is the end of hearing, Rom. x. 11. And therefore Lydia’s faith is called her attention, Acts xvi. 14. This is the life of heeding the word, without which all other exercise about it is but a dead carcase. To hear and not believe, is in spiritual life, what to see meat, and not to eat, is in the natural ; it will please the fancy, but will never nourish the soul. Faith alone realizeth the things spoken unto the heart, and gives them subsistence in it, Heb. xi. 1 ; without which, as to us, they flow up and down in loose and uncertain notions. This then is the principal part of our duty in heeding the things spoken, for it gives entrance to them into the soul, without which, they are poured upon it as water upon a stick that is fully dry.

4. Labouring to express the word received in a conformity of heart and life unto it, is another part of this attention. This is the next proper end of our hearing. And to do a thing appointed unto an end, without aiming at that end, is no better than the not doing at all, in some cases much worse. The apostle says of the Romans, that they were cast into the mould of the doctrine of the gospel, chap. vi. 17. It left upon their hearts an impression of its own likeness, or produced in them the express image of that holiness, purity, and wisdom which it revealeth. This is to “ behold with open face the glory of the Lord in a glass, and to be changed into the same image,” 2 Cor. iii. 18, that is, the image of the Lord Christ, manifested unto us, and reflected upon us by and in the glass of the gospel. When the heart of the hearer is quickened, enlivened, spirited with gospel truths, and by them is moulded and fashioned into their likeness, and expresseth that likeness in its fruits, or in a conversation becoming the gospel, then is the word attended unto in a right manner. This will secure the word a station in our hearts, and give it a permanent abode in us. This is

the indwelling of the word, whereof there are many degrees, and we ought to aim that it should be plentiful.

5. Watchfulness against all opposition that is made either against the truth or power of the word in us, belongs also unto this duty. And as these oppositions are many, so ought this watchfulness to be great and diligent. And these things have we added for the further explication of the duty that is pressed on us by the apostle; the necessity whereof, for the preservation of the truth in our hearts and minds, will further appear in the ensuing observation.

II. There are sundry times and seasons wherein, and several ways and means whereby, men are in danger to lose the word that they have heard, if they attend not diligently unto its preservation. Μηποτε, 'at any time,' or by any way or means. This our Saviour teacheth us at large in the parable of the seed, which was retained but in one sort of ground of those four whereinto it was cast, Matt. xiii. And this the experience of all times and ages confirmeth. Yea few there are at any time who keep the word heard as they ought. We may briefly name the season wherein, and the ways whereby the hearts and minds of men are made as leaking vessels, to pour out and lose the word that they have heard.

1. Some lose it in a time of peace and prosperity. That is a season which slays the foolish. Jeshurun waxes fat and kicks. According to men's pastures they are filled, and forget the Lord. They feed their lusts high, until they loath the word. Quails often make a lean soul. A prosperous outward estate hath ruined many a conviction from the word, yea, and weakened faith and obedience in many of the saints themselves. The warmth of prosperity breeds swarms of apostates, as the heat of the sun doth insects in the spring.

2. Some lose it in a time of persecution. "When persecution ariseth," saith our Saviour, "they fall away." Many go on apace in profession until they come to see the cross; this sight puts them to a stand, and then turns them quite out of the way. They thought not of it, and do not like it. We know what havoc this hath made amongst professors in all ages, and commonly where it destroys the bodies of ten, it destroys the souls of a hundred. This is the season wherein stars fall from the firmament, in reference whereunto innumerable are the precepts for watchfulness, wisdom, patience, enduring, that are given us in the gospel.

3. Some lose it in a time of trial by temptation; it pleaseth God in his wisdom and grace to suffer sometimes an hour of temptation to come forth upon the world, upon the church in the world, for their trial, Rev. iii. 10. And he doth it that his own thereby may be made conformable unto their head Jesus Christ, who had his especial hour of temptation. Now in such a season, temptation worketh variously, according as men are exposed unto it, or as God seeth meet that they should be tried by it. Everything that such days abound withal, shall have in it the force of a temptation. And the usual effect of this work is, that it brings professors into a slumber, Matt. xxv. 5. In this state many utterly lose the word. They have been cast into a negligent slumber by the secret power and efficacy of temptation; and when they

awake and look about them, the whole power of the word is lost and departed from them. With reference unto these and the like seasons it is, that the apostle gives us this caution, to take heed lest at any time the word which we have heard do slip out.

The ways and means also whereby this wretched effect is produced are various, yea, innumerable; some of them only I shall mention, whereunto the rest may be reduced. As, 1. Love of this present world. This made Demas a leaking vessel, 2 Tim. iv. 10, and choaks one fourth part of the seed in the parable, Matt. xiii. Many might have been rich in grace, had they not made it their end and business to be rich in this world, 1 Tim. vi. 9. But this is too well known, as well as too little regarded. 2. Love of sin. A secret lust cherished in the heart will make it *plenum rimarum*, "full of chinks," that it will never retain the showers of the word; and it will assuredly open them as fast as convictions stop them. 3. False doctrines, errors, heresies, false worship, superstition, and idolatries will do the same. I place these things together, as those which work in the same time upon the curiosity, vanity, and darkness of the minds of men. These break the vessel, and at once pour out all the benefits of the word that ever were received. And many the like instances might be given.

And this gives us the reason of the necessity of that heeding of the word which we before insisted on. Without it, at one time or other, by one means or other, we shall lose all the design of the word upon our souls. That alone will preserve us, and carry us through the course and difficulties of our profession. The duty mentioned then is of no less concern unto us than our souls, for without it we perish. Let us not deceive ourselves; a slothful, negligent hearing of the word will bring no man to life. The commands we have to watch, pray, strive, labour, and fight, are not in vain. The warnings given us of the opposition that is made to our faith by indwelling sin, Satan, and the world, are not left on record for nothing: no more are the sad examples which we have of many, who beginning a good profession, have utterly turned aside to sin and folly.

All these things, I say, teach us the necessity of the duty which the apostle enjoineeth, and which we have explained.

III. The word heard is not lost without the great sin, as well as the inevitable ruin of the souls of men. Lost it is, when it is not mixed with faith, when we receive it not in good and honest hearts, when the end of it is not accomplished in us, and towards us. And this befalls us not without our sin, and woeful neglect of duty. The word of its own nature is apt to abide, to incorporate itself with us, and to take root: but we cast it out, we pour it forth from us. And they have a woeful account to make, on whose souls the guilt thereof shall be found at the last day.

IV. It is in the nature of the word of the gospel to water barren hearts, and to make them fruitful unto God. Hence, as was shown, was it compared to water, dews, and rain, which is the foundation of the metaphorical expression here used. Where this word comes, it makes the "parched ground a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water," Isa. xxxv. 7. These are the waters of the sanctuary, that



“heal the barren places of the earth,” and make them fruitful, Ezek. xlvii. The river that “makes glad the city of God,” Psal. xlv. 7. That river of “living water” that comes forth from the throne of God, Rev. xxii. 1. And the places and persons which are not healed or benefited by these waters, are “left to barrenness and burning for evermore,” Ezek. xlvii. 11; Heb. vi. 8. With the dew hereof doth God “water his church every moment,” Isa. xxvii. 3. And then doth it, “grow as a lily, and cast forth its roots as Lebanon,” Hos. xiv. 5—7. Abundant fruitfulness unto God follows a gracious receiving of this dew from him. Blessed are they who have this dew distilling on them every morning, who are watered as the garden of God, as a “land that God careth for.

V. The consideration of the revelation of the gospel by the Son of God, is a powerful motive unto that diligent attendance unto it, which we have before described:—This is the inference that the apostle makes from the proposition that he had made of the excellency of the Son of God: *δια τούτο*, ‘therefore.’

And this is that which in the greatest part of the ensuing chapter he doth pursue. This is that which God declares, that he might so justly expect and look for, namely, that when he sent his Son to the vineyard, he should be regarded and attended unto.

And this is most reasonable upon many accounts.

1. Because of the authority wherewith he spake the word. Others spake and delivered their message as servants, he as the Lord over his own house, ch. iii. 6. The Father himself gave him all his authority for the revealing of his mind, and therefore proclaimed from heaven, that if any one would have any thing to do with God, they were to hear him, Matt. xvii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 17. The whole authority of God was with him, for him did God the Father seal, or put the stamp of all his authority upon; and he spake accordingly, Matt. vii. 29. And therefore he spake both in his own name, and the name of his Father; so that this authority sprung partly from the dignity of his person, for being God and man, though he spake on the earth, yet he who was the Son of man was in heaven still, John iii. 13, and therefore is said to speak from heaven, Heb. xii. 21, and coming from heaven was still above all, John iii. 31, having power and authority over all; and partly from his commission that he had from his Father, which, as we said before, gave all authority into his hand, John v. 26, 27. Being then in himself the Son of God, and being peculiarly designed to reveal the mind and will of the Father, which the prophet calls his “standing and feeding in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God,” Mic. v. 4, all the authority of God over the souls and consciences of men, is exerted in this revelation of the gospel by him. It cannot then be neglected without the contempt of all the authority of God. And this will be a sore aggravation of the sin of unbelievers and apostates at the last day. If we attend not unto the word on this account, we shall suffer on this account. He that despiseth the word, despiseth him; and he that despiseth him, despiseth him also who sent him.

2. Because of the love that is in it. There is in it the love of the

Father in sending the Son, for the revealing of himself and his mind unto the children of men. There is also in it the love of the Son himself, condescending to teach and instruct the sons of men, who by their own fault were cast into error and darkness. Greater love could not God nor his eternal Son manifest unto us, than that he should undertake in his own person to become our instructor; see 1 John v. 20. He that shall consider the brutish stupidity and blindness of the generality of mankind in the things of God, the miserable fluctuating and endless uncertainties of the more inquiring part of them; and withal the greatness of their concern in being brought unto the knowledge of the truth, cannot but in some measure see the greatness of this love of Christ in revealing unto us the whole counsel of God. Hence his words and speech are said to be gracious, Luke iv. 22, and grace to be poured into his lips, Psal. xlv. 2. And this is no small motive unto our attention to the word.

3. The fulness of the revelation itself by him made unto us, is of the same importance. He came not to declare a part or parcel, but the whole will of God, all that we are to know, all that we are to do, all that we are to believe: "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. ii. 3. He opened all the dark sentences of the will of God hidden from the foundation of the world. There is in his doctrine all wisdom, all knowledge, as all light is in the sun, and all water in the sea; there being nothing of the one or the other in any other thing, but by a communication from them. Now, if every word of God be excellent, if every part and parcel of it delivered by any of his servants of old was to be attended to on the penalty of extermination out of the number of his people; how much more will our condition be miserable, as our blindness and obstinacy now are, if we have not a heart to attend to this full revelation of himself and his will.

4. Because it is final.—Last of all he sent his Son, and hath spoken unto us by him. Never more in this world will he speak with that kind of speaking. No new, no farther revelation of God is to be expected in this world, but what is made by Jesus Christ. To this we must attend, or we are lost for ever.

VI. The true and only way of honouring the Lord Christ as the Son of God, is by diligent attendance and obedience unto his word.—The apostle having evidenced his glory as the Son of God, makes this his only inference from it. So doth he himself: 'If you love me,' saith he, 'keep my commandments.' Where there is no obedience unto the word, there is neither faith in, nor love unto Jesus Christ. But this whole argument the apostle farther pursues in the following verses.

VER. 2, 3, 4.—IN these three verses the apostle follows on his exhortation laid down in that foregoing, and giveth many peculiar enforcements unto a due compliance with it, as we shall see in our exposition of them.

VER. 2.—Εἰ γὰρ ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος ἐγένετο βεβαίος, καὶ πᾶσα παραβασία, καὶ παρακοή εἰληβεν ἐνδικὸν μισθαποδοσίαν.

Εἰ γὰρ, *si enim, etenim*, ‘and if, for if,’ ὁ λόγος λαληθεις, *Sermo dictus, מללמל דאיהא*, Syr. *Sermo qui dictus est, or pronuntiatius*, ‘the word which was spoken or pronounced;’ properly, as we shall see: δι’ ἀγγέλων, Syr. מלאכא ביד, ‘by the hand of angels;’ an Hebraism for their ministry. The word pronounced by the ministry of angels. The Arabic refers these words to the testimonies before insisted on about angels, and renders them, ‘If that which is spoken concerning the angels be approved (or confirmed) to be true;’ that is, περὶ ἀγγέλων, not δι’ ἀγγέλων. Ἐγενετο βεβαιος, *factus est firmus*; Ar. V. L. ‘was made firm or stable, became sure.’ *Fuit firmus*, Eras. Beza, ‘was firm;’ or as ours, ‘steadfast;’ אשחרר, Syr. *Confirmatus fuit*, ‘was confirmed or established;’ καὶ πᾶσα παραβασίς καὶ παρακοή, *et omnis pravaricatio, et inobedientia*; V. L. Ar. ‘Prevarication and disobedience;’ Rhem. *Omnisque transgressio et contumacia*; Beza, ‘Every transgression and stubborn disobedience:’ the Syriac a little otherwise, וכל דשמעה ועבר עליה, ‘And every one that heard it and transgressed it;’ with peculiar respect, as it should seem, to παρακοή, which includes a disobedience to that which is heard. Ἐλαβεν ἐνδικὸν μισθαποδοσίαν, *accepit justam mercedis retributionem*; V. L.—Beza, *retulit—præmii*; Eras. all to the same purpose, ‘received a just recompence,’ reward, a just compensation; Syr. ‘received a retribution in righteousness.’

VER. 2.—*For if the word spoken (pronounced) by angels, was sure, (steadfast) and every transgression, and (stubborn) disobedience received a just (meet, equal) retribution (or) recompence of reward.*

VER. 3.—Πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφεύξομεθα, τηλικαυτῆς ἀμελησαντες σωτηρίας; ἥτις ἀρχὴν λαβούσα λαλεισθαι διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου, ὑπο τῶν ἀκουσάντων εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐβεβαιώθη.

Ἀμελησαντες, *si neglexerimus*; V. L. Eras. Beza, ‘if we neglect.’ אסבב נא, Syr. *Si contemnamos*, ‘if we despise,’ if we care not about, if we take no care of, τηλικαυτῆς σωτηρίας, *tantam salutem*, ‘so great salvation:’ the Syriac, a little otherwise; כן נא נהנה נא נא נא, *super ea ipsa quæ sunt vitæ*, ‘those things which are our life;’ or as others render the words, *eos sermones qui vivi sunt*, ‘those words which are living. The former translation taking the pronoun in the neuter gender, and כן, substantively, with respect unto the effects of the gospel, most suits the place: ἥτις ἀρχὴν λαβούσα λαλεισθαι, *quæ cum primum enarrari capit*, Eras. Bez. ‘which when it was begun to be declared;’ and so the Syriac, ‘which began to be declared;’ which was first, at first spoken, declared, pronounced.

VER. 3.—*How shall we escape (fly or avoid) if we neglect (not taking care about) so great salvation, which began to be (was first of all) spoken (declared) by the Lord; and was confirmed (assured, established) unto us, by them that heard (it of him.)*

VER. 4.—*Συνεπιμαρτυρουντος του Θεου σημειοις τε και τερασι, και ποικιλαις δυναμεσι, και Πνευματος ἁγιου μερισμοις, κατα την αὐτου βουλησιν.*

*Συνεπιμαρτυρουντος, Contestante Deo, V. L. Attestante Deo, Eras. Testimonium illis præbente Deo, Beza, 'God withal testifying,' attesting it; giving testimony unto them.'* It is doubtful whether it be the word itself or the preachers of it, that God is said to give testimony unto. Syr. 'When God had testified unto them.' Arab. 'Whose truth was also proved unto us, besides the testimony of God with wonders;' separating between God's testimony to the words, and the signs or wonders that accompanied it. *Τερασι, prodigiis, portentis, miraculis.*

VER. 4.—*God bearing witness with signs and wonders (prodigies) and divers (various) mighty works (powers) and distributions (divisions) of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.*

The design of the apostle in these three verses, is to confirm and enforce the inference and exhortation laid down in the first; as that which arose from the discourse of the former chapter. The way he proceeds in for this end, is by interposing, after his usual way in this Epistle, subservient motives, arguments, and considerations, tending directly to his principal end, and connatural unto the subject treated on. Thus the main argument wherewith he presseth his preceding exhortation to attendance and obedience unto the word, is taken *ab incommodo*, or *ab eventu pernicioso*, from the pernicious end and event of their disobedience thereunto. The chief proof of this is taken from another argument *a minori*, and that is the confessed event of disobedience unto the law, ver. 2. To confirm and strengthen which reasoning, he gives a summary comparison of the law and the gospel: whence it might appear, that if a disregard unto the law was attended with a sure and sore revenge, that much more must and would the neglect of the gospel be so. And this comparison on the part of the gospel is expressed: 1. In the nature of it—it is great salvation. 2. The author of it—it was spoken by the Lord. 3. The manner of its tradition—"being confirmed unto us by them that heard them," and the testimony given to it and them, by "signs, and wonders, and distributions of the Holy Ghost;" from all which he draws the intended inference respecting the pernicious event of disobedience unto it, or disregarding of it. This is the sum of the apostle's reasoning, which we shall further open as the words present it unto us in the text.

The first thing we meet with in the word, is his subservient argument *a minori*, ver. 2, wherein three things occur. 1. The description that he gives us of the law, with which he compares the gospel—it was the word spoken by angels. 2. An adjunct of it, which ensued upon its being spoken by them—it was firm and steadfast. 3. The event of disobedience unto it—every transgression of it, and stubborn disobedience, had a just recompence of reward. How from hence he confirms his assertion of the pernicious consequence of neglecting the gospel, we shall see afterwards.

The first thing in the words is the description of the law, by that



periphrasis, ὁ λόγος δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθείς, 'the word spoken or pronounced by angels.' Λόγος is a word very variously used in the New Testament. The special senses of it, we shall not need in this place to insist upon. It is here taken for a system of doctrine, (and by the addition of λαληθείς) as published, preached, or declared. Thus the gospel, from the principal subject-matter of it, is called ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ, 1 Cor. i. 18; 'the word, the doctrine, the preaching concerning the cross, or Christ crucified.' So ὁ λόγος here, 'the word,' is the doctrine of the laws, that is, the law itself spoken, declared, published, promulgated, δι' ἀγγέλων, 'by angels;' that is, by the ministry of angels. It is not the Νομοθετης, 'he from whom the law was given,' that the apostle intends, but the ministerial publishers of it, by whom it was given. The law was given from God; but it was given by angels in the way and manner to be considered.

Two things we may observe in this periphrasis of the law. 1. That the apostle principally intends that part of the Mosaic dispensation which was given on mount Sinai; and which, as such, was the covenant between God and that people, as unto the privileges of the promised land. 2. That he fixed on this description of it rather than any other, or merely to have expressed it by *the law*: 1st, Because the ministry of angels, in the giving of the law by Moses, was that by which all the prodigious effects wherewith it was attended which kept the people in such a durable reverence unto it, were wrought. This therefore he mentions, that he might appear not to undervalue it, but to speak of it with reference unto that excellency of its administration, which the Hebrews even boasted in. 2d, Because having newly insisted on a comparison between Christ and the angels, his argument is much strengthened, when it shall be considered, that the law was the word spoken by the angels, the gospel was delivered by the Son, so far exalted above them. But the manner how this was done, must be a little farther inquired into.

That the law was given by the ministry of angels, the Jews always confessed, yea and boasted. So saith Josephus, one much ancients than any of their Rabins extant. Αρχαιολ. lib. 5. ἡμῶν τα καλλιστα των δογματων, και τα ὁσιωτατα των εν τοις νομοις, δι' ἀγγέλων παρα τῷ Θεῷ μαθοντων. 'We learned the most excellent and most holy constitutions of the law from God by angels.' The same was generally acknowledged by them of old. This Stephen treating with them takes for granted, Acts vii. 53, "You received the law by the disposition of angels." And our apostle affirms the same, Gal. iii. 19, "It was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator:" a word of the same original and sense is used in both places, though by ours variously rendered διαταγη, διαταγεις. This then is certain, but the manner of it is yet to be considered.

First then, nothing is more unquestionable, than that the law was given from God himself. He was the author of it. This the whole Scripture declares and proclaims. And it was the impious abomination of the Valentinians and Marcionites of old, to ascribe the original of it to any other author.

Secondly, He who spake in the name of God on Mount Sinai, was no other than God himself, the second person in the Trinity, Psal. lxxviii. 17—19. Him Stephen calls *the angel*. Acts vii. 30, 38; even the angel of the covenant, the Lord whom the people sought, Mal. iii. 1, 2. Some would have it to be a created angel, delegated unto that work, who thereon took on him the presence and name of God, as if he himself had spoken. But this is wholly contrary to the nature of all ministerial work. Never did ambassador speak in his own name, as if he were the king himself whose person he doth represent. The apostle tells us that the preachers of the gospel were God's ambassadors, and that God by them doth persuade men to be reconciled in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 20. But yet if any on that account should take on him to personate God, and to speak of himself as God, he would be highly blasphemous. Nor can this be imagined in this place, where not only he that speaks, speaks in the name of God, "I am the Lord thy God," but also elsewhere it is frequently affirmed that Jehovah himself did give that law, which is made unto the people an argument unto obedience. And the things done on Sinai are always ascribed unto God himself.

Thirdly, It remains then to consider, how notwithstanding this, the law is said to be the word spoken by angels. It is nowhere affirmed, that the law was given by angels, but that the people received it by the disposition of angels, and that it was ordained by angels, and here spoken by them. From hence it is evident, that not the original authoritative giving of the law, but the ministerial ordering of things in its promulgation, is that which is ascribed to angels. They raised the fire and smoke; they shook and rent the rock; they framed the sound of the trumpet; they effected the articulate voices which conveyed the words of the law to the ears of the people, and therein proclaimed and published the law, whereby it became the word spoken by angels.

Grotius on this place contends, that it was a created angel who represented the person of God on Mount Sinai; and in the confirmation of his conjecture, after he hath made use of the imagination before rejected, he adds, 'that if the law had been given out by God in his own person, (as he speaks) then upon that account it would have been preferred above the gospel.' But as the apostle grants in the first words of his Epistle, that the law, no less than the gospel, was primitively and originally from God, so we say not that God gave the law immediately without the ministry of angels. And the comparison which the apostle is pursuing, respects not the first author of law or gospel, but the principal ministerial publishers of them, which of the one was angels, and of the other the Son himself.

And in these words lies the spring of the apostle's argument, as is manifest in those interrogatory particles, *εἰ γὰρ*, *for if*; for if the law that was published unto our fathers by angels was so vindicated against the disobedient, how much more shall the neglect of the gospel be revenged.

Secondly, he affirms concerning this word *thus* published, that it was *βεβαιος*, *firm or steadfast*. That is, it became an assured cove-

nant between God and the people. That peace which is firm and well-grounded is called *εἰρήνη βεβαια*, ‘a firm, unalterable peace.’ And *το βεβαιον*, is ‘public security.’ The law’s becoming *βεβαιος*, then, ‘firm, sure, steadfast,’ consists in its being ratified to be the covenant between God and that people as to their typical inheritance, Deut. v. 2, “The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.” And therefore in the greater transgressions of the law, the people were said to *forsake*, to *break*, to *profane*, to *transgress* the covenant of God, Lev. xxvi. 15; Deut. xxxi. 20, ch. xvii. 2; Hosea vi. 7; Josh. vii. 11; 2 Kings xviii. 12; 1 Kings xix. 14; Jer. xxii. 9; Mal. ii. 10. And the law thus published by angels, became a steadfast covenant between God and the people, by their mutual stipulation thereon, Exod. xx. 19; Josh. xiv. 22, 24. Being thus firm and ratified, obedience unto it became necessary and reasonable; for hence,

Thirdly, The event of disobedience unto this word is expressed: “Every transgression, and every stubborn disobedience, received a meet retribution.” Sundry things must be a little inquired into for the right understanding of these words. As, first, The difference between *παραβασις*, and *παρακοη*. And the first is properly any transgression, which the Hebrews call פשע: the latter includes a refusal so to attend as to obey; contumacy, stubbornness, rebellion, מרי. And so the latter word may be exegetical of the former. Such transgressions the apostle speaks of, as were accompanied with contumacy and stubbornness; or they may both intend the same things under divers respects. Secondly, How may this be extended to every sin and transgression, seeing it is certain that some sins under the law were not punished, but expiated by atonements? *Ans.* 1. Every sin was contrary, *τω λογω*, to the doctrine of the law, to its commands and precepts. 2. Punishment was assigned to every sin, though not executed on every sinner. And so the word *ελαβεν* denotes not the actual infliction of punishment, but the constitution of it in the sanction of the law. 3. Sacrifices for atonement manifested punishments to have been due, though the sinner was relieved against them. But, 4. The sins especially intended by the apostle were such, as were directly against the law, as it was a covenant between God and the people, for which there was no provision made of any atonement or compensation; but the covenant being broken by them, the sinners were to die without mercy, and to be exterminated by the hand of God or man. And therefore the sins against the gospel, which are opposed unto those, are not any transgressions that professors may be guilty of, but final apostasy or unbelief, which render the doctrine of it altogether unprofitable unto men. Thirdly, *ενδικος μισθαποδοσια*, is a recompence just and equal, proportionable unto the crime according to the judgment of God. That which answers *δικαιωματι του Θεου*, ‘that judgment of God,’ which is, that “they which commit sin are worthy of death,” Rom. i. 32. And there were two things in the sentence of the law against transgressors. 1. The temporal punishment of cutting off from the land of the living, which respected that dispensation of the law which the Israelites were subjected to. And the several sorts of punishment that were among the Jews under the law, have been de-

clared in our Prolegomena ; to discover the nature whereof, let the reader consult the twenty-first Exercitation. And, 2. Eternal punishment, which was figured thereby, due unto all transgressors of the law as it is a rule of obedience unto God from all mankind, Jews and Gentiles. Now it is the first of these, which the apostle directly and primarily intendeth ; because he is comparing the law in the dispensation of it on Horeb unto the Jews, with all its sanctions, unto the present dispensation of the gospel ; and from the penalties wherewith the breach of it, as such, among that people, was then attended, argues unto the sorer punishment that must needs ensue upon the neglect of the dispensation of the gospel, as he expounds himself, ch. x. 28, 29. For otherwise the penalty assigned unto the transgression of the moral law as a rule, is the very same in the nature and kind of it, with that which belongs to despisers of the gospel, even death eternal. 4. Chrysostome observes some impropriety in the use of the word *μισθαποδοσια*, because it rather denotes ‘ a reward for a good work,’ than a punishment for an evil one. But the word is indifferent, *εκ των μεσων*, and notes only a recompence suitable unto that whereunto it is applied. So is *αντιμισθια*, used by our apostle, Rom. i. 27, excellently expressed by Solomon, Prov. i. 31. “ Sinners shall eat of the fruit of their own ways and be filled with their own devices.” Such rewards we have recorded, Num. xv. 30 ; 1 Sam. vi. 6 ; 1 Kings xiii. 4, and xx. 36 ; 2 Kings ii. 23, 24 ; 2 Chron. xxx. 20.

This the apostle lays down, as a thing well known unto the Hebrews ; namely, that the law which was delivered unto them by angels, received such a sanction from God, after it was established, as the covenant between him and the people, that the transgression of it, so as to disannul the terms and conditions of it, had by divine constitution the punishment of death temporal, or excision appointed unto it. And this in the next words he proceeds to improve unto his purpose by the way of an argument, a *minori ad majus* : “ How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation,” &c.

There is an antithesis expressed in one branch, as we observed before, between the law and the gospel ; namely, that the law was the word spoken by angels, the gospel being revealed by the Lord himself. But there are also other differences intimated between them, though expressed only on the part of the gospel ; as that it is in its nature or effects, *great salvation* ; that is, not absolutely only, but comparatively unto the benefit exhibited to their forefathers by the law, as given on Mount Horeb. The confirmation also of the gospel, by the testimony of God, is tacitly opposed to the confirmation of the law by the like witness ; and from all these considerations doth the apostle enforce his argument, proving the punishment that shall befall gospel neglecters.

In the words, as was in part before observed, there occurs : 1st, The subject-matter spoken of—so great salvation. 2dly, A further description of it ; 1 From its principal Author—it began to be spoken by the Lord. 2. From the manner of its propagation—it was confirmed unto us by them that heard it. 3. From its confirmation by the testimony of God : which, 4. Is exemplified by a distribution into



(1.) Signs, (2.) Wonders, (3.) Mighty works, and (4.) Various gifts of the Holy Ghost: whereof there is, 3dly, A neglect supposed—if we neglect: and, 4thly, Punishment thereof intimated; wherein, 1. The punishment itself; and, 2. The manner of its expression—how shall we escape? are to be considered; all which are to be severally explained.

1. The subject-matter treated of is expressed in those words—so great salvation. And it is the gospel which is intended in that expression, as is evident from the preceding verse. For that which is there called “the word which we have heard,” is here called “great salvation.” As also from the following words, where it is said to be declared by the Lord; and farther propagated by them that heard him. And the gospel is called *salvation*, by a metonymy of the effect for the cause. For it is the “grace of God bringing salvation,” Titus ii. 11, the “word that is able to save us.” The doctrine, the discovery, the instrumentally efficient cause of salvation, Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 20, 21. And this salvation the apostle calls *great*, upon many accounts, which we shall afterwards unfold. And calling it “so great salvation,” he refers them unto the doctrine of it wherein they had been instructed, and whereby the excellency of the salvation which it brings is declared.

Now, though the apostle might have expressed the gospel by “the word which was declared unto us by the Lord,” as he had done the law, by the word spoken by angels, yet to strengthen his argument, or motive unto obedience which he insists upon, he chose to give a brief description of it from its principal effect: it is great salvation. The law by reason of sin proved the ministry of death and condemnation, 2 Cor. iii. 9, yet being fully published only by angels, obedience was indispensably required unto it. And shall not the gospel, the ministry of life and great salvation, be attended unto?

2. He farther describes the gospel from its principal Author or Revealer—it began to be spoken by the Lord, *αρχην λαβουσα λαλεισθαι*, The words may have a twofold sense; for *αρχην* may denote either principium temporis, ‘the beginning of time:’ or principium operis, ‘the beginning of the work.’ In the first way, it asserts that the Lord himself was the first preacher of the gospel; before he sent or employed his apostles and disciples in the same work. In the latter, that he only began the work, leaving the perfecting and finishing of it unto those who were chosen and enabled by him unto that end. And this latter sense is also true: for he finished not the whole declaration of the gospel in his own person, teaching *viva voce*, but committed the work unto his apostles, Matt. x. 27. But their teaching from him being expressed in the next words, I take the words in the first sense, referring unto what he had delivered, ch. i. 1, of God’s speaking in these last days in the person of the Son. Now the gospel hath had a threefold beginning of its declaration. First, In prediction, by promises and types, and so it began to be declared from the foundation of the world, Luke i. 70, 71. Secondly, In an immediate preparation; and so it began to be declared in and by the ministry of John the Baptist, Mark i. 1, 2. Thirdly, In its open, clear, actual, full revelation:

so this work was begun by the Lord himself, and carried on to perfection by those who were appointed and enabled by him thereto, John i. 17, 18. Thus was it by him declared in his own person, as the law was by angels.

And herein lies the stress of the apostle's reasonings, with reference unto what he had before discoursed concerning the Son and angels, and his preeminence above them. The great reason why the Hebrews so pertinaciously adhered unto the doctrine of the law, was the glorious publication of it. It was the word spoken by angels: they received it by the disposition of angels. If, saith the apostle, that were a sufficient cause why the law should be attended unto, and that the neglect of it should be so sorely revenged as it was, though in itself but the ministry of death and condemnation: then consider what is your duty in reference unto the gospel, which as it was in itself a word of life and great salvation, so it was spoken, declared, and delivered by the Lord himself whom we have manifested to be so exceedingly exalted above all angels whatever.

3. He farther describes the gospel from the way and means of its conveyance unto us—it was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. And herein also he prevents an objection that might arise in the minds of the Hebrews; inasmuch as they, at least the greatest part of them, were not acquainted with the personal ministry of the Lord: they heard not the word spoken by him. For hereunto the apostle replies, that though they themselves heard him not, yet the same word which he preached, was not only declared, but confirmed unto them by those that heard him. And herein he doth not intend all of them who at any time heard him teaching, but those whom in an especial manner he made choice of, to employ them in that work, namely, the apostles. So that this expression, 'those that heard him,' is a periphrasis to denote the apostles, who enjoyed that great privilege of hearing immediately all things that our Lord taught in his own person. For neither did the church of the Jews hear the law, as it was pronounced on Horeb by angels, but had it confirmed unto them by the ways and means of God's appointment. And he doth not say merely, that the word was taught or preached unto us by them; but *εβεβαιωθη*, 'it was confirmed, made firm and stedfast,' being delivered infallibly unto us by the ministry of the apostles. There was a divine *βεβαιωσις*, firmness, certainty, and infallibility, in the apostolical declaration of the gospel, like that which was in the writings of the prophets, which Peter, comparing with miracles, calls *βεβαιωτερον λογον*, 'a more firm, steadfast, and sure word.' And this infallible certainty of their word was from their divine inspiration.

Sundry holy and learned men, from this expression, 'confirmed unto us,' (wherein they say the writer of this Epistle placeth himself among the number of those who heard not the word from the Lord himself, but only from the apostles,) conclude, that Paul cannot be the penman thereof, who in sundry places denieth that he received the gospel by instruction from men, but by immediate revelation from God. Now, because this is the only pretence which hath any appearance of reason for adjudging the writing of this Epistle from him, I

shall briefly show the invalidity of it. And, 1. It is certain that this term *us*, comprises and casts the whole under the condition of the generality or major part, and cannot receive a particular distribution unto all individuals. For this Epistle being written before the destruction of the temple, as we have demonstrated, it is impossible to apprehend but that some were then living at Jerusalem, who attended the ministry of the Lord himself in the days of his flesh; and among them was James himself, one of the apostles, as before we have made it probable; so that nothing can hence be concluded to every individual, as though none of them might have heard the Lord himself. 2. The apostle hath evidently a respect to the foundation of the church of the Hebrews at Jerusalem, by the preaching of the apostles immediately after the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them, Acts ii. 3, 4, 5, in which as he was not himself concerned, so he reminds them of it as the beginning of their faith and profession. 3. Paul himself did not hear the Lord Christ teaching personally on the earth, when he began to reveal the great salvation. 4. Nor doth he say, that those of whom he speaks were originally instructed by the hearers of Christ, but only that by them the word was confirmed unto them; and so it was unto Paul himself, Gal. ii. 1, 2. But, 5. yet it is apparent that the apostle useth an *ανακοινωνωσιν*, placing himself among those unto whom he wrote, though not personally concerned in every particular spoken; a thing so usual with him, that there is scarce any of his Epistles, wherein sundry instances of it are not to be found: See 1 Cor. x. 7, 8, 9; 1 Thess. iv. 17. The like is done by Peter, 1 Epist. iv. 3. Having therefore in this place, to take off all suspicion of jealousy in his exhortation to the Hebrews unto integrity and constancy in their profession, introduced his discourse in this chapter in the same way of expression, "Therefore ought *we* ; as there was no need, so there was no place for the change of the persons, so as to say *you* instead of *us*. So that on many accounts there is no ground for this objection.

4. He yet farther describes the gospel by the divine attestation given unto it, which also adds to the force of his argument and exhortation, *συνεπιμαρτυρουντος του Θεου*. The word is of a double composition, denoting a concurring testimony of God, a testimony given unto, or together with the testimony and witness of the apostles. Of what nature this testimony was, and wherein it consisted, the next words declare: "by signs and wonders, mighty works, and distributions of the Holy Ghost." All these agree in their general nature, as being works supernatural, and in their especial end as attesting to the truth of the gospel, being wrought according to the promise of Christ, Mat. xvi. 17, 18, by the ministry of the apostles, Acts. ii. 3, 4, and in especial by that of Paul himself, Rom. xv. 19; 2. Cor. xii. 12. But as to their especial differences, they are here cast under four heads.

The first are *σημεια*, *אורחות*, 'signs;' that is miraculous works, wrought to signify the presence of God by his power with them that wrought them, for the approbation and confirmation of the doctrine which they taught. The second are *τερατα*, *מופתים*, 'prodigies, wonders,' works

beyond the power of nature, above the energy of natural causes, wrought to fill men with wonder and admiration, stirring men up unto a diligent attention to the doctrine accompanied with them; for whereas they surprise men by discovering το θειον, 'a present divine power,' they dispose the mind to an embracing of what is confirmed by them. Thirdly, δυναμεις, הַנְּבוֹנוֹת, 'mighty works,' wherein evidently a mighty power, the power of God, is exerted in their operation. And, fourthly, Πνευματος ἁγιου μερισμοι, מַתָּנוֹת הַרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, 'gifts of the Holy Ghost,' enumerated, 1 Cor. xii. 7—11; Eph. iv. 7. χαρισματα, 'free gifts,' freely bestowed, called μερισμοι, 'divisions or distributions,' for the reason at large declared by the apostle, 1 Cor. xii. 7—11. All which are intimated in the following words, κατα την αὐτου θελησιν. It is indifferent whether we read αυτου or αυτου, and refer it to the will of God, or of the Holy Ghost himself, his own will, which the apostle guides unto 1 Cor. xii. 11.

As we said before, all these agree in the same general nature, and kind of miraculous operations: the variety of expressions whereby they are set forth, relating only unto some different respects of them, taken from their especial end and effects. The same works were in different respects, signs, wonders, mighty works, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. But being effectual unto several ends, they received these various denominations.

In these works consisted the divine attestation of the doctrine of the apostles, God in and by them giving testimony from heaven by the ministration of his almighty power, unto the things which were taught; and showing his approbation of the persons that taught them in their work. And this was of especial consideration in dealing with the Hebrews. For the giving of the law, and the ministry of Moses, having been accompanied with many signs and prodigies, they made great inquiry after signs for the confirmation of the gospel, 1 Cor. i. 22, which though our Lord Jesus Christ neither in his own person, nor by his apostles, would grant unto them in their time and manner, to satisfy their wicked and carnal curiosity, yet in his own way and season, he gave them forth for their conviction, or to leave them inexcusable, John x. 38.

Thirdly, The gospel being of this nature, thus taught, thus delivered, thus confirmed, there is a neglect of it supposed, ver. 3. "If we neglect," αμελησαντες; the conditional is included in the manner of the expression, 'If we neglect, if we regard not,' if we take not due care about it. The word intimateth an omission of all those duties which are necessary for our retaining the word preached unto our profit, and that to such a degree as utterly to reject it; for it answers unto those transgressions of, and to that stubborn disobedience to the law, which disannulled it as a covenant, and which were punished with excision or cutting off. 'If we neglect,' that is, if we continue not in a diligent observance of all those duties which are indispensably necessary unto a holy, useful, and profitable profession of the gospel.

Fourthly, There is a punishment intimated upon this sinful neglect of the gospel: Πως εκφευξομεθα; "How shall we escape," flee from, or avoid? wherein both the punishment itself, and the manner of ex-



pressing it, are to be considered. For the punishment itself, the apostle doth not expressly mention it. It must therefore be taken from the words going before, "How shall we escape?" that is, *ενδικον μισθαποδοσιαν*, 'a just retribution, a meet recompence of reward.' The breach of the law was followed by such a retribution: a punishment suitable unto the demerit of the crime was by God assigned unto it, and inflicted on them that were guilty. So to the neglect of the gospel a punishment is annexed, even a punishment justly deserved by so great a crime; so much greater and more sore than that designed unto the contempt of the law, as the gospel, upon the account of its nature, effects, author, and confirmation, was more excellent than the law. *Χειρων τιμωρια*, 'a sorer punishment,' as our apostle calls it, ch. x. 29, as much exceeding it as eternal destruction under the curse and wrath of God exceeds all temporal punishments whatever. What this punishment is, see Matt. xvi. 26, xxv. 46; 2 Thess. i. 8. The manner of ascertaining the punishment intimated, is by an interrogation, "How shall we escape?" wherein three things are intended. 1. A denial of any ways or means for escape or deliverance. There is none that can deliver us, no way whereby we may escape; see 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. And, 2. The certainty of the punishment itself; it will, as to the event, assuredly befall us. And, 3. The inexpressible greatness of this unavoidable evil, "How shall we escape?" We shall not, there is no way for it, nor ability to bear what we are liable to, Matt. xxiii. 33; 1 Pet. iv. 18.

This is the scope of the apostle in these verses, this the import of the several things contained in them. His main design and intentment is, to prevail with the Hebrews unto a diligent attendance to the gospel that was preached unto them, which he urgeth by an argument taken from the danger, yea certain ruin, that will undoubtedly ensue on the neglect of it; the certainty, unavoidableness, greatness, and righteousness of this, he manifests by the consideration of the punishment assigned to the transgressions of the law, which the gospel on many accounts doth excel.

The observations for our own instruction which these verses offer unto us, are these that follow.

I. Motives unto a due valuation of the gospel, and perseverance in the profession of it, taken from the penalties annexed unto the neglect of it, are evangelical, and of singular use in the preaching of the word: "How shall we escape if we neglect?"—This consideration is here managed by the apostle, and that when he had newly set forth the glory of Christ, and the greatness of the salvation tendered in the gospel, in the most persuading and attractive manner. Some would fancy, that all comminations and threatenings do belong to the law; as though Jesus Christ had left himself and his gospel to be securely despised by profane and impenitent sinners; but as they will find the contrary to their eternal ruin, so it is the will of Christ that we should let them know this, and thereby warn others to take heed of their sins and their plagues.

Now these motives, from comminations and threatenings, I call evangelical:

1st, Because they are recorded in the gospel. There we are taught

them, and by it commanded to make use of them, Matt. x. 28, xxiv. 50, 51, xxv. 41; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 36; 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, and in other places innumerable. And to this end are they recorded, that they may be preached and declared as part of the gospel. And if the dispensers of the word insist not on them, they deal deceitfully with the souls of men, and detain from them the counsel of God. And as such persons will find themselves to have a weak and an enervated ministry here, so also that they will have a sad account for their partiality in the word to give hereafter. Let not men think themselves more evangelical than the author of the gospel, more skilled in the mystery of the conversion and edification of the souls of men, than the apostles; in a word, more wise than God himself, which they must do if they neglect this part of his ordinance.

2d, Because they become the gospel. It is meet the gospel should be armed with threatenings, as well as attended with promises; and that,

1. On the part of Christ himself, the author of it. However the world persecuted and despised him whilst he was on the earth, and he threatened not, 1 Pet. ii. 23, on his own account; however they continue to contemn and blaspheme his ways, and salvation, yet he lets them know that he is armed with power to revenge their disobedience. And it belongs unto his honour to have it declared unto them. A sceptre in a kingdom without a sword, a crown without a rod of iron, will quickly be trampled on. Both are therefore given into the hand of Christ, that the glory and honour of his dominion may be known, Psal. ii. 9—12.

2. They become the gospel on the part of sinners, yea, of all to whom the gospel is preached. And those are of two sorts.

First, Unbelievers, hypocrites, apostates, impenitent neglecters of the great salvation declared in it. It is meet on this account, that the dispensation of the gospel be attended with threatenings and comminations of punishments. And that,

1. To keep them here in awe and fear, that they may not boldly and openly break out in contempt of Christ. These are his arrows that are sharp in the hearts of his adversaries, whereby he awes them, galls them, and in the midst of all their pride makes them to tremble sometimes at their future condition. Christ never suffers them to be so secure, but that his terrors in these threatenings visit them ever and anon. And hereby also doth he keep them within some bounds, bridles their rage, and overpowers many of them unto some usefulness in the world, with many other blessed ends not now to be insisted on.

2. That they may be left inexcusable, and the Lord Christ be justified in his proceedings against them at the last day. If they should be surprised with fiery indignation and everlasting burnings at the last day, how might they plead, that if they had been warned, of these things, they would have endeavoured to have fled from the wrath to come? and how apt might they be to repine against his justice, in the amazing greatness of their destruction. But now by taking order to have the penalty of their disobedience in the threatenings of the

gospel declared unto them, they are left without excuse, and himself is glorified in taking vengeance. He hath told them beforehand plainly what they are to look for, Heb. x. 26, 27.

Secondly, They are so on the part of believers themselves. Even they stand in need to be reminded of the terror of the Lord; and what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God; and that even our God is a consuming fire. And this,

1. To keep up in their hearts a constant reverence of the majesty of Jesus Christ, with whom they have to do. The threatening sanction of the gospel bespeaks the greatness, holiness, and terror of its Author, and insinuates into the hearts of believers thoughts becoming of them. It lets them know that he will be sanctified in all that draw nigh unto him, and so calls upon them for a due reverential preparation for the performance of his worship, and unto all duties wherein they walk before him, Heb. xii. 28, 29. This influenceth them also unto a diligent attendance to every particular duty incumbent on them, as the apostle declares, 2 Cor. v. 11.

2. They tend unto their consolation and support under all their afflictions and sufferings for the gospel. This relieves their hearts in all their sorrows, when they consider the sore vengeance that the Lord Jesus Christ will one day take of all his stubborn adversaries, who know not God, nor will obey the gospel, 2 Thess. i. 5—10. For the Lord Jesus is no less faithful in his threatenings than in his promises, and no less able to inflict the one, than to accomplish the other. And he is glorious unto them therein, Isa. lxiii. 1—4.

3. They give them constant matter of praise and thankfulness, when they see in them, as in a glass, that will neither flatter nor causelessly terrify, a representation of that wrath which they are delivered from by Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. i. 10. For in this way, every threatening of the gospel proclaims the grace of Christ unto their souls. And when they hear them explained in all their terror, they can rejoice in the hope of the glory that shall be revealed. And,

4. They are needful to them to engenerate that fear which may give check to the remainder of their lusts and corruptions, and to that security and negligence in attending to the gospel, which by means of these is apt to grow upon them. To this purpose is the punishment of despisers and backsliders here made use of, and urged by our apostle. The hearts of believers are like gardens, wherein there are not only flowers, but weeds also; and as the former must be watered and cherished, so the latter must be curbed and nipped. If nothing but dews and showers of promises should fall upon the heart, though they seem to tend to the cherishing of their graces, yet the weeds of corruption will be apt to grow up with them, and in the end to choke them, unless they are nipped and blasted by the severity of threatenings. And although their persons, in the use of means, shall be secured from falling under the final execution of comminations, yet they know there is an infallible connexion signified in them between sin and destruction, 1 Cor. vi. 9, and that they must avoid the one, if they will escape the other.

5. Hence they have in readiness wherewith to balance tempta-

tions, especially such as accompany sufferings for Christ and the gospel. Great reasonings are apt to rise in the hearts of believers themselves in such a season; and they are biassed by their infirmities to attend unto them. Liberty would be spared,—life would be spared—it is hard to suffer, and to die. How many have been betrayed by their fears at such a season to forsake the Lord Christ and the gospel? But now in these gospel threatenings, we have that in readiness which we may oppose unto all these reasonings and the efficacy of of them. Are we afraid of a man that shall die? Have we not much more reason to be afraid of the living God? Shall we, to avoid the anger of a worm, cast ourselves into the wrath of him who is a consuming fire? Shall we, to avoid a little momentary trouble, to preserve a perishing life, which a sickness may take away the next day, run ourselves into eternal ruin? Man threatens me if I forsake not the gospel, but God threatens if I do. Man threatens death temporal, which yet it may be he shall not have power to inflict; God threatens death eternal, which no backslider in heart shall avoid. On these and the like accounts, are comminations useful unto believers themselves.

3dly. These declarations of eternal punishment unto gospel neglecters, do become the gospel with respect unto them that are the preachers and dispensers of it, that their message be not slighted nor their persons despised. God would have even them to have in readiness wherewith to revenge the disobedience of men, 2 Cor. x. 6, not with carnal weapons, killing and destroying the bodies of men, but by such a denunciation of the vengeance that will ensue on their disobedience, as shall undoubtedly take hold upon them, and end in their everlasting ruin. Thus are they armed for the warfare, wherein by the Lord Christ they are engaged; that no man may be encouraged to despise them, or contend with them. They are authorized to denounce the eternal wrath of God against disobedient sinners; and whomsoever they bind under the sentence of it on earth, they are bound in heaven unto the judgment of the great day.

On these grounds it is that we say, that the threatenings and denunciations of future punishments unto all sorts of persons are becoming of the gospel; and therefore the using of them as motives unto the end for which they are designed, is evangelical. And this will farther appear, if we shall yet consider,

1. That threatenings of future penalties on the disobedient, are far more clear and express in the gospel than in the law. The curse, indeed, was threatened and denounced under the law; and a pledge and instance of its execution were given in the temporal punishments that were inflicted on the transgressors of it. But in the gospel the nature of this curse is explained, and what it consisteth in is made manifest. For as eternal life, though promised, was only obscurely promised in the Old Testament; so death eternal under the curse and wrath of God, was only obscurely threatened therein, though threatened. And, therefore, as life and immortality were brought to light by the gospel, so death and hell, the punishment of sin under the wrath of God, are more fully declared therein. The nature of the judgment to come, the duration of the penalties to be inflicted on unbelievers, with such inti-



mations of the nature and kind of them as our understandings are able to receive, are fully and frequently insisted on in the New Testament, whereas they are only very obscurely gathered out of the writings of the Old.

2. The punishment threatened in the gospel is, as unto degrees, greater and more sore than that which was annexed to the mere transgression of the first covenant. Hence, the apostle calls it, "death unto death," 2 Cor. ii. 16, by reason of the sore aggravations which the first sentence of death will receive from the wrath due unto the contempt of the gospel. Separation from God under eternal punishment, was unquestionably due to the sin of Adam, and so consequently unto every transgression against the first covenant, Gen. ii. 17; Rom. v. 12—14. But yet this hinders not, but that the same penalty for the nature and kind of it, may receive many and great aggravations, upon men's sinning against that great remedy provided against the first guilt and prevarication; which it also doth, as shall afterwards be farther declared.

And this ought they to be well acquainted withal, who are called unto the dispensation of the gospel. A fond conceit hath befallen some, that all denunciation of future wrath, even unto unbelievers, is legal, which therefore it doth not become the preachers of the gospel to insist upon; so would men make themselves wiser than Jesus Christ and all his apostles, yea, they would disarm the Lord Christ, and expose him to the contempt of his vilest enemies. There is also, we see, a great use in these evangelical threatenings unto believers themselves. And *they* have been observed to have had an effectual ministry, both unto conversion and edification, who have been made wise and dexterous in managing gospel comminations towards the consciences of their hearers. And those also that hear the word, may hence learn their duty, when such threatenings are handled and opened unto them.

II. All punishments annexed unto the transgression either of the law or gospel, are effects of God's vindictive justice, and consequently just and equal. 'Transgression received *a meet* recompense of reward.'—What it is, the apostle doth not declare; but he declares that it is just and equal, which depends on the justice of God appointing and designing of it. Foolish men have always had tumultuating thoughts about the judgments of God. Some have disputed with him about the equity and equality of his ways in temporal judgments, Ezek. xviii. and some about those that shall be eternal. Hence was the vain imagination of them of old, who dreamed that an end should be put, after some season, unto the punishment of devils and wicked men; so turning hell into a kind of purgatory. Others have disputed in our days, that there shall be no hell at all, but a mere annihilation of ungodly men at the last day. These things being so expressly contrary to the Scripture, can have no other rise, but the corrupt minds and affections of men not conceiving the reasons of God's judgments, nor acquiescing in his sovereignty. That which they seem principally to have stumbled at, is the assignation of a punishment infinite as to its duration, as well as in its nature extended unto the utmost capacity of the subject, unto a fault, temporary, finite, and transient. Now, that we may justify God herein, and the more clearly discern that the punish-

ment inflicted finally on sin, is but a meet recompense of reward, we must consider,

First, That God's justice constituting, and in the end inflicting the reward of sin, is essential unto him. Is God unjust? saith the apostle, *ὁ ἐπιφέρων τὴν ὀργήν*, "who taketh vengeance," Rom. iii. 5. *Ὀργή*, 'anger or wrath,' is not that from whence punishment proceedeth, but punishment itself;—God inflicteth wrath, anger, or vengeance. And, therefore, when we read of the anger or wrath of God against sin or sinners, as Rom. i. 18, the expression is metonymical, the cause being designed by the effect. The true fountain and cause of the punishment of sin is the justice of God, which is an essential property of his nature, natural unto him, and inseparable from any of his works. And this absolutely is the same with his holiness, or the infinite purity of his nature. So that God doth not assign the punishment of sin arbitrarily, as if he might do so or otherwise, without any impeachment of his glory; but his justice and his holiness indispensably require that it should be punished, even as it is indispensably necessary that God in all things should be just and holy. The holy God will do no iniquity; the Judge of all the earth will do right, and will by no means acquit the guilty. This is *δικαίωμα τοῦ Θεοῦ*, 'the judgment of God,' that which his justice requireth, "that they which commit sin are worthy of death," Rom. i. 32. And God cannot but do that, which it is just that he should do; see 2 Thess. i. 6. We have no more reason then to quarrel with the punishment of sin, than we have to repine that God is holy and just; that is, that he is God; for the one naturally and necessarily followeth upon the other. Now, there is no principle of a more uncontrollable and sovereign truth written in the hearts of all men than this; that what the nature of God, or any of his essential properties requires to be, is holy, meet, equal, just, and good.

Secondly, That this righteousness or justice of God is, in the exercise of it, inseparably accompanied with infinite wisdom. These things are not diverse in God, but are distinguished with respect unto the various manners of his actings, and the variety of the objects which he acteth towards; and so denote a different habitude of the divine nature, not diverse things in God. They are therefore inseparable in all the works of God. Now from this infinite wisdom of God, which his righteousness in the constitution of the punishment of sin is eternally accompanied withal; two things ensue.

1. That he alone knoweth what is the true desert and demerit of sin; and that no creature can know it, except from his declaration of it. And how shall we judge of what we know nothing but from him, but only by what he doth? We see amongst men, that the guilt of crimes is aggravated according to the dignity of the persons against whom they are committed. Now, no creature knowing him perfectly, against whom all sin is committed, none can truly and perfectly know what is the desert and demerit of sin, but by the revelation of him who is perfectly known unto himself. And what a madness is it to judge otherwise of that we do no otherwise understand? Shall we make ourselves judges of what sin against God doth deserve? Let us first by searching find out the Almighty unto perfection, and then we may

know of ourselves what it is to sin against him. Besides, we know not what is the opposition that is made by sin unto the holiness, the nature, and very being of God. As we cannot know him perfectly against whom we sin, so we know not perfectly what we do when we sin. It is the least part of the malignity and poison that is in sin, which we are able to discern. We see not the depth of that malicious respect which it hath unto God; and are we capable to judge aright of what is its demerit? But all these things are open and naked before that infinite wisdom of God, which accompanieth his righteousness in all his works. He knows himself against whom sin is; he knows the condition of the sinner; he knows what contrariety and opposition there is in sin unto himself: in a word, he knows what it is for a finite, limited, dependent creature, to subduct itself from under the government, and oppose itself unto the authority and being of the holy Creator, Ruler, and Governor of all things;—all these things he knows absolutely and perfectly, and so alone knows what sin deserves.

2. From this infinite wisdom is the proportioning of the several degrees in the punishment that shall be inflicted on sin. For although his righteousness require that the final punishment of all sin, should be an eternal separation of the sinner from the enjoyment of him, and that in a state of wrath and misery; yet, by his wisdom he hath constituted degrees of that wrath, according to the variety of provocations that are found among sinners. And by nothing else could this be done. What else is able to look through the unconceivable variety of aggravating circumstances which is required hereunto? For the most part, we know not what is so; and when we know any thing of its being, we know nothing almost of the true nature of its demerit. And this is another thing from whence we may learn, that divine punishment of sin is always a meet recompense of reward.

Thirdly, In the final punishment of sin, there is no mixture of mercy; nothing to alleviate, or to take off from the uttermost of its desert. This world is the time and place for mercy. Here God causeth his sun to shine, and his rain to fall on the worst of men, filling their hearts with food and gladness. Here he endures them with much patience and forbearance, doing them good in unspeakable variety, and to many of them making a daily tender of that mercy, which might make them blessed to eternity. But the season of these things is past in the day of recompense. Sinners shall then hear nothing, but “go ye cursed.” They shall not have the least effect of mercy shown to them unto all eternity. They shall then “have judgment without mercy, who showed no mercy.” The grace, goodness, love, and mercy of God shall be glorified unto the utmost in his elect; without the least mixture of alloy from his displeasure; and so shall his wrath, severity, and vindictive justice, in them that perish, without any temperature of pity or compassion. He shall reign upon them “snares, and fire, and brimstone, this shall be their portion for ever.” Wonder not, then, at the greatness or duration of that punishment, which shall exhaust the whole wrath of God, without the least mitigation.

And this will discover unto us the nature of sin, especially of unbelief, and neglect of the gospel. Men are apt now to have slight thoughts

of these things; but when they shall find them revenged with the whole wrath of God, they will change their minds. What a folly, what a madness is it to make light of Christ, when to this neglect an eternity of punishment is but a meet recompense of reward. It is good, then, to learn the nature of sin from the threatenings of God, rather than from the common presumptions that pass among secure perishing sinners. Consider what the righteousness, what the holiness, what the wisdom of God hath determined to be due unto sin, and then make a judgment of the nature of it, that you be not overtaken with a woeful surprisal, when all means of relief are past and gone. As also know that,

2. This world alone is the time and place wherein you are to look and seek for mercy. Cries will do nothing at the last day; they shall not obtain the least drop of water to cool the tongue in its torment. Some men doubtless have secret reserves, that things will not go at the last day, as by others they are made to believe. They hope to meet with better quarters than is talked of; that God will not be inexorable as is pretended. Were not these their inward thoughts, it were not possible they should so neglect the season of grace as they do. But, alas, how will they be deceived? God indeed is gracious, merciful, and full of compassion; but this world is the time wherein he will exercise them. They will be for ever shut up towards unbelievers at the last day. This is the acceptable day, this is the day of salvation; if this be despised, if this be neglected, expect no more to hear of mercy unto eternity.

III. Every concernment of the law and gospel, both as to their nature and promulgation, is to be weighed and considered by believers, to beget in their hearts a right and due valuation of them. To this end are they here so distinctly proposed; as of the law, that it was spoken by angels; and of the gospel, that it is great salvation, the word spoken by the Lord, confirmed with signs and miracles; all which the apostle would have us to weigh and consider distinctly. Our interest lies in them, and our good is intended by them. And to stir up our attention unto them, we may observe,

First, That God neither doth anything in vain, nor speaks anything in vain, especially in the things of his law and gospel, wherein the great concerns of his own glory, and the souls of men are enwrapped. And therefore our Saviour lets us know, that there is a worth in the least apex and iota of the word, and that it must have its accomplishment. An end it hath, and that end shall be fulfilled. The Jews have a foolish curiosity in reckoning all the letters of the Scripture, and casting up how often every one doth occur. But yet this curiosity of theirs, vain and needless as it is, will condemn our negligence, if we omit a diligent inquiry into all the things and circumstances of it, that are of real importance. God hath a holy and wise end in all that he doth. As nothing can be added unto his word or work, so nothing can be taken from it, it is every way perfect. And this in general is enough to quicken us to a diligent search into all the circumstances and adjuncts both of law and gospel, and of the way and manner, whereby he was pleased to communicate them unto us.



Secondly, There is in all those concerns of the law and gospel, a mixture of divine wisdom and grace. From this fountain they all proceed, and the living waters of it run through them all. The times, the seasons, the authors, the instruments, the manner of their delivery, were all ordered by the manifold wisdom of God, which especially appears in the dispensation of the gospel, Eph. iii. 9, 10. The apostle placeth not the wisdom of God only in the mystery of the gospel, but also in the season of its promulgation. "It was hid," saith he, "in God," ver. 9, that is, in the "purpose of God," ver. 10, 11, "from the ages past, but now is made manifest;" and herein doth the manifold wisdom of God appear. Were we able to look into the depth of any circumstance that concerns the institutions of God, we should see it full of wisdom and grace, and the neglect of a due consideration thereof hath God sometimes severely revenged, Lev. x. 1, 2.

Thirdly, There is in them all a gracious condescension unto our weakness. God knows that we stand in need of an especial remark to be set on every one of them. Such is our weakness, our slowness to believe, that we have need that the word should be unto us, "line upon line, and precept upon precept; here a little and there a little." As God told Moses, Exod. iv. 8, that if the children of Israel would not believe on the first sign, they would on the second. So it is with us; one consideration of the law or the gospel oftentimes proves ineffectual, when another overpowers the heart unto obedience. And therefore hath God thus graciously condescended unto our weakness, in proposing unto us the several considerations mentioned of his law and gospel; that by some of them we may be laid hold upon, and bowed unto his mind and will in them. Accordingly,

Fourthly, They have had their various influences and successes on the souls of men. Some have been wrought upon by one consideration, some by another. In some the holiness of the law, in others the manner of its administration has been effectual. Some have fixed their hearts principally upon the grace of the gospel; some on the person of its author. And the same persons at several times have had help and assistance, from these several considerations of the one and the other. So that in these things, God doth nothing in vain, nothing is in vain towards believers. Infinite wisdom is in all, and infinite glory will arise out of all.

And this should stir us up to a diligent search into the word, wherein God hath recorded all the concerns of his law and gospel, that are for our use and advantage. That is the cabinet wherein all these jewels are laid up and disposed, according to his wisdom and the counsel of his will. A general view of it will but little satisfy, and not at all enrich our souls. This is the mine wherein we must dig as for hid treasures. One main reason why we believe no more, why we obey no more, why we love no more, is because we are no more diligent in searching the word, for substantial motives unto them all. A very little insight into the word is apt to make men think that they see enough; but the reason of it is, because they like not what they see; as men will not like to look farther into a shop of wares, when they like nothing which is at first presented unto them. But if indeed we

find sweetness, benefit, profit, life, in the discoveries that are made unto us in the word, about the law and gospel, we shall be continually reaching after a farther acquaintance with them. It may be we know somewhat of those things; but how know we that there is not some special concern of the gospel, which God in a holy condescension hath designed for our good in particular, that we are not as yet arrived unto a clear and distinct knowledge of? Here if we search for it with all diligence, we may find it, and if we go maimed in our faith and obedience all our days, we may thank our own sloth for it.

Again, whereas God hath distinctly proposed those things unto us, they should have our distinct consideration. We should severally and distinctly meditate upon them; that so in them all we may admire the wisdom of God; and receive the effectual influence of them all upon our own souls. Thus may we sometimes converse in our hearts with the author of the gospel, sometimes with the manner of its delivery, sometimes with the grace of it; and from every one of these heavenly flowers, draw nourishment and refreshment unto our own souls. Oh that we could take care to gather up these fragments, that nothing might be lost unto us; as in themselves they shall never perish.

IV. What means soever God is pleased to use in the revelation of his will, he gives it a certainty, steadfastness, assurance and evidence, which our faith may rest in, and which cannot be neglected without the greatest sin. The word spoken was *βεβαιος*, 'steadfast.' Every word spoken from God by his appointment, is steadfast; and that because spoken from him, and by his appointment. And there are two things that belong unto this steadfastness of the word spoken.

1. That in respect of them unto whom it is spoken, it is the foundation of faith and obedience; the formal reason of these, and the last ground whereunto they are resolved.

2. That on the part of God, it is a stable and sufficient ground of righteousness in proceeding to take vengeance on them by whom it is neglected. The punishment of transgressors is a meet recompense of reward, because the word spoken unto them is steadfast. And this latter follows upon the former; for if the word be not a stable firm foundation for the faith and obedience of men, they cannot be justly punished for the neglect of it. That therefore must be briefly spoken unto, and this will naturally ensue, as a consequent thereof.

God hath, as we saw on the first verse of this Epistle, by various ways and means, declared and revealed his mind unto men. That declaration, what means or instruments soever he is pleased to make use of therein, is called his word. And that because originally it is his, it proceeds from him, is delivered in his name and authority, reveals his mind, and tends to his glory. Thus sometimes he spake by angels, using their ministry, either in delivering his messages, by words of an outward sound, or by representation of things in visions and dreams; and sometimes by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, enabling them so inspired, to give out the word which they received, purely and entirely, all remaining his word still. Now what ways soever God is pleased to use, in the communication of his mind and will unto men for their obedience, there is that steadfastness in the word itself, that

evidence to be from him, as make it the duty of men to believe in it, with faith divine and supernatural; and there is in it that stability which will never deceive them. It is, I say, thus steadfast upon the account of its being spoken from God, and stands in no need of the contribution of any strength, authority, or testimony from men, church, tradition, or aught else that is extrinsecal unto it. The testimonies given hereunto in the Scripture itself, which are very many, with the general grounds and reasons hereof, I shall not here insist upon; and that because I have done it elsewhere. I shall only mention that one consideration, which this place of the apostle suggests unto us, and which is contained in our second observation from the word *steadfast*. Take this word as spoken from God, without the help of any other advantages, and the steadfastness of it is the ground of God's inflicting vengeance on them that receive it not, that obey it not. Because it is his word, because it is clothed with his authority, if men believe it not, they must perish. But now if this be not sufficiently evidenced unto them, namely, that it is his word, God could not be just in taking vengeance of them; for he should punish them for not believing that, which they had no sufficient reason to believe, which suits not with the holiness and justice of God. The evidence then that this word is from God, that it is his, being the foundation of the justice of God in his proceeding against them that do not believe it, it is of indispensable necessity that he himself also do give that evidence unto it. For whence also should it have it? from the testimony of the church, or from tradition, or from probable moral inducements, that men can tender one to another; then these two things will inevitably follow. 1. That if men should neglect their duty in giving testimony unto the word, as they may do, because they are but men, then God cannot justly condemn any man in the world, for the neglect of his word, in not believing it, or not yielding obedience unto it. And the reason is evident; because if they have not sufficient grounds to believe it to be his, without such testimonies as are not given unto it, it is the highest injustice to condemn them for not believing it; and they should perish without a cause. For what can be more unjust, than to punish a man, especially eternally, for not doing that which he had no just or sufficient reason to do? This be far from God to destroy the innocent with the wicked. 2. Suppose all men aright to discharge their duty, and that there be a full tradition concerning the word of God; that the church give testimony unto it, and learned men produce their arguments for it; if this, all, or any part hereof, be esteemed as the sufficient proposition of the Scripture to be the word of God, then is the execution of infinite divine justice built upon the testimony of men, which is not divine or infallible, but such as might deceive. For God on this supposal must condemn men for not believing with faith divine and infallible, that which is proposed unto them by testimonies and arguments human and fallible, *quod absit*.

It remaineth then that the righteousness of the act of God in condemning unbelievers, is built upon the evidence, that the object of faith, or word to be believed, is from him.

And this he gives unto it, both by the impression of his majesty and

authority upon it, and by the power and efficacy wherewith by his Spirit it is accompanied. Thus is every word of God steadfast as a declaration of his will unto us, by what means soever it is made known unto us.

V. Every transaction between God and man, is always confirmed and ratified by promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments; "every trespass."

VI. The most glorious administrators of the law do stoop to look into the mysteries of the gospel. See 1 Pet. i. 12.

VII. Covenant transgressions are attended with unavoidable penalties; "every transgression," that is of the covenant, disannulling of it, "received a meet recompence of reward."

VIII. The gospel is a word of salvation to them that do believe.

IX. The salvation tendered in the gospel, is great salvation.

X. Men are apt to entertain thoughts of escaping the wrath of God, though they live in a neglect of the gospel. This the apostle insinuates in that interrogation, "How shall we escape?"

XI. The neglecters of the gospel shall unavoidably perish under the wrath of God: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation."

These last observations may be cast into one proposition, and so be considered together; namely, that the gospel is great salvation, which whoso neglecteth, shall therefore unavoidably perish without remedy. We shall first inquire how the gospel is said to be salvation, and that great salvation, and then show the equity and unavoidableness of their destruction by whom it is neglected, and therein the vanity of their hopes, who look for an escaping in the contempt of it.

By the gospel, we understand with the apostle, the word preached or spoken by Christ and his apostles, and now recorded for our use in the books of the New Testament; not exclusively unto what was declared of it in the types and promises of the Old Testament. But by the way of eminency we appropriate the whole name and nature of the gospel unto that delivery of the mind and will of God, by Jesus Christ, which included and perfected all that had preceded unto that purpose. Now the gospel is salvation upon a double account.

First. Declaratively, in that the salvation of God by Christ is declared, taught, and revealed thereby. So the apostle informs us, Rom. i. 16, 17. "It is the power of God unto salvation, because therein the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;" that is the righteousness of God in Christ, whereby believers shall be saved. And therefore it is called, *ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτηρία*, Tit. ii. 11, the 'saving,' or salvation-bringing, 'grace of God;' the grace of God, as that which teacheth and revealeth his grace. And thence they that abuse it to their lusts are said to "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness," Jude 4, that is, the doctrine of it, which is the gospel. And therefore under the Old Testament, it is called the preaching or declaring of glad tidings, tidings of peace, and salvation, Nahum i. 15; Isa. lii. 7, and is described as a proclamation of mercy, peace, pardon, and salvation unto sinners, Isa. lxi. 1, 2. And life and immortality are said to be brought to light thereby, 2 Tim. i. 10. It is true, God



had from all eternity in his infinite grace contrived the salvation of sinners, but this contrivance, and the purpose of it, lay hid in his own will and wisdom, as in an infinite abyss of darkness, utterly imperceptible unto angels and men, until it was brought to light, or manifested and declared by the gospel, Eph. iii. 9, 10; Col. i. 25—27. There is nothing more vain than the supposals of some, that there are other ways whereby this salvation might be discovered and made known. The works of nature, or creation and providence, the sun, moon, and stars, showers from heaven, with fruitful seasons, are in their judgment preachers of the salvation of sinners. I know not what also they say, that the reason of man, by the contemplation of these things may find out, of I know not what placability in God, that may incite sinners to go unto him, and enable them to find acceptance with him. But we see what success all the world, and all the wise men of it, had in the use and improvement of these means of the salvation of sinners. The apostle tells us not only, that by their “wisdom they knew not God,” 1 Cor. i. 21, but also, that the more they searched, the greater loss they were at, until they “waxed vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened,” Rom. i. 21. And indeed whatever they had amongst them, which had any semblance of an obscure apprehension of some way of salvation by atonement and intercession, as in their sacrifices, and mediations of inferior deities, which the apostle alludes unto, 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6; as they had it by tradition from those who were somewhat instructed in the will of God by revelation, so they turned it into horrible idolatries, and the utmost contempt of God. And this was the issue of their disquisitions, who were no less wise in the principles of inbred reason, and the knowledge of the works of nature, than those who now contend for their ability to have done better. Besides, the salvation of sinners is a mystery, as the Scripture every-where declareth, a blessed, a “glorious mystery,” Rom. xvi. 25. “The wisdom of God in a mystery,” 1 Cor. ii. 7; Eph. i. 9; Col. i. 25, 26. That is, not only a thing secret and marvellous, but such as hath no dependence on any causes that come naturally within our cognizance. Now, whatever men can find out, by the principles of reason, and the contemplation of the works of God, in creation and providence, it is by natural scientific conclusions; and what is so discovered, can be no heavenly, spiritual, glorious mystery, such as this salvation is. Whatever men may so find out, if they may find out any thing looking this way, it is but natural science, it is not a mystery, and so is of no use in this matter, whatever it be. Moreover, it is not only said to be a mystery, but a hidden mystery, and that “hid in God himself,” as Eph. iii. 9, 10; Col. i. 25, 26; 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8; that is, in the wisdom, purpose, and will of God. Now it is very strange that men should be able by the natural means forementioned, to discover a heavenly, supernatural wisdom, and that hidden on purpose from their finding by any such inquiry, and that in God himself, so coming unto the knowledge of it, as it were, whether he would or not. But we may pass over these imaginations, and accept of the gospel, as the only way and means of declaring the salvation of God. And therefore every word and promise in the whole book of God, that intimateth or

revealeth anything belonging unto this salvation, is itself a part of the gospel, and so to be esteemed. And as this is the work of the gospel, so is it in an especial manner, its proper and peculiar work with respect unto the law. The law speaks nothing of the salvation of sinners, and is therefore called the ministry of death and condemnation, as the gospel is of life and salvation, 2 Cor. iii. 9, 10. And thus the gospel is salvation declaratively.

Secondly, It is salvation efficiently, in that it is the great instrument which God is pleased to use, in and for the collation and bestowing salvation upon his elect. Hence the apostle calls it the "power of God unto salvation," Rom. i. 16, because God in and by it exerts his mighty power in the saving of them that believe; as it is again so called, 1 Cor. i. 18, whence there is a saving power ascribed unto the word itself. And therefore Paul commits believers unto the "word of grace, as that which is able to build them up, and give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified," Acts xx. 32. And James calls it the "ingrafted word, which is able to save our souls," James i. 21; the mighty power of Christ being put forth in it, and accompanying of it, for that purpose. But this will the better appear, if we consider the several principal parts of this salvation, and the efficiency of the word as the instrument of God, in the communication of it unto us. As,

First, In the regeneration and sanctification of the elect, the first external act of this salvation. This is wrought by the word, 1 Pet. i. 23, "We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God." Wherein not only the thing itself, of our regeneration by the word, but the manner of it also is declared. It is by the collation of a new spiritual life upon us, whereof the word is the seed. As every life proceeds from some seed, that hath in itself virtually the whole life to be educed from it by natural ways and means, so the word in the hearts of men is turned into a vital principle, that, cherished by suitable means, puts forth vital acts and operations. By this means are we born of God and quickened, who by "nature are children of wrath, dead in trespasses and sins." So Paul tells the Corinthians, that he had "begotten them in Jesus Christ by the gospel," 1 Cor. iv. 15. I confess, it doth not do this work by any power resident in itself, and always necessarily accompanying its administration. For then all would be so regenerated unto whom it is preached, and there would be no neglecters of it. But it is the instrument of God for this end; and mighty and powerful through God it is for the accomplishment of it. And this gives us our first real interest in the salvation which it doth declare. Of the same use and efficacy is it in the progress of this work in our sanctification; by which we are carried on towards the full enjoyment of this salvation. So our Saviour prays for his disciples, John xvii. 19, "Sanctify them by thy word;" as the means and instrument of their sanctification. And he tells his apostles, that they were "clean through the word that he had spoken unto them," chap. xv. 3. For it is the food and nourishment whereby the spiritual principle of life, which we receive in our regeneration, is cherished and increased,

1 Pet. ii. 2, and so able to build us up, until it give “us an inheritance among them that are sanctified.”

Secondly, It is so in the communication of the Spirit unto them that do believe, to furnish them with the gifts and graces of the kingdom of heaven, and to interest them in all those privileges of this salvation, which God is pleased in this life to impart unto us, and to entrust us withal. So the apostle dealing with the Galatians about their backslidings from the gospel, asketh them, “whether they received the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the word of faith,” Gal. iii. 2, that is the gospel. That was the way and means whereby God communicated unto them his Spirit, by whom, among many other privileges, “we are sealed unto the day of redemption.” This is the covenant of God, that his “Spirit and the word of the gospel” shall go, and shall abide together with his elect, Isa. lix. 21. And he is given unto us by the gospel, on many accounts.

1. Because he is the gift and grant of the author of the gospel, as to all the especial ends and concernments of salvation. John tells us, that “the Spirit was not given when Jesus was not as yet glorified,” chap. vii. 39, that is, not in that manner, as God hath annexed unto this salvation: and therefore Peter tells us, that “when the Lord Christ ascended up on high, he received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, and poured him forth on them which did believe,” Acts ii. 33. And this he did, according to his own great promise and prediction, while he conversed with his disciples in the days of his flesh. There was not any thing that he more supported and encouraged them with, nor more raised their hearts to an expectation of, than this, that he would send unto them, and bestow upon them the Holy Ghost, for many blessed ends and purposes, and that to abide with them for ever, as we may see, John xiv. 15, 16. And this is the great privilege of the gospel, that the author of it is alone the donor and bestower of the Holy Spirit; and of what concern he is in the business of our salvation, all men know, who have any acquaintance with these things.

2. He is promised in the gospel, and therein alone. All the promises of the Scripture, whether in the Old Testament or New, whose subject is the Spirit, are evangelical: they all belong unto, and are parts of the gospel. For the law had no promise of the Spirit, nor any privilege by him annexed unto it. And hence he is called “the Holy Spirit of promise,” Eph. i. 13, who, next unto the person of Christ, was the great subject of promises from the foundation of the world.

3. By these promises are believers actually and really made partakers of the Spirit. They are *vehicula Spiritus*, the chariots that bring this Holy Spirit into our souls, 2 Pet. i. 4. By these great and precious promises is the divine nature communicated unto us, so far forth as unto the indwelling of this blessed Spirit. Every evangelical promise is unto a believer but as it were the clothing of the Spirit; in receiving whereof he receives the Spirit himself, for some of the blessed ends of this great salvation. God makes use of the word of the gospel, and of no other means, to this purpose. So that herein also it is the grace of God that bringeth salvation.

Thirdly, In our justification. And this hath so great a share in this salvation, that it is often called salvation itself. And they that are justified, are said to be saved, as Eph. ii. 8. And this is by the gospel alone; which is a point of such importance, that it is the main subject of some of Paul's Epistles, and is fully taught in them all. And in sundry respects it is by the gospel.

1. Because therein, and thereby, is appointed and constituted the new law of justification, whereby even a sinner may come to be justified before God. The law of justification was, that he that did the works of the law should live in them, Rom. x. 5. But this became weak and unprofitable by reason of sin, Rom. viii. 3; Heb. viii. 7—9. That any sinner (and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God) should be justified by this law or rule, implies a contradiction, and is utterly impossible. Wherefore God by the gospel hath constituted a new law of justification, even the law of faith, Rom. iii. 27, which is the holy declaration of his will and grace, that sinners shall be justified and accepted with him by faith in the blood of Christ, without the works of the law; that he that believeth shall be saved. This is equally constituted and appointed in the law of faith to be proposed unto all that shall believe. And on the account hereof, the gospel is salvation.

2. Because in every justification there must be a righteousness before God, on the account whereof, the person to be justified is to be pronounced and declared righteous; this is tendered, proposed, and exhibited unto us in and by the gospel.

This is no other but the Lord Christ himself and his righteousness, Isa. xlv. 21, 22; Rom. viii. 3, 4; Rom. x. 4; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13, 14. Now Christ, with his whole righteousness, and all the benefits thereof, are tendered unto us, and given unto, or bestowed on them that do believe, by the promise of the gospel. Therein is he preached and proposed as crucified before our eyes, and we are invited to accept of him, which the souls of believers through the gospel do accordingly.

And, 3. Faith itself, whereby we receive the Lord Christ for all the ends for which he is tendered unto us, and become actually interested in all the fruits and benefits of his mediation, is wrought in us by the word of the gospel. For as we have declared, it is the seed of all grace whatever; and in especial, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by this word of God," Rom. x. 17. Conviction of sin is by the law; but faith is by the gospel. And this is the way and means which God hath appointed on our part, for the giving us an actual interest in justification, as established in the law of the gospel, Rom. v. 1. Again,

4. The promise of the gospel conveyed unto the soul by the Holy Spirit, and entertained by faith, completes the justification of a believer in his own conscience, and gives him assured peace with God. And then the whole work of this main branch of our salvation is wrought by the gospel.

Fourthly, There is in this salvation an instruction and growth in spiritual wisdom, and an acquaintance with the mystery of God, even



of the Father and the Son, which also is an effect of the gospel. Of ourselves, we are not only dark and ignorant of heavenly things, but darkness itself; that is, utterly blind, and incomprehensive of spiritual divine mysteries, Eph. v. 8, and so under the power of darkness, Col. i. 13, as that we should no less than the devils themselves be holden under the chains of it unto the judgment of the great day. Darkness and ignorance as to the things of God themselves, in respect of the revelation of them, and darkness in the mind and understanding of them in a right manner, being revealed, is upon the whole world. And no heart is able to conceive, no tongue to express the greatness and misery of this darkness. The removal hereof is a mercy inexpressible, the beginning of our entrance into heaven, the kingdom of light and glory, and an especial part of our salvation. For God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all; so that while we are under the power of it, we can have no intercourse with him; for what communion hath light with darkness? Now the removal hereof is by the gospel, 2. Cor. iv. 6. God, who commands light to shine out of darkness, shines in our hearts to give us the knowledge of his glory in the face of his Son; and he doth it by the illumination of the glorious gospel of Christ, ver. 4. For not only is the object revealed hereby, life and immortality being brought to light by the gospel, but also the eyes of our understandings are enlightened by it, savingly to discern the truths by it revealed. For by it, it is, that both the eyes of the blind are opened, and light shineth unto them that sit in darkness; whence we are said to be called out of darkness into marvellous light, 1 Pet. ii. 9. And our calling is no otherwise but by the word of the gospel. And as the implanting of this heavenly light in us is by the word, so the growth and increase of it in spiritual wisdom is no otherwise wrought, 2 Cor. iii. 18; Col. ii. 2. And this spiritual acquaintance with God in Christ, this saving wisdom in the mystery of grace, this holy knowledge and understanding of the mind of God, this growing light and insight into heavenly things, which is begun, increased, and carried on by the gospel, is an especial dawning of that glory and immortality, which this salvation tendeth ultimately unto.

Fifthly, There belongs unto it also that joy and consolation, which believers are made partakers of by the Holy Ghost in this world. Oft-times their trials are many, their troubles great, and their temptations abound in the course of their obedience. And these things are ready to fill them with cares, fears, sorrows, and disconsolation. Now, though our Lord Jesus Christ hath foretold his disciples of all the tribulations and sorrows that should attend them in this world, and taught them to uphold and support their spirits with the thoughts and hopes of the glory that shall be revealed; yet in the salvation that he hath purchased for them, there is provision of comfort, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even during their pilgrimage here below. Such joy indeed it is as the world knoweth not, nor can know. The principles and causes of it, its nature and effects, are all hidden unto them. Yet such it is, that all the contentments and enjoyments of this world are no way to be compared with it; and such do all that have tasted of it, esteem it to be. Now this also is wrought in us,

and communicated to us by the gospel. It is the word of promise, whereby God gives strong consolation unto the heirs of salvation, Heb. vi. 17, 18. And upon the receiving of this word by faith it is, that believers rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Not only supportment and comfort in the bearing of troubles, but glorious exultations and ecstasies of joy are oft-times wrought in the hearts of believers by the gospel. Now they can endure, now they can suffer, now they can die: joy is upon their heads, and in their hearts, and sorrow and sighing fly away. Here is rest, here is peace, here are refreshments, here are pleasures, here is life to be desired.—The good Lord sweeten and season all our hearts with all these consolations, these joys of his kingdom, and that by the blessed word of his grace.

Lastly, To instance in no more particulars, the gospel is the word of salvation, and the instrument in the hand of God for the conferring of it upon believers, because they shall be taken into the full possession and enjoyment of it at the last day, by and according to the word and sentence of it. It is the symbol and *tessera* that gives men final admission into glory. The secrets of all hearts shall be judged according to the gospel, Rom. ii. 16. And by the word of it shall the elect receive their crown. And in these respects is the gospel a word of salvation.

But, secondly, It is said in our proposition as in the text, to be *great salvation*. Now we have seen that the gospel is called salvation metonymically, the cause being called by the name of the effect. But in this adjunct of *great, so great*, the effect itself, *salvation* itself, preached and tendered by the gospel, is principally intended. We are then, in the next place, to declare that this salvation preached in the gospel, is great salvation. Neither is it absolutely said to be *great* salvation, but *such*, or *so great* salvation. And it is usual in the Scripture, where it would suggest unto our minds and thoughts an inconceivable greatness, to use some such expressions as plainly intimate somewhat more than can be expressed; see 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18; Heb. x. 29; John iii. 16. *So great*, that is absolutely so, and comparatively so, with respect unto the benefits received by the law; and inconceivably so, beyond what we can conceive or express. There ought then to be no expectation that we should declare the real greatness of this salvation, which the apostle intimates to be inexpressible: we shall only point at some of those considerations, wherein the greatness of it doth most principally consist and appear.

First, It is great in the eternal contrivance of it. When sin had defaced the glory of the first creation, and the honour of God seemed to be at a stand, no way remaining to carry it on unto that end which all things at first tended unto, all creatures were, and for ever would have been, ignorant of a way for the retrieval of things into the former, or a better order, or the bringing forth a salvation for that which was lost. For besides that there were such horrible confusions, and such inextricable entanglements brought upon the creation and the several parts of it, which none could discern how they might be jointed and set in order again, there appeared a repugnancy in the very properties of the divine nature, unto any relief or salvation of

sinner. Let sinners be saved, and what shall become of the justice, holiness, and wrath of God, all which are engaged to see a meet recompense of reward rendered unto every transgression? And this was enough eternally to silence the whole creation, by reason of that indispensable obligation which is on them always, and in all things, to prefer the honour and glory of their Maker, before the being or well-being of any creatures whatever. Should the holy angels have set upon a contrivance for the salvation of sinners, upon the first discovery that it would interfere and clash with the glory of God, (as every contrivance of wisdom, finite and limited, would undoubtedly have done, yea, risen up against his very blessedness and being,) they would instantly have cast it from them as an abominable thing, and have rested eternally in the contemplation of his excellencies, for which end they were created. Here, therefore, infinite wisdom, infinite grace, infinite goodness, and infinite holiness, discover themselves in that contrivance of salvation, which solves all those difficulties and seeming contradictions, keeps entire the glory of God's attributes, repairs the honour lost by sin, and reduceth the whole creation into a new order and subserviency to the glory of its Maker. Hence this great projection and design, is called 'the wisdom of God,' *κατ' ἐξοχὴν*; as that wherein he was pleased principally to lay open the fountain and spring of his eternal wisdom, Rom. xi. 33; 1 Cor. i. 24. And not only so, but 'the manifold wisdom of God,' Eph. iii. 10; that is, infinite Wisdom, exerting itself in great and unspeakable variety of means and ways for the accomplishment of the end designed. Yea, all the treasures of wisdom are said to be laid out in this matter, and laid up in Christ Jesus, Col. ii. 3. As if he had said, that the whole store of infinite wisdom was laid out herein. And thus, though God made all things in wisdom, yet that which he principally proposeth unto our consideration in the creation of all things, is his sovereign will and pleasure, joined with infinite power. For his will or pleasure were all things created, Rev. iv. 11. But in this work of contriving the salvation of sinners, he minds us of the counsel of his will, Eph. i. 11, that is, the infinite wisdom, wherewith the holy acts of his will concerning it were accompanied, and the mystery of his good pleasure, wherein he designed to gather up all things into one head by Jesus Christ, ver. 10. Certainly the product of infinite and eternal wisdom, of the counsel of the will of the most holy, wherein the treasures of it were laid out, with a design to display it in manifold variety, must needs be great, very great, so great as cannot be conceived or expressed. Might we here stay to contemplate and admire in our dim and dawning light, in our weakness, according to the meanness of our apprehensions of the reflections of it in the glass of the gospel, the eternity of this contrivance; the transactions between Father and Son about it; the retrieval of the lost glory of God by sin, and ruined creation in it; the security of the holiness, righteousness, veracity, and vindictive justice of God, provided for in it; with the abundant overflowings of grace, goodness, love, mercy, and patience, that are the life of it; we might manifest that there is enough in this fountain to render the streams flowing from it great



and glorious. And yet, alas! what a little, what a small portion of its glory, excellency, beauty, riches, is it, that we are able in this world to attain unto? How weak and mean are the conceptions and thoughts of little children, about the designs and counsels of the wise men of the earth? And yet there is a proportion between the understandings of the one and the other; but there is none at all between ours, and the infinite depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God, which are laid out in this matter. We think as children, we speak as children, we see darkly as in a glass, and the best acting of our faith in this business, is humble admiration and holy thankfulness. Now, certainly it is not in the capacity of a creature to cast greater contempt on God, than to suppose he would set all his glorious properties on work, and draw forth all the treasures of his wisdom, to produce or effect that which should be low, mean, not every way admirable. And yet unto that height of impiety hath unbelief arrived, amongst many of them to whom the gospel is, and hath been preached, as to reject and condemn the whole mystery of it as mere folly, as an empty notion, fit to be neglected and despised. So hath the god of this world blinded the eyes of men, that the light of the glorious gospel should not shine into their minds. But when God shall come to be admired in all them that believe, on the account of this design of his grace and wisdom, they will with astonishment see the glory of it in others, when it shall be too late to obtain any benefit by it unto themselves.

Secondly, The salvation preached in the gospel is great, upon the account of the way and means whereby it was wrought and accomplished; or the great effect of the infinite wisdom and grace of God, in the incarnation, mediation, and suffering of his Son. Thus was it wrought, and no otherwise could it be effected. "We were not redeemed with silver, and gold, and corruptible things," 1 Pet. i. 18. No such price could be accepted with God: salvation is more precious than to be so purchased, Psal. xlix. 6, 7. But it may be, it might be effected and brought about by the law, which was God's own institution; either its precepts or its sacrifices might effect this work, and salvation may be attained by the works of the law. But yet neither will this suffice; for the law is weak and insufficient as to any such purpose, Rom. viii. 2, 3; nor would the sacrifices of it be accepted unto that end, Heb. x. 7, 8. How then shall it be wrought? Is there none worthy in heaven or earth to undertake this work, and must it cease for ever? No: the eternal Son of God himself, the word, power, and wisdom of the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, he hath undertaken this work. This renders it great and glorious that the Son of God, in his own person, should perform it. It must assuredly be great salvation which he came himself to work out. And how doth he do it—by the mighty word of his power, as he made all things of old? No: this work is of another nature, and in another manner it must be accomplished. For,

1. To this purpose he must be incarnate, made flesh, John i. 14, made of a woman, Gal. iv. 4. Though he was in the form of God,



and equal to God, yet he was to humble and empty himself unto, and in the form of a man, Phil. ii. 6, 7. This is that great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, that the angels desire to look into. That the Son of God should take the nature of man into subsistence with himself in the same person, which was necessary for the effecting of this salvation, is a thing that the whole creation must admire unto eternity. And yet this is but an entrance into this work. For,

2. In this nature he must be made under the law, Gal. iv. 4; obnoxious to the commands of it, and bound to the obedience which it required. It became him to fulfil all righteousness, that he might be our Saviour; for though he were a Son, yet he was to learn and yield obedience. Without his perfect obedience unto the law, our salvation could not be perfected. The Son of God must obey, that we may be accepted and crowned. The difficulties also, temptations and dangers that attended him in the course of his obedience, are inexpressible. And surely this renders salvation by him very great. But yet there is that remains, which gives it another exaltation. For,

3. This Son of God, after the course of his obedience to the whole will of God, must shed his blood, and die, and make his soul an offering for sin. And herein the glory of this salvation breaks forth like the sun in its strength. Obedient he must be unto death, the death of the cross, Phil. ii. 8. If he will be a Captain of salvation, to bring many sons to glory, he must himself be made perfect by sufferings, Heb. ii. 10. There were law, and curse, and wrath, standing in the way of our salvation, all of them to be removed, all of them to be undergone, and that by the Son of God. For we were not redeemed with silver and gold, or corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet. i. 18. And therein God redeemed his church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. And herein assuredly was the love of God manifest, that he laid down his life for us, 1 John iii. 16. This belongs unto the means whereby our salvation is procured. Nor yet is this all, for if Christ had only died for us, our faith had been in vain, and we had been still in our sins. Wherefore,

4. To carry on the same work, he rose from the dead, and now lives for ever to make intercession for us, and to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him. By these means was the salvation preached in the gospel obtained, which surely manifest it to be great salvation. Would God have sent his Son, his only Son, and that in such a manner, were it not for the accomplishment of a work as well great and glorious in itself, as indispensably necessary with reference unto its end? Would the Son himself have so emptied himself of his glory, condescended to so low a condition, wrestled with such difficulties, and undergone at length such a cursed and shameful death, had not the work been great wherein he was employed? O the blindness, hardness, and stupidity, of the sons of men! They profess they believe these things to be true, at least they dare not deny them so to be; but for the effect of them, for the salvation wrought by them, they value it the least of all things that they have any acquaintance withal. If this salvation, thus procured, do seize on them

in their sleep, and fall upon them whether they will or no, they will not much resist it, provided that it cross them in none of their lusts, purposes, or pleasures. But to see the excellency of it, to put a value upon it according to the price whereby it is purchased, that they are utterly regardless of. "Hear, ye despisers; wonder and perish!" Shall the Son of God shed his blood in vain? Shall he obey, and suffer, and bleed, and pray, and die, for a thing of nought? Is it nothing unto you that he should undergo all these things? Was there want of wisdom in God, or love unto his Son, so to employ him, so to use him in a business which you esteem of so very small concern, as that you will scarce turn aside to make inquiry after it? Assure yourselves these things are not so, as you will one day find to your eternal ruin.

Thirdly, This salvation will appear to be great, if we shall consider what by it we are delivered from, and what we are interested in, or made partakers of by virtue thereof. These also may denominate salvation to be great, and they may therefore be considered apart.

First, What are we delivered from by this salvation? In a word, every thing that is evil in this world, or in that which is to come. And all evil may be referred unto two heads: 1. That which corrupteth and depraveth the principles of our nature in their being and operation; and 2. That which is destructive of our nature, as to its well-being and happiness. The first of these is sin, the latter is punishment; and both of them take up the whole nature of evil. The particulars comprised in them, may not here be distinctly and severally insisted on. The former containeth our apostasy from God, with all the consequences of it, in darkness, folly, filth, shame, bondage, restlessness, service of lust, the world and Satan, and therein constant rebellion against God, and diligence in working out our own everlasting ruin; all attended with a senseless stupidity in not discerning these things to be evil, hurtful, noisome, corruptive of our natures and beings; and for the most part, with brutish sensuality in the approbation and liking of them. But he who understands no evil in having fallen off from God, the first cause, chief good, and last end of all; in being under the power of a constant enmity against him, in the disorder of his whole soul, and all the faculties of it, in the constant service of sin, the fruit of bondage and captivity in the most vile condition, will be awakened unto another apprehension of these things, when a time of deliverance from them shall be no more. The latter of these consists in the wrath or curse of God, and compriseth whatever is or may be, penal and afflictive to our nature unto eternity. Now, from both these, with all their effects and consequences, are believers delivered by this salvation, namely from sin and wrath. The Lord Christ was called JESUS, because he saves his people from their sins, Matt. i. 21; and he is also the Saviour who delivers them from the wrath to come, 1 Thess. i. 10. And this is great salvation. If a man be but the means of delivering another from poverty, imprisonment, or a dangerous disease, especially if such a one could be no otherwise delivered but by him, how great is the kindness of it esteemed to be, and that deservedly! Providential deliverances from

imminent dangers of death temporal, are looked on as great salvations, and that by good men, and so they ought to be, 2 Cor. i. 10. But what are all these unto this salvation? What is the sickness of the body, unto the disease, yea the death of the soul? What is imprisonment of the outward man, under the wrath of poor worms like ourselves, and that for a few days, unto the chains of everlasting darkness? What is a little outward want and poverty, to the want of the favour, love, and presence of God, unto eternity? What is death temporal, past in a moment, an end of troubles, an entrance into rest, unto death eternal, an eternal dying, under the curse, wrath, and righteous vengeance of the holy God? These things have no proportion one to another. So inexpressibly great is this salvation, that there is nothing left us to illustrate it withal. And this excellency of gospel salvation will at length be known to them by whom at present it is despised, when they shall fall and perish under the want of it, and that to eternity.

Lastly, This salvation is great, upon the account of the end of it, or that which it brings believers unto. The deliverance of the people of Israel of old out of Egypt, was great salvation; so doth God every where set it forth, and so did the people esteem it, and that justly. They who murmured under it, they who despised the pleasant land, fell all of them under the sore displeasure of God. But yet as this deliverance was but from temporal, outward bondage, so that which it brought them unto was but outward rest for a few days, in a plentiful country: it gave them an inheritance of houses, and lands, and vineyards in the land of Canaan; but yet there also they quickly died, and many of them perished in their sins. But as we have seen what we are delivered from by this salvation, so the excellency of the inheritance which we obtain thereby is such, as no heart can conceive, no tongue can express. It brings us into the favour and love of God, unto the adoption of children, into durable rest and peace; in a word, unto the enjoyment of God in glory eternal. Oh the blessedness of this rest, the glory of this inheritance, the excellency of this crown, the eternity and unchangeableness of this condition, the greatness of this salvation! How mean, how weak, how low, how unworthy are our apprehensions of it! yet surely, through the blessed revelation of the Spirit of grace by the word of the gospel, we see, we feel, we experience so much of it, as is sufficient to keep us up unto a holy admiration and longing after it all the days of our pilgrimage here on earth.

It remaineth now that we declare the unavoidableness of their destruction, who neglect this so great salvation. There are three things that make the punishment, or destruction of any person, to be unavoidable. 1. That it be just and equal. 2. That there be no relief nor remedy provided for him. And, 3. That he to whom it belongs to inflict punishment, be able and resolved so to do: and they all concur to the height in this case. For,

1. It is just and equal that such persons should be destroyed; whence the sentence concerning them is so decretory and absolute: "He that believeth not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. And the

Holy Ghost supposeth this case so clear, evident, and undeniable, that he refers the proceedings of God therein to the judgment of sinners themselves, Heb. x. 29. And they who are judged on this account, at the last day, will be speechless, have nothing to reply, nothing to complain of. And the sentence denounced against them will appear unto all to be righteous.

1. Because they despise an overture of a treaty about peace and reconciliation between God and their souls. There is by nature an enmity between God and them, a state and condition whereby themselves alone would be losers, and that for ever. God, who hath no need of them, nor their obedience, or friendship, tenders them a treaty upon terms of peace. What greater condescension, love, or grace, could be conceived or desired? This is tendered in the gospel, 2 Cor. v. 19. Now what greater indignity can be offered unto him, than to reject his tenders, without so much as an inquiry after what his terms are, as the most do to whom the gospel is preached? Is not this plainly to tell him that they despise his love, scorn his offers of reconciliation, and fear not in the least what he can do unto them? And is it not just that such persons should be filled with the fruit of their own ways? Let men deal thus with their rulers whom they have provoked, that have power over them, and see how it will fare with them. Neither will God be mocked, nor shall his grace always be despised. When men shall see and learn by woeful experience what pitiful poor worms they are, and have some beams of the greatness, majesty, and glory of God, shining upon them, how will they be filled with shame, and forced to subscribe to the righteousness of their own condemnation for refusing his treaty and terms of peace.

2. These terms contain salvation. Men, in the neglect of them, neglect and refuse their own salvation; and can any man perish more justly, than they who refuse to be saved? If God's terms had been great, hard, and difficult, yet considering by whom they were proposed, and to whom, there was all the reason in the world why they should be accepted; and their destruction would be just, that should not endeavour to observe them unto the utmost. But now it is life and salvation that he tenders, on the neglect of which he complains, that men will not come unto him that they might have life. Certainly there can be no want of righteousness in the ruin of such persons. But,

3. That which the apostle principally builds the righteousness and inevitableness of the destruction of gospel-neglecters upon, is the greatness of the salvation tendered to them: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" How it is so, and wherein the greatness and excellency of it doth consist, have been before declared. Such, and so great it is, that there is nothing which a sinner can fear or suffer, but it will deliver him from it; nothing that a creature can desire, but it will bring him to the possession of it. And if this be despised, is it not righteous that men should perish? If we know not, yet God knows how to set a value upon this great effect of his love, wisdom, and grace, and how to proportion punishment to its contempt. The truth is, God alone is able sufficiently to revenge the



greatness of this sin, and indignity done to him. We have before shown how meet it was, that the transgression of the law should be punished with punishment eternal; and yet the law had provided no relief for any in distress or misery, only taking men as it found them, in the first place it required obedience of them, and then promised a reward. And a good, holy, and righteous law it was, both in its commands, and in its promises and threatenings. It found men in a good estate, and promised them a better on their obedience; wherein if they failed, it threatened them with the loss of their present condition, and also with the superaddition of eternal ruin. And in all this, it was a clear effect of the righteousness, holiness, and faithfulness of God. But the gospel finds men in quite another state and condition, in a condition of misery and ruin, helpless and hopeless, and is provided on purpose both for their present relief, and future everlasting happiness. And shall they escape by whom it is despised? Is it not just and equal, that it should prove a savour of death unto death to them? Is it meet that God should be mocked, his grace be despised, his justice violated, his glory lost, all that sinners may go unpunished? Let them think so whilst they please, God thinketh otherwise, all the angels in heaven think otherwise, all the saints from the beginning of the world to the end of it think otherwise, and will glorify God to eternity for the righteousness of his judgments on them that obey not the gospel. But,

Secondly, Suppose the destruction of these persons be in itself righteous, yet there may be some remedy and relief provided for them, that they may not actually fall under it; there may yet some way of escape remain for them, and so their ruin not be so unavoidable as is pretended. It hath been shown that it was a righteous thing that the transgressors of the law should perish, and yet a way of escape is provided for them. God is merciful, and things may be found at the last day otherwise than now they are reported; at least all that faith, diligence, obedience, and holiness which are spoken of, are not required to free men from being neglecters of the gospel, so that they who come short of them may nevertheless escape. I answer, that we are not now discoursing of the nature of that faith and obedience which are required to interest men in gospel salvation. But certain it is, that it will be found to be that which the word requires, and no other; even that faith which purifieth the heart, that faith which reformeth the life, that faith which is fruitful in good works, that faith which bringeth forth universal holiness, without which no man shall see God. A faith consisting with the love and service of sin, with neglect of duties, with conformity to the world, with a sensual, profane, or wicked life, will stand men in no stead in this matter. But this is not the subject of our present discourse. It may suffice in general, that the faith and obedience which the gospel requireth, are indispensably necessary to free men from being gospel-despisers. What these are, is the concern of all to inquire and learn; for where they are wanting, there is no relief nor remedy, whatever wind and ashes of vain hopes men may feed upon and deceive themselves withal. It is true, there was a remedy provided for the transgression of the law,

and this remedy was, 1. Reasonable, in that there was no mixture of mercy or grace in that dispensation. And God saw meet to glorify those properties of his nature, as well as those which before shone forth in the creation of all things, and giving of the law. Pardoning mercy was not sinned against in the breach of the law, and therefore that might interpose for a relief, which was done accordingly. And yet, 2. Neither would this have been either reasonable or righteous, if that only and last way of satisfying the righteousness and the law by the sufferings and sacrifice of the Son of God had not intervened. Without this, mercy and grace must have eternally rested in the bosom of God, without the least exercise of them; as we see they are in respect to the angels that sinned, whose nature the Son of God assumed not, thereby to relieve them. And, 3. This relief was declared immediately upon the entrance of sin, and the promises of it renewed continually, until it was wrought and accomplished. And hereby it became the subject of the whole book of God, and the principal matter of all intercourse between God and sinners. But all these things fully discover that there neither is, nor can be, any relief provided for them that sin against the gospel. For, 1. From what spring, what fountain should it proceed? Mercy and grace are principally sinned against in it, and their whole design of it therein defeated. The utmost of mercy and grace is already sinned against, and what remaineth now for the relief of a sinner? Is there any other property of the divine nature, whose consideration will administer unto men any ground of hope? Is there any thing, in the name of God, in that revelation that he hath made of himself by his works, or in his word, to give them encouragement? Doubtless nothing at all. But yet suppose that God had not laid out all the riches and treasures of his wisdom, grace, love, and goodness, in gospel salvation by Jesus Christ, which yet he affirmeth that he hath; suppose that in infinite mercy there were yet a reserve for pardon; by what way and means, 2. Should it be brought forth and made effectual? We have seen that God neither would nor could ever have exercised pardoning mercy towards sinners, had not way been made for it by the blood of his Son. What then? Shall Christ die again, that the despisers of the gospel may be saved? Why, besides that the Scripture affirms positively, that henceforth he dieth no more, and that there is no more sacrifice for sin, this is the most unreasonable thing that can be imagined. Shall he die again for them by whom his death hath been despised? Is the blood of Christ such a common thing as to be so cast away upon the lusts of men? Besides, when should he make an end of dying? They who have once neglected the gospel may do so upon a second trial, nay, undoubtedly would do so, and thence should Christ often die, often be offered, and all still in vain. Neither hath God any other Son to send to die for sinners: he sent his only begotten Son once for all, and he that believeth not on him must perish for ever. In vain then will all men's expectations be from such a mercy, as there is nothing to open a door unto, nor to make way for its exercise. Nay, this mercy is a mere figment of secure sinners; there is no such thing in God. All the mercy and grace that God hath for his creatures, is engaged in gospel salvation;

and if that be despised, in vain shall men look for any other. Neither, 3. Is there any word spoken concerning any such relief or remedy for gospel-neglecters. Pardon being provided for transgressions of the law, instantly it is promised, and the whole Scripture is written for the manifestation of it; but as for a provision of mercy for them that despise the gospel, where is any one word recorded concerning it? Nay, doth not the Scripture in all places fully and plainly witness against it? "He that believeth not shall be damned."—"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin."—"He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him." And will men yet feed themselves with hopes of mercy, whilst they neglect the gospel? Well fare them, who being not able to retrieve secure sinners against this light and evidence of the want of any relief reserved for them, have carried the whole matter behind the curtain, and invented a purgatory for them, to help them when they are gone from hence, and cannot return to complain of them by whom they are deceived. But this also, as all other reliefs, will prove a broken reed to them that lean on it; for they who neglect the gospel must perish, and that eternally; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Thirdly, Then all hopes of escaping must arise from hence, that he whose right it is, and on whom it is incumbent to take vengeance on them that neglect the gospel, will not be able so to do, or at least not to such a degree, as to render it so fearful as is pretended. This need not much to be insisted on. It is God with whom men have to do in this matter. And they who allow his being, cannot deny him to be omnipotent and eternal. Now, what cannot he do who is so. It will at length be found to be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. There is unto wicked men the same everlasting cause of being and punishment. The same hand that upholds them, shall afflict them, and that for ever. What his righteousness requires, his power and wrath shall execute unto the uttermost, so that there will be no escaping. And these are the holy foundations on which all gospel-threatenings and comminations are built, which will all of them take place and be accomplished, with no less certainty than the promises themselves. Now, from all that hath been spoken unto this proposition, we may learn,

1. To admire the riches of the grace of God, which hath provided so great salvation for poor sinners. Such, and so great as it is, we stood in need of it. Nothing could be abated without our eternal ruin. But when divine wisdom, goodness, love, grace, and mercy, shall set themselves at work, what will they not accomplish? And the effect of them doth the Scripture set forth in those expressions: "So God loved the world—God commended his love unto us—Greater love hath none than this—Riches of grace—Treasures of wisdom—Exceeding greatness of power," and the like. In this will God be glorified and admired unto all eternity. And in the contemplation hereof are we to be exercised here and hereafter; and thereby may we grow up in the image of God in Christ, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Which way soever we look, whatever we consider in it, here is that which will entertain our souls with delight and satisfaction. The eternal counsel of God, the person

of Christ, his mediation and grace, the promises of the gospel, the evil and wrath we are freed from, the redemption and glory purchased for us, the privileges we are admitted to a participation of, the consolations and joys of the Spirit, the communion with God that we are called to; how glorious are they in the eyes of believers! or assuredly at all times they ought so to be. How can we enough bewail that vanity whence it is, that the mind suffereth itself to be possessed and filled with other things? Alas! what are they if compared to the excellency of this love of God in Christ Jesus? Here lies our treasure, here lies our inheritance; why should not our hearts be here also? Were our minds fixed on these things as they ought, how would the glory of them cast out our cares, subdue our fears, sweeten our afflictions and persecutions and take off our affections from the fading perishing things of this world, and make us in every condition rejoice in the hopes of the glory that shall be revealed. And indeed we lose the sweetness of the life of faith, the benefit of our profession, the reward that is in believing, and are made a scorn to the world, and a prey unto temptations, because we dwell not enough in the contemplation of this great salvation. To stir us up then hereunto, we may consider, 1. The excellency of the things themselves that are proposed unto our meditations; they are the great, the deep, the hidden things of the wisdom and grace of God. Men justify themselves in spending their time and speculations about the things of nature; and indeed the employment is better and more noble than what the generality of men do exercise themselves about. For some seldom raise their thoughts above the dunghills whereon they live; and some stuff their minds with such filthy imaginations, as make them an abomination to God, Mic. ii. 1, 2. They are conversant only about their own lusts, and making provision to fulfil and satisfy them. But yet what are these things, which the better and more refined part of mankind doth search and inquire into? things that came out of nothing, and are returning thitherward apace; things which, when they are known, do not much enrich the mind, nor better it at all as to its eternal condition, nor contribute any thing to the advantage of their souls. But these things are eternal, glorious, mysterious, that have the characters of all God's excellencies enstamped upon them; whose knowledge gives the mind its perfection, and the soul its blessedness, John xvii. 3. This made Paul cry out, that he accounted all things to be but loss and dung, in comparison of an acquaintance with them, Phil. iii. 8; and the prophets of old to search diligently unto the nature of them, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12, as the things which alone deserved to be inquired after, and which inquiry renders them noble to whom it is, Acts xvii. 11, and that which alone differenceth men in the sight of God, Jer. ix. 23, 24.

2. Our interest and propriety in them.—If we are believers, these are our things. The rich man is much in the contemplation of his riches, because they are his own; and the great man of his power, because of his propriety in it. Men take little delight in being conversant in their minds about things that are not their own. Now all these things are ours, if we are Christ's, 1 Cor. iii. 22. This salvation was prepared for us from all eternity, and we are the heirs of it, Heb.



i. 14. It was purchased for us by Jesus Christ; we have redemption and salvation by his blood. It is made over unto us by the promise of the gospel, and conferred upon us by the spirit of grace. Are these things to be despised? Are they to be cast aside among the things wherein we are least concerned? Or can there be any greater evidence that we have no propriety in them, than that would be, if our hearts should not be set upon them? What! all these riches ours! all these treasures, this goodly inheritance, this kingdom, this glory, and yet we not be constant in thoughts and meditations about them? It is doubtless a sign at least, that we question our title to them, and that the evidences we have of them will not endure the trial. But woe unto us if that should be the end of our profession; and if it be otherwise, why are not our minds fixed on that which is our own, and which no man can take from us.

3. The profit and advantage which we shall have hereby, which will be much every way; for, 1. By this means we shall grow up into a likeness and conformity to these things in our inward man. Spiritual meditation will assimilate our minds and souls unto that which is the object of it. So the apostle tells the Romans, that they were delivered into the form of the doctrine preached unto them, Rom. vi. 17, obeying it by faith, the likeness of it was brought forth upon their souls; and by the renewing of their minds, they were transformed quite into another image in their souls, Rom. xii. 2. This the apostle most excellently expresth, 2 Cor. iii. 18. A constant believing contemplation of the glory of God in this salvation by Christ, will change the mind into the image and likeness of it, and that by various degrees, until we attain unto perfection, when we shall know as we are known. Accustoming of our minds unto these things, will make them heavenly; and our affections, which will be conformed unto them, holy. This is the way to have Christ dwell plentifully in us, and for ourselves to grow up into him who is our Head. And is it nothing to get our minds purged from an evil habit, which inclines us to earthly things, or lead us continually to forge foolish and hurtful imaginations in our hearts? This meditation will cast the soul into another mould and frame; making the heart a good treasure, out of which may be drawn at all times good things, new and old.

2. Consolation and support under all afflictions, will from hence spring up in the soul.—When the apostle would describe that property of faith, whereby it enables a believer to do and suffer great things joyfully and comfortably, he doth it by its work and effect in this matter. It is, saith he, the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, Heb. xi. 1, that is, it brings into the soul, and makes evident unto it, the great things of this salvation, the great things of the love and grace of God therein. And thus it doth no otherwise, than by a constant contemplation and holy admiration of them; and when this is once done, he multiplies instances to evince what great effects it will produce, especially in its enabling of us to go through difficulties, trials, and afflictions. And the same also he ascribeth unto hope, which is nothing but the soul's waiting and expectation to be made partaker of the fulness of this salvation, whose great-

ness and satisfactory excellency it doth admire, Rom. v. 2—5. When any affliction or tribulation presseth upon a believer, he can readily divert his thoughts from it, unto the rich grace of God in this salvation, which will fill his heart with such a sense of his love, as shall carry him above all the assaults of his trouble. And a direction to this purpose, the apostle pursues at large, Rom. viii. 16, 17, 18, 24, 25, 34—38. This is a safe harbour for the soul to betake itself unto in every storm ; as he teacheth us again, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17, 18. Whatever befalls us in our outward man, though it should press so sore upon us as to ruin us in this world, yet we faint not, we despond not ; and the reason is, because these things which we suffer, bear no proportion to what we enjoy or expect ; and the way whereby this consideration is made effectual unto us, is by a constant contemplation by faith on the great unseen things of this salvation, which takes off our minds and spirits from a valuation of the things which we presently suffer and endure. And experience assures us, that this is our only relief in afflictions, which undoubtedly it is our wisdom to be provided for.

3. The same may be said concerning persecution, one especial part of affliction, and commonly that which most entangles the minds of them that suffer. Now no man can endure persecution quietly, patiently, constantly according to the will of God, especially when the devil pursues his old design of bringing it home unto their persons, Job ii. 5, unless he hath in readiness a greater good which shall in itself, and in his own mind, out-balance the evil which he suffers. And this the grace of this salvation will do. The soul that is exercised in the contemplation and admiration of it, will despise and triumph over all his outward sufferings which befall him on the account of his interest therein, as all persecution doth. This the apostle declares at large, Rom. viii. 31—34. He directs us to a holy meditation on God's electing love, and on the death and mediation of Christ, the two springs of this meditation ; and thence leads us, ver. 35, 36, to a supposition of the great and sore persecutions that may befall us in this world ; and from the former consideration triumphs over it all, ver. 37, with a joy and exultation beyond that of conquerors in a battle, which yet is the greatest that the nature of man is capable of, in and about temporal things. When the soul is prepossessed with the glory of this grace, and its own interest therein, it will assuredly bear him up against all the threatenings, reproaches, and persecutions of this world ; even as it did the apostles of old ; making them esteem that to be their honour and glory, which the world looked on as their shame, Acts v. 41, and without this the heart will be very ready to sink and faint.

4. This also will greatly tend to the confirmation of our faith, by giving us a full experience of the things that we do believe. Then the heart is immoveable, when it is established by experience, when we find a substance, a reality, a spiritual nourishment in things proposed unto us. Now how can this be obtained, unless we are conversant in our minds about them ? unless we dwell in our thoughts and affections upon them ? For thereby do we taste and find how good the Lord is in this work of his grace. Thus this duty being on many accounts of so great importance, we may do well to consider wherein it consisteth, and there are these four things belonging unto it.

First. Intense prayer for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to give us an acquaintance with the mystery and grace of this salvation. In ourselves we have no inbred knowledge of it, nor can we by our own endeavours attain unto it. We must have a new understanding given us, or we shall not “know him that is true,” 1 John v. 20. For notwithstanding the declaration that is made of this mystery in the gospel, we see that the most men live in darkness and ignorance of it. It is only the Spirit of God which can search these deep things of God and reveal them unto us, 1 Cor. ii. 10. By him must he “who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shine into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” 2 Cor. iv. 6. And therefore the apostle prays for the Ephesians, that “God would give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him, that the eyes of their understandings being opened, they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe,” chap. i. 17—19. And for the Colossians, that they might come “unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ,” chap. ii. 2, that is, that they might have a spiritual and saving acquaintance with the mysteries of this great salvation, the love, grace, and wisdom of God therein; which without this spirit of wisdom and revelation from above we shall not attain unto. This then in the first place is to be sought after, this are we to abide in; constant prayers and supplications for the teaching, instructing, revealing, enlightening work and efficacy of this Spirit, that we may be enabled to look into these deep things of God, that we may in some measure with all saints comprehend them, and grow wise in the mystery of salvation. Solomon tells us how this wisdom is to be obtained, Prov. ii. 3—5. “If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest for her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” It is by praying, crying, supplications, with diligence and perseverance, that we attain this wisdom; abide herein, or all other attempts will prove but vain. How many poor souls, otherwise weak and simple, have by this means grown exceedingly wise in the mystery of God! And how many more, wise in this world, through the neglect of it, do walk in darkness all their days!

Secondly. Diligent study of the word wherein this mystery of God is declared and proposed unto our faith, and holy contemplation; but this hath been spoken unto in part already, and must again be considered, and so need not here to be insisted on.

Thirdly. Sincere love unto, and delight in the things that are by the Spirit of God revealed unto us, is another part of this duty. Herein our apostle declares what was his frame of heart, Phil. iii. 8. How doth his heart triumph in, and rejoice over the knowledge he had obtained of Jesus Christ! and then indeed do we know anything of the grace of God aright, when our hearts are affected with what we know. Peter tells us, that the saints of old, in their believing, “rejoiced with

joy unspeakable and full of glory," 1 Pet. i. 8. They discovered that in Christ which made their hearts leap within them, and all their affections to overflow with delight and joy. And this is an essential part of this holy admiration, which distinguisheth it from that barren, fruitless, notional speculation of it, which some are contented withal. To this are we to stir up our hearts, in all our meditations of the grace of God, and not to rest until we find [them affected, satisfied, and filled with a holy complacency, which is the most eminent evidence of our interest in, and union unto the things that are made known unto us.

Fourthly. All these things are to be attended with thankfulness and praise. This the apostle was full of, and breaks forth into, when he entered upon the description of this grace, Eph. i. 3, 4, and this will be the frame of his heart, who is exercised to a holy admiration of it. When our Lord Jesus Christ considered the grace of God in revealing the mysteries of this salvation to his disciples, it is said of him, that "he rejoiced in spirit," Luke x. 21. *ἡγαλλίασατο*, 'his spirit leaped in him,' and he breaks forth into a solemn doxology, giving praise and glory to God. And is it not their duty to whom they are revealed, to do that which, out of love to them, our Lord, Christ Jesus, did on their behalf? Thankfulness for the things themselves, thankfulness for the revelation of them, thankfulness for the love of God, and the grace of Jesus Christ, in the one and the other, is a great part of this duty.

Secondly, This will teach us, what esteem we ought to have of the word of the gospel by which alone this great salvation is revealed and exhibited to us; the great means and instrument which God is pleased to use in bringing us into a participation of it.—This one consideration is enough to instruct us what valuation we ought to make of it, what price we should set upon it, seeing we cannot have the "pearl" without the purchase of this "field." Some neglect it, some despise it, some persecute it, some look on it as foolishness, some as weakness, but to them that believe, it "is the power of God, and the wisdom of God." To further us in this duty, I shall take up some of those considerations, which the words we insist on do offer to us, and thereby also pass through what yet remains for our instruction in them. And we may consider,

1. The excellency and preeminence of the gospel, which ariseth from the first Revealer, that is, the Lord Christ the Son of God, "It was begun to be spoken unto us by the Lord." Herein the apostle prefers it before the law. It is "that word" which the Son came from the "bosom of the Father," to reveal and declare, and surely he deserves to be attended to. Hence it is so often called the "word of Christ," and the "gospel of Christ," not only because it treateth of him, but because it proceedeth from him, and on that account is worthy of all acceptation. And 2. To neglect the gospel is to neglect and despise the Son of God who was the Author of it, and consequently the love and grace of God in sending him. So the Lord Christ tells them that preach the gospel, "He that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." Neglect of the gospel reflects immediately on the Lord Christ and the Father, and there-



fore our apostle bids us "take heed that we despise not him who spake from heaven," which can be no otherwise done but by neglect of his word. Some pretend to honour Christ, but they have no regard for his word, yea, they may say of it as Ahab of Micaiah, that they "hate" it; and have therefore some of them endeavoured to extirpate the preaching of it out of the world, as the Papists have done; at least they have looked on it as an useless thing, that the church might be well enough without. But such men will find themselves mistaken when it is too late to seek after a remedy. The true cause of their hatred to the word is, because they can find no other way to express their hatred to Christ himself. Neither did ever any man hate or loath the gospel, but he that first hated and loathed Jesus Christ; but against the word they have many pretences, against the person of Christ none that are as yet passable in the world. This makes the word to bear that which is intended against Christ himself, and so will he interpret it at the last day. 3. Consider that this word was confirmed and witnessed to from heaven, by the mighty works and miracles which attended the dispensation thereof.—So our apostle here informs us; and though we saw not those miracles, yet we have them left on infallible record for our use, that by them we might be yet stirred up to value and attend to the word in a due manner. God hath so ordered things in his holy providence, that none can neglect the word without shutting his eyes against such light and evidence of conviction, as will leave them abundantly inexcusable at the last day. Now from these and the like considerations, the duty proposed may be enforced.

VER. 5—9.—THE apostle in these verses proceeds in the pursuit of his former design. From the doctrine of the first chapter, he presseth the exhortation at the beginning of this, which we have passed through. The foundation of that exhortation was the preeminence of the Lord Christ, the Author of the gospel, above the angels, by whom the law was spoken and delivered. This he now farther confirms, and that by an instance suited to his present purpose, and not as yet by him insisted on. And he doth it the rather, because by the testimonies wherewith he proves his assertion, he is led to the consideration of other concernments of the mediation of Christ, which he thought meet to declare to these Hebrews also. And this method he is constant to throughout this whole Epistle. In the midst of his reasonings, and testimonies for the explanation or confirmation of what he delivers dogmatically, he lays hold on some occasion or other, to press his exhortation to faith and obedience with constancy and perseverance in the profession of the gospel. And in the arguments which he interweaveth, and testimonies which he produceth for the enforcement of his exhortations, something still offers itself, which accordingly he lays hold upon, leading him to some farther explication of the doctrine which he had in hand; so insensibly passing from one thing to another, that he might at the same time inform the minds, and work upon the affections of them with whom he dealt. All which will appear in our ensuing exposition of these verses.

VER. 5.—Οὐ γὰρ ἀγγελοῖς ὑπέταξε τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μελλουσαν, περὶ ἧς λαλοῦμεν.

ὑπέταξε, *subjecit, in ordinem coegit*, ‘put into subjection,’ brought into order, under rule. τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μελλουσαν. Vul. *orbem terræ futurum*, the ‘habitable earth to come.’ Arias, *habitatam futuram*, to the same purpose, improperly. Syr. ܕܢܗܡܪܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ, *mundum, or seculum futurum*. The world or age to come. Beza, *mundum illum futurum* ‘that world to come.’ And indeed the repetition of the article, with the words following, “concerning which we speak,” require that it be so expressed, ‘That world to come,’ or ‘the world that is to come,’ *οἰκουμένη*, Heb. ܠܒܢ. So most commonly expressed by the LXX. as sometimes, though seldom, by, γῆ ‘the earth,’ and sometimes by ἅ ὑπο οὐρανῶν, ‘the things under the heavens.’ The apostle useth this word from Psal. viii, where it denotes a mixture of inhabitants there described. Περὶ ἧς λαλοῦμεν. That is, διαλεγόμεθα, ‘concerning which we treat,’ about which we reason. The Vulgar Latin adds *Deus* to the text. *Deus non subjecit*, ‘God hath not put in subjection,’ needlessly, as is acknowledged. *De quo*; *Christo*, saith the interlinear gloss, but περὶ ἧς, is not ‘of Christ.’

VER. 5.—*For unto the angels hath he not made subject that world to come, whereof we speak, (concerning which we treat.)*

VER. 6.—Διεμαρτυρατο δὲ πού τις, λέγων· Τι ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι μνησθήσεται αὐτοῦ, ἡ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ὅτι ἐπισκεπήσεται αὐτόν.

Syr. ܕܡܫܬܬܐ ܕܡܫܬܬܐ ܕܡܫܬܬܐ ܕܡܫܬܬܐ, “But as the Scripture witnesseth and saith,” limiting needlessly what was spoken indefinitely by the apostle, the words themselves declaring who spake them and where. Πού, Vul. in quodam loco, ‘in a certain place.’ Beza. alicubi, ‘somewhere,’ that is, Ps. viii. 5, τι ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, ܡܢ ܡܪܕܐ, quid homo mortalis, βροτός, βροτός ἀνὴρ, ‘frail mortal man,’ or the son of man, ܒܢ ܐܕܡ, filius hominis terreni, ܓܝܓܝܢܝܬܐ, e terra editus, man of the earth, or an ‘earthly man.’

VER. 6.—*But one (a certain man) testified (hath witnessed) in a certain place, (somewhere, that is, in the Scripture from whence he is arguing) saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?*

VER. 7.—Ἐλαττώσας αὐτὸν βραχύ τι παρ’ ἀγγέλους, δοξῇ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανώσας αὐτόν, καὶ κατεστήσας αὐτόν ἐπὶ τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου· πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ.

The latter words, which are commonly placed at the beginning of the eighth verse, I have added to this seventh, the sense and Hebrew text so requiring it.

Ἐλαττώσας αὐτόν; so the apostle renders ܠܗܝܬܠܝܬܝܢ in the Psalmist, and that properly. Vul. Minuisti, which is not ‘thou hast made less,’ but ‘thou hast lessened,’ which hath another sense than that here intended. Syr. ܡܚܡܬܝܬܝܢ, depressisti, ‘thou hast depressed,’ or made him



denote subjection and depression, and as thus conjoined, they denote the most absolute subjection that can be apprehended.

VER. 7.—*Thou madest him lower for a little while than the angels, thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him (give him authority) over the works of thy hands; all things hast thou put in subjection under his feet.*

VER. 8.—*Εν γὰρ τῷ ὑποταξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, οὐδὲν ἀφῆκεν αὐτῷ ἀνυποτακτον. Νυν δὲ οὐπω ὁρῶμεν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ὑποτεταγμένα.*

VER. 8.—*For in that he made all things subject unto him, he hath left nothing not put in subjection; but now we see not all things made subject unto him.*

VER. 9.—*Τον δὲ βραχυ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἡλαττωμενον βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν, διὰ τὸ παθῆμα του θανάτου, δοξῇ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανωμενον, ὅπως χάριτι Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ παντός γενηται θάνατος.*

The words of this *αποδοσις*, have most of them been considered in the *προθεσις*, and they must have the same sense in both places, or the reasoning of the apostle would be equivocal. For *χάριτι Θεοῦ*, some old copies read *χωρὶς Θεοῦ*, ‘besides God, God excepted.’ The Syriac copies also vary. Some read, ‘For God himself by his grace tasted death;’ others, ‘for he, God excepted, tasted death,’ which came from *χωρὶς Θεοῦ*, and shows that variety to be ancient. Hence, some have imagined it to be a corruption of the Nestorians, who, dividing the person of Christ, would not grant that God might be said to die, contrary to Acts xx. 28. *Χάριτι Θεοῦ*, is *gratia*, *beneficentia*, *beneficio Dei*, ‘by the grace, goodness, good-will of God,’ expressing the first spring, and moving cause of the sufferings of Christ. *Γενηται θάνατος*, ‘should taste of death,’ an Hebraism for ‘to die,’ intimating withal, the truth, reality, and kind of his death, which was bitter, and which was called his cup. *Ὑπὲρ παντός*, in the masculine not neuter gender, for *ὑπὲρ παντων*, by ‘an enallage of number,’ that is, *νίων*, of whom he treats, ‘all and every one of the children’ to whom he was a Captain of salvation.

VER. 9.—*But we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, who for the suffering of death was a little while made lower than the angels, that he by the grace of God might taste of death for all.*

VER. 5.—THE first words of the fifth verse, *οὐ γὰρ*, ‘for,’ declare that the apostle is in the pursuit of his former argument. *Γὰρ*, ‘for,’ doth not always intimate the introduction of a reason in the confirmation of what is past, but sometimes a progression to somewhat else in the like kind with that which precedeth, and so hath not respect to any especial words or sayings foregoing, but to the whole matter in hand, especially that which doth ensue; as *nam* also is used in Latin, ‘*nam quis te juvenum confidentissime, nostras jussit adire domos.*’ A new argument therefore to the same purpose with that before, is intimated by this particle. For,



The whole verse contains an assertion laid down in a negative proposition, the assumption of the apostle's argument, or the proof of it supposed in a *pro-syllogism*, consisting in the ensuing testimony with his explication of it. And it is to this purpose. The world to come is not made subject to angels, but it was made subject to Jesus, and therefore he is exalted above them. This he proves from the testimony of the Psalmist, to this purpose: "All things were made subject to man," who for a little while was made lower than angels; but this man was Jesus, and this assumption he proves from the event. First, On the part of man, absolutely considered, we see that all things were not made subject to him; therefore he cannot be intended. Secondly, On the part of Jesus, all things in the event agree to him. First, He was made for "a little while lower than the angels," which he shows the reason of, and thence takes occasion to discourse of his death and sufferings, according to the method before declared; and then "he was crowned with glory and dignity," all things being made subject to him; from all which it appears, that it is He, and not angels, to whom the world to come is put in subjection. This is the series of the apostle's discourse, wherein are many things "difficult and hard to be understood," which must be particularly considered.

The first verse, as was said, lays down the principal assertion in a negative proposition. "The world to come is not made subject unto angels." One proof hereof is included in the words themselves. For that expression, "he hath not put in subjection," is the same with our apostle, as it is nowhere written or recorded in the Scripture, there is no testimony of it. God is nowhere said to have done it. See ch. i. 5, with the exposition of it. And these negative arguments from the authority of the Old Testament, he esteemed in this matter, cogent and sufficient.

In the proposition itself, 1. The subject of it, "the world to come;" with 2. Its limitation, "whereof we treat;" and 3. The predicate, negatively expressed, is not "put in subjection to angels," are to be considered.

The subject of the proposition is, "the world to come," עולם הבא. "The new heavens and new earth" (οικουμένη) which God promised to create, Isa. lxx. 17, lxxi. 22, which refers to ימי המשיח, 'the days of the Messiah.' The later Jews sometimes call it, עולם עתיד 'the future world,' though usually by that expression they intend the world of future bliss. But the world here intended is no other but the promised state of the church under the gospel. This, with the worship of God therein, with especial relation to the Messiah, the Author and Mediator of it, administering its heavenly things before the throne of grace, thereby rendering it spiritual and heavenly, and diverse from the state of the worship of the Old Testament which was worldly and carnal, was "the world to come," that the Jews looked for, and which in this place is intended by the apostle. This we must farther confirm, as the foundation of the ensuing exposition. That this, then, is the intentment of the apostle, appeareth,

First, From the limitation annexed, περὶ ἧς λαλουμεν, "concerning which we treat." This is the world whereof he treats with the He-

brews in this Epistle, namely, the gospel state of the church, the worship whereof he had in the words immediately foregoing pressed them to the observance of. And not only so, but described it also, by that state wherein the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were given and enjoyed. And the mention of them, in the words directly preceding, is that description of the world to come, which the apostle in these words refers to, “concerning which we speak.” And the tradition of this new world, or the restoration of all things under the Messiah, was one of the principal reports of truth received among the Jews with which the apostle presseth them.

Some suppose that *λαλουμεν*, ‘we speak,’ is put for *ελαλησαμεν*, ‘we have spoken,’ and would have it refer to ch. i. 6. But what the apostle there intendeth by the ‘world,’ we have sufficiently evinced and declared. The ‘world’ there, by an usual synecdoche, is put for the habitable earth, *τα ιδια*, which the Son of God made and came to, John i. 11. Here a certain state and condition of things in the world, about which he treated with the Hebrews, is intended.

Besides, they who would thus change the word, (Grotius, Crellius, Slichtingius) by the ‘world,’ ch. i. 6, understand heaven itself, the state of glory, which is not here insisted on by the apostle. For,

Secondly, He treats of that which was already done in the “crowning of Jesus with glory and honour,” as the words following do manifest. This crowning of him, was upon his ascension, as we have before proved at large. Then was not the state of glory made subject to him, because it was not then, nor is yet in being. And therefore they who turn ‘we speak,’ into ‘we have before spoken,’ are forced also to pervert the following words, and to interpret, “he hath made all things subject unto him,” he hath purposed or decreed so to do; both without cause or reason. The world whereof the apostle treats was immediately made subject to Jesus; that is, the church of the New Testament, when God anointed him, “King upon his holy hill of Sion;” and therefore in the Psalm is there mention made of those other parts of the creation to be joined in this subjection, that have no relation unto heaven.

Thirdly, The apostle doth not treat directly any where in this Epistle concerning heaven, or the world of the blessed to come; he frequently indeed mentions heaven, not absolutely, but as it belongs to the gospel world, as being the place of the constant residence of the high priest of the church, and wherein also the worship of it is through faith celebrated.

Fourthly, The apostle in these words insists on the antithesis which he pursueth in his whole discourse between the Judaical and Evangelical church-state; for whatever power angels might have in and over things formerly, this world to come, saith he, is not “made subject unto them.” Now it is not heaven and glory that he opposeth to the Judaical church-state and worship, but that of the gospel, as we shall find in the progress of the Epistle, which is therefore necessarily here intended.

Fifthly, If by the world to come, the eternal blessed state of glory be designed, to begin at or after the general judgment, then here is a

promise that that blessed estate shall *de novo* be put in subjection to Jesus Christ as Mediator; but this is directly contrary unto what is elsewhere revealed by the same apostle, concerning the transactions between the Father and the Son as Mediator at that day, 1 Cor. xv. 28. "And when all shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Which words, if they do not absolutely assert the ceasing of the kingdom of the Mediator, but only the order of all things unto eternity in their subjection unto God by Christ, yet they are plainly exclusive of the grant of a new power or authority unto him, or of a new making subject of all things unto him. Add unto all this, that the apostle proves the subjection of this world unto the Lord Christ, and not unto angels, by a testimony expressing directly the present things of this world, antecedent unto the day of judgment. From what hath been discoursed we conclude, that the world to come here expressed, is the state and worship of the church under the Messiah, called so by the apostle according to the usual appellation which then it had obtained among the Jews, and allowed by him until the Mosaic church-state was utterly removed. And he afterwards declares how this comprised heaven itself also, because of the residence of our high priest in the holiest not made with hands, and the continual admission of the worshippers unto the throne of grace. This is the subject of the apostle's proposition, that concerning which he treats.

Concerning this world the apostle first declares negatively, that it is not made subject unto angels. The subjection of this world to come unto any, is such a disposal of it, as that he or they unto whom it is put in subjection, should, as the lord of it, erect, institute or set it up, rule and dispose of it, when erected, and judge or reward it in the end of its course and time. This is denied concerning angels, and the denial proved tacitly, because no such thing is testified in the Scripture. And herein the apostle either preventeth an objection that might arise from the power of the angels in and over the church of old, as some think, or rather proceeds in his design of exalting the Lord Jesus above them, and thereby prefers the worship of the gospel before that prescribed by the law of Moses. For he seems to grant that the old church and worship were in a sort made subject unto angels, this of the world to come being solely and immediately in his power, who in all things was to have the preeminence. And this will farther appear, if we consider the instances before mentioned, wherein the subjection of this world to come unto any doth consist.

First, It was not put in subjection unto angels in its erection or institution. That work was not committed unto them, as the apostle declares in the entrance of this Epistle. They did not reveal the will of God concerning it, nor were intrusted with authority to erect it. Some of them indeed were employed in messages about its preparatory work, but they were not employed either to reveal the mysteries of it wherewith they were unacquainted, nor authoritatively in the name of God to erect it. For the wisdom of God, in the nature and mystery of this work they knew not, but by the effects in the work itself, Eph.

iii. 9, 10, which they looked and inquired into, to learn and admire, 1 Pet. i. 12, and therefore could not be intrusted with authority for its revelation, and the building of the church thereon. But things were otherwise of old. The law, which was the foundation of the Judaical church-state, was given by the "disposition of angels," Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19. And our apostle here calls it the word spoken by angels. They were therefore intrusted by God to give the law and the ordinances of it unto the people in his name and authority, which being the foundation of the Mosaic church-state, it was so far put in subjection unto them.

Secondly, being erected, it is not put into subjection unto angels, as to the rule and disposal of it. Their office in this world, is a ministry, chap. i. 14, not a rule or dominion. Rule in or over the church they have none, but are brought into a co-ordination of service with them that have the testimony of Jesus, Rev. xix. 10, xxii. 9, being equally with us subjected unto him, in whom they and we are "gathered unto one head," Eph. i. 10. And from their ministerial presence in the congregations of believers, doth our apostle press women unto modesty and sobriety in their habit and deportment, 1 Cor. xi. 10. And the church of old had an apprehension of this truth, of the presence of an angel or angels in their assemblies, but so as to preside in them. Hence is that caution relating to the worship of God, Eccles. v. 5, 6. "Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than thou shouldst vow and not pay; suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the angel that it was an error; why should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands." By vowing and not paying, a man brought upon his flesh, that is, himself and his posterity, a guilt not to be taken away with excuses of haste or precipitation, made unto the angel presiding in their worship, to take an account of its due performance. It is true the absolute sovereign power over the church of old, was in the Son of God alone; but an especial immediate power over it was committed unto angels. And hence was the name of אלהים, God, 'Judge, mighty One,' communicated unto them, namely, from their authority over the church, that name expressing the authority of God, when unto him ascribed. And because of this, their acting in the name and representing the authority of God, the saints of old had an apprehension, that upon their seeing of an angel they should die, from that saying of God, that "none should see his face and live," Exod. xxxiii. 20. So Manoah expressly, Judg. xiii. 22. He knew that it was an angel which appeared unto him, and yet says to his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen אלהים, "an angel," vested with the authority of God. And hence it is not unlikely, but that there might be a respect or worship due unto the angels under the Old Testament, which themselves declare not to be meet for them under the New, Rev. xix. 10, not that they are degraded from any excellency or privileges which before they enjoyed, but that the worshippers under the New Testament, through their relation unto Christ, and the exaltation of their nature in his person, are delivered from their under age estate, wherein they differed not from servants, Gal. iv. 1, and are advanced into



an equality of liberty with the angels themselves, Heb. xii. 24, 25; Eph. i. 10, iii. 14, 15.; as amongst men there may be a respect due from an inferior to a superior, which may cease when he is advanced into the same condition with the other, though the superior be not at all abased. And to this day the Jews contend, that angels are to be adored with some kind of adoration, though they expressly deny that they are to be invoked or prayed unto. Furthermore, about their power and authority in the disposal of the outward concerns of the church of old, much more might be declared from the visions of Zechariah and Daniel, with their works in the two great typical deliverances of it from Egypt and Babylon. But we must not here insist on particulars.

Thirdly, As to the power of judging and rewarding at the last day, it is openly manifest, that God hath not put this world to come in subjection unto angels, but unto Jesus alone.

This then is the main proposition that the apostle proceeds on in his present argument. The most glorious effect of the wisdom, power, and grace of God, and that wherein all our spiritual concerns here are inwrapped, consists in that blessed church-state, with the eternal consequences of it, which having been promised from the foundation of the world, was now to be erected in the days of the Messiah. That you may, saith he, no more cleave to your old institutions, because given out unto you by angels, nor hearken unto such works of wonder and terror as attended their disposition of the law in the wilderness, consider that this world, so long expected and desired, this blessed estate, is not on any account made subject unto angels, or committed unto their disposal; the honour thereof being entirely reserved for another.

Having thus fixed the true and proper sense of this verse, we may stop here a little to consult the observations that it offers for our own instruction. Many things in particular might be hence deduced, but I shall insist on one only, which is comprehensive of the design of the apostle, and it is, that,

This is the great privilege of the church of the gospel, that in the things of the worship of God, it is made subject unto, and immediately depends upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and not to any others, angels or men.

That this is the privilege thereof, and that it is a great and blessed privilege, will both appear in our consideration of what it is, and wherein it doth consist. And among many other things, these ensuing are contained therein. 1. That the Lord Christ is our Head. So it was promised of old, that their "king should pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them," Mic. ii. 13. He shall be their King, Head, and Ruler. God hath now gathered all things, all the things of his church, into a head in Christ, Eph. i. 10. They were all scattered and disordered by sin, but are now all collected again and brought into order under one head. Him hath he given to "be head over all things unto the church," ver. 22. The whole sovereignty over all the whole creation that is committed unto him, is only for this end, that he may be the more perfect and glorious head to the church. He

is that head on which the whole body hath its orderly and regular dependence. Eph. iv. 15, 16. "The head of the body, the church," Col. i. 18. "The head of every man," that is, of every believer, 1 Cor. xi. 3; Eph. v. 23. And this is every-where proposed, both as our great honour, and our great advantage. To be united unto him, subjected unto him as our head, gives us both honour and safety. What greater honour can we have, than to be freemen of that corporation whereof he is the head, than to be subjects of his kingdom? What greater safety than to be united unto him inseparably, who is in glory, invested with all power and authority over the whole creation of God, every thing that may do us good or evil.

2. That he is our only head. The church is so put in subjection unto the Lord Christ, as not to be subject unto any other. It is true, the members of the church, as men on the earth, have other relations, in respect whereof they are, or may be subject one to another; children unto parents, servants unto masters, people unto rulers; but as they are members of the church, they are subject unto Christ and none other; if any other were or might be a head unto them, they must be angels or men. As for angels we have it here plainly testified, that the church is not made subject in any thing unto them. And amongst men, the apostles of all others might seem to lay the justest claim to this privilege and honour. But they openly disclaim any pretence thereunto. So doth Paul, 2 Cor. i. 24. "We have no dominion, rule, lordship, headship over your faith," any thing that concerns your obedience to God, and your worship, "but are helpers of your joy." And again, saith he, "We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ, the Lord, the only Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake," 2 Cor. iv. 5. And Peter, as it should seem, foreseeing that some who should come after would pretend unto such preeminence, warns the elders that they should not think themselves "lords over God's heritage," 1 Pet. v. 3. And this they did in pursuit of the instructions and charge which their Lord and Master gave them, Matt. xx. 25—27, where he warns them, that they should neither think of dignity nor dominion over the church, but apply themselves with all humility unto the service of it, for which he elsewhere adds his reason, namely, that all his "disciples have one Lord and Master, and no more," John xiii. 13; Matt. xxiii. 9, 10. And it is a woeful confusion that the Papists run themselves into in this matter. For first, they put the whole church into subjection to a man, whom they call the Pope, the common father and master of Christians, the head of the church; and then subject both him and it to angels, in the adoration and invocation of them, the greatest subjection possible; when the Scripture assigneth one only Head of the church expressly, even the Lord Jesus, and fully declares that it is not put in subjection to angels at all. But to pass them by, the Lord Christ is not only thus the only Head in general to the whole church, but also to every individual believer in the church. "The head of every man is Christ," 1 Cor. xi. 3. He is so to every believer respectively and severally, and that in both those senses wherein he is Head, that is according to the natural and metaphorical use of the word. For,

1. He is the only head of vital influence to the whole church, and every member thereof. As from the natural head all influences of life, for subsistence, motion, acting, guidance, and direction are communicated to the whole body, and to every member thereof; so, from the Lord Christ alone, as he is the spiritually vital Head of the church, in whom are the springs of life and all quickening grace, there are communicated to the whole church and to every believer therein, both the first quickening vital principle of life itself, and all succeeding supplies and influences of grace, for the enlivening, strengthening, acting, guiding, and directing of them. This he himself declares, by comparing the relations of all believers to him, to that of branches to the vine, John xv. 2, 4, which have no life but by virtue of their union to the vine, nor sap for fruitfulness but what is derived therefrom, which he teacheth expressly, ver. 5, "Without me," saith he, "ye can do nothing," and the apostle in a lively manner, sets out to us in the similitude of the natural body, Col. ii. 19. And this placing of all fulness in the Lord Christ as Head of the church, that thence the whole and every member of it, might derive needful supplies to themselves, is fully taught us in the gospel. Hence the church is called "the fulness of Christ," Eph i. 23, or that whereunto Christ communicates of his all-fulness of grace, till it comes to the measure or degree of growth and perfection, which he hath graciously assigned to it. And none I suppose will contend, but that the Lord Christ is the alone and only head of the church in this sense. It hath not a spiritual dependence on any other for grace. There is indeed I know not what *monster* lies in the opinion of them, who take on themselves to confer grace to others by virtue of such things as they do to them, or for them, but this we do not now consider. If any man think he may have grace from any but Christ alone, be they angels or men, let him turn himself to them, but withal know assuredly, that he forsakes "the Fountain of living waters," for "broken cisterns," which will yield him no relief.

2. He is the only Head of rule and government to the whole church, and every member thereof. This rule or government of the church concerneth all that obedience which it yields to God in his worship. And to a Head herein it is required, that he give perfect rules and laws for all things necessarily belonging thereto, and to take care that they be observed. And here a great contest ariseth in the world. The Papists in behalf of their Pope and others under him, contend to be sharers with the Lord Christ in this his headship, and fain they would persuade us that he himself hath appointed that so it should be. The Scripture tells us, that he, "was faithful in the whole house of God, as was Moses," and that as a "Lord over his own house," to erect, rule, and establish it; and he himself, when he gives commission to his apostles, bids them "teach men to do and observe all that he had commanded them." And accordingly they tell us, that they, "delivered unto us what they received from the Lord," and commanded us not to be "wise above what is written." But I know not how it is come to pass, that these men think, that the Lord Christ is not a complete head in this matter, that he hath not instituted all rules

and laws that are needful and convenient for the right discharge of the worship of God, and obedience of the church therein, at least that somewhat may be added to what he hath appointed, that may be much to the advantage of the church. And this they take to be their work, by virtue of I know not what unsealed warrant, unwritten commission. But to add any thing in the worship of God to the laws of the church, is to exercise authority over it, dominion over its faith; and to pretend that this “world to come,” this blessed gospel church-state, is put in subjection to them, although it be not so to angels: a vain and proud pretence, as at the last day it will appear. But you will say Christ gives his laws only to his whole church, and not to individual believers, who receive them from the church, and so he is not an immediate Head to every one in particular. I answer, That the Lord Christ commits his laws to the church’s ministry to teach them to believers, but his own authority immediately affects the soul and conscience of every believer. He that subjects himself aright to them, doth it not upon the authority of the church, by whom they are taught and declared, but on the authority of Christ by whom they are given and enacted.

3. It appears from hence, that as he is our only Head, so he is our immediate Head.—We have our immediate dependence on him, and our immediate access to him. He hath indeed appointed means for the communicating of his grace to us, and for the exercising of his rule and authority over us. Such are all his ordinances with the offices and officers that he hath appointed in his church; the first whereof he requires us to be constant in the use of, the latter he requires our obedience and submission to. But these belong only to the way of our dependence, and hinder not but that our dependence is immediate on himself, he being the immediate object of our faith and love. The soul of a believer rests not in any of these things, but only makes use of them to confirm his faith in subjection to Christ. For all these things are ours, are appointed for our use; and we are Christ’s as he is God’s, 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. And so have we our immediate access to him, and not as some foolishly imagine by saints and angels, and by him to God, even to the throne of grace.

4. This privilege is greatly augmented, in that the church being made subject to Christ alone, and cast into a dependence on him, he will assuredly take care of all its concerns, seeing to him only doth it betake itself. The church made it of old part of her plea, that she was as one fatherless, Hos. xiv. 3, that is, every way helpless, that had none to relieve or succour her. And the Lord Christ giveth this as a reason why he stirreth up himself to the assistance of his people, because there was “no man that appeared for their help, no intercessor to interpose for them,” Isa. lix. 16. Now God having placed the church in this condition, as to be oft-times altogether orphans in this world, to have none to give them the least countenance or assistance, and the church itself choosing this condition, to renounce all hopes and expectations from any else beside, betaking itself to the power, grace, and faithfulness of the Lord Christ alone, it cannot, as it were, but be a great obligation on him to take care of it, and to provide for



it at all times. They are members of his body, and he alone is their Head; they are subjects of his kingdom, and he alone is their King; they are children and servants in his family, and he alone is their Father, Lord, and Master, and can he forget them, can he disregard them? Had they been committed to the care of men, it may be some of them would have fought and contended for them, though their faithfulness is always to be suspected, and their strength is a thing of nought. Had they been put into subjection to angels, they would have watched for their good, though their wisdom and ability be both finite and limited, so that they could never have secured their safety; and shall not the Lord Jesus Christ, now they are made his special care, as his power and faithfulness is infinitely above those of any mere creature, excel them also in care and watchfulness for our good? And all these things do sufficiently set out the greatness of that privilege of the church which we insist on. And there are two things that make this liberty and exaltation of the church necessary and reasonable.

1. That God having exalted our nature in the person of his Son, into a condition of honour and glory, so as to be worshipped and adored by all the angels of heaven, it was not meet nor convenient that it should in our persons, when united unto Christ as our head, be made subject unto them. God would not allow, that whereas there is the strictest union between the head and the members, there should be such an interposition between them, as that the angels should depend on their head, and the members should depend on angels, which indeed would utterly destroy the union and immediate intercourse that is and ought to be between them.

2. God is pleased by Jesus Christ to take us into a holy communion with himself, without any other medium or means of communication, but only that of our nature, personally and inseparably united unto his own nature in his Son. And this also our subjection unto angels is inconsistent withal. This order of dependence the apostle declares, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23, "All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's." As there is no interposition between God and Christ, no more is there between Christ and us; and in and by him alone do we relate unto God himself. And this should teach us,

1. The equity and necessity of our universal obedience unto God in Christ. He hath freed us from subjection unto men and angels, that we might serve him, and live unto him. He hath taken us to be his peculiar ones, his lot and portion, from whom he expects all his reverence of glory out of this world. And he hath left us no pretence, no excuse for the neglect of any duties of obedience that he requireth of us. We cannot plead that we had other work to do, other lords and masters to serve: he hath set us free from them all, that we might be his. If a king take a servant into his family, and thereby free and discharge him from being liable unto any other duty or service whatever, may he not justly expect that such a one will be diligent in the observance of all his commands, especially considering also the honour and advantage that he hath by being taken near unto his person, employed in his affairs? And shall not God much more

expect the like from us, considering how exceedingly the privilege we have by this relation unto him surpasseth all that men can attain by the favour of earthly princes. And if we will choose other lords of our own to serve, if we are so regardless of ourselves as that we will serve our lusts and the world, when God hath had such respect unto us, as that he would not suffer us to be subject unto the angels of heaven, how inexcusable shall we be in our sin and folly? 'You shall be for me,' saith God, 'and not for any other whatever.' And are we not miserable if we like not this agreement?

2. For the manner of our obedience, how ought we to endeavour that it be performed with all holiness and reverence! Moses makes this his great argument with the people for holiness in all their worship and services, because no people had God so nigh unto them as they had. And yet that nearness which he insisted on, was but that of his institutions, and some visible pledges and representations therein of his presence among them. Now, the considerations of this real and spiritual nearness to himself, into which God hath taken us by Jesus, must needs be much more cogent to the same purpose. All that we do, we do it immediately unto this holy God; not only under his eye, and in his presence, but in an especial and immediate relation unto him by Jesus Christ.

VER. 6.—THE apostle hath shown, that the world to come, which the Judaical church looked for, was not made subject to angels, no mention of any such thing being made in the Scripture. That which he assumes to make good his assertion of the preeminence of the Lord Jesus above the angels, is, that unto him it was put in subjection. And this he doth not expressly affirm in words of his own, but insinuateth in a testimony out of the Scripture, which he citeth and urgeth unto that purpose. And this way he proceedeth, for these two ends: 1. To evidence that what he taught was suitable unto the faith of the church of old, and contained in the oracles committed unto it; which was his especial way of dealing with these Hebrews. 2. That he might, from the words of that testimony, take occasion to obviate a great objection against the dignity of Christ, and the mysteries of the gospel, taken from his humiliation and death, and thereby make way to a farther explication of many other parts or acts of his mediation. Many difficulties there are in the words and expressions of these verses, more in the apostle's application of the testimony by him produced, unto the person and end by him intended; all which, God assisting, we shall endeavour to remove: and to that end shall consider,

1. The way and manner of his introducing this testimony, which is peculiar.

2. The testimony itself produced; with an explication of the meaning and importance of the words, in the place from whence it is taken.

3. The application of it unto the apostle's purpose, both as to the person intended, and as to the special end aimed at. And,

4. Farther unfold what the apostle adds about the death and sufferings of Christ, as included in this testimony, though not intended as to the first use and design of it. And,

5. Vindicate the apostle's application of this testimony, with our explication of it accordingly, from the objections that some have made against it. All which we shall pass through, as they present themselves unto us in the text itself.

I. The manner of his citing this testimony is somewhat peculiar: "One testified in a certain place;" neither person nor place being specified, as though he had intended, פלני אלמני, 'a certain person,' whom he would not name. But the reason of it is plain; both person and place were sufficiently known to them to whom he wrote. And the Syriac translation changeth the expression in the text into, 'but as the Scripture witnesseth and saith,' without cause. The Hebrews were not ignorant whose words they were which he made use of, nor where they were recorded. The *one* there mentioned is David, and the *certain place* is the eighth Psalm, whereof much need not to be added. A Psalm it is, תהלות רוממה, 'of the high praises of God;' and such Psalms do mostly, if not all of them, respect the Messiah and his kingdom, as the Jews themselves acknowledge. For the time of the composure of this Psalm, they have a conjecture which is not altogether improbable; namely, that it was in the night, whilst he kept his father's sheep. Hence, in his contemplation of the works of God, he insists on the moon and stars then gloriously presenting themselves unto him, not mentioning the sun which appeared not. So also in the distribution that he makes of the things here below, that, amongst others, are made subject unto man, he fixeth in the first place on צֹדֶה, 'flocks of sheep,' which were then peculiarly under his care. So should all the works of God, and those especially about which we are conversant in our particular callings, excite us to the admiration of his glory, and praise of his name; and none are usually more void of holy thoughts of God, than those who set themselves in no way acceptable unto him. This is the place from whence this testimony is taken; whose special author the apostle omitteth, both because it was sufficiently known, and makes no difference at all whoever was the penman of this or that portion of Scripture, seeing it was all equally given by inspiration from God, whereon alone the authority of it doth depend.

II. The testimony itself is contained in the words following, ver. 6, 7, "What is man," &c. Before we enter into a particular explication of the words, and of the apostle's application of them, we may observe that there are two things in general, that lie plain and clear before us: As,

First, That all things whatsoever, are said to be put in subjection unto man; that is, unto human nature, in one or more persons, in opposition unto angels, or nature angelical. To express the former, is the plain design and purpose of the Psalmist, as we shall see. And whereas there is no such testimony any where concerning angels, it is evident, that the meaning of the word is, unto man, and not unto angels; which the apostle intimates in that adversative δε, *but*; but 'of man,' it is said, not of angels.

Secondly, That this privilege was never absolutely nor universally made good in, or unto, the nature of man, but in, or with respect to,

the person of Jesus Christ the Messiah. This the apostle calls us to the consideration of, previously unto his application of this testimony in a peculiar manner unto Jesus, ver. 8, "We see not all things." Now, there is not any thing absolutely necessary to make good the apostle's reasoning, but what is comprised in these two general assertions, which lie evident in the text, and are acknowledged by all. We shall therefore distinctly consider the testimony itself. The whole of it consists in a contemplation of the infinite love and condescension of God towards man; which is set out, 1. In the manner of the expressing it. 2. In, and by, the words of the expression. 3. In the acts of the mind and will of God, wherein that condescension and grace consisted. And 4. In the effects thereof, in his dispensation towards him.

First, In the manner of the expression, "What is man!" by way of admiration, yea, he cries out with a kind of astonishment. The immediate occasion hereof is omitted by the apostle, as not pertinent unto his purpose; but it is evident in the Psalm. David having exercised his thoughts in the contemplation of the greatness, power, wisdom, and glory of God, manifesting themselves in his mighty works, especially the beauty, order, majesty, and usefulness of the heavens, and those glorious bodies which in them present themselves to all the world, falls thereon into this admiration, that this great and infinitely wise God, who by the word of his mouth gave being and existence unto all those things, and thereby made his own excellencies conspicuous to all the world, should condescend unto that care and regard of man, which on this occasion his thoughts fixed themselves upon. "What is man!" saith he. And this is, or should be, the great use of all our contemplation of the works of God; namely, that considering his wisdom and power in them, we should learn to admire his love and grace in setting his heart upon us, who are every way so unworthy, seeing he might for ever satisfy himself in those other, appearingly more glorious, products of his power and Godhead.

Secondly, He farther expresseth his admiration at this condescension of God in the words that he useth, intimating the low and mean estate of man in his own nature. מִה-אָדָם, 'What is poor miserable mortal man,' obnoxious to grief, sorrow, anxiety, pain, trouble, and death! *τι ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπος*; but the Greeks have no name for *man*, fully expressing that here used by the Psalmist. *ἄνθρωπος* cometh nearest it, but is not used in the Scripture. He adds, וְבֶן-אָדָם, "and the Son of man," of one made of the earth. This name the apostle alludes to, yea expresseth, 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47, "The first man, Adam, is *ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός*, of the earth, earthly." So was it recorded of old, Gen. ii. 7, 'The Lord God formed, הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן הָאֲדָמָה, 'that man, Adam,' which was the Father of us all, 'of the dust of the ground;' and so again, Gen. iii. 19, 'Poor man! made of the dust of the ground.' When the Scripture would express *man* with reference unto any thing of worth or excellency in him, it calls him, אִישׁ; and בְּנֵי אִישׁ, are sons of men in place, power, and esteem. So these words are distinguished, Ps. lxii. 9, where we translate, בְּנֵי אָדָם, 'sons of Adam,' 'men of low degree;' and בְּנֵי אִישׁ, 'sons of Ish,' 'men of high degree.'



Now, the Psalmist useth this expression, to heighten his admiration at the grace and condescension of God. And as the person of the first Adam cannot be here especially intended; for although he made himself אנוש, 'a miserable man,' and subject unto death, yet was he not בן אדם, 'the Son of man,' of any man, for he was of God, Luke iii. ult. So there is nothing in the words but may properly be ascribed unto the nature of man in the person of the Messiah. For as he was called in an especial manner, בן אדם, 'the Son of man;' so was he made אנוש, 'a man subject to sorrow,' and acquainted above all men with grief and trouble, and was born on purpose to die. Hence in the contemplation of his own miserable condition, wherein unto the dolorous afflicting passions of human nature, which he had in himself, outward oppositions and reproaches were superadded, he cries out concerning himself, ונאכזי חללתי ולא-איש, Ps. xxii. 7, "I am a worm, and not איש a man of any consideration in the world:" אנוש, 'at best.'

Thirdly, He expresseth this condescension of God in the affections and acting of his mind towards man; בי חזכרנו, 'that thou rememberest him,' or 'art mindful of him.' 'Ὅτι μνησθήσῃ αὐτοῦ,' 'that thou shouldst be mindful of him.' To *remember* in the Scripture, when ascribed unto God, always intends some act of his mind, and purpose of his will, and that either for good or evil towards them that are remembered, in a signal manner. So also is *remembrance* itself used. On this account, God is said sometimes to *remember* us for good, and sometimes to *remember* our sins no more. So that it denotes the affection of the mind of God towards any creature for good or evil, attended with the purpose of his will to act towards them accordingly. In the first way it is here used, and so also by Job, ch. vii. 17, מזה-אנוש, "What is man that thou shouldst magnify him, that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him?" that is, remember him, or be mindful of him; set thine heart upon him for good. The frame of the heart and mind of God towards the nature of man in the person of Jesus Christ, in reference unto all the good that he did in it, and by it, is intended in this expression. The whole counsel and purpose of God concerning the salvation of mankind, in and by the humiliation, exaltation, and whole mediation of the man Christ Jesus, is couched herein.

Fourthly, There are in this condescension the effects of this act of God's mind and will in remembering of man. And they are expressed, 1. Under one general head, and, 2. In particular instances of them.

First. The general effect of God's remembering man, is that he visiteth him as the same word is used in Job, in the place before mentioned, פקד, though variously used, yet it constantly denotes the acting of a superior towards an inferior. And though it be often otherwise used, yet commonly it expresseth the acting of God towards his people for good. And in especial is this term of visiting used to express the acting of God in doing of us good, by sending of Jesus Christ to take our nature on him, Luke i. 68. "He hath *visited* and *redeemed* his people." And to the same purpose, ver. 78, "The Day-spring from on high hath *visited* us," both relating to the acting of God towards us in the person of his Son incarnate; so ch. vii. 16. This term therefore

of visiting, doth not precisely design God's acting in the exaltation of him visited, but such an ordering of things towards him, as is attended with great care, grace, and love. So was the nature of man in the heart of God to do good unto it, in and by the person of Jesus Christ, and so he acted towards it, or visited it. This is that which was the ground of the Psalmist's admiration, and which will be so in all believers unto eternity. It was not the outward state and condition of mankind in the world, which, since the entrance of sin, is sad and deplorable, that excites this admiration in the Psalmist; but his mind is intent upon the mystery of the grace, wisdom, and love of God in the person of the Messiah.

VER. 7.—SECONDLY. The especial instances wherein this visitation of God expressed itself, are contained in ver. 7, and therein referred unto two heads: 1. Man's depression and humiliation. 2. His exaltation and glory.

The first is expressed in these words, "Thou hast made him lower for a little while than the angels." This was a part of God's visitation; and though not that which was immediately intended by the apostle, yet that whereof he intends to make great use in his progress. That these words intend not the exaltation of the nature of mere man, as if they should intimate that such is his dignity, that he is made but a little less than angels; and how destructive that sense is unto the apostle's intention and application of the words, we shall afterwards declare. Three things are here expressed: 1. The act of God, in making of him *low*, or *lessening* of him. 2. The measure of that depression, *than the angels*. 3. His duration in that state and condition, *a little while*.

First.  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$ , the word used by the Psalmist, is rendered by the apostle  $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\tau\tau\omega$ , and that properly. They both signify a diminution of state and condition, a depression of any one from what he before enjoyed. And this, in the first place, belongs unto God's visitation. And the acting of the will of Christ in this matter, suitably unto the will of the Father, is expressed by words of the same importance:  $\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\nu\omega\sigma\epsilon\nu$   $\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu$ , 'he emptied himself;' and  $\epsilon\tau\alpha\tau\epsilon\iota\nu\omega\sigma\epsilon\nu$   $\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu$ , 'he humbled himself,' Phil. ii. 7, 8, denoting a voluntary depression from the glory of a former state and condition. In this humiliation of Christ in our nature, how much of that care and  $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\kappa\omicron\pi\eta$ , inspection and visitation of God was contained, is known.

Secondly. The measure of this humiliation and depression is expressed in reference unto angels, with whom he is now compared by the apostle; he was made less than the angels. This the Hebrews had seen and knew; and might, from his humiliation, raise an objection against what the apostle asserted about his preference above them. Wherefore he acknowledgeth, that he was made less than they; shows that it was foretold, that so he should be; and, in his following discourse, gives the reason why it was so to be. And he speaks not of the humiliation of Christ absolutely, which was far greater than here it is expressed by him, as he afterwards declares, but only with respect unto angels, with whom he compares him; and it is therefore sufficient

to his purpose at present, to show that he was made lower than they. מֵאֵלֹהִים, παρ' αγγελους. Hierome renders the word in the Psalm, *a Deo*, 'than God;' and Faber Stapulensis had a long contest with Erasmus to prove, that they should be so rendered in this place, which is plainly to contradict the apostle, and to accuse him of corrupting the word of God. Besides, the sense contended for by him and others, is absurd and foolish; namely, that the human nature of Christ was made little less than God, and humbled that it might be so; when it was infinitely less than the divine nature, as being created. The LXX. and all old Greek translations, read *angels*. That *Elohim* is often used to denote them, we have proved before. The Targum hath מלאכיא, *angels*, and the scope of the place necessarily requires that sense of the word. God then in his visitation of the nature of man, in the person of his Son, put it, and therein him that was invested in it, into a condition of wants and straits, and humbled him beneath the condition of angels, for the blessed ends afterwards declared. For although from his incarnation and birth, the angels adored his person as their Lord; yet in the outward condition of his human nature, he was made exceedingly beneath that state of glory and excellency, which the angels are in a constant enjoyment of.

Thirdly. There is a space of time, a duration intended in this condition. He made him lower, מועט, βραχυ τι, "for a little while," or a short season. That מועט is often used in that sense, and that that is the proper notation of βραχυ τι, we have shown before. But that which renders that sense of the words here unquestionable, is the apostle's precise restraining them thereunto in ver. 9, as we shall see. It was but for a little while, that the person of Christ, in the nature of man, was brought into a condition more indigent than the state of angels is exposed unto; neither was he for that season made a little, but very much lower than the angels. And had this been the whole of his state, it could not have been an effect of that inexpressible love and care which the Psalmist so admires. But seeing it is but for a little continuance, and that for the blessed ends which the apostle declares, nothing can more commend them unto us.

Secondly. There is another effect of God's visitation of man in his exaltation; expressed, 1. In the dignity whereunto he advanced him: and, 2. In the rule and dominion that he gave unto him.

For the first, He "crowned him with glory and honour." עֲטָרָה, is *insigne regium*, the badge and token of supreme and kingly power. Hence, when David complains of the straitening and diminution of his power or rule, he says, his "crown was profaned unto the ground," Psal. lxxxix. 39, that is, made contemptible, and trampled on. To be *crowned* then, is to be invested with sovereign power, or with right and title thereto, as it was with Solomon, who was crowned during the life of his father. Nor is it an ordinary crown that is intended, but one accompanied with glory and honour. To be crowned with glory and honour, is to have a glorious and honourable crown, or rule and sovereignty; כבוד ודוד. The first denotes the weight of this crown; כבוד, 'a weight of glory,' from כבד, 'to be heavy;' βαρος δοξης, 'a weight of glory,' as the apostle speaks in allusion to the primitive sig-

nification of this word, 2 Cor. iv. 17. The other, its beauty and glory; both authority and majesty. How Christ was thus crowned, we have at large shown on the first chapter.

Secondly. This sovereignty is attended with actual rule; wherein, 1. The dominion itself is expressed; and, 2. The extent of it. First. Thou madest "him have dominion over the works of thy hands; חַמְשִׁילָהוּ, 'madest him to rule;' κατεστήσας αὐτὸν ἐπὶ, 'appointedst him in authority over.' He had actual rule and dominion given him upon his coronation. And, secondly. The extent of this dominion, is the works of God's hands. And lest any from this indefinite expression should think this rule limited, either to the things mentioned before by the Psalmist, ver. 4, called "the work of God's fingers," that is, the heavens, the moon, and the stars, or in the following distribution of things here below, into sheep, oxen, fowls, and fish, ver. 7, 8, that is, all the creatures here below; he adds an amplification of it in an universal proposition, πάντα ὑπέταξε, 'he hath put all things without exception in subjection unto him;' and to manifest his absolute and unlimited power, with the unconditional subjection of all things unto him, he adds that they are placed, ὑποκατω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ, 'under his very feet;' an expression setting forth a dominion every way unlimited and absolute.

VER. 8.—The apostle having recited the testimony which he intends to make use of, proceeds in the eighth verse unto some such explications of it, as may make it appear to be proper, and suited unto the end for which it is produced by him. And they are two: the first whereof respects the sense of the words which express the extent of his dominion; the latter an instance of some person or persons, unto whom this testimony, as thus explained, cannot be applied.

For the explication of the objective extent of the rule and dominion mentioned, he adds, "For in that he hath made all subject unto him, he hath left nothing that is not put under him." For whereas it might be objected, that there is no mention in the Psalm of the world to come, whereof he treats, he lets them know, that that cannot be excepted; seeing the assertion is universal and unlimited, that all things whatsoever are put under him. It is true, our apostle making use of this very testimony in another place, 1 Cor. xv. 27, adds there, that there is a manifest exception in reference to him who so put all things under him; and it is evident that it is so indeed, for the Psalmist treats not of God himself, but of the works of God; and among them, saith the apostle here, there lies no exception: they are all brought into order under this rule. And so by this testimony, thus explained, as necessity requires it should be, he hath fully confirmed that the world to come, being one of the special works of God, and not put in subjection unto angels, is made subject unto man; which was that he undertook to demonstrate.

Secondly. To direct this testimony unto its proper end, and to make way for its application unto him, who is especially intended therein, he declares negatively unto whom it is not applicable: "but now we see not yet all things put under him." Man it was, concerning whom the



words are spoken, "What is man?" This must denote the nature of man; and that either as it is in all mankind in general, and every individual, or in some special and peculiar instance, in one partaker of that nature. For the first, he denies that this can belong unto man in general, all, or any of them, on that general account of being men. And in this negation, there are two circumstances considerable: First. The manner of his asserting it by an appeal to common experience—"we see;" this is a matter whereof every one may judge; we all of us know by experience, that it is otherwise; we need neither testimony nor argument to instruct us herein. Our own condition, and that in which we behold other men, is sufficient to inform us. And this is a way whereby an appeal is made as it were to common sense and experience, as we do in things that are most plain and unquestionable. Secondly. There is a limitation of this experience, in the word *yet*; "we see not as yet." And this doth not intimate a contrary state of things for the future, but denies, as to all the time that is past. A long space of time there hath been since the giving out of this testimony, much longer since the creation of man, and all other things, and yet all this while, we see that all things are far enough from being put under the feet of man; or if there be in the word a reserve for some season, wherein this word shall in some sense be fulfilled in mere man also, it is for that time wherein they shall be perfectly glorified with him, who is principally intended, and so be admitted as it were to be sharers with him in his dominion, Rev. iii. 21. These things make plain what is here denied, and in what sense. All mankind, in conjunction, are very remote from being invested with the dominion here described, from having the whole creation of God cast in subjection under their feet. It is true, there was given unto man at first, in his original condition, a rule over those creatures here below, that were made for the use and sustentation of his natural life, and no other. And this also is in some measure continued unto his posterity, though against the present bent and inclination of the creatures, who groan because of the bondage they are put unto, in serving of their use and necessity. But all this at first was but an obscure type and shadow of the dominion here intended, which is absolute, universal, and such as the creatures have no reason to complain of, their proper condition being allotted unto them therein. Hence we ourselves, by our own observation, may easily discern that this word respects not principally, either the first man or his posterity; for we see not as yet, after this long space of time since the creation, that all things are put into subjection unto him.

Having thus unfolded the testimony insisted on, before we proceed unto the apostolical application of it unto the person to whom it doth belong, we may stay here a little, and gather something from it for our instruction. And it is in general, that,

The consideration of the infinitely glorious excellencies of the nature of God manifesting themselves in his works, doth greatly set out his condescension and grace, in his regard and respect unto mankind. This, the occasion of the words, and the words themselves, do teach us.

1. This the method of the Psalmist, I say, leads us unto. He

begins and ends his consideration of the works of God, with an admiration of his glorious excellency by whom they were made, ver. 1, 9, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name!" how glorious art thou, and thou manifestest thyself so to be; and from thence doth he proceed to the consideration of his condescension in his regard and love to man, ver. 4. And to direct us in this duty with the Psalmist we may observe,

First. That the works of God, those especially which were the peculiar subject of his meditation, the heavenly bodies which we behold, are indeed in themselves exceedingly glorious. Their frame, greatness, beauty, order, course, usefulness, all speak them admirable and glorious. The naked view of them is enough to fill the mind of man with admiration and astonishment. And the more we contemplate them, the more skilful we are in the consideration of their nature, order, and use, the more excellent do they appear unto us; and yet it is the least part of their greatness, and beautiful disposition that we can attain a certain knowledge of; so that still they remain more the objects of our admiration and wonder, than of our science. Hence the wisest among the heathen, who were destitute of the teachings of the word and Spirit of God, did with one consent, ascribe of old a deity unto them, and worshipped them as gods; yea, the very name of God in the Greek language, Θεός, is taken from *θειν*, 'to run,' which they derived from the constant course of the heavenly bodies. They saw with their eyes how glorious they were; they found out by reason their greatness and dreadful motion. Experience taught them their use, as the immediate fountains of light, warmth, heat, moisture; and so consequently of life, growth, and of all useful things. It may be, they had some tradition of that rule and dominion, which was at first allotted unto the sun and moon over day and night, Gen. i. 16. On these, and the like accounts, having lost the knowledge of the true and only God, they knew not so well whither to turn themselves for a Deity, as to those things which they saw so full of glory, and which they found to be of so universal a communicative goodness and usefulness. And in them did all idolatry in the world begin. And it was betimes in the world, as we see in Job, where it is mentioned and condemned, ch. xxxi. 26, 27. "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand." He condemns the idolatry, but yet withal shows, that the lustre, brightness, and glory of those heavenly lights, had a great influence on the hearts of men, to entice them unto a secret adoration, which would break out into outward worship, whereof salutation, by kissing the hand, was one part and act. And therefore God cautions his people against this temptation, Deut. iv. 19, "Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven." If men forget the true God, and then lift up their eyes unto, or fall into the contemplation of the heavenly bodies, such is their glory, majesty, and excellency, that they will be driven and hurried unto the adoration and worship of them. And so universal

was this folly of old, that from those latter words. "which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations," the Jews affirm, that God hath given the sun, moon, and stars, to be the Deities of the Gentiles, for them to worship. But the distribution there mentioned, is as unto their common use unto all nations, and not as to their veneration; for God is not the author of idolatry, as they blasphemously imagine. But this their glory and excellency lead them unto. And when any of them ascended higher, to apprehend living intelligent spirits for their Deities, they yet conceived at least that they had their glorious habitation in the heavenly bodies. Yea, and some Christians have fallen into vain imaginations, from a false translation of the latter end of the fourth verse of Psalm xix. by the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin, who read the words, 'He hath placed his tabernacle in the sun,' instead of, 'He hath set in them,' that is, in the heavens, 'a tabernacle for the sun,' as the words are plain in the original. What! should I mention the madness of the Manichees, who affirmed that Christ himself was gone into, if not turned into the sun? I name these things, only to show what influence upon the minds of men destitute of the word, the glory and excellency of these heavenly bodies hath had; and what inestimable grace God showed unto us in the benefit of his word, for we are the posterity of them, and by nature not one jot wiser than they, who worshipped these things which are not God. But exceedingly glorious works of God they are; and the more we consider them, the more will their glory and greatness appear unto us. And as the children of Israel said of the sons of Anak, "We were before them in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight;" may we not much more say concerning ourselves, compared with these glorious works of the hands of God, 'We are all but as grasshoppers in comparison of them, and whence is it that God should set his heart upon us?'

Secondly, These glorious works of God do indeed show the infinite glory of him that made them.—This is the use that men should have made of their contemplation of them, and not have chosen them for their gods, as they did when their foolish hearts were darkened, and they waxed vain in their imaginations. This use the Psalmist here makes of them, and this the Scripture every-where directs us unto. This David brings them in preaching unto all the world, Psal. xix. 1 —6. They have a voice, they speak aloud unto all the world; and by their beauty, greatness, order, usefulness, they make known the incomprehensible glory of him that made them. The *το γνωστον του Θεου*, 'that which may be known of God,' is manifest in them, saith Paul, Rom. i 19. And what is that? even his eternal power and Godhead, ver. 20, that is, his infinite power, all-sufficiency, and self-subsistence. These things are clearly seen in them. Being all made and created by him in their season, doth it not manifest, that he was before them from eternity, and that existing without them, in perfect blessedness? And that he hath made them, so beautiful, so glorious, so excellent, and that out of nothing, doth it not declare his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness? Do they not all lead us to the contemplation of his infinite excellencies? And whence is it, that he who

made all these things of nothing, should have such regard to the weak frail nature of man? But that this consideration may be the more effectual, let us take a little weak view of some of those excellencies of the nature of God, which his works declare, and which set an especial lustre on his condescension unto us: As,

First. His greatness.—His greatness is unsearchable, saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxlv. 3, that is, it is infinite. The immensity of his nature, is his greatness. The heaven of heavens, saith Solomon, cannot contain him, 1 Kings viii. 27. The infiniteness and ubiquity of his essence, is beyond all that the understanding and imagination of man can reach unto. If men would set themselves to think and imagine a greatness, they can reach no higher than heavens above heavens, and that as far as they can fancy: but this expresseth not immensity. Those heavens of heavens cannot contain him. Our thoughts of greatness are apt to consist in adding one thing unto another, until that which we think on be extended unto the utmost of our imagination. But this hath no relation unto the immensity of God; which is not his filling of all imaginary place or space, but an infinite existence in an infinite Being? so that as he is present with, indistant from the whole creation; for, saith he, “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” Jer. xxiii. 24, so he is no less present, where there is no part of the creation. And if he should produce thousands of worlds, which he can do by his power, he would be no less present in them all, indistant from every thing in them, than he is in and unto this which he hath already created; and this not by the extending of his essence and greatness, but by the infiniteness of his being. Neither are there parts in this immensity; for that which hath parts, cannot be infinite or immense. Somewhat of God is not present in heaven, and somewhat in earth; but God is wholly present in his whole being every-where. This leaves no place for the imagination of men, but calls us to pure acts of understanding, and faith, to assent unto it. And thus far reason will go; that it will assent unto the truth of that which it cannot comprehend, because it is convinced that it cannot be otherwise. What remains it leaves to faith and reverential adoration, Reason having, by the help of divine revelation, led the mind and soul thus far, that God is immense, not only present unto the whole creation, but existing in his infinite being, where no creature is, and that in his whole essence equally, there it givethem up to admiration, reverence, adoration, and the improvement by faith of this excellency of God, wherever they are; so doth the Psalmist, Psal. cxxxix. 7—11. Thoughts of God’s omnipresence are of singular use to the soul in every condition. And who can sufficiently admire this excellency of the nature of God? How astonishing is this his greatness? How are all the nations of the world as the drop of a bucket, as the dust of the balance, as vanity, as nothing before him? What is a little dust to an immensity of Being? to that whose greatness we cannot measure, whose nature we cannot comprehend, whose glory we can only stand afar off and adore? What is a poor worm to him who is every-where, and who is every-where filled with his own excellencies and blessedness? The issue of all our thoughts on this property of God’s nature, is admiration and holy as-



tonishment. And whence is it that he should take thought of us, or set his heart upon us? And this greatness of God doth he set forth, by showing what a mean thing the whole creation which we behold is unto him. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance: Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing: all nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted unto him less than nothing and vanity," Isa. xl. 12, 15, 17.

Secondly. His infinite self-sufficiency doth manifest itself in his works; for all these things are the absolute product of his power, and wisdom, and goodness. From the infinite stores and treasures of them, did he bring them all forth. They had no previous matter whereof they were made, no reason, cause, or end was there, why they should be made, but only what was in himself, and from himself, Rom. xi. 36; Rev. iv. 11. Now this could not have been without an infinite self-sufficiency in himself; from whence it is, that all things begin and end in him. And had he not been every way self-sufficient, before the existence of all other things out of nothing, nothing could have been produced. And this ariseth from his fulness of being, which he declareth by his names *יהיה* and *אחיה*; which denote his self-being, his self-existence, his self-sufficiency. All the properties of his nature being infinite, have that which satisfies them and fills them. His understanding is infinite: and as nothing could comprehend the infinite nature of God, but an infinite understanding, God could not know himself if his understanding were not infinite; so nothing could satisfy an infinite understanding but an infinite object; the understanding of God could not be blessed and in rest, if the object of it, the nature of God, were not infinite. God, by his understanding, knows the extent of his infinite power, and so knows not only what he hath wrought by his power, but also whatever he can so do. And this suitableness of the properties of God one to another, as it makes them, because infinite, not really to differ from one another, or from his nature itself; so it gives them all rest, blessedness, satisfaction, and self-sufficiency. As to continue in our former instance, the blessedness of the understanding of God consists in its comprehension of the whole nature of God; nor is it capable of more, because it can comprehend no more. Hence is God all-sufficient, and eternally blessed in the contemplation and enjoyment of his own excellencies; for self-sufficiency is the fountain of blessedness. Where any thing is wanting, there is no absolute blessedness. And hence is the blessedness of God absolute, eternal, and essential unto him, because it hath its rise and spring absolutely in himself, his own fulness of being, his own sufficiency unto, and for himself. All the blessedness of the creatures that we shall, or ever may, attain unto, is but dependent, derivative, and communicated; because though nothing shall be wanting unto us, yet the spring of our supplies shall never be in ourselves, but in God. His blessedness is absolute, because it is from himself, and in himself, in his being every way

self-sufficient. This it is to be absolutely blessed. Hence God made not these things, because he had need of them ; for if he had had need of them, he could not have made them : or that they should add any thing unto him ; for that is not infinite unto which any thing can be added : nor that he might settle that rest and satisfaction in them, which he had not in himself before ; for that which is infinite, must necessarily and unavoidably give eternal satisfaction unto that which is infinite ; but only by a most free act of his will, he chose by the creation of all things, to express somewhat of his power, wisdom, and goodness, in something without himself. Absolutely he was self-sufficient from all eternity ; and that both as to rest, satisfaction, and blessedness in himself ; as also in respect of any operation, as to outward works, which his will and wisdom should incline him unto ; being every way able and powerful in, and from himself, to do whatever he pleaseth. And this infinite satisfaction and complacency of God in himself, arising from that fulness of divine being which is in all the properties of his nature, is another object of our holy admiration and adoration. This God was, this God did, before the world was created. Now what is man, that this every way all-sufficient God should mind, regard, and visit him ? Hath he any need of him, or his services ? Doth his goodness extend to him ? Can he “ profit God, as a man profiteth his neighbour ? If he sin, what doth he against him ? or if his transgressions be multiplied, what doth he against him ? ” that is, to his disadvantage : “ If he be righteous, what giveth he unto him, or what receiveth he at his hand ? ” Job xxxv. 6, 7. Nothing but infinite condescension and grace is the fountain of all God’s regard to us.

Thirdly. His infinite and eternal power is by the same means manifested. This the apostle expressly affirms, Rom. i. 20. He that made all these things of nothing, and therefore can also make and create in like manner whatever else besides he pleaseth, must needs be infinite in power, or as he is called, “ the Lord God omnipotent,” Rev. xix. 6. This himself sets forth in general, Isa. xl. 28. And to convince Job hereof, he treats with him in particular instances about some few of his fellow creatures here below, in the earth and in the waters, chap. xxxviii. xxxix. And if the power of God in making this or that creature which we see and behold, be so admirable, declaring his sovereignty and the infinite distance of man from him in his best condition, how glorious is it in the whole universe, and in the creation of all things visible and invisible, and that by a secret emanation of omnipotency in a word of command ? The art of man will go far in the framing, fashioning, and ordering of things : but there are two things in the least of the creatures of God, that make the creating energy that is seen in them, infinitely to differ from all limited and finite power. First, That they are brought out of nothing : now, let all creatures combine their strength and wisdom together, unless they have some pre-existent matter to work upon they can produce nothing, effect nothing. Secondly, To many of his creatures, of the least of them, God hath given life and spontaneous motions ; to all of them an especial inclination and operation following inseparably the principles of their nature. But as all created power can give neither life, nor spontaneous

motion, nor growth to any thing, no more can it plant in any thing a new natural principle, that should incline it unto a new kind of operation, which was not originally co-natural unto it. There is a peculiar impress of omnipotency upon all the works of God, as he declares at large in that discourse with Job, ch. xxxviii. xxxix. And this power is no less effectual, nor less evident in his sustentation and preservation of all things, than in his creation of them. Things do no more subsist by themselves, than they were made by themselves. He sustaineth all things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3. "And by him all things consist," Col. i. 17. He hath not made the world, and then turned it off his hand, to stand on its own bottom and shift for itself. But there is continually, every moment, an emanation of power from God unto every creature, the greatest, the least, the meanest, to preserve them in their being and order, which if it were suspended but for one moment, they would all lose their station and being, and by confusion be reduced into nothing. "In him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28, and, "He giveth unto all life and breath and all things," ver. 25. God needs not put forth any act of his power to destroy the creation, the very suspension of that constant emanation of omnipotency which is necessary unto its subsistence, would be sufficient for that end and purpose. And who can admire as he ought this power of God, which is greater in every particular grass of the field, than we are able to search into or comprehend. And what is man that he should be mindful of him.

Fourthly. His wisdom also shines forth in these works of his hands. "In wisdom hath he made them all," Psal. civ. 24. So also, cxxxvi. 5, his power was that which gave all things their being, but his wisdom gave them their order, beauty, and use. How admirable this is, how incomprehensible it is unto us, Zophar declares in Job, ch. xi. 6—10. "The secrets of this wisdom are double unto what may be known of it," infinitely more than we can attain to the knowledge of. Searching will not do it, it is absolutely incomprehensible. He that can take but a little, weak, faint consideration of the glorious disposition of the heavenly bodies, their order, course, respect to each other, their usefulness, and influences, their disposition and connection of causes and effects here below, the orderly concurrence and subserviency of every thing in its place and operation, to the consistency, use, and beauty of the universe, will be forced to cry out with the Psalmist, 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches.' But alas, what can the best and wisest of men attain unto in the investigation of the wisdom of God? There is not the least creature, but considered apart by itself, hath somewhat belonging unto it, that will bring them into wonder and astonishment. And what shall we say concerning the most glorious, concerning the order of them all unto one another, and the whole? there must all men's considerations end, and among them this of ours.

Fifthly, His goodness is in like manner manifest in these things. There is in the whole and every part of God's creation a four-fold goodness. 1. A goodness of being and subsistence. That which is, so far forth as it is, is good. So God saw all things, as he made them,

that they were good. The very being of every thing is its first goodness, on which all other concernments of it do depend. And this ariseth from hence, because thereby and therein it participates of the first absolute goodness, which is being; whereunto a nothingness, if I may so speak, is negatively opposed *ad infinitum*. 2. A goodness of order. This gives them their beauty, which is the first principle properly, of goodness, and convertible with it. Every thing that is good is beautiful, and every thing that is beautiful is good. Now the pulchritude or beauty of the whole creation, and of every part of it, consists in the order that is given unto it by the wisdom of God, whereof we spake before. This is that *το καλον κ' αγαθον* of all things, which of old by the light of nature was so much admired. Beautiful goodness, or goodly beauty, whereby every thing becomes comely and desirable, both in itself and its own parts, and in that respect which it hath unto all other things. 3. A goodness of usefulness: nothing is made in vain. Every thing hath its work, service, and operation allotted unto it. If the whole creation had been uniform, if it had been only one thing, it would have wanted this goodness, and been but a dead lump, or mass of being. But in this great variety and diversity of things which we behold, every one hath its proper place and service, and nothing is useless. As the apostle says, that it is in the several parts and members of the lesser world, man, that though some of them seem more worthy and comely than others, yet all have their proper use, so that they cannot say unto one another, "I have no need of thee;" so is it in the universe, though some parts of it seem to be very glorious, and others mean and to be trampled on, yet they cannot say one to another, "I have no need of thee," each having its proper use. The eye is a most noble part of the body, but, saith the apostle, "If the the whole body were an eye," the beauty of the whole were lost, and the very use of the eye. How glorious is the sun in the firmament in comparison of a poor worm in the earth? yet if the whole creation were one sun, it would have neither beauty nor use, nor indeed be a sun, as having nothing to communicate light or heat unto. But God hath brought forth his works in unspeakable variety, that they might all have this goodness of usefulness accompanying them. 4. A goodness of an orderly tendency unto the utmost and last end; which is the glory of him by whom they were made. This also is implanted upon the whole creation of God; and hence the Psalmist calls upon all the inanimate creatures to give praise and glory unto God, that is, he calls upon himself and others to consider how they do so. This is the point, the centre where all these lines do meet, without which there could be neither beauty nor order nor use in them: for that which errs from its end, is crooked, perverse, and not good. On all these considerations it is said, that "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good," Gen. i. 31. Now what an infinite eternal ocean of goodness must that be, which by the word of his mouth communicated all this goodness at once unto the whole creation! How deep, how unfathomable is this fountain! how unsearchable are these springs! This the holy men in the Scripture often express by way of admiration, "How great is his goodness!



how great is his beauty!" The first goodness, the fountain of all goodness must needs be absolutely and infinitely so, in which sense there is none good but one, that is God.

In these things consist somewhat of the glory, excellency, and honour of God, which the Psalmist falls into an admiration of upon the contemplation of the works of his hands, and which made him so astonished at his condescension in the regard that he is pleased to bear unto the nature of man. But besides this consideration, he adds also an intimation, as we have shown, of the mean condition of man unto whom this respect is shown, and that both in the manner of his expression, "What is man," and the words or names whereby he expreseth him, Enosh and Adam, which we shall also briefly add unto our former considerations of the glory of God.

First "What is man" as to his extract? A little dust, made of the dust of the ground, one that may say to corruption, "Thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister," Job xvii. 14. His fabric was not one jot of any better materials than theirs. That God put this honour upon him to breathe into the dust whereof he was made, that he should become a living soul, is part of that goodness wherein he is to be admired. Otherwise we are what God said to Adam, "dust thou art;" poor creature that wouldst be like unto God, thou art dust and no more. And in the sense of this extraction did holy men of old abase themselves in the presence of God, as Abraham, Gen. xviii. 27, "How shall I speak unto the Lord, that am but dust and ashes." Poor proud man, which scornest to touch that which thou art made of, and thinkest thyself I know not what, whilst the remainder of thee, that which was left in the making of thee, lies under the feet of all the creatures which thou despisest: what is this handful of dust that God should regard it? But yet,

Secondly. This fabric being erected, perhaps is durable, strong, and abiding, and so may be considerable on that account. But alas, his frailty is inexpressible. It is true, that before the flood, the life of man was prolonged unto a great continuance, but as that was not in the least any advantage unto the most of them, giving them only an opportunity to increase their sin and misery, nor to the whole society of mankind, seeing by that means the earth was filled with violence, and became a woeful habitation of distress, so they also came to their end, and nothing long since remaineth of their memory, but that they lived so many years and then they died, which is the common end of man. But since that, in which our concernment lies, how do the holy men of God set forth, and as it were complain of the woeful frailty of our condition! So doth Moses, Psal. xc. 5, 6, "Thou carriest them away with a flood," which he spake in contemplation of those thousands which he saw die before his eyes in the wilderness; "in the morning they are like grass which groweth up, in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth." The like also pleadeth Job, ch. xiv. 1, 2, and then turning to God he saith, "And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one," regard such a poor frail perishing creature? And David doth the like, Psal. cii. 24. And indeed no tongue can express the miserable frail condition of this poor creature. From within, from

without, from himself from all other creatures, and principally from the rage and cruelty of those of the same nature with himself, his misery is great, and his life of short continuance. And God abundantly shows that little weight also is to be laid on that duration which he hath here in this world, in that he takes many from the very womb, who scarce ever beheld the light, into the participation of his own eternal glory.

Thirdly. This earthly frail man hath made himself yet more unspeakably vile by sin; this sets him at the utmost distance from the glory of God, and utterly degrades every thing that is in him, which of itself is worthy of consideration.

All these things being put together, they make the condescension of God in remembering man, and setting his heart on him, exceedingly to be admired and adored. And this also will farther appear, if we might consider what are the blessed effects of this mindfulness of him; but these the apostle insists on in the next verses, whither we may refer our meditations on them. Only the duty itself arising from hence may be here pressed on us. And this is, that on the accounts mentioned we would live constantly in an holy adoration of this infinite condescension and grace of God. To this end,

First. Let us exercise ourselves to holy thoughts of God's infinite excellencies. Meditation accompanied with holy adoration is the fountain of this duty. Some men have over-busily and curiously inquired into the nature and properties of God, and have foolishly endeavoured to measure infinite things by the miserable short line of their own reason, and to suit the deep things of God to their own narrow apprehensions. Such are many of the disputations of the schoolmen on this subject, wherein though they have seemed wise to themselves and others, yet indeed for the most part they have waxed vain in their imaginations. Our duty lies in studying what God hath revealed of himself in his word, and what is evidently suitable thereto, and that not with curious searchings and speculations, but with holy admiration, reverence, and fear. This the apostle adviseth us to, Heb. xii. 28. 29. In this way serious thoughts of God's excellencies and properties, his greatness, immensity, self-sufficiency, power, and wisdom, are exceeding useful to our souls. When these have filled us with wonder, when they have prostrated our spirits before him, and laid our mouths in the dust, and our persons on the ground, when the glory of them shines round about us, and our whole souls are filled with a holy astonishment, then,

Secondly. Let us take a view of ourselves, our extract, our frailty, our vileness on every account. How poor, how undeserving are we? What is a little sinful dust and ashes before, or in the sight of this God of glory? What is there in us, what is there belonging to us, that is not suited to abase us? alive one day, dead another; quiet one moment, troubled another; fearing, caring, rejoicing causelessly, sinning always; "and in our best condition altogether vanity." Though much may be said to this purpose, yet it must be said after all, that in ourselves, we are inexpressibly miserable, and as the prophet speaks, "less than vanity and nothing." Would we be wise, we "are like the wild asses colt:" would we be honourable, we have no understand-

ing, but are like the beasts that perish; would we be strong, we are as a reed shaken with the wind. And,

Thirdly, Let the result of these thoughts be, a holy admiration of God's infinite love, care, grace, and condescension, in having any regard to us. So doth the Psalmist teach us to do; hence will praise, hence will thankfulness, hence will self-abasement ensue. And this will be a good foundation, as of obedience, so of comfort and support in every condition.

VER. 9.—THESE things being spoken indefinitely of man by the Psalmist, the apostle in the application of them to his present purpose, proceeds to show who it is that was especially intended, and in whom the words had their full accomplishment. "But," saith he, "we see Jesus," &c. The words of this verse are attended with many difficulties, all which we shall endeavour to clear. First, by showing in general how in them the apostle applies the testimony produced by him to Jesus. Secondly, by freeing them from the obscurity that ariseth from a *συνχυσις*, or transposition of expression in them. Thirdly, by opening the several things taught and asserted in them. And fourthly, by a vindication of the whole interpretation from exceptions and objections.

First. The apostle positively applies this testimony to Jesus, as he who was principally intended therein, or as he in whom the things that God did when he minded man, were accomplished. And this the Syriac translation directly expresseth, *הוּ דין דמך כליל מן מלאכא דדווי ישוע*, 'but him whom he made lower a little while than the angels, we see that it is Jesus.' That is, it is Jesus concerning whom the Psalmist spake, and in whom alone this testimony is verified. Two things are expressed concerning man in the words. 1. That he "was made lower than the angels." 2. That he had all things put in subjection to him. Both these, saith the apostle, we see accomplished in Jesus; for that is the meaning of that expression, "we see Jesus," that is, we see these things fulfilled in him. And as he had before appealed to their faith and experience in his negative, that all things are not made subject to man in general, so doth he here in his affirmative, "we see Jesus." Now they saw it; partly by what he had before proved concerning him; partly by the signs and wonders he had newly spoken of, whereby his doctrine was confirmed, and his power over all things manifested; partly by his calling and gathering of his church, giving laws, rules, and worship to it, by virtue of his authority in and over this new world. And as to the former part of the testimony, by what they had seen with their eyes, or had been otherwise taught concerning his low estate and humiliation; these things, saith he, we see, they are evident to us, nor can be denied whilst the gospel is acknowledged. Now this confession on the evidences mentioned, he applies to both parts of the testimony.

First. saith he, "We see that for a little while he was made lower than the angels," or brought into a state and condition of more exigency and want than they are, or can be exposed to. And hereby he evidently declares, that those words in the Psalm do not belong to the

dignity of man spoken of; as if he had said, He is so excellent that he is but little beneath the angels: for as he ascribes to him a dignity far above all angels, inasmuch as all things without exception are put under his feet, so he plainly declares that these words belong to the depression and minoration of Jesus, in that he was so humbled that he might die. And therefore he proceeds to show, how that part of the testimony concerned his present purpose, not as directly proving what he had proposed to confirmation concerning his dignity, but as evidently designing the person that the whole belonged to. As also he takes occasion from hence to enter on the exposition of another part of Christ's mediation, as prophesied of in this place. For though he was so lessened, yet it was not on his own account, but "that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man."

Secondly. For the other part of the testimony, We see, saith he, on the evidences mentioned, that he is crowned with glory and honour, and consequently, that all things are put under his feet. So that the whole testimony in both parts of it, is verified in him, and in him alone. And hereby he fully evinceth what he had before proposed to confirmation, namely the preeminence of Jesus the Messiah above the angels, or principal administrators of the law, in this especial instance, that the world to come was put into subjection to him and not to them; and therefore in the state of the church intended in that expression are his teachings, his doctrine, his worship diligently to be attended to by all those who desire to be partakers of the promises and good things thereof.

Secondly. There seems to be a *συγχυσις* in the words, by a transposition of some expressions from their proper place and coherence, which must be removed. *Τον δε βραχυ τι παρ' αγγελους ηλαττωμενον ελεπομεν Ιησουν, δια το παθημα του θανατου, δοξη και τιμη εστεφανωμενον· οπως χαριτι Θεου υπερ παντος γεννηται θανατου.* Some would have those words *τον βραχυ τι ηλαττωμενον*, to belong to the subject of the proposition, whose predicate alone is crowned with glory and honour, whereof the suffering of death is inserted as the meritorious cause. So reading the words to this purpose, "We see that Jesus who was for a little while made lower than the angels for his suffering of death, is crowned with glory and honour." Others would have Jesus alone to be the subject of the proposition, of whose predicate there are two parts, or two things are affirmed concerning him. First, that "he was made lower than the angels," the reason whereof is added, namely, "that he might suffer death," which is farther explained in the close of the verse, by the addition of the cause and end of that his suffering, "that by the grace of God he might taste of death for every man," so reading the words to this purpose, "We see Jesus made lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned" (or, and crowned) "with glory and honour." The difficulty principally consists in this only, namely, whether the apostle by *δια το παθημα του θανατου*, "for the suffering of death," intends the final cause of the humiliation of Christ; he was made low "that he might suffer death," or the meritorious cause of his exaltation; for, or because he suffered death, he was crowned with glory and honour. And the former seems evidently



the intention of the words, according to the latter resolution of them, and our application of the testimony foregoing. For, 1. If the cause and means of the exaltation of Christ had been intended, it would have been expressed by *δια του παθηματος του θανατου*, *δια* requiring a genitive case, where the cause or means of any thing is intended; but *δια το παθημα* expresseth the end of what was before affirmed. 2. These words “for the suffering of death,” must express either the minoration and humiliation of Christ, or the end of it; if they express the end of it, then we obtain that which is pleaded for, he was made less that he might suffer. If they express his minoration itself, then the end of it is contained only in the close of the verse, “that he might taste of death for every man.” In which exposition of the words, the sense would be that he suffered death, that by the grace of God he might taste death, which is no sense at all. 3. If those words denote only the means or meritorious cause of the exaltation of Christ, I inquire what is the medium intended of that end in the close, *ὅπως χαριτι*, “that he by the grace of God might taste death?” The word *ὅπως* ‘that so,’ plainly refers to some preparatory means preceding, which in this way can be nothing but the crowning him with glory and honour, which we know was not the means but the effect of it. He was humbled, not exalted, that he might taste death. 4. The apostle doth not merely take it for granted, that Jesus was for a little while made less than the angels, but asserts it as proved in the testimony insisted on, whereto he subjoins the end of that his comparative minoration, because he intended it as the especial subject of his ensuing discourse. This therefore is the import and natural order of the words: “But we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, who was for a little while made lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man.” And the only reason of the transposition of the words consisteth in the apostle’s following the order of the things testified to by the Psalmist, first his humiliation, then his exaltation, and yet connecting that which he would next treat of, to that which was first laid down, passing by the other as now sufficiently confirmed.

Thirdly. The general design of the words, and their order being cleared, we shall open them in particular, seeing that besides the application of the testimony of the Psalmist to the Lord Jesus now vindicated, there is an assertion in them, containing that which of all other things was of most difficult acceptance with the Jews, on the account whereof the apostle confirms it with many reasons in the verses following, to the end of this chapter. And indeed we have here the sum of the gospel, and the doctrine of it concerning the person and office of the Messiah, asserted and vindicated from the prejudicate opinions of many of the Jews, under these two heads. 1. That the salvation and deliverance that God had promised and intended to accomplish by the Messiah, was spiritual and eternal, from death, sin, Satan, and hell, ending in everlasting glory; not temporal and carnal with respect to the world, and the concomitants of it in this life, as they vainly imagined. 2. That this salvation could be no otherwise wrought nor brought about but by the incarnation, suffering,

and death of the Messiah, not in especial, by arms, war, and mighty power, as the people was of old led into Canaan under the conduct of Joshua the captain of that salvation, and as some of them expected yet to be saved and delivered by the Messiah. Now the apostle strengthening his discourse by multiplicity of reasons and arguments, he doth not only in these words apply his testimony to what he had before proposed, for confirmation, namely, the subjection of the world to come to Christ, but also lays in it the springs of those two other principles which we have mentioned, and whose proof and confirmation in the next verses he pursues.

undry things, as we have partly seen, are contained in the words. As first, The exinanition and humiliation of Christ. We see Jesus for a little while made lower, and brought into a more indigent condition than the angels are, or ever were obnoxious to. 2. The general end of that exinanition and depression of Jesus, it was that he might "suffer death." 3. His exaltation to power and authority over all things, in particular the world to come; "crowned with glory and honour." 4. A numerous amplification subjoined, of the end of his depression, and the death that it tended to. 1. From the cause of it, "The grace of God." 2. The nature of it, he was to "taste of death." 3. The end of it, it was for others. And, 4. Its extent, "for all." "That he by the grace of God might taste death for all."

1. Τον δε; δε for αλλα, an adversative, intimating the introduction of one singular person in opposition to him or them spoken of in the end of the foregoing verse. "We see not all things put under his feet," (which some against the whole context apply to Christ,) "but we see Jesus." Had the same person been spoken of in both verses, the expression would have been αυτον δε, 'but we see him;' but a new antecedent being here introduced, "but we see Jesus," another person is substituted as the subject spoken of, as the Syriac version declares, "we see him, that it is Jesus."

How and in what sense he was made lower than the angels hath been declared in opening the words, as they lie in the προθεσις, comprised in that testimony of the Psalmist. Only it may be inquired whether this exinanition of Christ, or minoration in respect of angels, did consist merely in his incarnation and participation of human nature, which in general is esteemed beneath angelical, or in the misery and anxiety which in that nature he conflicted withal. And the apostle seems not absolutely to intend the former. 1. Because he speaks of Jesus as the subject of this minoration; now that name denotes the Son of God as incarnate, who is supposed so to be, when he is said to be "made less than the angels." 2. Because the human nature in the very instant of its union to the person of that Son of God, was absolutely advanced above the angelical, and might have immediately been possessed of glory, if other works in it had not been to be performed. And yet neither doth it intend the low condition wherein he was placed exclusively to his incarnation, though that be afterwards (ver. 14.) particularly spoken to, but his being incarnate and brought forth, and in that condition wherein he was exposed to suffering, and so consequently to death itself. And thus was

he made less than angels in part, in that nature which he assumed ; he was obnoxious to all the infirmities which attend it, as hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, sorrow, grief, and exposed to all the miseries from without, that any person partaker of that nature is obnoxious to, and in sum death itself, from all which miseries angels are exempted. This we see, know, and grant to have been the state and condition of Jesus.

But, saith he, this was but “for a little while,” during his conversation with us on the earth, ending at his death. The apostle knew, that he had now fixed on that which of all things the Jews most stumbled at, the low and mean despised condition of Jesus, they having inveterate prejudicate opinions of another manner of state and condition for the Messiah ; wherefore he immediately subjoins the end why he was humbled into this condition, which he first explains, and then vindicates the necessity of it.

2. The end then is, *παθῆμα του θανατου*, ‘the suffering of death,’ he was so humbled that he might suffer death. This yet more displeased the Jews, the necessity whereof he therefore immediately proves. Adding by the way,

3. To complete the application of the testimony produced, his exaltation on his suffering, “he was crowned with glory and honour,” referring us to the testimony itself, to declare what was contained in that exaltation, namely, an absolute dominion over all things, God only excepted, and so consequently over the world to come, that was not put in subjection to angels. And in these words the apostle closeth his argument for the excellency of Christ above the angels, from the subjection of all things to him, and proceeds to the amplification of that kind of the humiliation of Christ which he had before intimated, and that in four things.

1. In the impulsive and efficient cause, which in the acts of God’s will are coincident ; *ὁπως χαριτι Θεου*. ‘Ὅπως for *ἵνα*, denoting the final cause of what was before asserted, relating to the whole clause following. That which is here called *χαρις Θεου*, ‘the grace of God,’ is elsewhere explained by *σωτηριος*, *χαρις του Θεου ἡ σωτηριος*, Tit. ii. 11. “The saving grace of God.” And sometimes it is termed his *χρηστοτης* and *φιλανθρωπια*, Tit. iii. 4, his ‘goodness, kindness, benignity, and love of mankind,’ absolutely his, *αγαπη*, John iii. 16 ; Rom. v. 8 ; 1 John iv. 8, 9 ; ‘love,’ intense love ; also his *ευδοκια*, Eph. i. 5 ; his ‘good pleasure,’ from the riches of his grace, ver. 7, and his *προθεσις*, ver. 9. Rom. viii. 28, or “purpose of his will,” being the same with his *προγνωσις* and *προωρισμος*, Rom. viii. 29, 30, his pre-designation and predestination of men to grace and glory. From all which it appears what this *χαρις* or ‘grace of God’ is, that was the moving and impulsive cause of the death of Christ, even the gracious free sovereign purpose of the will of God, suited to and arising from his natural grace, love, goodness, and benignity, pity, mercy, compassion, exerting themselves therein. It was not out of any anger or displeasure of God against Jesus, in whom his soul was always well pleased, not out of any disregard to him, whom he designed hereby to “be crowned with glory and honour,” but out of his love, kindness,

and goodness towards others who could not otherwise be brought to glory, as in the next verses the apostle declares, that he thus appointed him to die.

2. In the manner of his death, *ὥπως γενηται θάνατον*, 'that he should taste of death;' so die as to experience the sorrows, bitterness, and penalties of death. To taste of death is, first, really to die, not in appearance or pretence, in opinion or show, as some foolishly of old blasphemed about the death of Christ, which could have had no other fruit but a shadow of redemption, a deliverance in opinion. See the phrases used, Mark ix. 1, *οὐ μὴ γευσωμαι θάνατον*, 'shall not taste of death,' that is, not die. And that which is called to "see death," John viii. 51, is called to "taste of death," ver. 52, where the phrase is applied to the second death, or death eternal. And it being death which was threatened to those for whom he died, and which they should have undergone, he really tasted of that death also. So, secondly, It is intimated that there was bitterness in the death he underwent; himself compares it to a cup, whose bitterness he declares by his aversion from it, considered absolutely, and without reference to that hand of the will of God wherein it was held out to him, Matt. xxvi. 39, which *ποτήριον*, or כוס, 'cup,' was his lot or portion, Psal. xvi. 5, that which was prepared for him by his Father. And by the same metaphor he calls the will of God his meat, which he tasted of in the doing and suffering of it. To "taste of death," as is known, is a Hebraism. So the Rabbins speak, Beresh. Rab. sect 9, ראוי היה אדם הראשון שלא יטעם טעם מיתה, 'the first Adam was worthy that he should not taste of death, or die.' And it compriseth somewhat more than merely to die, it expresseth also, 'to find out and experience,' what is in death. And טעם, is sometimes rendered by *γινωσκειν*, 'to know,' 2 Sam. xix. 35. And sometimes the substantive by *συνεσις*, 'understanding," Job xii. 20. So that Christ, by tasting of death, had experience, knew what was in death as threatened to sinners. He found out and understood what bitterness was in that cup wherein it was given him. To which purpose the Rabbins have a proverb in Jalkut, fol. 265, מאן דאכיל קדרא ידע מזה מעמה דתבשילין, 'he that eateth of the pot knoweth the taste of the meat that is in it.' Thus, when Agag thought he should escape a violent death by the sword, he expresseth his joy by *סר מר המות*, 1 Sam. xv. 32. "The bitterness of death is removed" or taken away; though die he must, yet he thought he should not taste the 'bitterness of death,' or die by the sword. Thirdly, His conquest over death may be also intimated in this expression; for though the phrase, 'to taste of death,' be used concerning other persons also, yet as applied to Christ, the event sheweth, that it was only a through taste of it that he had; he neither was nor could be detained under the power of it, Acts ii. 24, and so is the word 'to taste' used, chap. vi. 4, of this epistle. And thus "by the grace of God, did he taste of death."

3. The end of his tasting of death; it was for others, *ὑπερ παντός*. Of the extent of this end of his death, expressed in that word *παντός*, we shall speak afterwards; for the present we consider how he died, *ὑπερ*, 'for them,' for whom he died. *ὑπερ*, is either, *pro*, or *super*, or *supra*, 'for,' or 'above,' or 'over;' the latter signification belongs not



to this place. As it signifies *προ*, 'for,' it is used sometimes as *δια*, *propter*, and with respect to persons, is as much as *alicujus causa*, 'for his sake,' or *in alicujus gratiam* or *bonum*, 'for his good and advantage,' sometimes as *αντι*, 'in the stead of another,' and this is the constant and inviolable sense of *υπερ* in Greek, *pro* in Latin, where the suffering of one for another is expressed by it. And that also is the constant sense of the Hebrew *חנה*, when used in that case. Some instances on each word will illustrate our intention. Thus David expresseth his desire to have died in the stead of Absalom, that he might have been preserved alive, 2 Sam. xviii. 33, *מי יתן מותי אני חנה*, 'who will grant me to die, I for thee my son Absalom,' that is, in thy stead, or so that thou mightest be alive. So Isa. xliii. 4. And by that word is still expressed the succeeding of one to another in government, or reigning in the stead of him that deceased, 1 Kings iii. 7, xix. 16; 2 Sam. x. 1. And in general, children succeeding in the place and room of their fathers, Num. ii. 12. So that to die *חנה*, for another, is 'to die in his stead,' the death he should have died, that he might live, or in general to be substituted in the room and place of another. So when Jehu commanded his officers to slay the priests and worshippers of Baal, he tells them, that if any one should let any one of them escape, *נפש החיה נפש*, "his life should go for his life," or he should die in his stead, 2 Kings x. 24. So is *υπερ* used, Rom. v. 7, expressing the act of an *αντιψυχος*, one that lays down his life instead of another's, as Damon for Pythias and Nisus for Euryalus, 'Me, me, adsum qui feci.' See 1 Pet. i. 20, 21. And it is explained by *αντι*, perpetually denoting 'a substitution,' where opposition can have no place. See Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45; 1 Tim. ii. 6, *αντιλυτρον υπερ παντων*, *pro*, also, as *υπερ* in this case is to be rendered, have no other signification. So often in the Poet,

Hanc tibi Eryx meliorem animam pro morte Daretis  
Persolvo ———

*Æn.* 5.

He slew the ox, and sacrificed it to Eryx instead of Dares, who was taken from him. And Mezentius on the death of Lausus his son, who undertook the fight with Æneas, on the wounding of his father, being slain himself,

Tantane me tenuit vivendi nate voluptas,  
Ut pro me hostili paterer succedere dextræ,  
Quem genui? tuane hæc genitor per vulnera servor,  
Morte tua vivam. Pro me—in my stead.

And of Palinurus, by whose death the rest of his companions escaped,

Unum pro multis dabitur caput.

So the Comedian,

Verberibus cæsum te Dave in pristinum dedam usque ad necem;  
Ea lege atque omine, ut, si inde te exemerim, ego pro te molam:

'grind in thy stead.' And Juvenal to the same purpose of the Decii.

Plebeia Deciorum animæ, plebeia fuerunt  
Nomina, pro totis Legionibus hi tamen et pro  
Omnibus auxiliis atque omni plebe Latina,  
Sufficiunt Diis infernis.

They were accepted in sacrifice ‘for,’ or instead of all the rest. So did they express their doing or suffering, who cast themselves into danger in the stead of others, that they might go free, as those who sacrificed themselves like Menœceus for the safety of their country, as Papinius expresses his design,

Armorum <sup>superi</sup>, tuque o qui funere tanto<sup>7</sup>  
Indulges mihi Phæbe mori, date gaudia Thebis  
Quæ pepigi, et toto quæ sanguine prodigus emi.

Of which afterwards.

In the common constant use of these words then, ‘to die for another,’ signifies, ‘to die in his room and stead.’ And this the Jews understood in the use of their sacrifices, where the life of the beast was accepted in the stead of the life of the sinner. Thus Christ tasted of death, *ὑπερ παντος*: he was by the grace and wisdom of God substituted as a mediator, surety, *αντιψυχος*, ‘in their stead,’ to undergo the death which they should have undergone, that they might go free, as we shall see in the following verses.

4. This dying of Christ is said to be, *ὑπερ παντος*. The word is either of the masculine or neuter gender: and in the latter, it seems to have been taken by them, who for *χαριτι Θεου*, read *χωρις Θεου*, as some Syriac copies do still, and Ambrose, *ad Gradianum*, with some other of the ancients, intimating that Christ died for every thing, God only excepted; alluding, it may be, unto Eph. i. 10, of which place we have spoken before. For we may not suppose it a corruption of the Nestorians, when some read so before their days; nor will the words so read give any countenance to their error, none affirming that Christ died any otherwise than in his human nature, though he who is God died therein. But this conjecture is groundless and inconsistent with the signification of the preposition *ὑπερ*, insisted on; which will not allow that he be said to die for any, but those in whose stead he died, and which therefore in themselves were obnoxious to death, as he declares, ver. 14, 15. *Παντος* then is put for *παντων*, by an enallage of number, the singular for the plural, for ‘all men;’ that is, all those many sons, which God by his death intended to bring unto glory, ver. 10, those sanctified by him, whom he calls his brethren, ver. 11, 12, and children given him by God, ver. 13, whom by death he delivers from the fear of death, ver. 15, even all the seed of Abraham, ver. 16.

And thus we hope our whole interpretation of these verses receives light from, as well as brings some light unto the text; and that we need no argument to confirm it, but its own suitableness throughout to the context and design of the apostle. That, wherein divers worthy expositors are otherwise minded, and differ from us, is the application of the words of the Psalm immediately unto the person of Christ, which they say are referred unto him only by way of allusion. Now, though our exposition sufficiently confirm and strengthen itself by its own evidence, yet because divers learned men, whose judgment is much to be regarded, have given another sense of the words than that embraced by us, I shall, by some further considerations, confirm that part of our exposition, which is by them called into question; pre-

missing unto them, for the further clearing of the place, what we grant in reference unto the sense by them contended for.

1. I grant that the Psalmist's design in general, is to set forth the goodness, kindness, love, and care of God, unto mankind; so that in those words, "What is man—and the Son of man!" though he principally respect the instance of the person of the Messiah, yet he doth it not exclusively to the nature of man in others, but hath a special regard unto mankind in general, in contradistinction unto other outwardly more glorious works of the hands of God. But it is the special instance of the person of the Messiah, wherein alone he undertakes to make good his assertion of mankind's preeminence.

2. I also grant, that he hath respect unto the dignity and honour collated on the first man at his creation, not directly and intentionally as his chief scope, but by way of allusion, as it did prefigure and obscurely represent that great glory and honour, which mankind was to be advanced unto in the person of the Messiah. That primarily and directly he, and he alone, according to our exposition, is intended in the Psalm. For,

1. That the whole Psalm is prophetic of the Messiah, the passages out of it reported in the New Testament, and applied unto him, do make evident and unquestionable; see Matt. xxi. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 27, with this place; so that he must needs be *the man*, and *Son of man* therein treated of, and who alone did make to cease the enemy and self-avenger, ver. 2, as the apostle declares, ver. 14, 15, of this chapter.

2. The general scope of the Psalm will admit of no other interpretation. The Psalmist, on his contemplation of the great glory of God, in framing the heavens, and all the host of them, especially those which then appeared unto him, falls into an admiration of his wisdom, goodness, and love, in that which was far greater and more excellent, as that wherein his glory was more exalted, which he rejoiceth and triumpheth in, as that wherein his own, and the interest of all others did lie. Now this could not be either the state of man, as fallen by sin, which is far enough from a matter of exultation and joy, nor yet the state of Adam in innocency, in no privilege whereof, without a restitution by Christ, have we share or interest.

3. There are not any words in the testimony, that can properly be applied unto any other man, or be verified in him; not in Adam at his first creation, not in mankind in general, but only in the instance of the person of Christ. For how was Adam diminished, and made less than angels, and therein depressed from another state and condition than that he had, or was due to him? or how can this be said of mankind in general, or of believers in a special sense? And how could this be spoken of them for a little while, seeing the nature of man in itself considered, is for ever beneath the angelical. Again, if the apostle's interpretation be allowed, that expression, "he hath put all things under his feet," is universal, and extends to all the works of God's hands, and among them the world to come; and these were never put in subjection to Adam, nor any other man, the man Christ Jesus excepted. And this also the apostle plainly avers, ver. 8, so that

scope of the place, context of the words, and importance of the expression, do all direct us unto the Messiah, and to him alone.

4. The uncertainty and mutual contradictions, yea, self-contradictions, of the most who apply the words of the Psalmist directly unto any other but Christ, may serve further to fix us unto this interpretation, which is liable to none of those inconveniences which they cast themselves upon. Some would have a double literal sense in the words; the one principal, relating unto Adam, or man in general; the other less principal, or subordinate, respecting Christ, which is upon the matter to affirm, that the words have no sense at all. For those words which have not one certain determinate sense, as those have not, which have two, have indeed no true proper sense at all; for their sense is their determinate signification of any thing. Some would have the literal sense to respect mankind in general, and what is affirmed in them to be mystically applied unto Christ. How far this is from truth, we have already declared, by showing that the words cannot so in any measure be verified or made good. By *man*, some understand Adam in his integrity; but how he can be called *the son of man*, I know not. Besides, how was his honour, not to be thought of or mentioned, without the remembrance of his sin and shameful fall, such a cause of rejoicing and exaltation unto the Psalmist?—Some, man in his corrupted condition; which, how far he is from the things here mentioned, need not be declared. Can we suppose the apostle would prove the subjection of the world to come unto Christ, by a testimony principally respecting them who have no interest in it.—Some, believers as restored in Christ, which is true consequentially, and in respect of participation, Rev. ii. 26, 27, but not antecedently unto the investiture of the honour that they are made partakers of in the person of Christ. Besides, which is the great absurdity of this interpretation, they all affirm, that the same words are used to express and confirm things directly contrary and adverse unto one another. For those words in the Psalmist, “Thou hast made him little less than the angels,” they would have to signify the exaltation of man in his creation, being made nigh unto, and little less than angels; and in the application of them by the apostle to Christ, they acknowledge, that they denote depression, minoration, humiliation, or exinanition. How the same words, in the same place, can express contrary things, prove the exaltation of one, and the depression of another, is very hard, if not impossible to be understood. Besides, they are compelled to interpret the same phrase in divers senses, as well as the same sentence in contrary; for those words in the Psalmist, *βραχυ τι*, as applied unto man, they make to denote *quantity* or *quality*, as unto Christ, *time* or *duration*; which that in the same place, they cannot do both, is needless to prove. But, as we said, our exposition is wholly free from these entanglements, answering the words of the Psalmist, and suited to the words and context of the apostle throughout.

Slichtingius, or Crellius, in his comment on these words, would fain lay hold of an objection against the deity of Christ, p. 112, ‘Hinc videmus,’ saith he, ‘cum D. Author adeo sollicite laboret, et Scripturæ dictis pugnet, eum qui angelis fuerit ratione naturæ minor, nempe



Christum, debuisse suprema gloria et honore coronari, angelosque dignitate longe superare; nec ipsi Authori nec cuiquam Christianorum ad quos scribit, divinæ præter humanam in Christo naturæ in mentem venisse, nam si hanc in Christo agnovissent, nullo negotio etiam Christum angelis longe præstare, naturamque humanam ei minime obstare vidissent: quid quæso tanto molimine, tantoque argumentorum apparatu ad rem omnibus apertissimam persuadendam opus fuisset? Quid argumentis aliunde conquisitis laborat author, cum uno ictu, unica naturæ istius divinæ mentione rem totam conficere potuisset? The whole ground of this fallacy, lies in a supposition that the apostle treateth of the person of Christ absolutely, and in himself considered, which is evidently false. He speaks of him in respect of the office he underwent, as the Mediator of the new covenant; in which respect he was both made less than the angels, not only on the account of his nature, but of the condition wherein he discharged his duty, and also made, or exalted above them, by grant from his Father; whereas, in his divine nature, he was absolutely and infinitely so, from the instant of the creation. And whereas those to whom he wrote, did hear that he was in the discharge of his office, for a little while made much lower than the angels, it was not in vain for him to prove by arguments and testimonies, that in the execution of the same office, he was also exalted above them, that part of his work being finished for which he was made lower than they for a season. And most needful it was for him so to do in respect of the Hebrews, who, boasting in the ministry of angels in the giving of the law, were to be convinced of the excellency of the Author of the gospel, as such, in the discharge of his work, above them. And the express mention of his divine nature, was in this place altogether needless and improper. Nor would it have proved the thing that he intended; for how easy had it been for the Jews to have replied, that notwithstanding that, they saw in how low an outward condition he ministered upon the earth, and therefore that would not prove his exaltation above angels in the discharge of his office, seeing notwithstanding that he was evidently made lower than they in that office. It would also have been improper for him in this place to have made any mention thereof, seeing the proof of the excellency of his person, absolutely considered, was nothing unto the business he had now in hand. And it was likewise every way needless, he having so abundantly proved and vindicated his divine nature in the chapter foregoing. Now, to take an argument against a thing from the apostle's silence of it in one place, where the mention of it was improper, useless, and needless, he having fully expressed the same matter elsewhere, yea, but newly before, is an evidence of a bad, or barren cause. Of the like importance is that which he afterwards adds, p. 15, 'Quemadmodum autem Jesus homo verus, et naturali conditione cæteris hominibus similis esse debuit; neque enim eorum servator est, qui natura et dii sunt et homines, sed hominum tantum.' For we shall demonstrate, that it was needful he should have a divine nature, who was to suffer and to save them, who had only a human. And if this man had acknowledged that end and effect of his suffering, without which we know it would have been of

no advantage unto them for whom he suffered, he also would believe the same.

We say not any thing of the sense of the Jews on this place of the Psalmist. They seem wholly to have lost the design of the Holy Ghost in it, and therefore, in their accustomed manner, to embrace fables and trifles. The Talmudists ascribe those words, "What is man!" unto some of the angels, expressing their envy and indignation at his honour upon his first creation. The later doctors, as Kimchi, and Aben Ezra, make application of it unto man in general, wherein they are followed by too many Christians, unto whom the apostle had been a better guide. But we may here also see what is farther tendered unto us for our instruction: As,

I. The respect, care, love, and grace of God unto mankind, expressed in the person and mediation of Jesus Christ, is a matter of singular and eternal admiration.—We have before shown, from the words of the Psalmist, that such in general is the condescension of God, to have any regard of man, considering the infinite excellency of the property of his nature, as manifested in his great and glorious works. That now proposed, followeth from the apostle's application of the Psalmist's words, unto the person of Christ; and consequently the regard of God unto us in his mediation. And this is such, as that the apostle tells us, that at the last day it shall be his great glory, that he will be admired in all them that do believe, 2 Thess. i. 10. When the work of his grace shall be fully perfected in and towards them, then the glory of his grace appeareth, and is magnified for ever. This is that which the admiration of the Psalmist tends to, and rests in. That God should so regard the nature of man, as to take it into union with himself in the person of his Son; and in that nature humbled and exalted, to work out the salvation of all them that believe on him. There are other ways wherein the respect of God towards man doth appear, even in the effects of his holy wise providence over him, "He causeth his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon him," Matt. v. 45. He "leaves not himself without witness towards us, in that he doth good, and gives us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness," Acts xiv. 17. And these ways of his providence are singularly admirable. But this way of his grace towards us in the person of his Son, assuming our nature into union with himself, is that wherein the exceeding and unspeakable riches of his glory and wisdom are made manifest. So the apostle expresseth it, Eph. i. 17—23. He hath that to declare unto them, which, because of its greatness, glory, and beauty, they are no way able of themselves to receive or comprehend. And therefore he prays for them, that they may have the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to give them the knowledge of Christ; or that God by his Spirit would make them wise to apprehend, and give them a gracious discovery of what he proposeth to them; as also that hereby they may enjoy the blessed effect of an enlightened understanding, without which they will not discern the excellency of this matter. And what is it, that they must thus be helped, assisted, prepared for to understand, in any measure? What is the greatness, the glory of it, that can no otherwise be dis-

cerned? Why, saith he, marvel not at the necessity of this preparation; that which I propose unto you, is the glory of God; that wherein he will principally be glorified, here and unto eternity; and it is the riches of that glory, the treasures of it. God hath in other things set forth and manifested his glory, but yet as it were by parts and parcels: one thing hath declared his power, another his goodness and wisdom; and that in part, with reference to that particular about which they have been exercised. But in this, he hath drawn forth, displayed, manifested all the riches and treasures of his glory, so that his excellencies are capable of no greater exaltation. And there is also in this work, the unspeakable greatness of his power engaged, that no property of his nature may seem to be uninterested in this matter. Now, whereunto doth all this tend? Why, it is all to give a blessed and eternal inheritance to believers, unto the hope and expectation whereof they are called by the gospel. And by what way or means is all this wrought and brought about? even by the working of God in Jesus Christ in his humiliation, when he died; and his exaltation, in his resurrection, putting all things under his feet, crowning him with glory and honour, which the apostle shows by a citation of this place of the Psalmist; for all this is out of God's regard unto man, it is for the church, which is the body of Christ, and his fulness. So full of glory, such an object of eternal admiration, is this work of the love and grace of God, which, as Peter tells us, the very angels themselves desire to look into, 1 Pet. i. 12. And this further appears,

First. Because all God's regard of man in this way, is a fruit of mere sovereign grace and condescension. And all grace is admirable, especially the grace of God; and that *so great grace*, as the Scripture expresseth it. There was no consideration of any thing without God himself, that moved him hereunto. He had glorified himself, as the Psalmist shows, in other works of his hands; and he could have rested in that glory. Man deserved no such thing of him, being worthless and sinful. It was all of grace, both in the head and members. The human nature of Christ neither did, nor could merit the hypostatical union. It did not, because, being made partaker of it from the instant of his conception, all antecedent operations that might procure it, were prevented; and a thing cannot be merited by any, after it is freely granted antecedently to any deserts. Nor could it do so; hypostatical union could be no reward of obedience, being that which exceeds all the order of things, and rules of remunerative justice. The assumption, then, of our nature into personal union with the Son of God, was an act of mere, free, sovereign, inconceivable grace. And this is the foundation of all the following fruits of God's regard unto us; and that being of grace, so must they be also. Whatever God doth for us, in and by Jesus Christ, as made man for us, which is all that he so doth, it must, I say, be all of grace, because his being made man was so. Had there been any merit, any desert on our part, any preparation for, or disposition unto the effects of this regard; had our nature, that portion of it which was sanctified and separated to be united unto the Son of God, any way procured, or prepared itself for its

union and assumption, things had fallen under some rules of justice and equality, whereby they might be apprehended and measured; but all being of grace, they leave place unto nothing but eternal admiration and thankfulness.

Secondly. Had not God been thus mindful of man, and visited him in the person of his Son incarnate, every one partaker of that nature must have utterly perished in their lost condition. And this also renders the grace of it an object of admiration. We are not only to consider what God takes us unto by this visitation, but also what he delivers us from. Now this is a great part of that vile and base condition, which the Psalmist wonders that God should have regard to; namely, that we had sinned and come short of his glory, and thereby exposed ourselves unto eternal misery. In that condition we must have perished for ever, had not God freed us by this visitation. It had been great grace to have taken an innocent, a sinless man, into glory; great grace to have freed a sinner from misery, though he should never be brought to the enjoyment of the least positive good. But to free a sinner from the utmost and most inconceivable misery, in eternal ruin, and to bring him unto the highest happiness, in eternal glory, and all this in a way of mere grace—this is to be admired.

Thirdly. Because it appeareth that God is more glorified in the humiliation and exaltation of the Lord Christ, and the salvation of mankind thereby, than in any of, or all the works of the first creation. How glorious those works are, and how mightily they set forth the glory of God, we have before declared. But as the Psalmist intimates, God rested not in them. He had yet a farther design, to manifest his glory in a more eminent and singular manner, and this he did, by minding and visiting of man in Christ Jesus. None almost is so stupid, but on the first view of the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars, he will confess that their fabric, beauty, and order is wonderful, and that the glory of their Framer and Builder is for ever to be admired in them; but all this comes short of that glory which ariseth unto God from this condescension and grace. And therefore, it may be, the day will come, and that speedily, wherein these heavens, and this whole old creation, shall be utterly dissolved and brought to nothing. For why should they abide as a monument of his power unto them, who enjoying the blessed vision of him, shall see and know it far more evidently and eminently in himself? However, they shall undoubtedly in a short time cease as to their use, wherein at present they are principally subservient unto the manifestation of the glory of God. But the effects of this regard of God to man, shall abide unto eternity, and the glory of God therein. This is the foundation of heaven, as it is a state and condition; as it denotes the glorious presence of God among his saints and holy ones. Without this, there would be no such heaven; all that is there, and all the glory of it, depends thereon. Take away this foundation, and all that beauty and glory disappears. Nothing indeed would be taken from God, who ever was, and ever will be, eternally blessed in his own self-sufficiency. But the whole theatre which he hath erected for the manifestation of his glory unto eternity, depends on this his holy condescension and grace, which assuredly render them meet for ever to be admired and adored.



This, then, let us exercise ourselves unto. Faith having infinite, eternal, incomprehensible things proposed unto it, acts itself greatly in this admiration. We are every-where taught, that we now know but imperfectly, in part, and that we see darkly as in a glass; not that the revelation of these things in the word is dark and obscure, for they are fully and clearly proposed, but that such is the nature of the things themselves, that we are not in this life able to comprehend them; and therefore, faith doth principally exercise itself in a holy admiration of them. And indeed no love or grace will suit our condition, but that which is incomprehensible. We find ourselves by experience to stand in need of more grace, goodness, love, and mercy, than we can look into, search to the bottom of, or fully understand. But when that which is infinite and incomprehensible is proposed unto us, there all fears are overwhelmed, and faith finds rest with assurance. And if our admiration of these things be an act, an effect, a fruit of faith, it will be of singular use to endear our hearts unto God, and to excite them unto thankful obedience. For who would not love and delight in the eternal fountain of this inconceivable grace? And what shall we render unto him, who hath done more for us than we are any way able to think or conceive?

II. Observe also, that such was the inconceivable love of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, unto the souls of men, that he was free and willing to condescend unto any condition for their good and salvation. That was the end of all this dispensation. And the Lord Christ was not humbled and made less than the angels without his own will and consent. His will and good liking concurred unto this work. Hence, when the eternal counsel of this whole matter is mentioned, it is said of him as the Wisdom of the Father, that he "rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men," Prov. viii. 31. He delighted in the counsel of redeeming and saving them, by his own humiliation and suffering. And the Scripture makes it evident upon these two considerations:

First. In that it shows, that what he was to do, and what he was to undergo in this work was proposed unto him, and that he willingly accepted of the terms and conditions of it, Ps. xl. 6. God says unto him, that sacrifice and offering would not do this great work, burnt-offering and sin offering would not effect it; that is, no kind of offerings or sacrifices instituted by the law were available to take away sin, and to save sinners, as our apostle expounds that place at large, Heb. x. 1—9, confirming his exposition with sundry arguments taken from their nature and effects. What then doth God require of him, that this great design of the salvation of sinners may be accomplished?—even that he himself should make "his own soul an offering for sin, pour out his soul unto death, and thereby bear the sin of many," Isa. liii. 10, 12; that, "seeing the law was weak through the flesh," that is, by reason of our sins in the flesh, that he himself should take upon him the "likeness of sinful flesh, and become an offering for sin in the flesh," Rom. viii. 3; that he should be "made of a woman, made under the law," if he would "redeem them that were under the law," Gal. iv. 4, 5; that he "should make himself of no reputation," but "take upon him the form of a servant, and be made in the likeness of man,

and being found in fashion as a man, to humble himself, and to become obedient unto death, the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 7, 8. These things were proposed unto him, which he was to undergo, if he would deliver and save mankind. And how did he entertain this proposal? how did he like these conditions? "I was not," saith he, "rebellious, I turned not away back," Isa. i. 5. He declined them not, he refused none of the terms that were proposed unto him, but underwent them in a way of obedience, and that with willingness, alacrity, and delight, Ps. xl. 6, 7, 8. "Thou," saith he, "hast opened my ears," or "prepared a body for me," wherein I may yield this obedience; (that the apostle declares to be the sense of the expression, Heb. x. 5.) This obedience could not be yielded without a body, wherein it was performed; and whereas to hear, or to have the ear opened, is in the Scripture to be prepared unto obedience, the Psalmist in that one expression, "Mine ear hast thou opened," compriseth both these, even that Christ had a body prepared, by a synecdoche, of a part for the whole; and also in that body he was ready to yield obedience unto God in this great work, which could not be accomplished by sacrifices and burnt-offerings. And this readiness and willingness of Christ unto this work is set out under three heads in the ensuing words. 1. His tender of himself unto this work; then said he, "Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me." This thou hast promised, this is recorded in the head, beginning of thy book, namely, in that great promise, Gen. iii. 15. "That the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent;" and now thou hast given me, and prepared me in the fulness of time, a body for that purpose, "Lo, I come," willing and ready to undertake it. 2. In the frame of his mind in this engagement; he entered into it with great delight, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." He did not delight in the thoughts of it only of old, as before, and then grew heavy and sorrowful when it was to be undertaken, but he went into it with cheerfulness and delight, although he knew what sorrow and grief it would cost him before it was brought unto perfection. 3. From the principle whence this obedience and delight did spring, which was an universal conformity of his soul, mind, and will, unto the law, will, and mind of God: "Thy law is in my heart, in the midst of my bowels;" every thing in me is compliant with thy will and law, there is in me an universal conformity thereunto. Being thus prepared, thus principled, he considered the glory that was set before him, the glory that would redound unto God, by his becoming a captain of salvation, and that would ensue unto himself: "He endured the cross and despised the shame," Heb. xii. 2. He armed himself with those considerations, against the hardships and sufferings that he was to meet withal; as the apostle adviseth us to arm ourselves with the like mind when we are to suffer, 1 Pet. iv. 1. By all which it appears, that the good-will and love of Jesus Christ was in this matter of being "humbled and made less than angels," as the apostle says expressly, "that he humbled himself and made himself of no reputation," Phil. ii. 7, 8, as well as it is here said, that "God humbled him," or made him less than angels.

Secondly. The Scripture peculiarly assigns this work unto the love

and condescension of Christ himself. For although it abounds in setting forth the love of the Father in the designing and contriving this work, and sending his Son into the world, yet it directs us unto the Lord Christ himself, as the next immediate cause of his engaging into it, and performance of it. So saith the apostle, Gal. ii. 20, "I live by the faith of the Son of God," that is, by faith in him "who loved me, and gave himself for me." It was the love of Christ that moved him to give himself for us, which is excellently expressed in that doxology, Rev. i. 5, 6. "To him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood from our sins, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, unto him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." All this was the fruit of his love, and therefore unto him is all praise and honour to be given and ascribed. And so great was this love of Christ, that he declined nothing that was proposed unto him. This the apostle calls his grace, 2 Cor. 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." He condescended unto a poor and low condition, and to suffer therein for our good, that we might be made partakers of the riches of the grace of God. And this was the love of the person of Christ, because it was in, and wrought equally in him, both before and after his assumption of our nature.

Now the Holy Ghost makes an especial application of this truth unto us, as unto one part of our obedience, Phil. ii. 5. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;" and what that mind was, he declares in the ensuing verses, laying out his infinite condescension in taking our nature upon him, and submitting to all misery, reproach, and death itself for our sakes. If this mind were in Christ, should not we endeavour after a readiness and willingness to submit ourselves unto any condition for his glory. "Forasmuch," saith Peter, "as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind," 1 Pet. iv. 1. Many difficulties will lie in our way, many reasonings will rise up against it, if we consult with flesh and blood; but, saith he, "Arm yourselves with the same mind that was in Christ," get your souls strengthened and fenced by grace against all oppositions, that you may follow him, and imitate him. Some that profess his name will suffer nothing for him; if they may enjoy him or his ways in peace and quietness, well and good; but if persecution arise for the gospel, immediately they fall away. These have neither lot nor portion in this matter. Others, the most, the best, have a secret loathness and unwillingness to condescend unto a condition of trouble and distress for the gospel. Well, if we are unwilling hereunto, what doth the Lord Christ lose by it? Will it be any real abatement of his honour or glory? Will he lose his crown or kingdom thereby? So far as suffering in this world is needful for any of his blessed ends and purposes, he will not want them who shall be ready even to die for his name sake. But what if he had been unwilling to be humbled and to suffer for us? If the same mind had been in Christ, as was in us, what had been our state and condition unto eternity? In this grace, love, and willingness of Christ, lies the foundation of all our happi-

ness, of all our deliverance from misery and ruin; and shall we reckon ourselves to have an interest therein, and yet find ourselves altogether unready to a conformity unto him? Besides, the Lord Christ was really rich when he made himself poor for our sakes; he was "in the form of God," when he took upon him the "form of a servant," and became for us of no reputation, nothing of this was due to him, or belonged unto him, but merely on our account. But we are in ourselves really poor, and obnoxious unto infinitely more miseries for our own sins, than what he calls us unto for his name. Are we unwilling to suffer a little light transitory trouble in this world for him, without whose sufferings for us, we must have suffered misery, and that eternal, whether we would or not? And I speak not so much about suffering itself, as about the mind and frame of spirit wherewith we undergo it. Some will suffer when they cannot avoid it, but so unwillingly, so uncheerfully, as makes it evident that they aim at nothing, and act from no principle, but merely that they dare not go against their convictions. But the mind that was in Christ will lead us unto it, out of love unto him, with freedom and enlargedness of heart, which is required of us.

III. The blessed issue of the abasement of Jesus Christ in his exaltation unto honour and glory, is an assured pledge of the final glory and blessedness of all that believe in him, whatever dangers and difficulties they may be exercised withal in the way. His humiliation and exaltation, as we have seen, proceeded out of God's condescension and love to mankind. His electing love, the eternal gracious purpose of his will to recover lost sinners, and to bring them to the enjoyment of himself, was the ground of this dispensation. And therefore what he hath done in Christ, is a certain pledge of what he will do in and for them also. He is not crowned with honour and glory merely for himself, but that he may be a captain of salvation, and bring others unto a participation of his glory.

IV. Jesus Christ as the mediator of the new covenant, hath absolute and supreme authority given unto him over all the works of God in heaven and earth. This we have so fully manifested and insisted on, upon the foregoing chapter, that we shall not here farther pursue it, but only mind by the way, that blessed is the state and condition, great is the spiritual and eternal security of the church, seeing all things are under the very feet of its Head and Saviour.

V. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only Lord of the gospel state of the church, called under the Old Testament the world to come, and therefore he only hath power to dispose of all things in it, relating unto that worship of God which it is to perform and celebrate. It is not put in subjection unto any other, angels or men. This privilege was reserved for Christ, this honour is bestowed on the church. He is the only Head, King, and Lawgiver of it, and nothing is it to be taught to observe or do, but what he hath commanded. But this will fall more directly under our consideration in the beginning of the next chapter.

VI. The Lord Jesus Christ in his death did undergo the penal sentence of the law, in the room and stead of them for whom he died.



Death was that which by the sentence of the law was due unto sin and sinners. For them did Christ die, and therein tasted of the bitterness of that death which they were to have undergone, or else the fruit of it could not have redounded unto them; for what was it towards their discharge, if that which they had deserved was not suffered, but somewhat else wherein the least part of their concernment did lie. But this being done, certain deliverance and salvation will be the lot and portion of them, of all them for whom he died, and that upon the rules of justice and righteousness on the part of Christ, though on theirs, of mere mercy and grace.

VER. 10.—The apostle, in the verses foregoing, made mention of that, which of all other things the Jews generally were most offended at, and which was of the greatest importance to be believed, namely, the sufferings of the Messiah, wherein a great part of the discharge of his sacerdotal office, whereunto he here makes a transition, did consist. This his own disciples were slow in the belief of, Matt. xvi. 22, chap. xvii. 22, 23; Luke xxiv. 25, 26, and the Jews generally stumbled at. They thought it strange that the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of his people, and Captain of their salvation, concerning whom so great and glorious things were promised and foretold, should be brought into a low despised condition, and therein to suffer and die. Hence they cried to him on the cross, "If thou be the Christ, come down and save thyself;" intimating that by his suffering he was assuredly proved not to be so, for why any one should suffer that could deliver himself, they saw no reason.

Besides, they had inveterate prejudices about the salvation promised by the Messiah, and the way whereby it was to be wrought, arising from their love and over-valuation of temporal or carnal things, with their contempt of things spiritual and eternal. They expected a deliverance outward, glorious, and kingly, in this world, and that to be wrought with arms, power, and a mighty hand. And what should they expect from a Messiah who suffered and died? Wherefore the apostle, having asserted the sufferings of Christ, saw it necessary to proceed unto a full confirmation of it, with a declaration of the reasons, causes, and ends of it; partly to avert that false persuasion which prevailed amongst them, about the nature of the salvation to be wrought by Christ; partly to show, that nothing would thence ensue derogatory to what he had before delivered about his preeminence above angels; but principally to instruct them in the sacerdotal office of the Messiah, the redemption which he wrought, and the means whereby he accomplished it, which was the great business that he had designed to treat with them about. For the salvation itself, he declares that it was not to be of the same kind with that which they had of old, when they were brought out of Egypt, and settled in the land of Canaan, under the conduct of Joshua; but spiritual and heavenly, in a deliverance from sin, Satan, death, and hell, with a manuduction into life and blessedness eternal. He informs them that the way whereby this was to be wrought, was by the sufferings and death of the Messiah, and that in no other way it could be accomplished; on which account they

were indispensably necessary. And the first reason hereof he expresseth in this tenth verse.

VER, 10.—Επρεπε γαρ αυτω, δι' ον τα παντα και δι' ου τα παντα, πολλους υιους εις δοξαν αγαγοντα, τον αρχηγον της σωτηριας αυτων δια παθηματων τελειωσαι.

One or two copies read *δια παθηματος αυτον τελειουσθαι*, against the sense and design of the place. *Αυτον* is needlessly repeated, unless put for *εαυτον*, and then it disturbs the whole meaning of the verse, and is inconsistent with the passive verb following in this reading. *Παθηματος*, in the singular number, relates only unto death, expressed in the verse foregoing by *παθημα θανατου*; but here all the sufferings of Christ, as well those antecedent unto death, as death itself, was intended. *Τελειουσθαι*, in the passive, is followed by some copies of the Vulgar translation, reading 'consummari;' both inconsistent with the sense of the place, as we shall see.

Translations differ but little about these words. *Επρεπε γαρ αυτω*, most, *Decebat enim eum*, 'for it became him.' Beza, *Decebat enim ut iste*, 'for it was meet that he,' to make the following words flow regularly. *Δι' ον τα παντα*, *propter quem omnia*; Syr. *לכא דכא*, *cui omnia*, 'for whom are all things.' Beza, *Propter quem sunt hæc omnia*, expressing the article as restrictive to the things spoken of, 'for whom are all these things.' One Syriac copy adds. *באידו*, 'in his hand,' which somewhat corrupts the sense. *Και δι' ου τα παντα*, *et per quem omnia*. Beza, *hæc omnia*, as before, without cause; for the article is frequently prefixed unto *παντα*, where all things absolutely are intended; as Eph. i. 11, "By whom are all things." *Πολλους υιους εις δοξαν αγαγοντα*. Vulg. *Qui multos filios ad gloriam adduxerat*; 'Who had brought many sons unto glory.' Arias. *Multos filios ad gloriam adducentem*. Beza. *Adducendo*, 'bringing many sons unto glory.' Syr. *Adduxerat in gloriam suam*; 'had brought many sons into his glory.' *Τον αρχηγον*. Vulg. *Auctorem*, 'the Author.' Beza. *Principem*. Syr. *אשר*, 'the Head or Prince of their salvation.' *Δια παθηματων τελειωσαι*, *per passionem consummare*, 'to consummate or complete by suffering.' Beza, *per perpassiones*, 'by sufferings.' Syr. *perficere, perfectum reddere*, 'to perfect, to make perfect.'

The proper signification of the words in this verse is much to be heeded, as that which will give us much light into the sense of the whole. *Πρεπει* is *deceat, convenit, dignum est*, 'it becometh, it is meet, convenient, or just,' *Πρεπον Θεοις*, in Plato, is rendered by Cicero, *Deo decorum*, 'that which becometh God;' and, saith he, *πρεπον*, *appellant hoc Græci, nos dicamus sane decorum*; that which becometh any one in his state and condition, in a moral sense, as 'holiness becometh the house,' that is the people of God. *Κατα το πρεπον*, *ut deceat, ut par est*; that which is equal and right to be done. *Πρεπουσα τιμη*, is 'honour justly deserved;' and *πρεπουσα ζημια*, 'just loss or punishment.' The word then signifies that decency and becomingness, which justice, reason, and equity, require; so that the contrary would be unmeet, because unequal and unjust. Thus every one's duty, that which is morally incumbent on him in his place and

station, is that which becomes him ; and thence in the New Testament, that which is not *κατα το πρεπον*, 'thus decent,' is condemned as evil, 1 Cor. xi. 13; 1 Tim. ii. 10. And itself is commended as a rule of virtue, Matt. iii. 15; Eph. v. 3.

*Δι' ὧν. Δια*, with an accusative case, constantly denotes the final cause, propter quem, 'for whom.' Rev. iv. 11. *συ ἐκτίσας τα πάντα*, 'Thou hast created all things,' (all things universally, with the article prefixed, as in this place,) *και δια το θελημα σου εισι και εκτισθησαν*, 'and for thy will (thy pleasure, thy glory) they are and were created,' Rom. xi. 36. *εις ὧν τα πάντα*, 'to whom, to him, or for him, or his glory, are all things,' Prov. xvi. 4. *כל פעל יהוה למענו*, "The Lord hath made all things for himself;" his glory is the final cause of them all.

*Και δι' οὗ τα πάντα*, 'and by whom are all things.' *Δια*, with a genitive, denotes the efficient cause. Some, from this expression, would have the Son to be the person here spoken of, because concerning him it is frequently said, that all things are *δι' αὐτον*, John i. 3; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Heb. i. 3; but it is used also with reference unto the Father, Rom. xi. 36; Gal. i. 1. Slichtingius here gives it for a rule, that when *δια* relates unto the Father, it denotes the principal efficient cause; when unto the Son, the instrumental. But it is a rule of his own coining, a groundless efflux of his *πρωτον ψευδος*, that the Son is not God, on which kind of presumptions men may found what rules they please. The principal efficiency, or supreme production of all things by God, is intended in this expression.

*Αγαγοντα*, 'bringing,' a word of common use and known signification, but in this place attended with a double difficulty, from a double enallage in the use of it. First, in the case; for whereas it seems to relate unto *αυτω*, 'it became him in bringing,' it should then regularly be *αγαγοντι*, not *αγαγοντα*. Hence some, by supposing a *συγχυσις* in the words, refer it unto *αρχηγον*, 'the Author;' as if the apostle had said, *Τον αρχηγον της σωτηριας αυτων πολλους υιους αγαγοντα*, 'to make perfect the Captain of their salvation, who brought many sons unto glory.' But this transposition of the words, neither the context, nor the addition of *αυτων*, 'their,' unto *σωτηριας*, 'their salvation,' relating unto the sons before mentioned, will by any means allow. Wherefore an enallage of the case is necessarily to be allowed; *αγαγοντα* for *αγαγοντι*, unless we suppose a repetition of *επρεπε*, which frequently admits of the accusative case; but the principal author is unquestionably intended. Again, *αγαγοντα* is a participle of the second Aoristus, which usually denotes the time past; and thence is it translated by many, adduxit, adduxerat, and filiis adductis; 'after he had brought many sons to glory.' And this some refer to the saints who died under the Old Testament, unto whom the Lord Christ was no less a Captain of salvation than to us. And so the apostle shows, that after they were saved on his account, it was meet that he should answer for them according to his undertaking. But neither doth this restraining of the word answer the apostle's intention. For it is evident, that he principally minded them, unto whom the Lord Jesus became eminently a Captain of salvation, after he was perfected by

sufferings, though not exclusively unto them that went before. *Αγαγοντα* then is put for *αγοντα*, unless we shall suppose that the act of God here intended was on purpose thus expressed to comprehend all the sons, both those that lived before, and those that lived after the sufferings of Christ; ‘bringing, leading, bearing.’ It concerns the whole execution of the design of God, for the salvation and glorification of believers. *Πολλους υιους*, ‘many sons,’ Jews and Gentiles, all that were by faith to become his sons, ‘unto glory.’

*Τον αρχηγον*, ‘the Author.’ Wherever this word is used in the New Testament, it is applied unto Christ, Acts iii. 15, he is called *αρχηγος της ζωης*, ‘the Prince of life.’ And chap. v. 31, God is said to make him *αρχηγον και σωτηρα*, ‘a Prince and a Saviour;’ that is, *αρχηγον της σωτηριας*, as here, ‘the Prince of our salvation,’ Heb. xii. 2, the apostle calls him, *τον της πιστεως αρχηγον και τελειωτην*, as we render it, ‘the author and finisher of faith.’ As here God is said, *τελειωσαι τον αρχηγον*, ‘to finish or perfect this Author of our salvation.’ No where else is this word used in the New Testament. It answers justly the Hebrew *רִאשׁוֹן*, which the LXX. render *αρχων* and *ηγουμενος*, the signification of both which words are included in *αρχηγος*, Princeps, Dux, Præses, Author; ‘a Prince, Captain, Ruler, Author.’ And it is used in writers, with respects to works good and bad. *Αρχηγος και διδασκαλος των εργων τοιουτων*, Isocrat. ‘The author and teacher of such works.’ And *αρχηγος του κακουργηματος*, artifex maleficii, ‘the principal contriver of mischief.’ It is also used for the author of a stock, race, or kindred of men. In this place it is limited by *σωτηριας*; it denotes the chief or principal operator, or worker of that salvation, with especial reference unto the kingly or princely power, whereunto he was advanced after his sufferings. As he is also absolutely a prince, a ruler, and the author or spring of the whole race and kind of believers, according unto the other senses of the words.

*Τελειωσαι*; this word is variously used, and variously rendered: ‘to consummate, to perfect, to make perfect, to consecrate, dedicate, sanctify.’ Some would have it in this place to be the same with *αγειν εις δοξαν*, ‘to bring unto glory.’ But what is the precise signification of the word, we shall clear in the exposition ensuing, when we declare what act of God it is that is here intended.

Before we proceed to the exposition of the several parts of this text, we must consider the order of the words, to prevent some mistakes that divers learned commentators have fallen into about them. Some suppose a hyperbaton in them; and that those expressions, ‘For whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory,’ do intend the Son, the Captain of salvation. The word *αυτου*, ‘him—it became him,’ they confess to relate unto *Θεου*, ‘God,’ in the verse foregoing, and to relate unto the Father: in which order, this would be the sense of the words, ‘It became him,’ that is God, ‘to make perfect through sufferings the Captain of their salvation, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, who bringeth many sons unto glory.’ But there is no just reason why we should arbitrarily thus transpose the words; and that separation of, ‘from whom are all



things, and for whom are all things,' from, 'it became him,' takes away one main foundation of the apostle's reasoning, as we shall see. And the reason alleged for this ordering of the words is infirm, namely, that it is Christ who brings the many sons unto glory, not the Father; for it is also assigned unto him, as we shall see upon many accounts.

Some refer the whole words unto Christ to this purpose, 'it became him,' that is the Son incarnate, 'for whom,' &c., 'bringing many sons unto glory, to be consummated or made perfect by sufferings.' So Tena, and those whom he followeth. But this exposition of the words is directly contrary to the scope of the apostle, declared in the verse foregoing, and that following. It leaves also *αυτου*, 'him,' nothing to relate unto; nor allows the casual *γαρ*, 'for,' to give an account of any act of God before mentioned; and besides, the whole of it is built on the corruption or mistake of one word in the Vulgar translation, consummari for consummare, and that but in some copies, as is acknowledged by the most learned Romanists, who here adhere unto the original. For taking that word actively, and the object of the act expressed in it, being the Captain of salvation, some agent distinct from him must needs be signified, which is God the Father.

Some suppose an *ελλειψις* in the words, and therefore in the reading of those, 'in bringing many sons unto glory,' they supply 'by afflictions or sufferings;' having brought many sons to glory by afflictions it became him to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. So Capellus. But this imaginary defect arose merely from a mistake, that the *το προπον*, or condecency here mentioned, hath a respect unto the things done; that seeing the sons had suffered, it was meet and convenient that their Captain should suffer in an eminent manner. But the truth is, it respects only the doer of them, it was on his part requisite so to do the things mentioned.

VER. 10.—*For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

There is in the words, 1. The causal connection unto the verse foregoing, 'for.' 2. A design of God intimated as the foundation of the discourse, which was to bring many sons unto glory. 3. The means he fixed on for the accomplishment of that design, namely, the appointing unto them a Captain of their salvation. 4. The especial way of his dedicating him unto that office—he made him perfect by sufferings. 5. The reason of this his proceeding and dealing with him—it became him so to do. 6. An amplification of that reason, in a description of his condition—him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things.

First. A reason is rendered in the words, of what he had asserted in the foregoing verse, namely, that Jesus the Messiah was to suffer death, and by the grace of God to taste of death for all. Why he should do thus, on what account, what ground, necessity, and reason there was for it, is here declared: it was so to be, "For it became him," &c.

Secondly. The design of God is expressed in this whole matter, and that was—to bring many sons unto glory. And herein the apostle declares the nature of the salvation which was to be wrought by the Messiah, about which the Jews were so greatly mistaken, and consequently in and about the way whereby it was to be wrought. His purpose herein was not now to carry his children into a new Canaan, to bring them into a wealthy country, an earthly kingdom, which must or might have been done by might, and power, and arms, as of old; but his design towards his sons in and by the Messiah was of another nature, it was to bring them unto glory, eternal glory, with himself in heaven; and so it is no wonder if the way whereby this is to be accomplished, be quite of another nature than that whereby their temporal deliverance was wrought, namely, by the death and sufferings of the Messiah himself. And here, in reference unto this design of God, it is supposed, 1. That some who were created for the glory of God, had by sin come short of it; so that without a new way of bringing them unto it, it was impossible that they should ever be made partakers of it. This is here supposed by the apostle, and is the foundation of all his doctrine concerning the Messiah. 2. That the way whereby God will at length bring them who are designed unto glory thereunto, is by taking of them first into a state of sonship and reconciliation with himself: they must be sons, before they are brought to glory. There is a double act of God's predestination; the first is, his designation of some unto grace to be sons, Eph. i. 5, the other, his appointment of those sons unto glory, both to be wrought and accomplished by Christ, the Captain of their salvation. The latter, and the execution of it, namely, the bringing of those who by grace are made sons, unto glory, is that which the apostle here expresseth. He dealeth not with the Hebrews in this Epistle about the conversion of the elect, the traduction of them into a state of grace and sonship, but of the government of them being made sons, and their guidance unto glory. And therefore the sufferings of Christ, which absolutely and in themselves are the cause of our sonship and reconciliation with God, are mentioned here only as the means whereby Christ entered into a condition of leading sons into glory, or of saving them who upon the account of his sufferings are made sons by grace. But yet this is not so precisely respected neither, but that the apostle withal intimates the necessity of the sufferings of Christ, as to the whole effect of it towards the elect. Now these sons, thus to be brought unto glory, are said to be many; not all absolutely, not a few, or of the Jews only, which they looked for, but all the elect of God, who are many, Rev. vii. 9. And this work of bringing many sons unto glory, is here signally assigned by the apostle unto God the Father, whose love, wisdom, and grace, believers are principally to eye in the whole work of their salvation, wrought out and accomplished by Jesus Christ. This therefore we shall a little insist upon, to declare the grounds and reasons, on the account whereof it is so ascribed unto him, or what acts are peculiarly assigned unto the Father in this work of bringing many sons unto glory, which will secure the ascription of it unto him, and therein our interpretation of the place.

1. The eternal designation of them to that glory whereunto they are to be brought, is peculiarly assigned to him. "He predestinates them to be conformed to the image of his Son," Rom. viii. 28—30. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ chooseth us before the foundation of the world, and predestineth us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, Eph. i. 3—5. And he hath "from the beginning chosen us unto salvation," 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. And this electing love of God, this eternal purpose of his "good pleasure, which he purposed in himself," is the fountain and spring of all other immediate causes of our salvation. From hence faith, Acts xiii. 48; sanctification, 2 Thess. ii. 13; holiness, Eph. i. 4, preservation in grace, 2 Tim. ii. 19; the death of Christ for them, John iii. 16, and final glory itself, 2 Tim. ii. 10, do all ensue and proceed, so that on the account hereof, he may justly be said to be the "Bringer of many sons to glory."

2. He was the spring and fountain of that covenant (as in other operations of the Deity) that was of old between himself and his Son, about the salvation and glory of the elect, See Zech. vi. 13; Isa. xlii. 1; Prov. viii. 20—30; Isa. i. 4, liii. 11, 12; Ps. xvi. 10; Ps. cx. 1, 6. He in his love and grace is still declared as the proposer both of the duty and of the reward of the Mediator, the Son incarnate, as the Son accepts of his terms and proposals, Heb. x. 5—8. And hence the intenseness of his love, the immutability of his counsel, the holiness of his nature, his righteousness and faithfulness, his infinite wisdom, do all shine forth in the mediation and sufferings of Christ, Rom. iii. 25, 26, v. 8; 1 John iv. 9; Heb. vi. 17, 18; Tit. i. 2. Rather than his love should not be satisfied, and his counsel accomplished, "he spared not his own Son, but gave him unto death for us."

3. He signally gave out the first promise, that great foundation of the covenant of grace, and afterwards declared, confirmed, and ratified by his oath, that covenant wherein all the means of bringing the elect to glory are contained, Gen. iii. 15; Jer. xxxi. 32—34; Heb. viii. 8. The person of the Father is considered as the principal author of the covenant, as the person covenanting and taking us into covenant with himself, the Son as the Messiah, being considered as the Surety and Mediator of it, Heb. vii. 22, ix. 15, and the Purchaser of the promises of it.

4. He gave and sent his Son to be a Saviour and Redeemer for them and to them; so that in his whole work, in all that he did and suffered, he obeyed the command and fulfilled the will of the Father. Him did God the Father send, and seal, and give, and set forth, as the Scripture every-where expresseth it. And our Lord Jesus Christ every-where remits us to the consideration of the love, will, and authority of his Father, in all that he did, taught, or suffered, so seeking the glory of God that sent him.

5. He draws his elect, and enables them to come to the Son, to believe in him, and so to obtain life, salvation, and glory by him. "No man," saith our Saviour, "can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," John vi. 44. No man, no not any one of the elect, can come to Christ unless the Father, in the pursuit

of that love from whence it was that he sent the Son, do put forth the efficacy of his grace to enable him thereto, and accordingly he reveals him to some, when he is hidden from others, Matt. xi. 25. For the revelation of Christ to the soul is the immediate act of the Father, Matt. xvi. 17.

6. Being "reconciled to them by the blood of his Son," he reconciles them to himself, by giving them pardon and forgiveness of sins in and by the promises of the gospel, without which they cannot come to glory, 2 Cor. v. 18—21. "He is in Christ reconciling us unto himself," by the non-imputation, or forgiveness of our sins, "Forgiving us all our trespasses for Christ's sake, Eph. iv. 32. There are many things concurring to the pardon of sin, that are peculiar acts of the Father.

7. He quickens them and sanctifies them by his Spirit, to "make them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," that is for the enjoyment of glory. "He that raised up Jesus from the dead quickens us by his Spirit," Rom. viii. 11, (Eph. ii. 1). So saving us, "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us richly by Jesus Christ," Tit. iii. v. 6. This sanctification and renovation by the Holy Ghost, and all supplies of actual grace, enabling us to obedience, are every-where asserted as the grant and work of the Father, who "worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." And so in especial is the saving illumination of our minds, to know the mystery of his grace, and discern the things that are of God, 2 Cor. iv. 6; Col. ii. 2; Eph. iii. 13—18; Matt. xi. 25.

8. As the great Father of the family he adopts them, and makes them his sons, that so he may bring them to glory. He gives them the power or privilege to become the sons of God, John i. 12, making them heirs and co-heirs with Christ, Rom. viii. 14—17, sending withal "into their hearts the Spirit of adoption, enabling them to cry Abba Father," Gal. iv. 6. The whole right of adopting children is in the Father, and so is the authoritative translation of them out of the world and kingdom of Satan into his own family and household, with their investiture in all the rights and privileges thereof.

9. He confirms them in faith, establisheth them in obedience, preserveth them from dangers and oppositions of all sorts, and in manifold wisdom keeps them through his power to the glory prepared for them, as 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; Eph. iii. 20, 21; 1 Pet. i. 5; John xvii. 11.

10. He gives them the Holy Ghost as their Comforter, with all those blessed and unspeakable benefits which attend that gift of his, Matt. vii. 11; Luke xi. 13; John xiv. 16, 17; Gal. iv. 6.

In brief, in bringing the elect to glory, all the sovereign acts of power, wisdom, love, and grace, exerted therein, are peculiarly assigned to the Father, as all ministerial acts are to the Son as Mediator. So that there is no reason why he may not be said by the way of eminency to be the *αγωγεύς*, 'the leader or bringer of his sons to glory.'

And herein lies a great direction to believers, and a great support for their faith. Peter tells us, that "by Christ we do believe in God that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and



hope might be in God," 1 Pet. i. 21. Jesus Christ, considered as Mediator, is the next, but not the ultimate object of our faith and hope. We so believe in him, as by him to believe in God, that is the Father, whose love is the supreme fountain and spring of our salvation, which the apostle manifests in that double instance of his raising up Christ, and giving of him glory, thereby declaring himself the principal author of the great work of his mediation. This he directs us to, so to believe in Christ, as that discerning in and by him the grace, goodwill, and love of the Father himself towards us, we may be encouraged to fix our faith and hope on him, seeing he himself loveth us. So that Christ himself had no need to pray for the love of the Father to us, but only for the communication of the effects of it, John xvi. 26, 27. And this is the work of faith, when, as we are directed, we pray to the Father in the name of Christ, John xvi. 23, 24. And we thus place our faith in God the Father, when we conceive of him as the sovereign Leader of us to glory, by all the instances before mentioned. And then doth faith find rest in him, delight, complacency, and satisfaction, as we have elsewhere declared.

Thirdly, There is in these words intimated the principal means that God fixed on for the accomplishment of this design of his, for the bringing of many sons to glory; it was by appointing a Captain of their salvation. The Jews generally granted that the Messiah was to be the Captain of their salvation, but misunderstanding that salvation, they also mistook the whole nature of his office. The apostle doth here evidently compare him to Joshua, the captain and leader of the people into Canaan, (as he had before preferred him above the angels, by whose ministry the law was given to the people in the wilderness,) which was a type of their salvation, as he farther declares, chap. iv. All the sons of God are put under his conduct and guidance, as the people of old were under the rule of Joshua, to bring them into the glory designed for them, and promised to them in the covenant made with Abraham. And he is called their Ἀρχηγός, 'Prince, Ruler, and Captain, or Author of their salvation,' on several accounts. 1. Of his authority and right to rule over them in order to their salvation. So he appeared to Joshua, as שׂרֵצְבָא־יְהוָה, Josh. v. 14, "The Captain of the Lord's host," intimating then, that there was another Captain and other work to do, than what Joshua had then in hand—the General of all the people of God, as Joab was to Israel, שׂרֵצְבָא. 2. Of his actual leading and conduct of them by his example, spirit, and grace, through all the difficulties of their warfare; so he was promised, as נָסִיחַ, Isa. lv. 4, Princeps, Dux, Antecessor, ἀρχηγός, 'a leader and commander of the people, one that goes before them for their direction and guidance, giving them an example in his own person of doing and suffering the will of God, and so entering into glory. So is he their Προδρόμος, Heb. vi. 20, 'Antecessor, Fore-runner,' or as Daniel calls him, מְשִׁיחַ נָסִיחַ, Dan. ix. 25, "Messiah the Prince," or Guide. 3. As he is to them Αἰτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου, as chap. v. 9, "the Author or cause of eternal salvation," he procured and purchased it for them. So that the expression denotes both his acquisition of salvation itself, and his conduct or leading of the people of God to the en-

joyment of it. And the Holy Ghost hereby also intimates, that the way whereby God will bring the sons unto glory, is full of difficulties, perplexities, and oppositions, as that of the Israelites into Canaan was also; so that they have need of a captain, leader, and guide, to carry them through it. But yet all is rendered safe and secure unto them, through the power, grace, and faithfulness of their Leader. They only perish in the wilderness, and die in their sins, who either out of love unto the flesh-pots of Egypt, the pleasures of this world, or being terrified with the hardships of the warfare which he calls them to, refuse to go up under his command.

Fourthly, There is expressed in the words, the especial way whereby God fitted or designed the Lord Christ unto this office, of being a Captain of salvation unto the sons to be brought to glory. To understand this aright, we must observe that the apostle speaks not here of the redemption of the elect absolutely, but of the bringing them to glory, when they are made sons in an especial manner. And therefore he treats not absolutely of the designation, consecration, or fitting of the Lord Christ unto his office of Mediator in general, but as unto that part, and the execution of it, which especially concerns the leading of the sons unto glory, as Joshua led the Israelites into Canaan. This will give us light into what act of God towards the Lord Christ is intended in this expression, *τελειωσαι αυτον δια παθηματων*. And sundry are here pleaded by expositors, not without some probability. As, 1. Some think, that his bringing him to glory is intended: it became him, *τελειωσαι*, to bring him to glory, by and through sufferings, so to perfect him. But besides that the word is no where so used, nor hath any such signification, the apostle doth not declare what God intended to bring him unto, but by what in and about him, he intended to bring many sons to glory. 2. Some would have it to denote the finishing of God's work about him: whence in his sufferings on the cross, he said, *τετελεσται*, "It is finished, John xix. 30. This answers indeed the sense of the word *τελειω*, used in that place by our Saviour, but not of *τελειωω*, the word here used by the apostle, which never signifies to end or finish, or to perfect by bringing unto an end. 3. Some think God made the Lord Christ perfect by sufferings, in that he gave him thereby a full sense and experience of the condition of his people; whence he is said to learn obedience by the things that he suffered, ch. v. 8. And this is true, God did so; but it is not formally and directly expressed by this word, which is never used unto that purpose. This is rather a consequent of the act here intended, than the act itself. *Τελειωσαι* then, in this place, signifies 'to consecrate, dedicate, to sanctify unto an office,' or some especial part or act of an office. This is the proper meaning of the word: *τελη*, are 'mysteries,' and *τελεται*, 'sacred acts and offices;' *τετελεσμενοι* are those who are initiated and consecrated unto sacred offices or employments; see Exod. xxix. 33, 35, in the LXX. Hence the ancients called baptism *τελειωτης*, or consecration unto the sacred service of Christ; and *αγιαζω*, the word next insisted on by our apostle, is so used by Christ himself, John xvii. 19, *υπερ αυτων εγω αγιαζω εμαυτον*, 'for their sakes I sanctify (that is, dedicate, consecrate, se-

parate) myself to be a sacrifice.' And his blood is said to be that, *ἐν ᾧ ἡγιασθη*, Heb. x. 29, 'wherewith he was so consecrated.' Nor is this word used in any other sense in this whole Epistle, wherein it is often used, when applied to Christ; see ch. v. 9, vii. 28. And this was the use of the word among the heathen, signifying the initiation and consecration of a man into the mysteries of their religion, to be a leader unto others. And among some of them it was performed through the instigation of the devil by great sufferings. *Οὐκ ἂν αἰ μίθραν δυνήσαιο τις τελεσθῆναι, εἰ μὴ δια τινῶν βαθμῶν παρελθῶν τῶν κολακῶν, δείξῃ ἑαυτόν ὅσιον καὶ ἀπαθῇ*, saith Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. con'. I. 'No man could be consecrated unto the mysteries of Mithra (the sun) unless he proved himself holy, and as it were inviolable, by passing through many degrees of punishments and trials.' Thus it became God to dedicate and consecrate the Lord Christ unto this part of his office by his own sufferings. He consecrated Aaron to be priest of old, but by the hands of Moses; and he was set apart to his office by the sacrifice of other things. But the Lord Christ must be consecrated by his own sufferings, and the sacrifice of himself. And thence it is, that those very sufferings, which as antecedaneous unto his being a captain of salvation, to this end that he might lead the sons unto glory, are means of his dedication or consecration, are in themselves a great part of that means whereby he procures salvation for them. By all the sufferings then of the Lord Christ in his life and death, by which sufferings he wrought out the salvation of the elect, did God consecrate and dedicate him to be a prince, a leader, and captain of salvation unto his people, as Peter declares the whole matter, Acts v. 30, 31, and ii. 36. And from these things last mentioned, of the Lord Christ being the captain of our salvation, and being dedicated unto that office by his own sufferings, it appeareth,

First. That the whole work of saving the sons of God from first to last, their guidance and conduct through sins and sufferings unto glory, is committed unto the Lord Jesus; whence he is constantly to be eyed by believers in all the concernments of their faith, obedience, and consolation. "Behold," saith the Lord, "I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people," Isa. lv. 4, a witness to testify the truth, in revealing the mind and will of God; a leader going before them as a prince and captain, as the word signifies; and a commander, that gives out laws and rules for their obedience. God hath set him as a Lord over his whole house, ch. iii. 5, and committed all the management of all its concernments unto him. There is no person that belongs unto God's design of bringing many sons to glory, but he is under his rule and inspection. Neither is there any thing that concerns any of them in their passage towards glory, whereby they may be farthered or hindered in their way, but the care is committed unto him, as the care of the whole army lies on the general, or prince of the host. This the prophet sets out in his type Eliakim, Isa. xxii. 21—24, "He is fastened as a nail in a sure place; and all the glory of the house, and every vessel of it, from the greatest unto the least, is hanged on him," the weight of all, the care of all is upon him, committed unto him. When the people came out

of Egypt with Moses, they were numbered unto him, and he being the administrator of the law, they died all in the wilderness; but they were delivered again by tale and number unto Joshua the type of Christ, and none of them, not one failed of entering into Canaan. And he dischargeth this trust as a faithful captain.

First. With care and watchfulness, Psal. cxxi. 4, "Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep." There is no time nor season wherein the sons committed unto his care may be surprised through any neglect or regardlessness in him. His eyes are always open upon them. They are never out of his heart, nor thoughts; they are "engraven on the palms of his hand, and their walls are continually before him;" or as he expresseth it, Isa. xxvii. 3, "I the Lord do keep my vineyard: I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it; I will keep it night and day." Greater care and watchfulness cannot be expressed; night and day, and every moment in them, he is intent about this work. O how great an encouragement is this to adhere unto him, to follow him in the whole course of obedience that he calls unto. This puts life into soldiers, and gives them security, when they know that their commander is continually careful for them.

Secondly. He dischargeth this great trust with tenderness and love: Isa. xl. 11, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." These sons are of various sorts and degrees; the best and strongest of them are but sheep, poor, infirm, and helpless creatures; and amongst them, some are young and tender as lambs; some heavy and burdened with sins and afflictions, like those that are with young. In tender compassion, he condescends unto all their conditions; feeds and preserves the whole flock as a shepherd; gathers in his arm, and bears in his bosom, those that otherwise by their infirmity would be cast behind, and left unto danger. Compassion he hath for them that err, and are out of the way; seeks for them that wander, heals the diseased, feeds them when they are even a flock of slaughter. And where these two concur, care and compassion, there can be no want of any thing, Psal. xxiii. 1. Indeed, Zion is ready sometimes to complain that she is forgotten. The sons, in great distresses, afflictions, persecutions, temptations, that may befall them in their way to glory, are apt to think they are forgotten and disregarded, that they are left as it were to shift for themselves, and to wrestle with their difficulties by their own strength and wisdom, which they know to be as a thing of nought. But this fear is vain and ungrateful. Whilst they are found in the way, following the Captain of their salvation, it is utterly impossible that this watchfulness, care, love, and tenderness, should in any thing be wanting unto them.

Thirdly. He leads them with power, authority, and majesty, Mic. v. 4, "He shall stand and rule in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God, and they shall abide." The name of God is in him, accompanied with his power and majesty, which he puts forth in the feeding and ruling of his people, whereon their safety doth depend. They shall abide, or dwell in safety, because in this his glory and majesty, he shall be great, or be magnified, unto the ends



of the earth. So also is he described in his rule, Zech. vi. 13, "Even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be a priest upon his throne." Having built the temple, raised a house and family to God, he shall be the ruler or captain of it, to preserve it unto glory; and this in a glorious manner, bearing the glory of God, sitting upon a throne, in the whole discharge of his office, both as a king and priest. Unto this end is he entrusted with all the power and authority which we have before described, God having given him to be head over all things to his church. There is nothing so high, so great, so mighty, that lies in the way of his sons to glory, but it must stoop to his authority, and give place to his power. The whole kingdom of Satan, the strong holds of sin, the high imaginations of unbelief, the strength and malice of the world, all sink before him. And thence are they described so glorious and successful in their way, Mic. ii. 13, "The breaker is come up before them, they have broken up and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it, and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." Many obstacles lie in their way, but they shall break through them all, because of their King and Lord that goes before them. And those difficulties which in this world they meet withal, that seem to be too hard for them, their persecutions, and sufferings, though they may put a stop unto somewhat of their outward profession, yet they shall not in the least hinder them in their progress unto glory. Their Captain goes before them with power and authority, and breaks up all the hedges and gates that lie in their way, and gives them a free and abundant entrance into the kingdom of God.

Secondly. As the manner how, so the acts wherein and whereby this Antecessor and Captain of salvation leads on the sons of God, may be considered; and he doth it variously.

First. He goes before them in the whole way unto the end. This is a principal duty of a captain or leader, to go before his soldiers. Hence they that went unto the war, were said to go at the feet of their commanders, Judges iv. 10, "Barak went up, and ten thousand men at his feet;" that is, followed him, and went where he went before them. And this also became the Captain of the Lord's host, even to go before his people in their whole way, not putting them on any thing not calling them to any thing, which himself passeth not before them in. And there are three things whereunto their whole course may be referred.

1. Their obedience. 2. Their sufferings. 3. Their entrance into glory. And in all these hath the Lord Christ gone before them, and that as their Captain and Leader, inviting them to engage into them, and courageously to pass through them upon his example, and the success that he sets before them.

1. As unto obedience; he himself was made under the law, and learned obedience, fulfilling all righteousness. Though he was in his own person above the law, yet he submitted himself to every law of God, and righteous law of men, that he might give an example unto them who were of necessity to be subject unto them. So he tells his

disciples, as to one instance of his humility, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done," John xiii. 15. As he calls on "all to learn of him, for he was meek and lowly of heart," Matt. xi. 29. That is, learn to be like him in those heavenly graces. This the apostles proposed as their pattern and ours, 1 Cor. xi. 1, "Be followers of me, as I am of Christ." That is, labour with me to imitate Christ. And the utmost perfection which we are bound to aim at in holiness and obedience, is nothing but conformity unto Jesus Christ, and the pattern that he hath set before us, to mark his footsteps and to follow him. This is our putting on of Jesus Christ, and growing up into the same image and likeness with him.

2. He goes before the sons of God in sufferings, and therein is also a leader unto them by his example. Christ, said Peter, "hath suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps," that is, be ready and prepared unto patience in sufferings, when we are called thereunto, as he explains himself, chap. iv. 1, "Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind," that you may follow him in the same way. And this our apostle presseth much in this Epistle, chap. xii. 2, 3, "Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame: for consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds." The sons of God are sometimes ready to think it strange that they should fall into calamity and distresses, and are apt to say with Hezekiah, "Remember O Lord we beseech thee how we have walked before thee in truth, and with an upright heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight," and to weep sore; supposing that this might have freed them from oppositions and persecutions. And as it was with Gideon when the angel told him "the Lord was with him." He replies, "Whence is all this evil come upon us?" For when they find it is otherwise, and begin to apply themselves unto their condition, yet if their troubles continue, if they are not in their season removed, they are ready to be weary and faint in their minds. But, saith the apostle, "Consider the captain of your salvation," he hath set you another manner of example, notwithstanding all his sufferings, he fainted not. The like argument he presseth, chap. xiii. 12, 13. And the Scripture in many places represents unto us the same consideration. The Jews have a saying, that a third part of the afflictions and troubles that shall be in the world, do belong unto the Messiah. But our apostle, who knew better than they, makes all the afflictions of the church to be the afflictions of Christ, Col. i. 24; who both before underwent them in his own person, and led the way to all that shall follow him. And as the obedience of Christ, which is our pattern, doth incomparably exceed whatever we can attain unto, so the sufferings of Christ, which are our example, did incomparably exceed all that we shall be called unto. Our pattern is excellent, inimitable in the substance and parts of it, unattainable and inexpressible in its degrees, and he is the best proficient who attends most thereunto.

3. But what is the end of all this obedience and suffering? death

lies at the door, as the ocean whereunto all these streams do run, and seems to swallow them up, that there they are lost for ever. No; for 3. This Captain of our salvation is gone before us in passing through death, and entering into glory. He hath shown us in his own resurrection, (that great pledge of our immortality,) that death is not the end of our course, but a passage into another more abiding condition. He promiseth, that whosoever believeth on him, they shall not be lost or perish, or consumed by death, but that he will "raise them up at the last day," John vi. 39, 40. But how shall this be confirmed unto them? Death looks ghastly and dreadful, as a lion that devours all that come within his reach: Why, saith Christ, behold me entering into his jaws, passing through his power, rising from under his dominion; and fear not, so shall it be with you also. This our apostle disputes at large, 1 Cor. xv. 12—21. He is gone before us through death, and is become the first fruits of them that sleep. And had Christ passed into heaven before he died, as did Enoch and Elijah, we had wanted the greatest evidence of our future immortality. What then remains for the finishing of our course? Why, the Captain of our salvation, after he had suffered, entered into glory; and that as our leader or forerunner, Heb. vi. 20, "Jesus, as our forerunner, is entered into heaven;" he is gone before us, to evidence unto us what is the end of our obedience and sufferings. In all this, he is a Captain and Leader unto the sons of God.

Secondly. He guides them and directs them in their way. This also belongs unto him as their Captain and Guide. Two things in this, are they of themselves defective in: 1. They know not the way that leads to happiness and glory; and, 2. They want ability to discern it aright when it is shown unto them: and in both they are relieved and assisted by their leader; in the first by his word, in the latter by his Spirit. First. Of themselves they know not the way; as Thomas said, "How can we know the way?" The will of God, the mystery of his love and grace, as to the way whereby he will bring sinners unto glory, is unknown to the sons of men by nature. It was a secret hid in God, a sealed book which none in heaven or earth could open. But this Jesus Christ hath fully declared in his word, unto all the sons that are to be brought unto glory. He hath revealed the Father from his own bosom, John i. 18, and declared those heavenly things, "which no man knew, but he that came down from heaven, and yet at the same time was in heaven," John iii. 12, 13. In his word hath he declared the name, and revealed the whole counsel of God; and brought life and immortality to light, 2 Tim. i. 10. Whatever is any way needful, useful, helpful in their obedience, worship of God, suffering, expectation of glory, he hath taught it them all, revealed it all unto them. Other teachers they need not. Had there been any thing belonging unto their way which he had not revealed unto them, he had not been a perfect Captain of salvation unto them. And men do nothing but presumptuously derogate from his glory, who will be adding and imposing their prescriptions in and about this way.

Again, The way being revealed in the word, he enables them by his Spirit, to see, discern, and know it, in such a holy and saving manner,

as is needful to bring them unto the end of it. He gives them eyes to see, as well as provides paths for them to walk in. It had been to no purpose to have declared the way, if he had not also given them light to see it. This blessed work of his Spirit, is every-where declared in the Scripture, Isa. xlii. 16. And by this means is he unto us, what he was unto the church in the wilderness, when he went before them in a pillar of fire, to guide them in their way, and to show them where they should rest. And herein lies no small part of the discharge of his office towards us, as the Captain of our salvation. Whatever acquaintance we have with the way to glory, we have it from him alone; and whatever ability we have to discern the way, he is the fountain and author of it. This God hath designed and called him unto. And all our wisdom consists in this, that we betake ourselves unto him, to him alone, for instruction and direction in this matter, Matt. xvii. 5. Doth not he deservedly wander, yea, and perish, who in war will neglect the orders and directions of his general, and attend unto every idle tale of men pretending to show him a way that they have found out, better than that which his captain hath limited him unto?

Thirdly. He supplies them with strength by his grace, that they may be able to pass on in their way. They have much work lying before them; much to do, much to suffer, and without him they can do nothing, John xv. 5. Wherefore he watcheth over them, to succour them that are tempted, Heb. ii. 18, and to give out help unto them all in time of need, ch. iv. 16, and hence they who have no might, no sufficiency, can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth them, Phil. iv. 13. Nothing is too hard for them, nothing can prevail against them, because of the constant supplies of grace, which the Captain of their salvation communicates unto them. And this makes the ways of the gospel marvellous, both to the world and to believers themselves. Their life is hid with God in Christ, Col. iii. 3, and they have a new name that no man knoweth, Rev. ii. 17. The world seeing poor, mean, weak, contemptible creatures, willing, ready, and able to suffer, endure, and die for the name of Christ, stand astonished, not knowing where their great strength lies, as the Philistines did at the might of Sampson, whom they saw with their eyes to be like other men. Let them in the height of their pride, and rage of their madness, pretend what they please, they cannot but be, they really are, amazed to see poor creatures, whom otherwise they exceedingly despise, constant unto the truth and profession of the gospel, against all their allurements and affrightments. They know not, they consider not, the constant supplies of the strength and grace which they receive from their Leader. He gives them the Spirit of truth, which the world neither sees nor knows, John xiv. 17, and therefore it wonders from whence they have their ability and constancy. They cry, What! will nothing turn these poor foolish creatures out of their way? They try them one way, and then another; add one weight of affliction and oppression unto another, and think surely this will effect their design; but they find themselves deceived, and know not whence it is. The ways of obedience are hence also marvellous unto believers themselves.



When they consider their own frailty and weakness, how ready they are to faint, how often they are surprised, and withal take a prospect of what opposition lies against them, from indwelling sin, Satan, and the world, which they are acquainted with in several instances of their power and prevalency, they neither know how they have abode so long in their course as they have done, nor how they shall continue it unto the end. But they are relieved when they come to the promise of the gospel. There they see whence their preservation doth proceed. They see this Captain of their salvation, in whom is the fulness of the Spirit, and to whom are committed all the stores of grace, giving out daily and hourly unto them as the matter doth require. As the captain in an army doth not at once give out unto his soldiers the whole provision that is needful for their way and undertaking; for if he should, the most of them would instantly waste it, and so quickly perish for want; but he keeps provision for them all in his stores, and gives out unto them according to their daily necessities; so God gave the people manna for their daily food in the wilderness; even so deals this great Leader with the sons of God. He keeps the stores of grace and spiritual strength in his own hand; and from thence imparts unto them according as they stand in need.

Fourthly. He subdues their enemies. And this belongs to his office, as the Captain of their salvation, in an especial manner. Many enemies they have, and unless these are conquered and subdued, they can never enter into glory. Satan, the world, death, and sin, are the chief or heads of them, and all these are subdued by Christ; and that two ways. First. In his own person: for they all attempted him, and failed in their enterprise, John xiv. 30. He bruised the serpent's head, Gen. iii. 15, and destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, ver. 14, of this chapter; destroyed his power in a glorious and triumphant manner, Col. ii. 15. He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross, adding the utmost complement unto his victory in a triumph. And he overcame the world, John xvi. 33, "Be of good cheer," saith he, "I have overcome the world." Both it, and the prince of it, were put under his feet. Death also was subdued by him; he swallowed it up in victory, 1 Cor. xv. 54. He plucked out its sting, broke its power, disannulled its peremptory law, when he shook it off from him, and rose from under it, Acts ii. 24. Sin also set upon him in his temptations, but was utterly foiled; as all sin is destroyed in its very being, where it is not obeyed. And all this was for the advantage of the sons of God.

For, 1. He hath given them encouragement, in showing them that their enemies are not invincible, their power is not uncontrollable, their law not peremptory or eternal; but that, having been once conquered, they may the more easily be dealt withal.

2. They know also, that all these enemies set upon his person in their quarrel, and as he was the great Defender of the faithful, so that although they were not conquered by their persons, yet they were conquered in their cause; and they are called in to be sharers in the victory, although they were not engaged in the battle.

3. That he subdued them by God's ordinance and appointment, as their representative ; declaring in his person, who is the head, what should be accomplished in every one of his members.

And, 4. That by his personal conquest over them, he hath left them weak, maimed, disarmed, and utterly deprived of that power they had to hurt and destroy, before he engaged with them. For he hath thereby deprived them, 1. Of all their right and title to exercise their enmity against, or dominion over the sons of God. Before his dealing with them, they had all right to the utmost over mankind. Satan to rule, the world to vex, sin to enslave, death to destroy and give up unto hell. And all this right was enrolled in the law, and hand-writing of ordinances which was against us. This was cancelled by Christ, nailed to the cross, never to be pleaded more, Col. ii. 14. And when any have lost their right or title unto any thing, whatever their strength be, they are greatly weakened. But he hath herein, 2. Deprived them of their strength also. He took away the strength of sin as a law, and the sting of death in sin, the arms of the world in the curse, and the power of Satan in his works and strong holds.

But this is not all, he not only subdues these enemies for them, but also in them and by them ; for though they have neither title nor arms, yet they will try the remainder of their power against them also. "But thanks be to God," saith the apostle, "who giveth us the victory by Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv. 57. He enables us in our own persons to conquer all these enemies. "Nay," saith he, "in all these things we are more than conquerors," Rom. viii. 37. Because we have more assurance of success, more assistance in the conflict, more joy in the trial, than any other conquerors have, or we do not only conquer, but triumph also. As for Satan, he tells believers, that "they have overcome the wicked one," 1 John ii. 13, 14. And shows how it came to pass that they should be able to do so, chap. iv. 4. "It is, because greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world." The good Spirit which he hath given unto them to help and assist them, is infinitely greater and more powerful than that evil spirit which rules in the children of disobedience ; and by this means is Satan bruised even under their feet. A conflict indeed we must have with them, we must wrestle with principalities and powers in heavenly places ; but the success is secured through the assistance we receive from this Captain of our salvation.

The world also is subdued in them and by them, 1 John v. 4. "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Faith will do this work, it never failed in it nor ever will. He that believeth shall overcome ; the whole strength of Christ is engaged unto his assistance. Sin is the worst and most obstinate of all their enemies. This puts them hard to it in the battle, and makes them cry out for aid and help, Rom. vii. 24. But this also they receive strength against, so as to carry away the day. "I thank God," saith the apostle, "through Jesus Christ our Lord," ver 25, namely, for deliverance and victory. Sin hath a double design in its enmity against us. 1. To reign in us ; 2. To condemn us. If it be disappointed in these designs, it is abso-

lutely conquered, and that it is by the grace of Christ. As to its reign and dominion, it is perfectly defeated for the present, Rom. vi. 14. The means of its rule, is the authority of the law over us; that being removed, and our souls put under the conduct of grace, the reign of sin comes to an end. Nor shall it condemn us, Rom. viii. 1. And what can it then do? Where is the voice of this oppressor? It abides but a season, and that but to endure and die. Death also contends against us, by its own sting and our fear; but the first by the grace of Christ is taken from it, and from the latter also we are delivered, and so have the victory over it. And all this is the work of this Captain of our salvation for us, and in us.

5. He doth not only conquer all their enemies, but he avenges their sufferings on them, and punisheth them for their enmity. These enemies, though they prevail not absolutely nor finally, against the sons of God, yet by their temptations, persecutions, oppressions, they put them oftentimes to unspeakable hardships, sorrow, and trouble. This the Captain of their salvation will not take at their hands, but will avenge on them all their ungodly endeavours from the lowest unto the greatest and highest of them. Some he will deal withal in this world, but he hath appointed a day wherein not one of them shall escape. See Rev. xx. 10, 14. Devil, and beast, and false prophet, and death, and hell, shall go all together into the lake of fire.

6. He provides a reward, a crown for them, and in the bestowing thereof, accomplisheth this his blessed office of the Captain of our salvation. He is gone before the sons into heaven, to make ready their glory, to prepare a place for them, and he "will come and receive them unto himself, that where he is, there they may be also," John xiv. 2, 3. When he hath given them the victory, he will take them unto himself, even unto his throne, Rev. iii. 22. And as a righteous judge, he will give "unto them a crown of righteousness and glory," 2 Tim. iv. 8. And thus is the whole work of conducting the sons of God unto glory, from first to last, committed unto this great Captain of their salvation, and thus doth he discharge his office and trust therein, and blessed are all they who are under his leading and guidance. And all this should teach us,

First. To betake ourselves unto him, and to rely upon him in the whole course of our obedience, and all the passages thereof. To this purpose is he designed by the Father, this hath he undertaken, and this doth he go through withal. No address that is made unto him in this matter will he ever refuse to attend unto; no case or condition that is proposed unto him, is too hard for him or beyond his power to relieve. He is careful, watchful, tender, faithful, powerful, and all these properties and blessed endowments will he exercise in the discharge of this office. What should hinder us from betaking ourselves unto him continually? Is our trouble so small, are our duties so ordinary, that we can wrestle with them or perform them in our own strength? Alas, we can do nothing, not think a good thought, not endure a reproachful word. And whatever we seem to do or endure of ourselves, it is all lost, "for in us there dwelleth no good thing." Or are our distresses so great, our temptations so many, our corrup-

tions so strong, that we begin to say there is no hope? Is any thing too hard for the Captain of our salvation? Hath he not already conquered all our enemies? Is he not able to subdue all things by his power? Shall we faint whilst Jesus Christ lives and reigns? But it may be, we have looked for help and assistance, and it hath not answered our expectation, so that now we begin to faint and despond. Sin is not subdued, the world is still triumphant, and Satan rageth as much as ever, his temptations are ready to pass over our souls. But have we sought for his help and assistance in a due manner with faith and perseverance, unto right ends of his glory, and advantage of the gospel? Have we taken a right measure of what we have received? Or do we not complain without a cause? Let us not judge according to outward appearance, but judge righteous judgment. What is it to us, if the world triumph, if Satan rage, if sin tempt and vex? we are not promised that it shall be otherwise. But are we forsaken? Are we not kept from being prevailed against? If we ask amiss, or for improper ends, or know not what we do receive, or think, because the strength of enemies appears to be great, we must fail and be ruined; let us not complain of our Captain, for all these things arise from our own unbelief. Let our application unto him be according unto his command, our expectations from him according to the promise; our experiences of what we receive be measured by the rule of the word, and we shall find, that we have all grounds of assurance that we can desire. Let us then in every condition "look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," who hath undertaken the leading of us in the whole course of our obedience from first to last, and we shall not need to faint, nor shall we ever fail.

Secondly. To look for direction and guidance from him. This in an especial manner belongs unto him as the Captain of our salvation. There are two things which we find by experience that professors are apt to be at a great loss in, while they are in this world: the worship of God, and their own troubles. For the first, we see and find that woeful variance that is among all sorts of men; and for the latter, we are apt ourselves to be much bewildered in them, as unto our duty and our way. Now all this uncertainty ariseth from the want of a due attendance unto Jesus Christ as our guide. In reference unto both these, he hath peculiarly promised his presence with us. With the dispensers of the word he hath promised to be unto the end of the world, or consummation of all things, Matt. xxviii. 29. And we find "him walking in the midst of his golden candlesticks, Rev. i. In that allegorical description of the gospel church-state and worship, which we have in Ezekiel, there is a peculiar place assigned unto the prince. Now one end of his presence is, to see that all things are done according to his mind and will. And unto whom should we go but unto himself alone? His word here will prove the best directory, and his Spirit the best guide. If we neglect these, to attend unto the wisdom of men, we shall wander in uncertainties all our days. It is so also in respect of our troubles; we are ready in them to consult with flesh and blood, to look after the examples of others, to take the advice that comes next to hand; when the Lord Christ hath promised



his presence with us in them all, and that as the Captain of our salvation. And if we neglect him, his example, his direction, his teaching, it is no wonder if we pine away under our distresses.

II. We may observe, that the Lord Jesus Christ being priest, sacrifice, and altar himself, the offering whereby he was consecrated unto the perfection and complement of his office, was of necessity to be part of that work, which as our priest and mediator he was to undergo and perform. When other typical priests were to be consecrated, there was an offering of beasts appointed for that purpose, and an altar to offer on, and a person to consecrate them. But all this was to be done in and by Jesus Christ himself. Even the Father is said to consecrate him, but upon the account of his designing him and appointing him unto this office; but his immediate actual consecration was his own work, which he performed when he offered himself through the eternal Spirit. By his death and suffering, which he underwent in the discharge of his office, and as a priest therein offered himself unto God, he was dedicated and consecrated unto the perfection of his office. This would require our further explication in this place, but that it will again occur unto us more directly.

III. The Lord Christ being consecrated and perfected through sufferings, hath consecrated the way of suffering, for all that follow him, to pass through unto glory. All complaints of sufferings, all despondencies under them, all fears of them, are rendered unjust and unequal by the sufferings of Christ. It is surely righteous that they should be contented with his lot here, who desire to be received into his glory hereafter. Now there are sundry things that follow upon this consecration of the way of suffering, by Jesus Christ. As,

First. That they are made necessary and unavoidable. Men may hope and desire other things, and turn themselves several ways in their contrivances to avoid them, but one way or other, sufferings will be the portion of them that intend to follow this Captain of salvation. The apostle tells believers, that they are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God," Rom. viii. 29. And lets them know in the close of that chapter, that no small part of this conformity consists in their afflictions and sufferings. The head having passed through them, there is a measure of afflictions belonging unto the body, which every member is to bear his share of, Col. ii. 24. And the Lord Jesus himself hath given this law unto us, that every one who will be his disciple must take up his cross and follow him. Discipleship and the cross are inseparably knit together, by the unchangeable law and constitution of Christ himself. And the gospel is full of warnings and instructions to this purpose; that none may complain that they were surprised, or that any thing did befall them in the course of their profession which they looked not for. Men may deceive themselves with vain hopes and expectations, but the gospel deceiveth none; it tells them plainly before-hand, that through many tribulations they must enter into the kingdom of God; and that they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. If they like not of these terms, they may let the way of Christ alone; if they will not do so, why do they yet complain? Christ will be

taken with his cross, or not at all. And the folly of our hearts can never be enough bewailed, in thinking strange of trials and afflictions ; when the very first thing that the Lord Christ requireth of them that will be made partakers of him, is, that they deny themselves, and take up their cross. But we would be children, and not be chastised ; we would be gold, and not be tried ; we would overcome, and yet not be put to fight and contend ; we would be Christians, and not suffer. But all these things are contrary to the eternal law of our profession. And so necessary is this way made, that though God deal with his people in great variety, exercising some with such trials and troubles, that others sometimes in comparison of them seem utterly to go free, yet every one, one way or other, shall have his share and measure. And those exceptions that are made in the providence of God, as to some individual persons at some seasons, derogate nothing from the general necessity of the way towards all that do believe.

Secondly. It hath made all sufferings for the gospel honourable. The sufferings of Christ himself were indeed shameful, and that not only in the esteem of men, but also in the nature of them, and by God's constitution. They were part of the curse, "As it is written, Cursed is he that hangs upon a tree." And as such our Lord Jesus Christ looked on them, when he wrestled with and conquered the shame as well as the sharpness. But he hath rendered all the sufferings of his that remain, very honourable in themselves, whatever they are in the reputation of a blind perishing world. That which is truly shameful in suffering, is an effect of the curse for sin. This Christ by his suffering hath utterly separated from the sufferings of his disciples. Hence the apostles rejoiced that they had the honour to suffer shame for his name, Acts v. 41, that is, the things which the world looked on as shameful, but themselves knew to be honourable. They are so in the sight of God, of the Lord Jesus Christ, of all the holy angels, who are competent judges in this case. God hath a great cause in the world, and that such a one as wherein his name, his goodness, his love, his glory is concerned ; this in his infinite wisdom is to be witnessed, confirmed, testified unto by sufferings. Now can there be any greater honour done unto any of the sons of men, than that God should single them out from among the rest of mankind, and appoint them unto this work ? Men are honoured according to their riches and treasures. And when Moses came to make a right judgment concerning this thing, he esteemed the "reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt," Heb. xi. 26. We believe that God gave great honour unto the apostles and martyrs of old in all their sufferings. Let us labour for the same spirit of faith in reference unto ourselves, and it will relieve us under all our trials. This then also hath Christ added unto the way of sufferings, by his consecration of it for us. All the glory and honour of the world is not to be compared with theirs, unto whom it is "given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him," Philip. i. 29 ; 1 Pet. iv. 14—16.

Thirdly. He hath thereby made them useful and profitable. Troubles and afflictions in themselves and their own nature have no good

in them, nor do they tend unto any good end: they grow out of the first sentence against sin, and are in their own nature penal, tending unto death, and nothing else. Nor are they in those who have no interest in Christ, any thing but effects of the wrath of God. But the Lord Christ, by his consecrating of them, to be the way of our following him, hath quite altered their nature and tendency; he hath made them good, useful, and profitable. "I shall not here show the usefulness of afflictions and sufferings; the whole Scripture abundantly testifieth unto it, and the experience of believers in all ages and seasons confirms it. I only show whence it is that they become so, and that is, because the Lord Christ hath consecrated, dedicated, and sanctified them unto that end. He hath thereby cut them off from their old stock of wrath and the curse, and planted them on that of love and good-will. He hath taken them off from the covenant of works, and translated them into that of grace. He hath turned their course from death, towards life and immortality; mixing his grace, love, and wisdom with these bitter waters, he hath made them sweet and wholesome. And if we would have benefit by them, we must always have regard unto this consecration of them.

Fourthly. He hath made them safe. They are in their own nature a wilderness wherein men may endlessly wander and quickly lose themselves. But he hath made them a way, a safe way, that way-faring men, though fools, may not err therein. Never did a believer perish by afflictions or persecutions; never was good gold or silver consumed or lost in this furnace. Hypocrites indeed, and false professors, fearful, and unbelievers, are discovered by them and discarded from their hopes. But they that are disciples indeed, are never safer than in this way, and that because it is consecrated for them. Sometimes it may be through their unbelief, and want of heeding the Captain of their salvation, they are wounded and cast down by them for a season, but they are still in the way, they are never turned quite out of the way. And this through the grace of Christ doth turn also unto their advantage. Nay, it is not only absolutely a safe way, but comparatively more safe than the way of prosperity. And this the Scripture, with the experience of all saints, bears plentiful witness unto. And many other blessed ends are wrought by the consecration of this way for the disciples of Christ, not now to be insisted on.

There remains yet to be considered in the words of the apostle, the reason why the Captain of our salvation was to be consecrated by sufferings; and this he declares in the beginning of the verse, "It became God so to deal with him," which he amplifies by that description of him, "For whom are all things, and by whom are all things." Having such a design as he had, "to bring many sons unto glory," and being he, "for whom are all things and by whom are all things," it became him so to deal with the Captain of their salvation. What is the *το προπον* here intended, and what is the importance of the word, was declared before. This becomingness, whatever it be, it ariseth from hence, that God is he for whom are all things, and by whom are all things. It became him, not only who is so, but as he is so, and because he is so. There is no reason for the addition of

that consideration of God in this matter, but that the cause is contained and expressed in it, why it became him to do that which is here ascribed unto him. We are then to inquire what it is that is principally regarded in God in this attribution, and thence we shall learn how it became him to bring the Lord Christ unto suffering. Now the description of God in these words, is plainly of him as the first cause and last end of all things; neither is it absolutely his power in making all of nothing, and his sovereign eternal being requiring that all things tend unto his glory, that are intended in the words. But he is the governor, ruler, and judge of all things made by him and for him, with respect unto that order and law of their creation which they were to observe. This rule and government of all things, taking care that as they are of God, so they should be for him, is that which the apostle respects. This then is that which he asserts, namely, that it became God as the governor, ruler, and judge of all, to consecrate Christ by sufferings, which must be farther explained.

Man being made an intellectual creature, had a rule of moral obedience given unto him. This he was to observe to the glory of his Creator and Lawgiver, and as the condition of his coming unto him, and enjoyment of him. This is here supposed by the apostle, and he discourseth how man having broken the law of his creation, and therein come short of the glory of God, might by his grace be again made partaker of it. With respect unto this state of things, God can be no otherwise considered, but as the supreme governor and judge of them. Now that property of God which he exerteth principally as the ruler and governor of all, is his justice, *justitia regiminis*, the righteousness of government. Hereof there are two branches; for it is either remunerative or vindictive. And this righteousness of God, as the supreme ruler and judge of all, is that, upon the account whereof it was meet for him, or became him, to bring the sons to glory by the sufferings of the Captain of their salvation. It was hence just, equal, and therefore indispensably necessary that so he should do. Supposing that man was created in the image of God, capable of yielding obedience unto him, according to the law concreated with him, and written in his heart, which obedience was his moral being for God, as he was from or of him, supposing that he by sin had broken this law, and so was no longer for God, according to the primitive order and law of his creation; supposing also, notwithstanding all this, that God in his infinite grace and love intended to bring some men unto the enjoyment of himself, by a new way, law, and appointment, by which they should be brought to be for him again: supposing, I say, these things which are all here supposed by our apostle, and were granted by the Jews, it became the justice of God, that is, it was so just, right, meet, and equal, that the Judge of all the world who doth right, could no otherwise do, than cause him, who was to be the way, cause, means, and author of this recovery of men into a new condition of being for God, to suffer in their stead. For whereas the vindictive justice of God, which is the respect of the universal rectitude of his holy nature, unto the deviation of his ra-



tional creatures from the law of their creation, required that that deviation should be revenged, and themselves brought into a new way of being for God, or of glorifying him by their sufferings, when they had refused to do so by obedience, it was necessary on the account thereof, that, if they were to be delivered from that condition, the author of their deliverance should suffer for them. And this excellently suits the design of the apostle, which is to prove the necessity of the suffering of the Messiah, which the Jews so stumbled at. For if the justice of God required that so it should be, how could it be dispensed withal? Would they have God unjust? Shall he forego the glory of his righteousness and holiness to please them in their presumption and prejudices? It is true indeed, if God had intended no salvation of his sons but one that was temporal, like that granted to the people of old under the conduct of Joshua, there had been no need at all of the sufferings of the Captain of their salvation. But they being such, as in themselves had sinned, and come short of the glory of God, and the salvation intended for them being spiritual, consisting in a new ordering of them for God, and in the bringing of them to the eternal enjoyment of him in glory, there was no way to maintain the honour of the justice of God, but by his sufferings. And as here lay the great mistake of the Jews, so the denial of this condescency of God's justice, as to the sufferings of the Messiah, is the *πρωτον ψευδος* of the Socinians. Slichtingius on this place would have no more intended, but that the way of bringing Christ to suffer, was answerable to that design which God had laid to glorify himself in the salvation of man. But the apostle says not, that it became, or was suitable to an arbitrary free decree of God, but it became himself as the supreme ruler and judge of all; he speaks not of what was meet on the execution of a free decree, but what was meet on account of God's holiness and righteousness to the constitution of it, as the description of him annexed doth plainly show. And herein have we with our apostle discovered the great, indispensable, and fundamental cause of the sufferings of Christ. And we may hence observe, that,

V. Such is the desert of sin, and such is the immutability of the justice of God, that there was no way possible to bring sinners to glory, but by the death and sufferings of the Son of God, who undertook to be the Captain of their salvation.—It would have been unbecoming God, the supreme Governor of all the world, to have passed by the desert of sin without this satisfaction. And this being a truth of great importance, and the foundation of most of the apostle's ensuing discourses, must be a while insisted on.

In these verses, that foregoing this, and some of those following, the apostle directly treats of the causes of the sufferings and death of Christ. A matter of great importance in itself, comprising no small part of the mystery of the gospel, and indispensably necessary to be explained and confirmed to the Hebrews, who had entertained many prejudices against it. In the foregoing verse he declared the cause, *προηγουμενην*, the inducing, leading, moving cause, which was the grace of God, 'by the grace of God he was to taste death' for men. This grace he farther explains in this verse, showing that it consisted

in the design of God to ‘bring many sons to glory.’ All had sinned and come short of his glory. He had, according to the exigence of his justice, denounced and declared death and judgment to be brought on all that sinned, without exception. Yet such was his infinite love and grace, that he determined or purposed in himself to deliver some of them, to make them sons, and to bring them to glory. To this end he resolved to send or give his Son to be a Captain of salvation to them. And this love or grace of God is every where set forth in the gospel. How the sufferings of this Captain of salvation became useful to the sons on the account of the manifold union that was between them, he declares in the following verses, farther explaining the reasons and causes why the benefit of his sufferings should redound to them. In this verse he expresseth the cause προκαταρκτικην, the procuring cause of the death and sufferings of Christ, which is the justice of God, on supposition of sin, and his purpose to save sinners. And this on examination we shall find to be the great cause of the death of Christ.

That the Son of God, who did no sin, in whom his soul was always well pleased on account of his obedience, should suffer and die, and that a death under the sentence and curse of the law, is a great and astonishing mystery; all the saints of God admire at it, the ‘angels desire to look into it.’ What should be the cause and reason hereof? why should God thus bruise him, and put him to grief? This is worth our inquiry, and various are the conceptions of men about it. The Socinians deny that his sufferings were penal, or that he died to make satisfaction for sin, but only that he did so to confirm the doctrine that he had taught, and to set us an example of suffering for the truth. But his doctrine carried its own evidence with it, that it was from God, and was besides uncontrollably confirmed by the miracles that he wrought. So that his sufferings on that account might have been dispensed withal. And surely this great and stupendous matter of the dying of the Son of God, is not to be resolved into a reason and cause that might so easily be dispensed with. God would never have given up his Son to die, but only for such causes and ends as could no otherwise have been satisfied or accomplished. The like also may be said of the other cause assigned by them, namely, to set us an example. It is true, in his death he did so, and it is of great and singular use to us, that so he did. But yet, this was not indispensably necessary, either from any precedent law or constitution, or from the nature of the thing itself, or from any property of God. God could by his grace have carried us through sufferings, although he had not set before us the example of his Son; so he doth through other things no less difficult, wherein the Lord Christ could not in his own person go before us, as in our conversion to God, and mortification of indwelling sin, neither of which the Lord Christ was capable of. We shall leave them, then, as those who acknowledge the death of Christ, yet do not acknowledge or own any sufficient cause or reason why he should die.

Christians generally allow that the sufferings of Christ were penal, and his death satisfactory for the sins of men; but as to the cause

and reason of his so suffering, they differ. Some, following Austin, refer the death of Christ solely to the wisdom and sovereignty of God. God would have it so, and therein are we to acquiesce. Other ways of saving the elect were possible, but this God chose, because so it seemed good to him. Hence arose that saying 'That one drop of the blood of Christ was sufficient to redeem the whole world,' only it pleased God that he should suffer to the utmost. And herein are we to rest, that he hath suffered for us, and that God hath revealed. But this seems not to me any way to answer that which is here affirmed by the apostle, namely that it became God as the supreme governor of all the world, so to cause Christ to suffer; nor do I see what demonstration of the glory of justice can arise from the punishing of an innocent person, who might have been spared, and yet all the ends of his being so punished to have been otherwise brought about. And to say that one drop of Christ's blood was sufficient to redeem the world, is derogatory to the goodness, wisdom, and righteousness of God, in causing not only the whole to be shed, but also 'his soul to be made an offering for sin,' which was altogether needless if that were true. But how far this whole opinion is from truth, which leaves no necessary cause of the death of Christ, will afterwards appear.

Others say, that *on supposition* that God had appointed the curse of the law, and death to be the penalty of sin, his faithfulness and veracity were engaged so far, that no sinner should go free, or be made partaker of glory, but by the intervention of satisfaction. And therefore on the supposition that God would make some men his sons, and bring them to glory, it was necessary with respect to the engagement of the truth of God, that he should suffer, die, and make satisfaction for them. But all this they refer originally to a free constitution, which might have been otherwise. God might have ordered things so, without any derogation to the glory of his justice or holiness in the government of all things, as that sinners might have been saved without the death of Christ. For if he had not engaged his word, and declared that death should be the penalty of sin, he might have freely remitted it without the intervention of any satisfaction. And thus all this whole work of death being the punishment of sin, and of the sufferings of Christ for sinners, is resolved into a free purpose and decree of God's will, and not into the exigence of any essential property of his nature, so that it might have been otherwise in all the parts of it, and yet the glory of God have been preserved every way entire. Whether this be so or not, we shall immediately inquire.

Others grant many *free acts* of the mind and will of God in this matter; as, 1. The creation of man in such a condition, as that he should have a moral dependence on God in reference to his utmost end, was an effect of the sovereign pleasure, will, and wisdom of God. But on supposition of this decree and constitution, they say, the nature, authority, and holiness of God required indispensably, that man should yield to him that obedience which he was directed to, and guided in, by the law of his creation, so that God could not suffer him to do otherwise, and remain in his first state, and come to the end first designed to him, without the loss of his authority, and wrong of his justice.

Again, they say, that God did freely by an act of his sovereign will and pleasure decree to permit man to sin and fall, which might have been otherwise. But on supposition that so he should do, and would do, and thereby infringe the order of his dependence on God, in reference to his utmost end, that the justice of God as the supreme governor of all things, did indispensably require that he should receive a meet recompense of reward, or be punished answerably to his crimes, so that God could not have dealt otherwise with him, without a high derogation from his own righteousness. Again, they say, that God by a mere free act of his love and grace, designed the Lord Jesus Christ to be the way and means for the saving of sinners, which might have been otherwise. He might, without the least impeachment of the glory of any of his essential properties, have suffered all mankind to have perished under that penalty which they had justly incurred; but of his own mere love, free grace, and good pleasure, he gave and sent him to redeem them. But on the supposition thereof, they say, the justice of God required that he should lay on him the punishment due to the sons whom he redeemed; it became him on the account of his natural essential justice to bring him to sufferings. And in this opinion is contained the truth laid down in our proposition, which we shall now farther confirm, namely, that it became the nature of God, or the essential properties of his nature required indispensably, that sin should be punished with death, in the sinner, or in his surety. And therefore, if he would bring any sons to glory, the Captain of their salvation must undergo death and sufferings, to make satisfaction for them. For,

First, Consider that description which the Scripture giveth us of the nature of God in reference to sin; and this it doth either metaphorically or properly: in the first way it compares God to fire, to 'a consuming fire,' and his actings towards sin as the acting of fire on that which is combustible, whose nature it is to consume them, Deut. iv. 24, 'Thy God is a consuming fire,' which words the apostle repeats, Heb. xii. 29. 'Devouring fire and everlasting burnings,' Isa. xxxiii. 14. Hence, when he came to give the law, which expresseth his wrath and indignation against sin, his presence was manifested by great and terrible fires and burnings, till the people cried out, 'Let me not see this great fire any more, lest I die,' Deut. xviii. 16. They saw death and destruction in that fire, because it expressed the indignation of God against sin, and therefore the law itself is also called 'a fiery law,' Deut. xxxiii. 2, because it contains the sense and judgment of God against sin, as in the execution of the sentence of it, the breath of the Lord is said to kindle the fire of it like a stream of brimstone, Isa. xxx. 33, so ch. lxvi. 15, 16. And by this metaphor doth the Scripture lively represent the nature of God in reference to sin. For as it is the nature of fire to consume and devour all things that are put into it, without sparing any or making difference, so is the nature of God in reference to sin; wherever it is, he punisheth and revengeth it according to its demerit. The metaphor indeed expresseth not the manner of the operation of the one and the other, but the certainty and event of the working of both from the principles of the nature of the one and



the other. The fire so burneth by a necessity of nature, as that it acts to the utmost of its quality and faculty by a pure natural necessity. God punisheth sin, as suitably to the principle of his nature, that otherwise he cannot do, yet so as that for the manner, time, measure, and season, they depend on the constitution of his wisdom and righteousness, assigning a meet and equal recompense of reward to every transgression. And this the Scripture teacheth us by this metaphor, or otherwise we are led by it from a right conception of that which it doth propose; for God cannot at all be to sin and sinners as a devouring fire, unless it be in the principles of his nature indispensably to take vengeance on them.

Again, The Scripture expresseth this nature of God with reference to sin, properly as to what we can conceive thereof in this world, and that is by his holiness, which it sets forth to be such, as that on the account thereof he can bear with no sin, nor suffer any sinner to approach to him, that is, let no sin go unpunished, nor admit of any sinner into his presence whose sin is not expiated and satisfied for. And what is necessary on the account of the holiness of God, is absolutely and indispensably so, his holiness being his nature. 'Thou art,' saith Habakkuk, 'of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity,' ch. i. 13. Thou canst not by any means have any thing to do with sin, that is, it may be, because he will not, nay, saith he, it is on the account of his purity or holiness. That is such, as he cannot pass by sin, or let it go unpunished. The Psalmist also expresseth the nature of God to the same purpose, Ps. v. 4, 5, 6. 'Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee, the foolish shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest all the workers of iniquity, thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing, the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.' What is the formal reason and cause of all these things, that he hates, abhors, and will destroy sin and sinners? It is because he is such a God. Thou art not a God to do otherwise; a God of such purity, such holiness; and should he pass by sin without the punishment of it, he would not be such a God as he is. Without ceasing to be such a God, so infinitely holy and pure, this cannot be. The foolish and all workers of iniquity must be destroyed, because he is such a God. And in that proclamation of his name, wherein he declared many blessed eternal properties of his nature, he adds this among the rest, that 'he will by no means clear the guilty,' Exod. xxxiv. 7. This his nature, this his eternal holiness requireth, that the guilty be by no means cleared. So Joshua instructs the people in the nature of this holiness of God, ch. xxiv. 19, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins.' That is, if you continue in your sins, if there be not a way to free you from them, it is in vain for you to have any thing to do with this God, for he is holy and jealous, and will therefore certainly destroy you for your iniquities. Now, if such be the nature of God, that with respect thereunto, he cannot but punish sin in whomsoever it be found, then the suffering of every sinner, in his own person, or by his surety, doth not depend on a mere free voluntary constitution, nor is resolved merely

into the veracity of God, in his commination or threatening, but is antecedently to them indispensably necessary, unless we would have the nature of God changed, that sinners may be freed. Whereas, therefore, the Lord Christ is assigned the Captain of our salvation, and hath undertaken the work of bringing sinners to glory, it was meet with respect to the holiness of God, that he should undergo the punishment due to their sin. And thus the necessity of the sufferings and satisfaction of Christ, is resolved into the holiness and nature of God, he being such a God as he is, it could not otherwise be.

Secondly, The same is manifest from that principle whereunto the punishment of sin is assigned, which is not any free act of the will of God, but an essential property of his nature, namely, his justice or righteousness. What God doth because he is righteous, is necessary to be done. And if it be just with God in respect of his essential justice to punish sin, it would be unjust not to do it: for to condemn the innocent and acquit the guilty is equally unjust. Justice is an eternal and unalterable rule, and what is done according to it, is necessary; it may not otherwise be, and justice not be impeached. That which is to be done with respect to justice must be done, or he that is to do it is unjust. Thus it is said to be ‘a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to sinners,’ 2 Thess. i. 6, because he is righteous, and from his righteousness or justice, so that the contrary would be unjust, or would not answer his righteousness. And it is the judgment of God that ‘they who commit sin are worthy of death,’ Rom. i. 32. Namely, it is that which his justice requireth should be so, that is, the judgment of God. Not only doth he render death to sinners because he hath threatened so to do, but because his justice necessarily requireth that so he should do. So the apostle farther explains himself, Rom. ii. 5—9, where he calls the last day, ‘the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God,’ wherein by rendering tribulation to sinners, he will manifest what his righteousness requires. And what that requires cannot otherwise be, God being naturally, necessarily, essentially righteous. And this property of God’s nature requiring that punishment be inflicted on sin and sinners, is often in Scripture called his anger and wrath. For although sometimes the effects of anger and wrath in punishment itself, be denoted by those expressions, yet often also they denote the habitude of the nature of God in his justice towards sin. For anger in itself being a passion and perturbation of mind, including change and weakness, cannot properly be ascribed to God; and therefore when it is spoken of, as that which is in him, and not of the effects which he works on others, it can intend nothing but his vindictive justice, that property of his nature which necessarily inclines him to the punishment of sin. Thus it is said, that his wrath or anger ‘is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness,’ Rom. i. 18. That is, he discovers in his judgments what is his justice against sin. And thus when he comes to deal with Christ himself, to make him a propitiation for us, he is said to have set him forth, *εις ενδειξιν της δικαιοσυνης*, Rom. iii. 25, 26. ‘To declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, that he might be just, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus.’ As God would pardon sin, and justify them that

believe, so he would be just also. And how could this be? by punishing our sins in Christ; that declared his righteousness: *ενδειξις*, here, is as much as *ενδειγμα*, *documentum*, a declaration by an especial instance or example; or as *υποδειγμα*, as he is said to have punished Sodom and Gomorrah, and to have left them, *υποδειγμα μελλοντων ασεβειν*, 'an example to them that should live ungodly,' that is, an instance of what his dealings would be with sinners. So God is said here to have declared his righteousness by an example in the sufferings of Christ, which indeed was the greatest instance of the severity and inexorableness of justice against sin, that God ever gave in this world; and this he did, that he might be just as well as gracious and merciful in the forgiveness of sin. Now, if the justice of God did not require that sin should be punished in the Mediator, how did God give an instance of his justice in his sufferings; for nothing can be declared, but in and by that which it requires; for to say, that God showed his righteousness in doing that, which might have been omitted without the least impeachment of his righteousness, is in this matter not safe.

Thirdly, God is the supreme Ruler, Governor, and Judge of all. To him as such it belongeth to do right. So saith Abraham, Gen. xviii. 25. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' undoubtedly he will do so, it belongs to him so to do. For, saith the apostle, 'Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? God forbid, for then how shall God judge the world,' Rom. iii. 5, 6. Right judgment in all things belongs to the universal rectitude of the nature of God, as he is the supreme Governor and Judge of all the world. Now the goodness and rightness of all things, consists in the observance of that place and order which God in their creation allotted to them, whereon he pronounced that they were 'exceeding good.' And that this order be preserved for the good of the whole, it belongs to the government of God to take care; or if it be in any thing transgressed, not to leave all things in confusion, but to reduce them into some new order and subjection to himself. That this order was broken by sin we all know. What shall now the Governor of all the world do? Shall he leave all things in disorder and confusion? cast off the works of his hands, and suffer all things to run at random? Would this become the righteous Governor of all the world? What then is to be done to prevent this confusion? Nothing remains, but that he who brake the first order by sin, should be subdued into a new one by punishment. This brings him into subjection to God on a new account. And to say that God might have let his sin go unpunished, is to say, that he might be not righteous in his government, or not do that which is necessary for the good, beauty, and order of the whole. But hereof somewhat was spoken in the opening of the words, so that it needs not farther be insisted on.

Lastly. There is no common presumption ingrafted in the hearts of men, concerning any free act of God, and which might have been otherwise. No free decree or act of God is, or can be known to any of the children of men, but by revelation, much less have they all of them universally an inbred persuasion concerning any such acts or

actings. But of the natural properties of God, and his acting suitable to them, there is a secret light and persuasion ingrafted in the hearts of all men by nature. At least, those things of God, whereof there is a natural and indelible character in the hearts of all men, are natural, necessary, and essential to him. Now, that God is just, and that therefore he will punish sin, all sin, is an inbred presumption of nature, that can never be rooted out of the minds of men. All sinners have an inbred apprehension that God is displeased with sin, and that punishment is due to it. They cannot but know that it is the judgment of God, that they who commit sin are worthy of death. And therefore, though they have not the law written to instruct them, yet their thoughts accuse them on sin, Rom. ii. 14, 15; that is, their consciences, which is the judgment which a man makes of himself in reference to the judgment of God. And therefore all nations who retained any knowledge of a Deity, constantly invented some ways and means whereby they thought they might expiate sin, and appease the God that they feared: All which manifests, that the punishment of sin, inseparably follows the nature of God, and such properties thereof as men have a natural inbred notion and presumption of. For if it depended merely on the will of God, and his faithfulness in the accomplishing of that threatening and constitution, whereof they had no knowledge, they could not have had such an immovable and unconquerable apprehension of it. But these things I have handled at large elsewhere.

And this fully discovers the vile and horrid nature of sin. 'Fools,' as the wise man tells us, 'make a mock of it.' Stifling for a while their natural convictions, they act as if sin were a thing of nought, at least not so horrible as by some it is represented. And few there are who endeavour aright to obtain a true notion of it, contenting themselves in general, that it is a thing that ought not to be. What direct opposition it stands in to the nature, properties, rule, and authority of God, they consider not. But the last day will discover the true nature of it, when all eyes shall see what it deserves in the judgment of God, which is according to righteousness. Is it a small thing for a creature to break that order which God at first placed him and all things in? to cast off the rule and authority of God, to endeavour to dethrone him, so that he cannot continue to be the supreme Governor of all things, and Judge of all the world, unless he punish it? Is it a small thing to set up that which hath an utter inconsistency with the holiness and righteousness of God, so that if it go free, God cannot be holy and righteous? If these things will not now sink into the minds of men, if they will not learn the severity of God in this matter from the law, on the threatening and curse whereof he hath impressed the image of his holiness and justice, as was said, they will learn it all in hell. Why doth God thus threaten and curse sin and sinners? Why hath he prepared an eternity of vengeance and torment for them? Is it because he would? Nay, because it could not otherwise be, God being so holy and righteous as he is. Men may thank themselves for death and hell. They are no more than sin hath made necessary, unless God should cease to be holy, righteous, and the Judge of all, that



they might sin freely and endlessly. And this appears most eminently in the cross of Christ, for God gave in him an instance of his righteousness, and of the desert of sin. Sin being imputed to the only Son of God, he could not be spared. If he be made sin, he must be made a curse. If he will take away our iniquities, he must make 'his soul an offering for sins,' and bear the punishment due to them. Obedience in all duties will not do it, intercession and prayers will not do it, sin required another manner of expiation. Nothing but undergoing the wrath of God and the curse of the law, and therein answering what the eternal justice of God required, will effect that end. How can God spare sin in his enemies, who could not spare it on his only Son? Had it been possible, this cup should have passed from him: but this could not be, and God continue righteous. These things, I say, will give us insight into the nature of sin, and the horrible provocation wherewith it is attended.

And this also opens the mystery of the wisdom, and love, and grace of God, in the salvation of sinners. This is that which he will for ever be admired in; a way he hath found out to exercise grace, and satisfy justice, at the same time, in and by the same person; sin shall be punished, all sin, yet grace exercised; sinners shall be saved, yet justice exalted—all in the cross of Christ.

VER. 11—13.—THE great reason and ground of the necessity of the sufferings of Christ hath been declared. It became God that he should suffer. But it doth not yet appear on what grounds this suffering of his could be profitable or beneficial unto the sons to be brought unto glory. It was the sinner himself against whom the law denounced the judgment of death. And although the Lord Christ, undertaking to be a Captain of salvation unto the sons of God, might be willing to suffer for them, yet what reason is there, that the punishment of one should be accepted for the sin of another? Let it be granted that the Lord Christ had an absolute and sovereign power over his own life, and all the concerns of it, in the nature which he assumed, as also that he was willing to undergo any sufferings that God should call him unto; this indeed will acquit the justice of God, in giving him up unto death. But whence is it, that sinners should come to be so interested in these things, as thereon to be acquitted from sin, and brought unto glory. In these verses, the apostle enters upon a discovery of the reasons hereof also. He supposeth, indeed, that there was a compact and agreement between the Father and Son in this matter: of which he afterwards expressly treateth, ch. x. He supposeth also, that in his sovereign authority, God had made a relaxation of the law, as to the person suffering, though not as to the penalty to be suffered, which God abundantly declared unto the church of the Jews in all their sacrifices, as we shall manifest. These things being supposed, the apostle proceeds to declare the grounds of the equity of this substitution of Christ, in the room of the sons, and of their advantage by his suffering; the proposition whereof he lays down in these verses, and the especial application in those that ensue.

VER. 11—13.—Ο τε γαρ ἁγιαζων και οἱ ἁγιαζομενοι, ἐξ ἑνος παντες. Δι' ἣν αιτιαν ουκ επαισχυνεται αδελφους αυτους καλειν, λεγων· Απαγγελω το ονομα σου τοις αδελφοις μου, εν μεσφ εκκλησιας υμνησω σε. Και παλιν· Εγω εσομαι πεποιθως επ' αυτω. Και παλιν· Ιδου εγω και τα παιδια ἃ μοι εδωκεν ὁ Θεος.

There is no variety in the reading of these words in any copies, nor do translators differ in rendering the sense of them. The Syriac renders the last testimony, as if the words were spoken unto God, 'Behold I and the children, אֲנִי וְלִבְנֵי, whom thou hast given unto me, O God.' The Ethiopic, 'Wherefore they who sanctify, and they who are sanctified are altogether;' to what purpose I cannot guess.

Ἀγιαζω is used in this Epistle both in the legal sense of it, to separate, consecrate, dedicate, and in the evangelical, to purify, sanctify, to make internally and really holy. It seems in this place to be used in the latter sense, though it include the former also, κατ' ανακολουθησιν, by 'just consequence,' for they who are sanctified, are separated unto God. The word then expresseth what the Lord Christ doth unto and for the sons, as he is the Captain of their salvation; he consecrates them unto God, through the sanctification of the Spirit, and washing in his own blood.

Εξ ἑνος. It may be of the masculine gender, and so denote one person, or of the neuter, and so one thing, one mass, one common principle, whereof afterwards.

The first testimony is taken from Psal. xxii. 24. אֲנִי וְלִבְנֵי אֲדָמָה, which the LXX. render, διηγησομαι το ονομα σου τοις αδελφοις μου, εν μεσφ εκκλησιας υμνησω σε. The first word אֲדָמָה, *narrabo, amuntiabo*, the apostle renders by απαγγελω, more properly than they by διηγησομαι. In the rest of the words there is a coincidence, the original (υμνησω) being expressly rendered in them. For though לְבָנִי be rendered simply to 'praise,' yet in its most frequent use, when respecting God as its object, it is to praise by hymns or psalms; as the apostle here, υμνησω σε; *tibi hymnos canam*, or *te hymnis celebrabo*; I will 'sing hymns unto thee,' or 'praise thee with hymns,' which was the principal way of setting forth God's praise under the Old Testament.

It is not certain whence the second testimony is taken. Some suppose it to be from Isa. viii. 17, from whence the third also is cited. The words of the prophet there אֲנִי וְרֵעִי, are rendered by the LXX. και πεποιθως εσομαι επ' αυτω, the words here used by the apostle. But there are sundry things that will not allow us to close with this supposal. First, the original is not rightly rendered by the LXX., and as we shall see, the apostle's words do exactly express the original in another place. Besides, רֵעִי is never but in this place, and once more, turned into *πειθω* by the LXX., but is constantly rendered by them, *μενω*, or *υπομενω*. So that it is not improbable, but that these words might be inserted into the Greek text out of this place of the apostle, there being some presumptions and likelihoods that it was the place intended by him, especially because the next testimony used by the apostle, consists in the words immediately ensuing these in the prophet;

but yet that yields another reason against this supposition. For if the apostle continued on the words of the prophet, to what end should he insert in the midst of them, that constant note of proceeding unto another testimony, *καὶ παλιν*, 'and again,' especially considering, that the whole testimony speaks to the same purpose,

We shall then refer these words unto Psal. xviii. 2, אֶסְתַּחֲבֵב, which the LXX. render, *ἐλπὶω ἐπ' αὐτῷ*, 'I will hope in him;' the apostle more properly, *ἐσομαι πεποιθὼς ἐπ' αὐτῷ*, 'I will put my trust in him.' And that that Psalm had respect unto the Lord Christ and his kingdom, our apostle sheweth elsewhere by citing another testimony out of it, concerning the calling of the Gentiles, Rom. xv. 9. Nor was the latter part of the Psalm properly fulfilled in David at all.

The last testimony is unquestionably taken out of Isa. viii. 17, where the words are אֲנִי וְהַיְלָדִים אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לִי יְהוָה and rendered by the LXX., as here by the apostle, *ἰδού ἐγὼ καὶ παῖδια ἃ ἔδωκεν μοι ὁ Θεός. ἡ ἡμετέρα* is properly *nati*, *γεννητοί*, or *ἐκγονοί*, those that are begotten or born of any one, whilst they are in their tender age. But it may be rendered by *παῖδια*, as it is by the LXX. Gen. xxx. 26, xxxii. 22, xxxiii. 1, 2, which is children in a larger sense.

VER. 11—13.—*For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him: And again, behold I and the children which God hath given me.*

The words contain,

First. A farther description of the Captain of salvation, and the sons to be brought unto glory by him, mentioned in the verse foregoing, taken from his office and work towards them, and the effect thereof upon them—He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified; which is the subject of the first proposition in these words.

Secondly. An assertion concerning them—they are all of one.

Thirdly. A natural consequence of that assertion, which includes also the scope and design of it—He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

Fourthly. The confirmation hereof by a triple testimony from the Old Testament.

First. He describes the Captain of salvation, and the sons to be brought unto glory, by their mutual relation to one another in sanctification. He is, *ὁ ἁγιαζὼν*, 'he that sanctifieth,' and they are *οἱ ἁγιαζόμενοι*, 'they that are sanctified.' That it is the Son, the Captain of salvation, that is intended by the Sanctifier, both what the apostle affirms immediately of him and them, and the ensuing testimonies whereby he confirms it, do make evident. And as in the verse foregoing, giving an account why God would have Christ to suffer, he describes him by that property of his nature, which includes a necessity of his so doing; so setting forth the causes, on our part, of that suffering, and the grounds of our advantage thereby, he expresseth him and the children by those terms, which manifest their relation

unto one another ; and which they could not have stood in, had they not been of the same nature, as he afterwards declares. Now the same word being here used actively and passively, it must in both places be understood in the same sense, the one expressing the effect of the other. As Christ sanctifies, so are the children sanctified. And the act of Christ which is here intended, is that which he did for the sons, when he suffered for them according to God's appointment ; as ver. 10. Now, as was said before, to *sanctify* is either to separate and to dedicate unto sacred use, or to purify and make really holy, which latter sense is here principally intended. Thus when the apostle speaks of the effects of the offerings of Christ for the elect, he distinguisheth between their *τελειωσις*, or 'consummation,' and their *άγιασμος*, or 'sanctification,' ch. x. 14, *μια προσφορά τετελειωκεν τους άγιαζομενους*, 'by one offering, he consummated or perfected the sanctified.' First, He sanctifieth them, and then dedicates them unto God, so that they shall never more need any initiation into his favour and service. This work was the Captain of salvation designed unto ; the children that were to be brought unto glory, being in themselves unclean and unholy, and on that account separated from God, he was to purge their natures, and to make them holy, that they might be admitted into the favour of, and find acceptance with God. And for the nature of this work, two things must be considered : 1. The impetration of it, or the way and means whereby he obtained this sanctification for them ; and, 2. The application of that means, or the real effecting of it. The first consisteth in the sufferings of Christ, and the merit thereof. Hence we are so often said to be sanctified, and washed in his blood, Eph. v. 25, 26 ; Acts xx. 32 ; Rev. i. 5 ; and his blood, is said to cleanse us from all our sins, 1 John i. 7. As it was shed for us, he procured by the merit of his obedience therein, that those for whom it was shed, should be purged and purified, Titus ii. 14. The other consists in the effectual workings of the Spirit of grace, communicated unto us by virtue of the blood-shedding and sufferings of Christ, as the apostle declares, Tit. iii. 4—6. And they who place this sanctification merely on the doctrine and example of Christ, as Grotius on this place, besides that they consider not at all the design and scope of the place, so they reject the principal end, and the most blessed effect of the death and blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus. Now, in this description of the Captain of salvation, and of the sons, the apostle intimates a farther necessity of his sufferings, because they were to be sanctified by him, which could no otherwise be done but by his death and blood-shedding. Having many things to observe from these verses, we shall take them up as they offer themselves unto us in our procedure ; As here,

I. That all the children which are to be brought unto glory, antecedently unto their relation unto the Lord Christ, are polluted, defiled, separate from God.—They are all to be sanctified by him, both as to their real purification and consecration to be God's hallowed portion. This, for many blessed ends, the Scripture abundantly instructs us in, Tit. iii. 3, 'We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, and disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy,



hateful and hating of one another.' A most wretched, defiled, and loathsome condition, that which justly might be an abhorrence to God, and to all his holy angels; and such indeed God describes it to be by his prophet, Ezek. xvi. 5, 6, 'Thou wast polluted in thy blood, and cast out in the field, to the loathing of thy person.' Thus we were, saith the apostle, even we, who are now sanctified and cleansed by the means which he afterwards relates. The like description he gives of this estate, 1 Cor. vi. 11, 12, with an assertion of the same deliverance from it. We are naturally very proud, apt to please ourselves in ourselves, to think of nothing less than of being polluted or defiled, or at least not so far, but that we can wash ourselves. What a hard thing it is to persuade the great men of the world, in the midst of their ornaments, paintings, and perfumes, that they are all over vile, leprous, loathsome, and defiled! Are they not ready to wash themselves in the blood of them who intimate any such thing unto them? But whether men will hear or forbear, this is the condition of all men, even of the sons of God themselves, before they are washed and sanctified by Christ Jesus. And as this sets out the infinite love of God, in taking notice of such vile creatures as we are, and the unspeakable condescension of the Lord Christ, with the efficacy of his grace in cleansing us by his blood, so it is sufficient to keep us humble in ourselves, and thankful unto God all our days.

II. That the Lord Christ is the great Sanctifier of the church. —His title is, *ὁ ἁγιαζων*, 'the Sanctifier;' of which more afterwards.

III. The Lord Christ, the Captain of our salvation, sanctifies every son whom he brings unto glory. He will never glorify an unsanctified person. The world indeed is full of an expectation of glory by Christ, but of that which is indispensably previous thereunto, they have no regard. But this the Scripture gives us, as a principal effect of the whole mediation of Christ—of his death, Eph. v. 26; Titus ii. 14—of his communication of his word and Spirit, John xvii. 19; Titus iii. 5, 6—of his blood-shedding in an especial manner, 1 John i. 7; Rom. vi. 5, 6; Rev. i. 5—of his life in heaven, and intercession for us, Col. iii. 1—3. This he creates his people unto by his grace, Eph. ii. 8, excites them unto by his promises, 2 Cor. vii. 1, and commands, John xv. 16, 17. So that no end of the mediation of Christ is accomplished in them, who are not sanctified and made holy. And this was necessary for him to do, on the part, 1. Of God. 2. Of himself. 3. Of themselves.

1. Of God, unto whom they are to be brought in glory. He is holy, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: no unclean thing can stand in his presence. Holy in his nature, glorious in holiness; holy in his commands, and will be sanctified in all that draw nigh unto him. And this Peter urgeth, as that which requires holiness in us, 1 Pet. i. 15, 16, 'As he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy;' and thence it is said, that holiness becometh his house, that is, all that draw nigh unto him; and the apostle sets it down as an uncontrollable maxim, that 'without holiness no man shall see God.'

If the Lord Christ then will bring the children unto God, he must make them holy, or they can have no admittance into his presence, no acceptance with him; for no unclean thing, nothing that defileth, can enter into the new Jerusalem, the place where his holiness dwelleth. It is utterly impossible, that any soul not washed with the blood of Christ, not sanctified by his Spirit and grace, should stand in the sight of God. And this was expressed in all the typical institutions about cleansing, which God appointed unto his people of old. He did it to teach them, that unless they were sanctified, washed, and cleansed from their sins, they could be admitted unto no communion with him, nor enjoyment of him. Neither can any serve him here, unless their consciences be purged by the blood of Christ from dead works; nor can they come to him hereafter, unless they are washed from all their defilements. Their services here he rejects as an unclean and polluted thing, and their confidences for the future he despiseth as a presumptuous abomination. God will not divest himself of his holiness, that he may receive, or be enjoyed by unholy creatures. And the day is coming, wherein poor unsanctified creatures, who think they may miss holiness in the way to glory, shall cry out, Who amongst us shall inhabit with those everlasting burnings? for so will he appear unto all unsanctified persons.

2. Of himself, and the relation whereunto he takes these sons with himself. He is their head, and they are to be members of his body. Now he is holy, and so must they be also, or this relation will be very unsuitable and uncomely. A living head and dead members, a beautiful head and rotten members, how uncomely would it be? Such a monstrous body Christ will never own. Nay, it would overthrow the whole nature of that relation, and take away the life and form of that union that Christ and his are brought into, as head and members. For whereas it consists in this, that the whole head and members are animated, quickened, and acted, by one and the self-same Spirit of life; nor doth any thing else give union between head and members; if they be not sanctified by that Spirit, there can be no such relation between them. Again, he takes them unto himself to be his bride and spouse. Now you know, that it was appointed of old, that if any one would take up a captive maid to be his wife, she was to shave her head, and pare her nails, and wash herself, that she might be meet for him. And the Lord Christ, taking this bride unto himself, by the conquest he hath made of her, must by sanctification make them meet for this relation with himself. And therefore he doth it, Eph. v. 25, 26, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word: ver. 27, that he might present it unto himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.' This it became him to do, this was the end why he did it: he sanctifieth his church, that he may present it a meet bride or spouse unto himself. The like may be said of all other relations wherein the Lord Christ stands unto his people; there is no one of them, but makes their sanctification absolutely necessary.

3. On the part of the children themselves; for unless they are regenerate, or born again, wherein the foundation of their sanctification is laid, they can by no means enter into the kingdom of God. It is this that makes them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. As without it, they are not meet for their duty, so are they not capable of their reward. Yea, heaven itself, in the true light and notion of it, is undesirable unto an unsanctified person. Such an one neither can, nor would enjoy God if he might. In a word, there is no one thing required of the sons of God, that an unsanctified person can do, no one thing promised unto them that he can enjoy.

There is surely then a woeful mistake in the world. If Christ sanctifies all whom he saves, many will appear to have been mistaken in their expectations at another day. It is grown amongst us almost an abhorrency unto all flesh, to say, that the church of God is to be holy. What though God hath promised that it should be so; that Christ hath undertaken to make it so? What if it be required to be so? What if all the duties of it be rejected of God if it be not so? It is all one; if men be baptised whether they will or not, and outwardly profess the name of Christ, though not one of them be truly sanctified, yet they are, as it is said, the church of Christ. Why then let them be so: but what are they the better for it? Are their persons, or their services, therefore accepted with God? Are they related or united unto Christ? Are they under his conduct unto glory? Are they meet for the inheritance of the saints in light? Not at all; not all, not any of these things, do they obtain thereby. What is it then that they get by the furious contest which they make for the reputation of this privilege? Only this, that satisfying their minds by it, resting, if not priding themselves in it, they obtain many advantages to stifle all convictions of their condition, and so perish unavoidably. A sad success, and for ever to be bewailed. Yet is there nothing at all at this day more contended for in this world, than that Christ might be thought to be a Captain of salvation unto them unto whom he is not a sanctifier; that he may have an unholy church, a dead body. These things tend neither to the glory of Christ, nor to the good of the souls of men. Let none then deceive themselves, sanctification is a qualification indispensably necessary unto them, who will be under the conduct of the Lord Christ unto salvation: he leads none to heaven, but whom he sanctifies on the earth. The holy God will not receive unholy persons. This living head will not admit of dead members, nor bring men into the possession of a glory which they neither love nor like.

Secondly. Having given this description of the Captain of salvation, and of the sons to be brought unto glory, the apostle affirms of them, that they are *ἐξ ἑνός*, 'of one,' which made it meet for him to suffer, and for them to be made partakers of his sufferings. The equity hercof lies in the agreement, that he and they are of one; which, what it is, we must now inquire.

The word hath this ambiguity in it, that it may be of the masculine gender, and denote one person; or of the neuter, and signify one thing. If it relate unto the person, it may have a double interpretation.

1st. That it is God who is intended : they are of one, that is God. And this may be spoken in several respects. The Son was of him by eternal generation, the many sons by temporal creation ; they were made by him. Or they are all of him : he ordained him to be the Sanctifier, them to be sanctified ; him to be the Captain of salvation, and them to be brought unto glory. And this sense, the last testimony produced by the apostle seems to give countenance unto : ‘ Behold I, and the children whom God hath given unto me :’ me to be their Father, Captain, Leader ; they to be the children to be cared for, and conducted by me. And this way went most of the ancients, in their exposition of this place. In this sense, the reason yielded by the apostle in these words, why the Captain of salvation should be made perfect by sufferings, because the sons to be brought unto glory were also to suffer ; and they were all of one, both he and they, even of God. But though these things are true, yet they contain not a full reason of what the apostle intends to prove by this assertion. For this interpretation allows no other relation to be expressed between Christ and the sons, than what is between him and angels ; they are also with him of one God. And yet the apostle afterwards sheweth, that there was another union and relation between Christ and the elect needful, that they might be saved by him, than any that was between him and angels. And if nothing be intimated but the good pleasure of God, appointing him to be a Saviour, and them to be saved, because they were all of himself, of one God, which was sufficient to make that appointment just and righteous, then nothing is here asserted to prove the meetness of Christ to be a Saviour unto men, and not to angels, which yet the apostle in the following verses expressly deduceth from hence.

2ndly. If it respect a person, it may be *ex uno homine*, ‘of one man,’ that is, of Adam. They are all of one common root and stock, he and they came all of one Adam ; unto him is the genealogy of Christ referred by Luke. And as a common stock of our nature, he is often called the one, the one man, Rom. v. And this, for the substance of it, falls in with what will be next considered.

3rdly. It may be taken in the neuter sense, and denote one thing ; and so also it may receive a double interpretation.

1. It may denote the same mass of human nature. *Εξ ἑνός φύραματος*, ‘of one and the same mass of human nature ;’ or *εξ ἑνός αἵματος*. So it is said of all mankind, that God made them, *εξ ἑνός αἵματος*, ‘of one blood,’ Acts xvii. 26, of one common principle, which gives an alliance, cognation, and brotherhood unto the whole race of mankind. As the making of all mankind by one God gives them all a relation unto him, as saith the apostle, ‘We are all his offspring ;’ so their being made of one blood gives them a brotherhood among themselves ; see Acts xiv. 15. And this interpretation differs not in the substance of it from that last preceding ; inasmuch as the whole mass of human nature had its existence in the person of Adam, only it refers not the oneness mentioned formally unto his person, but unto the nature itself whereof he was made partaker. And this sense the apostle farther explains, ver. 14, as he also observes it, Rom. ix. 5.



2. By one, some understand the same spiritual nature, the principles of spiritual life which is in Christ the head, and the children his members. And this they say is that which is their peculiar oneness, or being of one; seeing all wicked men, even reprobates, are of the same common mass of human nature as well as the children. But yet this is not satisfactory. It is true indeed, that after the children are really sanctified, they are of one and the same spiritual nature with their Head, 1 Cor. xii. 12, and hereby they are differenced from all others. But the apostle here treats of their being so of one, that he might be meet to suffer for them, which is antecedent unto their being sanctified, as the cause is unto the effect. Neither is it of any weight that the reprobates are partakers of the same common nature with the children, seeing the Lord Christ partook of it on<sup>ly</sup> on the children's account, as ver. 14. And of their nature he could not be partaker, without being partaker of that which was common to them all, seeing that of one blood God made all nations under heaven. But the bond of nature itself is in the covenant, reckoned only unto them that shall be sanctified.

It is then one common nature that is here intended. He and they are of the same nature, of one mass, of one blood. And hereby he became to be meet to suffer for them, and they to be in a capacity of enjoying the benefit of his sufferings; which how it answers the whole design of the apostle in this place, doth evidently appear.

First. He intends to show that the Lord Christ was meet to suffer for the children; and this arose from hence, that he was of the same nature with them, as he afterwards at large declares. And he was meet to sanctify them by his sufferings, as in this verse he intimates. For as in an offering made unto the Lord, of the first-fruits, of meat, or of meal, a parcel of the same nature with the whole was taken and offered, whereby the whole was sanctified, Lev. ii; so the Lord Jesus Christ, being taken as the first-fruits of the nature of the children, and offered unto God the whole lump, or the whole nature of man in the children, that is all the elect is separated unto God, and effectually sanctified in their season. And this gives the ground unto all the testimonies which the apostle produceth unto his purpose out of the Old Testament. For being thus of one nature with them, he is not ashamed to call them brethren as he proves from Ps. xxii. For although it be true that as brethren is a term of spiritual cognition and love, he calls them not so until they are made partakers of his Spirit, and of the same spiritual nature that is in him, yet the first foundation of this appellation lies in his participation in the same nature with them, without which, however he might love them, he could not properly call them brethren. Also his participation of their nature, was that which brought him into such a condition, as wherein it was needful for him to put his trust in God, and to look for deliverance from him in a time of danger, which the apostle proves in the second place by a testimony out of Psal. xviii. which could not in any sense have been said of Christ, had he not been partaker of that nature, which is exposed unto all kinds of wants and troubles, with outward straits and oppositions, which the nature of angels is not. And as

his being thus of one with us, made him our brother, and placed him in that condition with us, wherein it was necessary for him to put his trust in God for deliverance, so being the principal head and first-fruits of our nature, and therein the author and finisher of our salvation, he is a Father unto us, and we are his children, which the apostle proveth by his last testimony from Isa. viii. "Behold I, and the children which the Lord hath given unto me." And further upon the close of these testimonies, the apostle assumes again his proposition, and asserts it unto the same purpose, ver. 14, showing in what sense he and the children were one, namely in their mutual participation of flesh and blood.

And thus this interpretation of the word will sufficiently bear the whole weight of the apostle's argument and inferences. But if any one list to extend the word farther, and to comprise it in the manifold relation that is between Christ and his members, I shall not contend about it. There may be in it, 1. Their being of God, designing him and them to be one mystical body, one church, he the head, they the members. 2. Their taking into one covenant, made originally with him, and exemplified in them. 3. Their being of one common principle of human nature. 4. Designed unto a manifold spiritual union in respect to that new nature which the children receive from him, with every other thing that concurs to serve the union and relation between them; but that which we have insisted on is principally intended, and to be so considered by us. And we might teach from hence, that,

III. The agreement of Christ and the elect in one common nature, is the foundation of his fitness to be an undertaker on their behalf, and of the equity of their being made partakers of the benefits of his mediation. But that this will occur unto us again more fully, ver. 14.

And by all this doth the apostle discover unto the Hebrews, the unreasonableness of their offence at the afflicted condition and sufferings of the Messiah. He had reminded them of the work that he had to do, which was to save the elect by a spiritual and eternal salvation. He had also intimated what was their condition by nature, wherein they were unclean, unsanctified, separate from God. And withal had made known what the justice of God, as the supreme Governor and Judge of all required, that sinners might be saved. He now reminds them of the union that was between him and them, whereby he became fit to suffer for them, as that they might enjoy the blessed effects thereof in deliverance and salvation.

Thirdly. The apostle lays down an inference from his preceding assertion, in those words, 'For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' In which words, we have, 1. The respect of that which is here affirmed unto the assertion foregoing—for which cause. 2. The thing itself affirmed, which is—that the Lord Christ calls the sons to be brought unto glory *his brethren*. 3. The manner of his so doing—he is not ashamed to call them so. And herein also the apostle according to his wonted way of proceeding, which we have often observed, makes a transition towards somewhat else which he had in

design, namely, the prophetic office of Christ, as we shall see afterwards.

‘For which cause;’ that is, because they are of one, partakers of one common nature, ‘he calls them brethren.’ This gives a rightful foundation unto that appellation. Hereon is built that relation which is between him and them. It is true, there is more required to perfect the relation of brotherhood between him and them, than merely their being of one; but it is so far established from hence, that he was meet to suffer for them, to sanctify and save them. And without this, there could have been no such relation. Now this calling of them *brethren*, doth both declare that they are so, and also that he owns them, and avouches them as such. But whereas it may be said, that they are thus of one in respect of their common nature, yet upon sundry other accounts he is so glorious, and they are so vile and miserable, that he might justly disavow this cognation, and reject them as strangers; the apostle tells us it is otherwise, and that passing by all other distances between them, and setting aside the consideration of their unworthiness, for which he might justly disavow them, and remembering wherefore he was of one with them, he is not ashamed to call them brethren. There may be a *μεωσις* in the words, and the contrary asserted to that which is denied: ‘He is not ashamed,’ that is, willingly, cheerfully, and readily he doth it. But I rather look upon it as an expression of condescension and love; and herein doth the apostle show the use of what he taught before, that they were of one, namely that thereby they became brethren, he meet to suffer for them, and they meet to be saved by him. What in all this the apostle confirms by the ensuing testimonies, we shall see in the explanation of them; in the meantime we may learn for our instruction,

IV. That notwithstanding the union of nature which is between the Son of God incarnate, the Sanctifier, and the children that are to sanctified, there is in respect of their persons an inconceivable distance between them, so that it is a marvellous condescension in him to call them brethren.

He is not *ashamed* to call them so, though considering what himself is, and what they are, it should seem that he might justly be so. The same expression, for the like reasons, is used concerning God’s owning his people in covenant, ch. xi. 16, ‘Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God.’ And this distance between Christ and us, which makes his condescension so marvellous, relates unto a fourfold head.

First. The immunity of the nature, wherein he was of one with us in his person, from all sin. ‘He was made like unto us in all things, sin excepted.’ The nature of man in every other individual person, is defiled with, and debased by sin. We are every one gone astray, and are become altogether filthy or abominable. This sets us at no small distance from him. Human nature defiled with sin, is farther distanced from the same nature as pure and holy, in worth and excellency, than the meanest worm is from the most glorious angel. Nothing but sin casts the creature out of its own place, and puts it into another distance from God, than it hath by being a creature. This is

a debasement unto hell, as the prophet speaks, 'Thou didst debase thyself even unto hell,' Isa. lvii. 9. And therefore the condescension of God unto us in Christ, is set out by his regarding of us, when we were enemies unto him, Rom. v. 10; that is, whilst we were sinners, as ver. 8. This had cast us into hell itself, at the most inconceivable distance from him. Yet this hindered not him, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, to own us as his brethren. He says not with those proud hypocrites in the prophet, 'Stand farther off, I am holier than you;' but he comes unto us, and takes us by the hand in his love, to deliver us from this condition.

Secondly. We are in this nature obnoxious unto all miseries in this world, and that which is to come. Man now is born to trouble, all the trouble that sin can deserve, or a provoked God inflict: his misery is great upon him, and that growing and endless. He, justly in himself, free from all, obnoxious to nothing that was grievous or irksome, no more than the angels in heaven, or Adam in paradise. *Pœna noxam sequitur*: 'Punishment and trouble follow guilt only naturally.' He did no sin, nor was there guile found in his mouth; so that God was always well pleased with him. Whatever of hardship or difficulty he underwent, it was for us, and not for himself. Might not he have left us to perish in our condition, and freely enjoyed his own? We see how unapt those who are in prosperity, full and rich, are to take notice of their nearest relations in poverty, misery, and distress; and who among them would do so, if it would cast them into the state of those who are already miserable? Yet so it did the Lord Christ. His calling us brethren, and owning of us, made him instantly obnoxious unto all the miseries, the guilt whereof we have contracted upon ourselves. The owning of his alliance unto us, cost him, as it were, all he was worth; for being rich, for our sakes he became poor. He came into the prison, and into the furnace to own us. And this also renders his condescension marvellous.

Thirdly. He is inconceivably distanced from us, in respect of that place and dignity which he was designed unto. This, as we have shown at large, was to be Lord of all, with absolute sovereign authority over the whole creation of God. We are poor abjects, who either have not bread to eat, or have no good right to eat that which we meet withal. Sin hath set the whole creation against us. And if Mephibosheth thought it a great condescension in David on his throne to take notice of him being poor, who was yet the son of Jonathan, what is it in this King of kings to own us for brethren in our vile and low condition. Thoughts of his glorious exaltation will put a lustre on his condescension in this matter.

Fourthly. He is infinitely distanced from us in his person, in respect of his divine nature, wherein he is and was God over all, blessed for ever. He did not so become man, as to cease to be God. Though he drew a veil over his infinite glory, yet he parted not with it. He who calls us brethren, who suffered for us, who died for us, was God still in all these things. The condescension of Christ in this respect, the apostle in an especial manner insists upon and improves, Phil. ii. 5—11. That he who in himself is thus over all, eternally blessed, holy, powerful, should take us poor worms of the earth into this relation



with himself, and avow us for his brethren, as it is not easy to be believed, so it is for ever to be admired. And these are some of the heads of that distance, which is between Christ and us. Notwithstanding his participation of the same nature with us, yet such was his love unto us, such his constancy in the pursuit of the design and purpose of his Father, in bringing many sons unto glory, that he overlooks as it were them all, and is not ashamed to call us brethren. And if he will do this, because he is of one with us, because a foundation of this relation is laid in his participation of our nature, how much more will he continue so to do, when he hath perfected this relation by a communication of his Spirit.

And this is a ground of unspeakable consolation unto believers, with support in every condition. No unworthiness in them, no misery upon them, shall ever hinder the Lord Christ from owning them, and openly avowing them to be his brethren. He is a brother born for the day of trouble, a Redeemer for the friendless and fatherless. Let their miseries be what they will, he will be ashamed of none but of them who are ashamed of him and his ways when persecuted and reproached. A little while will clear up great mistakes, : all the world shall see at the last day whom Christ will own ; and it will be a great surprisal when men shall hear him call them brethren, whom they hate, and esteem as the offscouring of all things. He doth it indeed already by his word, but they will not attend thereunto. But at the last day they shall both see and hear, whether they will or not. And herein, I say, lies the great consolation of believers. The world rejects them, it may be their own relations despise them, they are persecuted, hated, reproached ; but the Lord Christ is not ashamed of them. He will not pass by them because they are poor, and in rags, it may be reckoned as he himself was for them, among malefactors. They may see also the wisdom, grace, and love of God in this matter. His great design in the incarnation of his Son, was to bring him into that condition, wherein he might naturally care for them as their brother, that he might not be ashamed of them, but be sensible of their wants, their state and condition in all things, and so be always ready to meet and relieve them. Let the world now take its course, and the men thereof do their worst : let Satan rage, and the powers of hell be stirred up against them : let them load them with reproaches and scorn, and cover them all over with the filth and dirt of their false imputations ; let them bring them unto rags, into dungeons, unto death ; Christ comes in the midst of all this confusion, and says, surely these are my brethren, the children of my Father, and he becomes their Saviour. And this is a stable foundation of comfort and supportment in every condition. And are we not taught our duty also herein, namely, not to be ashamed of him or his gospel, or of any one that bears his image ? The Lord Christ is now himself in that condition, that even the worst of men esteem it an honour to own him, when indeed they are no less ashamed of him, than they would have been when he was carrying his cross upon his shoulders, or hanging upon the tree. For of every thing that he hath in this world they are ashamed ; his gospel, his ways, his worship, his Spirit, his saints, they are all of them the objects of their scorn ; and in

these things it is, that the Lord Christ may be truly honoured or be despised. For those thoughts which men have of his present glory, abstracting from these things, he is not concerned in them; they are all exercised about an imaginary Christ, that is unconcerned in the Word and Spirit of the Lord Jesus. These are the things, when we are not to be ashamed of him; see Rom. i. 16; 2 Tim. i. 16, iv. 16.

That which remaineth of these verses, consisteth in the testimonies which the apostle produceth out of the Old Testament in the confirmation of what he had taught and asserted. And two things are to be considered concerning them; the end for which they are produced, and the special importance of the words contained in them. The first he mentions is from Ps. xxii. 22, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will sing praise unto thee." The end why the apostle produceth this testimony, is to confirm what he had said immediately before, namely, that with respect unto his being one with the children, Christ owns them for his brethren, for this he doth expressly in this place. And we are to take notice, that the apostle in the use of these testimonies, doth not observe any order, so that one of them should confirm one part, and another, another part of his assertion, in the order wherein he had laid them down; it sufficeth him, that his whole intendment in all the parts of it, is confirmed in and by them all, one having a more especial respect unto one part than another. In this first it is clear, that he proves what he had immediately before affirmed, namely, that the Lord Christ owns the children for his brethren, because of their common interest in the same nature. And there needs nothing to evince the pertinency of this testimony, but only to show that it is the Messiah which speaketh in that Psalm, and whose words these are, which we have done fully already in our Prolegomena.

For the explication of the words themselves, we may consider the two-fold act or duty that the Lord Christ takes upon himself in them; first, that he will declare the name of God unto his brethren; and secondly, that he would celebrate him with praise in the congregation. In the former we must inquire what is meant by the name of God, and then how it is or was declared by Jesus Christ.

This expression, the name of God, is variously used. Sometimes it denotes the being of God, God himself; sometimes his attributes, his excellencies, or divine perfections, some one or more of them. As it is proposed unto sinners as an object for their faith, trust, and love, it denotes in an especial manner his love, grace, and goodness, that in himself he is good, gracious, and merciful, Isa. 1. 10. And withal it intimates what God requires of them towards whom he is so good and gracious. This name of God is unknown to men by nature, so is the way and means whereby he will communicate his goodness and grace unto them. And this is the name of God here intended, which the Lord Jesus manifested unto the men given him out of the world, John xvii. 5, which is the same with his declaring the Father, whom no man hath seen at any time, John i. 18. This is that name of God which the Lord Jesus Christ had experience of in his sufferings, and the manifestation whereof unto his brethren he had procured thereby.

Hereof he says in the Psalm, אֲדַבֵּר, 'I will declare it,' recount it in order, number the particulars that belong unto it, and so distinctly and evidently make it known. Απαγγελω, 'I will make it known as a messenger,' sent from thee and by thee. And there are two ways whereby the Lord Christ declared this name of God. 1. In his own person, and that both before and after his sufferings; for although it be mentioned here, as a work that ensued his death, yet is it not exclusive of his teachings before his suffering; because they also were built upon the supposition thereof. Thus in the days of his flesh, he instructed his disciples, and preached the gospel in the synagogues of the Jews, and in the temple, declaring the name of God unto them. So also after his resurrection, he conferred with his apostles concerning the kingdom of God, Acts i. 2. By his Spirit: and that both in the effusion of it upon his disciples, enabling them personally to preach the gospel unto the men of their own generation, and in the inspiration of some of them, enabling them to commit the truth unto writing for the instruction of the elect unto the end of the world. And herein doth the apostle, according unto his wonted manner, not only confirm what he had before delivered, but make way for what he had farther to instruct the Hebrews in; namely, the prophetic office of Christ, as he is the great revealer of the will of God and teacher of the church, which he professedly insists upon in the beginning of the next chapter.

In the second part of this first testimony is declared farther: 1. what Christ will moreover do; 'He will sing praises unto God:' and 2. when he will do it; 'in the midst of the congregation.' The expression of both these is accommodated unto the declaration of God's name, and praising of him in the temple. The singing of hymns of praise unto God in the great congregation was then a principal part of his worship. And in the first expression two things are observable. 1. What Christ undertakes to do, and that is to praise God. Now this is only exegetical of what went before. He would praise God by declaring his name. There is no way whereby the praise of God may be celebrated, like that of declaring his grace, goodness, and love unto men, whereby they may be won to believe and trust in him, whence glory redounds unto him. 2. The cheerfulness and alacrity of the Spirit of Christ in this work, he would do it as with joy and singing, with such a frame of heart as was required in them, who were to sing the praises of God in the great assemblies in the temple. 2. Where would he do this, בְּתוֹךְ קָהָל, 'in the midst of the congregation;' the great congregation as he calls it, ver. 25, that is, the great assembly of the people in the temple. And this was a type of the whole church of the elect under the New Testament. The Lord Christ in his own person, by his Spirit in his apostles, and his word, by all his messengers unto the end of the world, setting forth the love, grace, goodness, and mercy of God in him the Mediator, sets forth the praise of God in the midst of the congregation. I shall only add, that whereas singing of hymns unto God, was an especial part of the instituted worship under the Old Testament, to whose use these expressions are accommodated, it is evident that the Lord Christ hath eminently set forth this praise of God in his institution of worship

under the New Testament, wherein God will ever be glorified and praised. This was that which the Lord Christ engaged to do upon the issue of his sufferings, and we may propose it unto our example and instruction : namely,

V. That which was principally in the heart of Christ upon his sufferings, was to declare and manifest the love, grace, and good-will of God unto men, that they might come to an acquaintance with him, and acceptance before him. There are two things in the Psalm, and the words, that manifest how much this was upon the heart of Christ. The most part of the Psalm containeth the great conflict that he had with his sufferings, and the displeasure of God against sin declared therein. He is no sooner delivered from thence, but instantly he engageth in this work. As he lands upon the shore from that tempest wherein he was tossed in his passion, he cries out, ‘ I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise unto thee.’ And thus we find, that upon his resurrection he did not immediately ascend into glory, but first declared the name of God unto his apostles and disciples, and then took order that by them it should be declared and published to all the world. This was upon his spirit, and he entered not into his glorious rest until he had performed it. The words themselves also do evidence it, in that expression of celebrating God’s name with hymns, with singing. It was a joy of heart unto him to be engaged in this work. Singing is the frame *ευθυμουτων*, James v. 13, of them that are in a glad, free, rejoicing condition. So was the Lord Christ in this work. He rejoiced of old with the very thoughts of this work, Prov. viii. 30, 31; Isa. lxi. 1—3. And it was one of the glorious promises that were made unto him upon his undertaking the work of our salvation, that he should declare or preach the gospel, and the name of God therein, unto the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, Isa. xlix. 1—10. He rejoiced therefore greatly to do it; and that,

First. Because herein consisted the manifestation and exaltation of the glory of God, which he principally in his own work aimed at. He came to do the will, and thereby to set forth the glory of the Father. By and in him God designed to make his glory known; the glory of his love and grace in sending him; the glory of his justice and faithfulness in his sufferings; the glory of his mercy in the reconciliation and pardon of sinners; the glory of his wisdom in the whole mystery of his mediation; and the glory together of all his eternal excellencies in bringing his sons unto the everlasting enjoyment of him. Now nothing of all this could have been made known, unless the Lord Christ had taken upon him to preach the gospel and declare the name of God. Without this, whatever else he had done or suffered, had been lost as unto the interest of the glory of God. This then being that which he principally aimed at, this design must needs be greatly in his mind. He took care that so great glory, built on so great a foundation as his incarnation and mediation, should not be lost. His other work was necessary, but this was a joy of heart and soul unto him.

Secondly. The salvation of the sons to be brought unto glory, with



all their interest in the benefit of his sufferings, depended on this work of his. How much he sought that, his whole work declares. For their sakes it was, that he came down from heaven, and was made flesh, and dwelt amongst them; for their sakes did he undergo all the miseries that the world could cast upon him; for their sakes did he undergo the curse of the law, and wrestle with the displeasure and wrath of God against sin. And all this seemed as it were little unto him, for the love he bare them, as Jacob's hard service did to him for his love unto Rachel. Now after he had done all this for them, unless he had declared the name of God unto them in the gospel, they could have no benefit by it. For if they believe not, they cannot be saved. And how should they believe without the word, and how or whence could they hear the word, unless it had been preached unto them. They could not of themselves have known any thing of that name of God, which is their life and salvation. Some men talk of I know not what declaration of God's name, nature, and glory, by the works of nature and providence; but if the Lord Christ had not indeed revealed, declared, and preached these things, these disputers themselves would not have been in any other condition than all mankind are who are left unto those teachers, which is most dark and miserable. The Lord Christ knew, that without his performance of this work, not one of the sons, the conduct of whom to glory he had undertaken, could ever have brought unto the knowledge of the name of God, or unto faith in him, or obedience unto him, which made him earnestly and heartily engage in it.

Thirdly. Hereon depended his own glory also. His elect were to be gathered unto him; in, among, and over them was his glorious kingdom to be erected. Without their conversion unto God, this could not be done. In the state of nature they also are children of wrath, and belong to the kingdom of Satan. And this declaration of the name of God, is the great way and means of their calling, conversion, and translating from the power of Satan into his kingdom. The gospel is the rod of his strength, whereby his people are made willing in the day of his power. In brief, the gathering of his church, the setting up of his kingdom, the establishment of his throne, the setting of the crown upon his head, depend wholly on his declaring the name of God in the preaching of the gospel. Seeing therefore that the glory of God which he aimed at, the salvation of the sons which he sought for, and the honour of his kingdom which was promised unto him, do all depend on this work, it is no wonder, if his heart were full of it, and that he rejoiced to be engaged in it.

And this frame of heart ought to be in them, who under him are called to this work. The work itself we see is noble and excellent, such as the Lord Christ carried in his eye through all his sufferings, as that whereby they were to be rendered useful to the glory of God; and the souls of men. And by his rejoicing to be engaged in it, he hath set a pattern to them whom he calls to the same employment. Where men undertake it for filthy lucre, for selfish ends, and carnal respects, this is not to follow the example of Christ, not to serve him, but their own bellies. Zeal for the glory of God, compassion for the

souls of men, love to the honour and exaltation of Christ, ought to be the principles of men in this undertaking.

Moreover the Lord Christ by declaring that he will set forth the praise of God in the church, manifests what is the duty of the church itself, namely, to praise God for the work of his love and grace in our redemption by Christ Jesus. This he promiseth to go before them in; and what he leads them to, is by them to be persisted in. This is indeed the very end of gathering the church, and of all the duties that are performed therein and thereby. The church is called to the 'glory of the grace of God,' Eph. i. 6, that it may be set forth in them, and by them. This is the end of the institution of all ordinances of worship in the church, Eph. iii. 8—10. And in them do they set forth the praises of God to men and angels. This is the tendency of prayer, the work of faith, the fruit of obedience. It is a fond imagination which some have fallen on, that God is not praised in the church for the work of redemption, unless it be done by words and hymns particularly expressing it. All praying, all preaching, all administration of ordinances, all our faith, all our obedience, if ordered aright, are nothing but giving glory to God, for his love and grace in Christ Jesus, in a due and acceptable manner. And this is that which ought to be in our design in all our worship of God, especially in what we perform in the church. To 'set forth his praise,' to 'declare his name,' to give glory to him by believing, and by the profession of our faith, is the end of all we do. And this is the first testimony produced by our apostle.

His next is taken from Ps. xviii. 2, 'I will put my trust in him.' The whole Psalm literally respects David, with his straits and deliverances; not absolutely, but as he was a type of Christ. That he was so the Jews cannot deny, seeing the Messiah is promised on that account under the name of David. And the close of the Psalm treating of the calling of the Gentiles, as a fruit of his deliverance from sufferings, manifests him to be principally intended. And that which the apostle intends to prove by this testimony is, that he was really and truly of one with the sons to be brought to glory: and that he doth from hence, inasmuch as he was made and brought into that condition, wherein it was necessary for him to trust in God, and act in that dependence on him, which the nature of man whilst exposed to troubles doth indispensably require. Had he been only God, this could not have been spoken of him. Neither is the nature of angels exposed to such dangers and troubles, as to make it necessary for them to betake themselves to God's protection with respect thereunto. And this the word *חסה*, used by the Psalmist properly signifies, 'to betake a man's self' to the care and protection of another, as Ps. ii. *ult.* This then the condition of the Lord Christ required, and this he did perform in all troubles and difficulties, that he had contended withal, 'He put his trust in God,' as Isa. l. 8, 9; Ps. xxii. 19. And this evinceth him to have been truly and really of one with the children, his brethren; seeing it was his duty no less than it is theirs, to depend on God in troubles and distresses. And in vain doth Slichtingius hence endeavour to prove, that Christ was the Son of God by

grace only, because he is said to depend on him, which if he had been God by nature he could not do. True, if he had been God only; but the apostle is now proving, that he was man also, like to us in all things, sin only excepted. And as such his duty it was, in all straits, to betake himself by faith to the care and protection of God. And some things may hence also be briefly observed. As,

1. That the Lord Christ, the Captain of our salvation, was exposed in the days of his flesh, to great difficulties, anxiety of mind, dangers, and troubles.—This is included in what he here affirms about ‘putting his trust in God.’ And they were all typified out by the great sufferings of David before he came to his kingdom. In the consideration of the sufferings of Christ, men commonly fix their thoughts solely on his death. And indeed therein was a recapitulation of all that he had before undergone, with an addition of the wrath of God. But yet neither are the sufferings of his life to be disregarded. Such they were as made his whole pilgrimage on the earth dangerous and dolorous. There was on him a confluence of every thing that is evil or troublesome to human nature. And herein he is principally our example, at least so far, that we should think no kind of sufferings strange to us.

2. The Lord Christ in all his perplexities and troubles, betook himself to the protection of God, trusting in him.—See Isa. l. 7, 8. And he always made an open profession of this trust, insomuch that his enemies reproached him with it in his greatest distress, Matt. xxvii. 43. But this was his course, this was his refuge, wherein at length he had blessed and glorious success.

3. He both suffered and trusted as our Head and Precedent.—What he did in both these kinds he calls us to. As he did, so must we undergo perplexities and dangers in the course of our pilgrimage. The Scripture abounds with instructions to this purpose, and experience confirms it. And professors of the gospel do but indulge pleasing dreams, when they fancy any other condition in this world to themselves. They would not be willing, I suppose, to purchase it at the price of inconformity to Jesus Christ. And he is a Precedent to us in trusting, as well as in suffering. As he betook himself to the protection of God, so should we do also; and we shall have the same blessed success with him.

There remains yet one testimony more, which we shall briefly pass through the consideration of. ‘Behold I and the children which God hath given me.’ It is taken from Isa. viii. 18. That it was a prophecy of Christ which is there insisted on, we have proved at large in our Prolegomena, so that we need not here again farther to discourse that matter. That which the apostle aims at in the citation of this testimony, is farther to confirm the union in nature, and the relation that ensues thereupon, between the Captain of salvation, and the sons to be brought to glory. Now as this is such, that thereon he calls them brethren, and came into the same condition of trouble with them, so they are by the grant and appointment of God, his children. Being of the same nature with them, and so meet to become a common Parent to them all, God, by an act of sovereign grace, gives them

to him for his children. This is the aim of the apostle, in the use of this testimony to his present purpose. In the words themselves we may consider,

First. That God gives all the sons that are brought to glory, to Jesus Christ.—The Lord hath ‘given them to me.’ ‘Thine they were,’ saith he, ‘and thou gavest them unto me,’ John xvii. 6. God having separated them, as his peculiar portion in the eternal counsel of his will, gives them to the Son to take care of them, that they may be preserved and brought to the glory that he designed for them. And this work he testifies that he undertook, so that none of them shall be lost, but that whatever difficulties they may pass through, he ‘will raise them up at the last day,’ and give them an entrance into life and immortality.

Secondly. He gives them to him as his children to be provided for; and to have an inheritance purchased for them, that they may become ‘heirs of God and co-heirs with himself.’—Adam was their first parent by nature, and in him they lost that inheritance, which they might have expected by the law of their creation. They are therefore given to the second Adam as their Parent by grace, to have an inheritance provided for them, which accordingly he hath purchased with the price of his blood.

Thirdly. That the Lord Christ is satisfied with, and rejoiceth in the portion given him of his Father, his children, his redeemed ones.—This the manner of the expression informs us in. ‘Behold I and the children;’ though he considers himself and them at that time ‘as signs and wonders to be spoken against.’ He rejoiceth in his portion, and doth not call it ‘Cabul,’ as Hiram did the cities given him of Solomon, because they displeased him. He is not only satisfied on the sight of the ‘travail of his soul,’ Isa. liii. 11, but glorieth also, that the ‘lines are fallen to him in pleasantnesses, that he hath a goodly heritage,’ Psal. xvi. 6. Such was his love, such was his grace, for we in ourselves are a people not to be desired.

Fourthly. That the Lord Jesus assumes the children given him of his Father into the same condition with himself, both as to life and eternity.—‘I and the children,’ as he is, so are they. His lot is their lot, his God is their God, his Father their Father, and his glory shall be theirs.

Fifthly. From the context of the words in the prophet, expressing the separation of Christ and the children, from the world, and all the hypocrites therein combined together in the pursuit of their sinful courses, we are taught, that Christ and believers are in the same covenant, confederated to trust in God in difficulties and troubles, in opposition to all the confederacies of the men of the world for their carnal security.

And thus by this triple testimony hath the apostle both confirmed his foregoing assertion, and farther manifested the relation that is between the children to be brought to glory, and the Captain of their salvation, whereby it became righteous that he should suffer for them, and meet that they should enjoy the benefit of his sufferings, which he more fully expresseth in the following verses.



VER. 14, 15.—THE union of Christ and the children in their relation to one common root, and participation of the same nature being asserted, the apostle proceeds to declare the ends, use, and necessity of that union, in respect of the work which God had designed him unto, and the ends which he had to accomplish thereby. Of these he layeth down two in these two verses, namely, the destruction of the devil, and the deliverance thereby of them that were in bondage by reason of death; neither of which could have been wrought nor effected, but by the death of the Captain of salvation; which he could not have undergone, nor would what he could otherwise have done, have been profitable to them, had he not been of the same nature with the children; as will appear in the opening of the words themselves.

VER. 14, 15.—Επει ουν τα παιδια κεκοινωνηκε σαρκος και αίματος, και αυτος παραπλησιως μετεσχε των αυτων, ίνα δια του θανατου καταργηση τον το κρατος εχοντα του θανατου, τουτεστι τον διαβολον·

Και απαλλαξη τουτους όσοι φοβω θανατου δια παντος του ζην ενοχοι ησαν δουλειας.

Επει ουν, V. L. Quia ergo; Bez. quoniam ergo, ‘because therefore:’ Syr. מִן לִבִּי, ‘for seeing,’ or for because. Eras. Posteaquam igitur; ours, ‘forasmuch then.’ Επει, is sometimes used for εφ’ ού postquam, ex quo tempore, from whence; so as to express no causality as to that which follows, but only the precedency of that which it relates to. But it is not in that sense used with ουν, which here is subjoined, but quoniam, quandoquidem; the particle ουν, ‘therefore,’ plainly expressing a causality; they are well rendered by ours, ‘Forasmuch then,’ or therefore.

Τα παιδια κεκοινωνηκε σαρκος και αίματος. V. L. pueri communicaverunt carni et sanguini, ‘The children communicated in flesh and blood.’ Syr. בְּנֵי, ‘the sons’ were partakers, or do partake. Eras. commercium habent cum carne et sanguine, ‘have communion or commerce with flesh and blood.’ Bez. Pueri participes sunt carnis et sanguinis, ‘the children are partakers of flesh and blood,’ as ours. The Vulgar expresseth the time past, which the original requireth. Ethiopic, ‘He made his children partakers of his flesh and blood:’ with respect as it should seem to the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Και αυτος παραπλησιως μετεσχε των αυτων, V. L. Et ipse similiter (consimiliter, A. M.) participavit eisdem. Bez. Ipse quoque consimiliter particeps factus est eorundem, as ours, ‘He also himself took part of the same.’ And the Syr. אִתּוֹ הוּא בְּהַלֵּךְ בְּהַלֵּךְ אִתּוֹ הוּא בְּהַלֵּךְ, ‘he himself also, in the same likeness (or manner) was partaker or partook in the same or self same things.’ Arab. ‘He also, like unto them, partook in the properties of the same.’ That is, truly partook of flesh and blood in all their natural or essential properties. Ethiop. ‘And he also was made as a brother to them.’

‘Ινα δια θανατου; Syr. בְּמוֹתוֹ, ut per mortem suam, ‘that by his own death,’ properly as to the sense. Καταργηση, V. L. destrueret; all other Latin translations, aboleret, ‘that he might destroy,’ so

ours; but 'to destroy,' respects the person, abolere, in the first place the power. *Τον το κρατος εχοντα του θανατου*, eum qui tenebat mortis imperium. Syr. Eras. Vul. 'him that held, or had the rule of death.' Bez. eum penes quem est mortis robur, 'him that had the power of death.' Ethiop. 'the prince of death.' *Τουτεστι τον διαβολον*. Syr. כחשׁוּ יְהוּדִי, 'which is Satan.' *Και απαλλαξη* (some copies read *αποκαταλλαξη*,) *τους οσοι*, V. et liberaret eos. Bez. et liberos redderet eos; 'and free them,' 'and make them free.' Syr. 'and loose them.'

*Δια παντος του ζην*, Per omne vivere suum. 'Whilst they lived,' 'all their lives.'

*Ενοχοι ησαν δουλειαις*, Obnoxii erant servituti. Bez. Mancipati erant servituti, properly damnates erant servitutis; 'obnoxious, subject unto bondage.'

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood." This expression is not elsewhere used in the Scripture. *Κοινωνεω*, is to have any thing whatever in common with another. *Ακοινωνητος*, is he who hath nothing in fellowship or common with others. And this word is used in reference to all sorts of things good and bad, as nature, life, actions, qualities, works. Here it intimateth the common and equal share of the children in the things spoken of. They are equally common to all. These are *σαρξ και αιμα*, 'flesh and blood,' that is, human nature liable to death, misery, destruction. Some would have, not the nature of man, but the frail and weak condition of mankind, to be intended in this expression. So Eniedinus, and after him Grotius, who refers us to chap. v. 7; 1 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Cor. iv. 11, for the confirmation of this sense. But in none of those places is there mention of flesh and blood, as here: but only of flesh, which word is variously used both in the Old Testament and New. Yet in all the places referred to, it is taken not for the quality of human life, as it is infirm and weak, but for human nature itself which is so, as concerning that of 1 Tim. iii. 16, it hath at large been declared. And the design of the place rejects this gloss, which was invented only to defeat the testimony given in these words to the incarnation of the Son of God. For the apostle adds a reason in these verses, why the Lord Christ was so to be of one with the children, as to take on himself their nature, which is, because that was subject to death, which for them he was to undergo. And flesh and blood are here only mentioned, though they complete not human nature without a rational soul, because in and by them it is that our nature is subject to death. We may only farther observe, that the apostle having especial regard to the saints under the Old Testament, expresseth their participation of flesh and blood in the preterperfect tense, or time past, which by proportion is to be extended to all that believe in Christ; unless we shall say, that he hath respect to the common interest of all mankind in the same nature, in the root of it; whence God is said, 'of one blood to have made them all.'

*Παραπλησιως*, we see is rendered by interpreters, similiter, consimiliter, eodem modo, ad eandem similitudinem. That is, *ομοιως* or *τον αυτον τροπον*, 'likewise,' or 'after the same manner.' And *παραπλη-*

σιος, is as much as *κατα πάντα ὁμοιος*, ver. 17, 'every way like.' Here it is restrained by *των αὐτων*, 'the same,' that is flesh and blood—human nature: as to the human nature, he was every way as the children.

*Μετεσχε*, *Partem habuit, particeps erat*, 'he took part.' And in the use of this word, the dative case of the person is still understood, and sometimes expressed. So Plato, *ἵνα δη μετεχοι των πραγματος αυτοις*, 'that he might share or partake in the same acts with them.' And it is here also understood, that he might partake with them of flesh and blood. And the apostle purposely changeth the word from that which he had before used concerning the children: *κεκοινωνηκε τα παιδια*, 'they had human nature in common,' they were men and that was all, having no existence but in and by that nature. Concerning him he had before proved, that he had a divine nature on the account whereof he was more excellent than the angels. And here he says of him, *μετεσχε*, 'existing in his divine nature,' he moreover took part of that nature with them, which makes a difference between their persons, though as to human nature they were every way alike; and this removes the exception of Slichtingius, or Crellius, that he is no more said to be incarnate than the children.

That by death, *καταργηση*. This word is peculiar to Paul; he useth it almost in all his epistles, and that frequently. Elsewhere it occurs but once in the New Testament, Luke xiii. 7, and that in a sense whereunto by him it is not applied. That which he usually intends in this word, is to make a thing or person to cease as to its present condition, and not to be what it was. So Rom. iii. 3, *μη ἡ ἀπιστία αὐτων την πίστιν του Θεου καταργησει*; 'shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?' cause it to cease, render the promise useless? and ver. 31, *νομον οὖν καταργουμιν δια πιστεως*; 'do we make the law void by faith?' take away its use and end; ch. iv. 14, *κατηργηται ἡ ἐπαγγελία*, 'the promise is made ineffectual;' ch. vii. 2, *εαν δε αποθανη ὁ ἀνηρ, κατηργηται απο του νομου*, 'If her husband be dead, she is freed from the law.' The law of the husband hath no more power over her. So ver. 6; 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 10, 11, xv. 24, 26; 2 Cor. iii. 11, 13; Gal. iii. 17, v. 4, 11; Eph. ii. 15. The intention of the apostle in this word is, the making of any thing to cease, or to be void as to its former power and efficacy, not to remove, annihilate, or destroy the essence or being of it. And the expression here used is to the same purpose with that in Ps. viii. 2, *לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמְחַנֵּק*, to quiet, or make to cease the enemy and self-avenger.

*Τον το κρατος εχοντα του θανατου*. *Κρατος*, is properly vis, robur, potentia, 'force, strength, power,' like that of arms, or armies in battle. And sometimes it is used for rule, empire, and authority. *Εν κρατει ειναι*, is to be in 'place of power,' and *κρατος εχειν*, is to be 'able' to dispose of what it relates to. And in both senses we shall see that the devil is said to have *κρατος του θανατου*, 'the power of death.'

Now, there is not any notion under which the devil is more known unto, or spoken of among the Jews, than this of his having the power of death: his common appellation among them is, *מלאך המות*, 'the angel of death.' And they call him Samael also. So the Targum of

Jonathan, *ומוֹת סַמְאֵל מִלֹּאךְ דְּמוּתָא* Gen. iii. 6. "And the woman, saw Samael the angel of death." And Maimon. More Nebu. lib. ii. cap. 30, tells us from the Midrash, that Samael rode upon the serpent when he deceived Eve; that is, used him as his instrument in that work. And most of them acknowledge Satan to be principally intended in the temptation of Eve, though Aben Ezra denies it in his comment on the words, and disputes against it. And he adds, that by Samael, the angel of death, they understand Satan, which he proves from the words of their wise men, who say in some places, that Satan would have hindered Abraham from sacrificing Isaac; and in others, that Samael would have done it, which proves that it is one and the same who by both names is intended. And hence they usually call him, *סַמְאֵל הַרְשָׁע רֹאשׁ כָּל הַשְּׂטִיִּים*, 'the wicked Samael, the prince of all the devils;' and say of him, *סַמְאֵל גָּרִים מוֹתָא לְכָל עֲלָמָא*, 'Samael brought death upon all the world.' So that by this Samael, or angel of death, it is evident that they intend him who is termed *ὁ διαβολος*, as the prince and ruler of the rest. So also they speak expressly in *Baba Bathra*, *distinc. Hashatephir*. *אֲר"י שֶׁמֶעֶן הוּא שֶׁנֶּן הוּא מִלֹּאךְ הַמוֹת*. *הוּא יֵצֵר הָרָע*. 'Rabbi Simeon said the same is Satan, and the angel of death, and the evil figment;' that is the cause and author of it. And they call him the angel of death on many accounts, the consideration whereof may give us some light into the reason of the expression here used by the apostle. The first is that before mentioned, namely, that by his means death entered and came upon all the world. His temptation was the first occasion of death; and for that reason is he termed by our Saviour, *ἀνθρωποκτονος ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, John viii. 44. 'A murderer from the beginning.' And herein he had the power of death, prevailing to render all mankind obnoxious to the sentence and stroke of it. Secondly. Because he is employed in great and signal judgments to inflict death on men. He is the head of those *מַלְאכֵי רָעִים*, 'evil angels,' who slew the Egyptians, Ps. lxxviii. 49. So in Ps. xci. 5, those words, 'Thou shalt not fear *יְמֵהּ יַעֲוֶה מִחֵץ*, from the arrow that flieth by day,' are rendered by the Targum, *מִגִּידָא דְּמִלֹּאךְ מוֹתָא דְּשַׂדֵּי בִּימָמָא*, 'from the arrow of the angel of death which he shooteth by day.' And in the next verse those words, *מִקְטֵב יֵשׁוּד צָהָרִים*, 'from the destruction that wasteth at noon day,' they render *מִסִּיעַת שִׁידִין דְּמַחְבְּלִין בְּיַהֲרָא*, 'from the troop of devils that walk at noon day;' the Psalmist treating of great and sudden destructions, which they affirm to be all wrought by Satan; and thence the Hellenists also render the latter place by *δαίμονιον μεσημβρινον*, 'the devil at noon-day;' wherein they are followed by the Vulgar Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic translations. And this the apostle seems to allude unto, 1 Cor. x. 10, where he says, that those who "murmured in the wilderness were destroyed *ὑπο τον ολοθρευτον*, by the destroyer;" *ὁ ἀγγελος ολοθρευτης*, that *מִלֹּאךְ הַמוֹת*, 'the destroying angel,' or the angel of death; as in this Epistle he terms him, *ὁ ολοθρευων*, ch. xi. 28. And it may be this is he who is called him, *בְּכוֹר מוֹת*, Job xviii. 13, 'the first-born of death,' or he that hath right unto the administration of it. They term him also *אַשְׁמוּדִי*, that is, *ολοθρευτης*, the 'waster' or destroyer: and *שֶׁד*, from *שָׁד*, to waste or destroy, as also *אַבְדוֹן*; which, as John tells us, is the Hebrew name of



the 'angel of the bottomless pit,' Rev. ix. 11, as his Greek name is *απολλυσον*, that is מלאך המות, and *ολοθρευτης*. Thirdly. The later Jews suppose that this angel of death takes away the life of every man, even of those who die a natural death. And hereby, as they express the old faith of the church, that death is penal, and that it came upon all for sin, through the temptation of Satan, so also they discover the bondage that they themselves are in for fear of death all their days. For when a man is ready to die, they say the angel of death appears to him in a terrible manner, with a sword drawn in his hand. From thence drops I know not what poison into him, whereon he dies. Hence, they woefully howl, lament, and rend their garments upon the death of their friends. And they have composed a prayer for themselves against this terror. Because also of this their being slain by the angel of death, they hope and pray that their death may be an expiation for all their sins. Here lies the sting of death, mentioned by the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 55. Hence they have a long story in their Midrash, or mystical exposition of the Pentateuch, on the last section of Deuteronomy, about Samael's coming to take away the life of Moses, whom he repelled and drove away with the rod that had the Shem Hamphorash written in it. And the like story they have in a book about the Acts of Moses, which Aben Ezra rejects on Exod. iv. 20. This hand of Satan in death, manifesting it to be penal, is that which keeps them in bondage and fear all their days. Fourthly. They suppose that this angel of death hath power over men even after death. One horrible penalty they fancy in particular that he inflicts on them, which is set down by Elias in his Tishbi in *הבט הקבר*, out of the Midrash of Rabbi Isaac, the son of Parnær; for when a man, as they say, departs out of this world, *בא מלאך המות וישב על קברו*, 'the angel of death comes and sits upon his grave.' And he brings with him a chain, partly of iron, partly of fire, and making the soul to return into the body, he breaks the bones, and torments variously both body and soul for a season. This is their purgatory, and the best of their hopes are, that their punishment after this life shall not be eternal. And this various interest of Satan in the power of death, both keeps them in dismal bondage all their days, and puts them upon the invention of several ways for their deliverance. Thus one of their solemn prayers on the day of expiation, is to be delivered from *הבט הקבר*, or this 'punishment of the devil in their graves;' to which purpose also they offer a cock unto him for his pacification. And their prayer to this purpose in their Berachoth is this, *הי רחוק הוצילנו מזירות רעות ומדלות מעות מכל מיני פועניות ומדינה של גהנם ומחבט של קבר*, 'That it may please thee (good Lord) to deliver us from evil decrees or laws, from poverty, from contempt, from all kind of punishments, from the judgment of hell, and from beating in the grave,' by the angel of death. And this supposition is in like manner admitted by the Mahometans, who have also this prayer, '*Deus noster libera nos ab angelo interrogante tormento sepulchri, et a via mala.*' And many such lewd imaginations are they now given up unto, proceeding from their ignorance of the righteousness of God. But yet from these apprehensions of theirs, we may see what the apostle intended in this expression, calling the devil him that had the power of death:

Και απαλλαξη τουτους οσοι, Et liberaret ipsos, hos, quot cunque, 'and free those who.' Απαλλαττω, is to 'dismiss, discharge, free;' and in the use of the word unto the accusative case of the person, the genitive of the thing is added or understood. Απαλλαττω σε τουτου, 'I free thee from this.' Ταυτης απαλλαξειν σε της οφθαλμιας; Aristoph. 'to deliver thee from this eyesore.' And sometimes the genitive case of the thing is expressed where the accusative of the person is omitted. Απαλλαττειν φοβου, that is, *τινα*, 'to free or deliver one from fear,' as here the accusative case of the person is expressed, and the genitive of the thing omitted. Απαλλαξη τουτους, that is, φοβου or θανατου, 'to deliver them,' that is, from death, or from fear because of death.

Ενοχοι ησαν δουλειας: ενοχος is obnoxius, obstrictus, reus, damnas. He that is legally obnoxious, subject, liable to any thing, that is, law, crime, judge, judgment, punishment, in all which respects the word is used. He that is under the power of any law, is ενοχος τω νομω, 'subject to its authority' and penalty. See Matt. v. 21, 22, xxvi. 66; Mark iii. 29; 1 Cor. xi. 27; James ii. 10. Now the δουλεια, servitude or 'bondage' here mentioned is penal, and therefore are men said to be ενοχοι, 'obnoxious' unto it.

VER. 14, 15.—*For as much then as (or, seeing therefore that) the children are (were in common) partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise (after the same manner) took part (did partake) of the same; that through (by) death he might destroy (make void the authority of) him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. And deliver (free, discharge) them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.*

In the former verses, as was shown, the apostle declared the necessity that there was on the part of God, intending to bring many sons unto glory, to constitute such an union between them and the Captain of their salvation, as that it might be just for him to suffer in their stead. In these he proceeds to manifest in particular what that nature is, in the common participation whereof their union designed did consist, wherein they were all of one; and what were the especial reasons why the Lord Christ was made partaker of that nature. This coherence of these verses Chrysostome briefly gives us, Ειτα δειξας την αδελφοτητα, και την αιτιαν τιθησι της οικονομιας, 'Having shown the brotherhood that was between Christ and the children, 'he lays down the causes of that dispensation;' and what they are, we shall find here expressed.

There are sundry things which the apostle supposeth in these words, as known unto, and granted by the Hebrews. As, first, that the devil had the power of death. Secondly. That on this account men were filled with fear of it, and led a life full of anxiety and trouble, by reason of that fear. Thirdly. That a deliverance from this condition was to be effected by the Messiah. Fourthly. That the way whereby he was to do this, was by his suffering. All which, as they are contained in the first promise, so that they were allowed of by the Hebrews of

old, we have fully proved elsewhere. And by all these doth the apostle yield a reason of his former concession, that the Messiah was for a little while made lower than the angels, the causes and ends whereof he here declares. There are in the words,

First. A supposition of a two-fold state and condition of the children to be brought unto glory.

1st. Natural, or their natural state and condition. They were all of them in common partakers of flesh and blood; 'Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood.'

2dly. Moral, their moral state and condition. They were obnoxious unto death, as it is penal for sin, and in great bondage through fear of it: 'Them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject unto bondage.'

Secondly. There is a double inference with respect unto this supposition, on the part of Christ, the Captain of salvation.

1st. As to their natural condition, that he did partake of it, he was so to do: 'He himself also did partake of the same.'

2dly. As to their moral condition, he freed them from it: 'and deliver them.'

Thirdly. The means whereby he did this, or this was to be done, evidencing the necessity of his participation with them in their condition of nature, that he might relieve them from their condition of trouble. He did it by death: 'that by death.'

Fourthly. The immediate effect of his death, tending unto their deliverance and freedom, and that is the destruction of the devil, as to his power over and interest in death as penal, whereof their deliverance is an infallible consequent: 'and destroy him,' &c.

In the first place, the apostle expresseth, as by way of supposition, the natural condition of the children, that is, the children whom God designed to bring unto glory; those who were given unto Christ, they were in common partakers of flesh and blood. I shall not stay to remove the conceit of some, (who yet are not a few) among the Romanists, who refer those words unto the participation of the flesh and blood of Christ in the sacrament, whereunto also, as we observed, the Ethiopic version gives countenance. For not only is there not any thing in the expression that inclines unto such an imagination, but also it enervates the whole design of the apostle's discourse and argument, as from the former consideration of it doth appear. Flesh and blood are, by a usual synecdoche, put for the whole human nature; not as though by blood the soul was intended, because the life is said to be in it, as not acting without it; but this expression is used, because it is not human nature as absolutely considered, but as mortal, passible, subject unto infirmities and death itself, that is intended. And it is no more than if he had said, the children were men subject unto death. For he gives his reason herein, why the Lord Christ was made a man subject unto death. That he and the children should be of one nature, he had shown before. Forasmuch, then, as this was the condition of the children, that they were all partakers of human nature, liable to sufferings, sorrow, and death, he was so also. And this is thus expressed, to set forth the love and condescension of Jesus Christ, as will afterward appear.

The second thing in these words, is the moral condition of the children; and there are sundry things, partly intimated, partly expressed in the description that is here given us of it. As, 1st. Their state absolutely considered, they were subject to death. 2d. The consequences of that state. 1. It wrought fear in them. 2. That fear brought them into bondage. 3. The continuance of that condition,—it was for the whole course of their lives.

First. It is implied, that they were subject, obnoxious unto, guilty of death, and that as it was penal, due to sin, as contained in the curse of the law, which what it comprehendeth, and how far it is extended, is usually declared. On this supposition lies the whole weight of the mediation of Christ. The children to be brought unto glory were obnoxious unto death; and from the curse and wrath of God therein, he came to deliver them.

Secondly. The first effect and consequent of this obnoxiousness unto death, concurring unto their state and condition is, that they were filled with fear of it—for fear of death. ‘Fear is a perturbation of mind, arising from the apprehension of a future imminent evil.’ And the greater this evil is, the greater will the perturbation of the mind be, provided the apprehension of it be answerable. The fear of death then here intended, is that trouble of mind which men have in the expectation of death to be inflicted on them, as a punishment due unto their sins. And this apprehension is common to all men, arising from a general presumption that death is penal, and that it is the judgment of God, that they which commit sin are worthy of death, as Rom. i. 32, ii. 15. But it is cleared and confirmed by the law, whose known sentence is, “The soul that sinneth shall die.” And the troublesome expectation of the event of this apprehension, is the fear of death here intended. And according unto the means that men have to come unto the knowledge of the righteousness of God, are, or ought to be, their apprehensions of the evil that is in death. But even those who had lost all clear knowledge of the consequents of death natural, or the dissolution of their present mortal condition, yet on a confused apprehension of its being penal, always esteemed it, φοβερων φοβερωτατον, the most dreadful of all things that are so unto human nature. And in some this is heightened and increased, until it come to be φοβερα εκδοχη κρισεως, και πυρος ζηλος, εσθιειν μελλοντος τους υπεναντιους, as our apostle speaks, ch. x. 27. ‘A fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.’ And this is the second thing that is in this description of the state and condition of the children to be brought unto glory: being obnoxious unto the sentence of death, they could not but live in fear of the execution of it.

Thirdly. They are by this means brought into bondage. The troublesome expectation of death as penal, brings them into bondage, into the nature whereof we must a little inquire. Sundry things concur to make any state a state of bondage; as, 1. That it be involuntary. No man is in bondage by his will: that which a man chooseth, is not bondage unto him. A man that would have his ear bored, though he were always a servant, was never in bondage, for he enjoyed



the condition that pleased him. Properly all bondage is involuntary. 2. Bondage engenerates strong desires after, and puts men on all manner of attempts for liberty. Yokes gall, and make them on whom they are desire ease. So long as men are sensible of bondage, which is against nature, (for that which is not so, is not bondage,) they will desire and labour for liberty. When some in the Roman senate asked an ambassador of the Privernates, after they were overthrown in battle, if they granted them peace, how they would keep it, what peace they should have with them? he answered, *Si bonam dederitis, fidam et perpetuam; si malam, haud diuturnam.* Whereat when some in the senate stormed, as if he had threatened them with war and rebellion, the wiser sort commended him, as one that spake like a man and a free-man; adding as their reason, '*An credi posse, ullum populum, aut hominem denique in ea conditione, cujus eum pœniteat, diutius quam necesse sit mansurum.* Liv. Dec. i. lib. 8. So certain it is, that bondage wearieth and stirreth up restless desires in all, endeavours in some after liberty. 3. Bondage perplexeth the mind. It ariseth from fear, the greatest perturbation of the mind, and is attended with weariness and distrust, all which are perplexing. 4. Where bondage is complete, it lies in a tendency unto future and greater evils. Such is the bondage of condemned malefactors, reserved for the day of execution; such is the bondage of Satan, who is kept in chains of darkness for the judgment of the great day. And all these things concur in the bondage here intended; which is a dejected troublesome state and condition of mind arising from the apprehension and fear of death to be inflicted, and their disability in whom it is to avoid it, attended with fruitless desires and vain attempts to be delivered from it, and to escape the evil feared. And this is the condition of sinners out of Christ, whereof there are various degrees answerable unto their convictions. For the apostle treats not here of men's being servants unto sin, which is voluntary; but of their sense of the guilt of sin which is wrought in them, even whether they will or not; and by any means they would cast off the yoke of it, though by none are they able so to do: for,

Fourthly. They are said to continue in this estate all their lives. Not that they were always perplexed with this bondage, but that they could never be utterly freed from it. For the apostle doth not say, that they were thus in bondage all their days, but that they were obnoxious and subject unto it. They had no way to free and deliver themselves from it, but that at any time they might righteously be brought under its power; and the more they cast off the thoughts of it, the more they increased their danger. This was the state of the children, whose deliverance was undertaken by the Lord Christ, the Captain of their salvation. And we may hence observe, that,

1. All sinners are subject unto death, as it is penal. The first sentence reacheth them all, Gen. ii. 17. And thence are they said by nature to be children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3, obnoxious unto death, to be inflicted in a way of wrath and revenge for sin. This passeth upon all, inasmuch as all have sinned, Rom. v. 12. This all men see and know; but all do not sufficiently consider what is contained in the

sentence of death, and very few, how it may be avoided. Most men look on death as the common lot and condition of mankind, upon the account of their frail natural condition, as though it belonged to the natural condition of the children, and not the moral, and were a consequent of their being, and not the demerit of their sin. They consider not, that although the principles of our nature are, in themselves subject unto a dissolution, yet if we had kept the law of our creation, it had been prevented by the power of God, engaged to continue life during our obedience. Life and obedience were to be commensurate, until temporal obedience ended in life eternal. Death is penal, and its being common unto all, hinders not but that it is the punishment of every one. How it is changed unto believers by the death of Christ, shall be afterward declared. In the meantime, all mankind are condemned as soon as born. Life is a reprieve, a suspension of execution. If, during that time, a pardon be not effectually sued out, the sentence will be executed according to the severity of justice. Under this law are men now born, this yoke have they pulled on themselves, by their apostasy from God. Neither is it to any purpose to repine against it, or to conflict with it: there is but one way of deliverance.

II. Fear of death as it is penal, is inseparable from sin, before the sinner is delivered by the death of Christ. They were in fear of death. There is a fear of death that is natural, and inseparable from our present condition; that is but nature's aversation from its own dissolution. And this hath various degrees, occasioned by the differences of men's natural constitution, and other accidental occurrences and occasions; so that some seem to fear death too much, and others not at all: I mean those who are freed from it, as it is in the curse and under the power of Satan. But this difference is from occasions foreign and accidental: there is in all naturally the same aversation from it. And this is a guiltless infirmity, like our weariness and sickness, inseparably annexed unto the condition of mortality. But sinners, in their natural state, fear death as it is penal, as an issue of the curse, as under the power of Satan, as a dreadful entrance into eternal ruin. There are indeed a thousand ways whereby this fear is for a season stifled in the minds of men. Some live in brutish ignorance, never receiving any full conviction of sin, judgment, or eternity. Some put off the thoughts of their present and future estate, resolving to shut their eyes and rush into it, when as they can no longer avoid it. Fear presents itself unto them as the forerunner of death, but they avoid the encounter, and leave themselves to the power of death itself. Some please themselves with vain hopes of deliverance, though they know not well how, nor why they should be partakers of it. But let men forego these helpless shifts, and suffer their own innate light to be excited with such means of conviction as they do enjoy, and they will quickly find what a judgment there is made in their own souls concerning death to come, and what effects it will produce. They will conclude, that it is the judgment of God, that they which commit sin are worthy of death, Rom. i. 32, and then that their own consciences do accuse and condemn them, Rom. ii. 14, 15, whence unavoidably, fear, dread, and terror, will seize upon them. And then,

III. Fear of death, as penal, renders the minds of men obnoxious unto bondage; which, what it is, we have in part before declared. It is a state of trouble which men dislike, but cannot avoid. It is a penal disquietment arising from sense of future misery. Fain would men quit themselves of it, but are not able. There is a chain of God in it, not to be broken; men may gall themselves with it, but cannot remove it; and if God take it from them, without granting them a lawful release and deliverance, it is to their farther misery. And this is, in some measure or other, the portion of every one that is convinced of sin, before they are freed by the gospel. And some have disputed what degrees of it are necessary before believing. But what is necessary for any one to attain unto, is his duty. But this bondage can be the duty of no man, because it is involuntary. It will follow conviction of sin, but it is no man's duty; rather it is such an effect of the law, as every one is to free himself from, so soon as he may, in a right way and manner. This estate then befalls men, whether they will or not. And this is so, if we take bondage passively, as it affects the soul of the sinner; which the apostle seems to intend, by placing it as an effect of the fear of death; take it actively, and it is no more than the sentence of the law, which works and causeth it in the soul, and so all sinners are inevitably obnoxious unto it. And this estate, as we observed, fills men with desires after, and puts them upon various attempts for deliverance. Some desire only present ease, and they commonly withdraw themselves from it, by giving up themselves wholly unto their hearts' lusts, and therein to atheism, which God oftentimes, in his righteous judgment, gives them up unto, knowing that the day is coming wherein their present woeful temporal relief will be recompensed with eternal misery. Some look forward unto what is to come, and according to their light and assistance, variously apply themselves to seek relief. Some do it by a righteousness of their own, and in the pursuit thereof also there are ways innumerable not now to be insisted on; and some do it by Christ, which how it is by him effected, the apostle in the next place declares.

Two things as was shown, are affirmed of the Lord Christ, in consequence unto the premised supposition of the children's being partakers of flesh and blood, and of their obnoxiousness unto death, and to bondage. 1. That of their natural condition—he himself partook. 2. That from their moral condition—he delivered them; and that he might do this, it was necessary that he should partake of the other.

1. He himself did likewise partake of the same. The word *παραπλησως*, 'likewise, in like manner,' doth denote such a similitude as is consistent with a specifical identity. And therefore Chrysostome from hence urgeth the Marcionites and Valentinians, who denied the reality of the human nature of Christ, seeing that he partook of it in like manner with us, that is, truly and really even as we do. But yet the word, by force of its composition, doth intimate some disparity and difference. He took part of human nature really as we do, and almost in like manner with us. For there were two differences between his being partaker of human nature and ours: 1st. In that we subsist singly in that nature; but he took his portion in this nature into subsistence with himself in the person of the Son of God. 2dly. This

nature in us is attended with many infirmities, that follow the individual persons that are partakers of it : in him it was free from them all. And this the apostle also intimates in the word *μετεσχε*, changing his expression from that whereby he declared the common interest of the children in the same nature, which is every way equal and alike. The whole is, that he took his own portion, in his own manner, unto himself.

And this observation removes what is hence objected against the deity of Christ. ‘Cum Christus (saith Slichtingius) hominum mortalium et fragilium dux et fautor sit, propterea is non angelus aliquis, multo vero minus ipse Deus summus qui solus immortalitatem habet, sed homo suo tempore malis, et variis calamitatibus obnoxius esse debuit.’ It is true it appears from hence, that Christ ought to be a man, subject to sufferings and death, and not an angel, as the apostle farther declares in the next verse ; but that he ought not to be God, it doth not appear. As God, indeed, he could not die ; but if he who was God had not taken part of flesh and blood, God could not have redeemed his church with his own blood. But this is the perpetual paralogism of these men. Because Christ is asserted to have been truly a man, therefore he is not God ; which is to deny the gospel, and the whole mystery of it.

He proceeds with his exceptions against the application of these words unto the incarnation of the Lord Christ, the sum whereof is, that the words *παραπλησιως μετεσχε*, denote an universal conformity, or specific identity between Christ and the children, not only as to the essence, but also as to all other concernments of human nature, or else no benefit could redound unto them from what he did or suffered. But, 1. The words do not assert any such thing, as hath been declared. 2. It is not true. The children were partakers of human nature, either by creation out of the dust of the earth, as Adam ; or by natural generation. The Lord Christ was conceived of a virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost ; and yet the benefit redounds unto the children. It is evident, then, that the similitude urged by the apostle is confined to the substance of flesh and blood, or the essence of human nature, and is not to be extended unto the personal concernments of the one or the other ; nor the way whereby they became partakers of the same nature. Nor is the argument for the incarnation of Christ taken merely from the expressions in this verse ; but whereas he had before proved him to be above, and before the angels, even God over all, and here intimating his existence antecedent to his participation of flesh and blood, his incarnation doth necessarily ensue.

The necessity of this incarnation of Christ, with respect to the end of it, hath before been declared, evinced, and confirmed. We shall now stay only a little to admire the love, grace, and mystery of it. And we see here,

IV. That the Lord Christ, out of his inexpressible love, willingly submitted himself unto every condition of the children to be saved by him, and to every thing in every condition of them, sin only excepted. —They being of flesh and blood, which must be attended with many infirmities, and exposed unto all sorts of temptations and miseries, he himself would also partake of the same. His delight was of old in



the sons of men, Prov. viii. 30, and his heart was full of thoughts of love towards them; and that alone put him on this resolution, Gal. ii. 20; Rev. i. 5. When God refused sacrifices and burnt-offerings, as insufficient to make the atonement required, and the matter was rolled on his hand alone, it was a joy unto him that he had a body prepared, wherein he might discharge his work, although he knew what he had to do and suffer therein, Psal. xl. 8, 9; Heb. x. 6—9. He rejoiced to do the will of God, in taking the body prepared for him, because the children were partakers of flesh and blood. Though he was in the form of God, equal unto him, yet that mind, that love, that affection towards us, was in him, that to be like unto us, and thereby to save us, he emptied himself, and took on him the form of a servant, our form, and became like unto us, Phil. ii. 5—8. He would be like unto us, that he might make us like unto himself: he would take our flesh, that he might give unto us his Spirit. He would join himself unto us, and become one flesh with us, that we might be joined unto him, and become one spirit with him, 1 Cor. vi. 17. And as this was a fruit of his eternal antecedent love, so it is a spring of consequent love. When Eve was brought unto Adam, after she was taken out of him, Gen. ii. 23, to manifest the ground of that affection which was to be always between them, he says of her, “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.” And by this condescension of Christ, saith the apostle, are we members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones, Eph. v. 30. Whence he infers, that he loves and nourisheth his church, as a man doth his own flesh. And how should this inexpressible love of Christ constrain us to love him, and to live unto him, 2 Cor. v. 14, as also to labour to be like unto him, wherein all our blessedness consisteth, seeing for that end he was willing to be like unto us, whence all his troubles and sufferings arose. Here also we see that,

V. It was only in flesh and blood, the substance and essence of human nature, and not in our personal infirmities, that the Lord Christ was made like unto us. He took to himself the nature of all men, and not the person of any man. We have not only human nature in common, but we have every one particular infirmities and weaknesses following that nature, as existing in our sinful persons. Such are the sicknesses and pains of our bodies from inward distempers, and the disorder of the passions of our minds. Of these the Lord Christ did not partake, it was not needful, it was not possible that he should do so; not needful, because he could provide for their cure without assuming them; not possible, for they can have no place in a nature innocent and holy. And therefore he took our nature, not by an immediate new creation out of nothing, or of the dust of the earth like Adam; for if so, though he might have been like unto us, yet he would have been no kin to us, and so could not have been our Goel to whom the right of redemption did belong; nor by natural generation, which would have rendered our nature in him obnoxious to the sin and punishment of Adam; but by a miraculous conception of a virgin, whereby he had truly our nature, yet not subject on its own account, unto any one of those evils, whereunto it is liable as propa-

gated from Adam in an ordinary course. And thus though he was joined unto us in our nature, yet as he was holy, harmless, and undefiled in that nature, he was 'separate from sinners,' Heb. vii. 25. So that although our nature suffered more in his person, than it was capable of in the person of any mere man, yet not being debased by any sinful imperfection, it was always excellent, beautiful, and glorious. And then,

VI. That the Son of God should take part in human nature with the children, is the greatest and most admirable effect of divine love, wisdom, and grace. So our apostle proposeth it, 1 Tim. iii. 16. A mystery which the angels with all diligence desire to look into, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12; see John i. 14; Isa. ix. 6; Rom. ix. 5. Atheists scoff at it, deluded Christians deny it, but the angels adore it, the church professeth it, believers find the comfort and benefit of it. The heavens indeed declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work, Ps. xix. 1. 'And the invisible things of God 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. In particular, man himself is fearfully and wonderfully made. These works of God's power and providence do greatly manifest the glory of his wisdom, omnipotency, and goodness, and are like the light which was created the first day at the beginning of all things, as we have shown. But in this instance of assuming human nature into personal subsistence with himself, that scattered light is gathered into one sun, giving out most glorious beams unto the manifestation of his infinite excellencies, far above all other things. And this surely was not done, but for the greatest end that can be conceived, and such is the salvation of sinners.

But we must proceed with our apostle, and he gives the reason and end of this wonderful dispensation. The end is, the deliverance of the children from the condition before described: and first, the means whereby he wrought and brought about this end is proposed unto us; 'by death,' he was to do it by death.

That by death he might deliver them; that is, by his own death. This as it is placed, as one principal end of his being made partaker of flesh and blood, so it is also the means of the farther end aimed at, namely, the deliverance of the children out of the condition expressed. Some translations add, 'by his own death,' which is evidently understood, though it be not literally in the text; the death which he underwent in the nature of man, whereof he was partaker. His death was the means of delivering them from death. Some distinguish between death in the first place, which Christ underwent, and that death in the close of the verse, which the children are said to be in fear of; for this latter they say is more extensive than the former, as comprising death eternal also. But there doth not any thing in the text appear to intimate, that the Captain of salvation, by death of one kind, should deliver the children from that of another. Neither will the apostle's discourse well bear such a supposition. For if he might have freed the children by any way or means, but only by undergoing that which was due unto them for sin, whence

could arise that indispensable necessity which he pleads for by so many considerations of his being made like unto them, seeing without the participation of their nature which he urgeth, he might have done any other thing for their good and benefit, but only suffer what was due to them. And if it be said, that without this participation of their nature, he could not die, which it was necessary that he should do; I desire to know why, if the death which he was to undergo, was not that death to which they were obnoxious for whom he died, how could it be any way more beneficial unto them, than any thing else which he might have done for them, although he had not died? There is no ground then to pretend such an amphibology in the words as that which some contend for. Now, as we observed before, the death of Christ is here placed in the midst, as the end of one thing, and the means or cause of another; the end of his own incarnation, and the means of the children's deliverance. From the first we may see,

VII. That the first and principal end of the Lord Christ's assuming human nature, was not to reign in it, but to suffer and die in it. He was indeed from of old designed unto a kingdom, but he was to suffer, and so to enter into his glory, Luke xxiv. 26. And he so speaks of his coming into the world, to suffer, to die, to bear witness unto the truth, as if that had been the only work that he was incarnate for. Glory was to follow, a kingdom to ensue, but suffering and dying was the principal work he came about. Glory he had with his Father before the world was, John xvii. 5, and therein a joint rule with him over all the works of his hands. He need not have been made partaker of flesh and blood to have been a king, for he was the King immortal, invisible, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, the only Potentate, from everlasting. But he could not have died, if he had not been made partaker of our nature. And therefore when the people would have taken him by force, and have made him a king, he hid himself from them, John vi. 15. But he hid not himself, when they came to take him by force, and put him to death, but affirmed that for that hour, or business, he came into the world, John xviii. 4, 5, 11. And this farther sets forth his love and condescension. He saw the work that was proposed unto him, how he was to be exposed unto miseries, afflictions, and persecutions, and at length to make his soul an offering for sin; yet because it was all for the salvation of the children, he was contented with it, and delighted in it. And how then ought we to be contented with the difficulties, sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions, which for his sake we are or may be exposed unto; when he on purpose took our nature, that for our sakes he might be exposed and subject unto much more than we are called unto.

There yet remains in these verses, the effects of the death of Christ; 'that he might destroy sin and deliver:' wherein we must consider, 1. Who it is that had the power of death. 2. Wherein that power of his did consist. 3. How he was destroyed. 4. How by the death of Christ. 5. What was the deliverance that was obtained for the children thereby.

1. He that had the power of death is described by his name, *ὁ δα-*

ὁ ὄλος, 'the devil,' the great enemy of our salvation, the great calumniator, make-bait, and false accuser, the firebrand of the creation. The head and captain of the apostasy from God, and of all desertion of the law of the creation. The old serpent, prince of the apostate angels, with all his associates, who first falsely accused God unto man, and continues to accuse men falsely unto God; of whom before.

2. His power in and over death is variously apprehended. What the Jews conceive hereof, we have before declared, and much of the truth is mixed with their fables. And the apostle deals with them upon their acknowledgment in general, that he had the power of death. Properly in what sense or in what respect he is said so to have it, learned Expositors are not agreed. All consent, 1. That the devil hath no absolute, or sovereign supreme power over death. Nor 2. Any ἐξουσία or 'authority' about it *de jure*, in his own right, or on grant, so as to act lawfully and rightly about it according to his own will. Nor 3. Any judging or determining power as to the guilt of death committed unto him, which is peculiar to God, the supreme Rector and Judge of all, Gen. ii. 17; Deut. xxxii. 39; Rev. i. 18.

But wherein this power of Satan doth positively consist, they are not agreed. Some place it in his temptations unto sin, which bind unto death; some in his execution of the sentence of death; he hath the power of an executioner. There cannot well be any doubt, but that the whole interest of Satan in reference unto death is intended in this expression. This death is that which was threatened in the beginning, Gen. ii. 17. Death penally to be inflicted in the way of a curse, Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10; that is, death consisting in the dissolution of soul and body, with every thing tending penally thereunto, with the everlasting destruction of body and soul. And there are sundry things wherein the κράτος, or power of Satan in reference unto this death doth consist. As 1. He was the means of bringing it into the world. So is the opinion of the Jews in this matter expressed in the book of Wisdom, written as is most probable, by one of them not long before this Epistle. They tell us, chap. i. 13, ὁ Θεὸς θάνατον οὐκ ἐποίησε, 'God made not death,' it belonged not unto the original constitution of all things; but chap. ii. 24, φθονῶ διαβόλου θανάτος εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, 'by the envy of the devil death entered into the world.' And that expression of εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, is retained by the apostle, Rom. v. 12. Only he lays the end of it on the morally deserving cause, the sin of man, as here it is laid on the efficiently procuring cause, the envy of the devil. And herein consisted no small part of the power of Satan with respect unto death. Being able to introduce sin he had power to bring in death also, which in the righteous judgment of God, and by the sentence of the law, was inseparably annexed thereunto. And by a parity of reason, so far as he yet continueth to have power over sin, deserving death, he hath power over death itself.

2. Sin and death being thus entered into the world, and all mankind being guilty of the one, and obnoxious unto the other, Satan became thereby to be their prince, as being the prince or author of that state and condition whereinto they are brought. Hence he is



called the "prince of this world," John xii. 31, and the "god of it," 2 Cor. iv. 4. Inasmuch as all the world is under the guilt of that sin and death which he brought them into.

3. God having passed the sentence of death against sin, it was in the power of Satan to terrify and affright the consciences of men, with the expectation and dread of it, so bringing them into bondage. And many God gives up unto him to be agitated and terrified as it were at his pleasure. To this end were persons excommunicated, given up unto Satan to vex, 1 Tim. i. 20. He threatens them as an executioner, with the work that he hath to do upon them.

4. God hath ordained him to be the executioner of the sentence of death upon stubborn sinners unto all eternity; partly for the aggravation of their punishment, when they shall always see, and without relief bewail their folly in hearkening unto his allurements; and partly, to punish himself in his woeful employment. And for these several reasons is Satan said to have the power of death. And hence it is evident, that,

VIII. All the power of Satan in the world, over any of the sons of men is founded in sin, and the guilt of death attending it. Death entered by sin, the guilt of sin brought it in; herewith comes in Satan's interest, without which, he could have no more to do in the earth, than he hath in heaven. And according as sin abounds or is subdued, so his power is enlarged or straitened. As he is a spirit, he is mighty, strong, wise; as sinful, he is malicious, subtle, ambitious, revengeful, proud; yet none of all these give him his power. He that made him, can cause his sword to pierce unto him, and preserve man, though weak and mortal, from all his force, as a *mighty* spirit, and from all his attempts as a *wicked* one. And yet these are the things in him that men are generally afraid of, when yet by them he cannot reach one hair of their heads. But here lies the foundation of his power, even in sin, which so few regard. Then,

IX. All sinners out of Christ, are under the power of Satan. They belong unto that kingdom of death, whereof he is the Prince and Ruler. The whole world lies, *εν τω πονηρω*, 'in the power of this wicked one.' If the guilt of death be not removed from any, the power of the devil extends unto them. A power indeed it is, that is regulated. Were it sovereign or absolute, he would continually devour. But it is limited unto times, seasons, and degrees, by the will of God, the Judge of all. But yet great it is, and answerable unto his titles, the prince, the god of the world. And however men may flatter themselves, as the Jews did of old, that they are free, if they are not freed by an interest in the death of Christ, they are in bondage unto this beastly tyrant; and as he works effectually in them here, he will ragingly inflict vengeance on them hereafter.

3. He is destroyed—'to destroy him.' The sense and importance of the word here used, was before declared. It is not applied unto the nature, essence, or being of the devil, but unto his power in, and over death; as it is elsewhere declared, John xii. 31, 'Now is the judgment of this world, now is the prince of this world cast out.' That which is here called the destroying of the devil, is there called,

the casting out of the prince of this world. It is the casting him out of his power, from his principedom and rule; and Col. ii. 15, 'Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made an open show of them, triumphing over them in his cross:' as conquerors used to do, when they had not slain the persons of their enemies, but deprived them of their rule, and led them captives. The destruction then here intended of him that had the power of death, is the dissolution, evacuation, and removing of that power which he had in, and over death, with all the effects and consequences of it.

4. The means whereby Satan was thus destroyed, is also expressed. It was by death, by his own death. This, of all others, seemed the most unlikely way and means, but indeed was not only the best, but the only way whereby it might be accomplished. And the manner how it was done thereby, must be declared and vindicated. The four-fold power of Satan in reference unto death before mentioned, was all founded in sin. The obligation of the sinner unto death, was that which gave him all his power. The taking away then of that obligation, must needs be the dissolution of his power. The foundation being removed, all that is built upon it must needs fall to the ground. Now this, in reference unto the children for whom he died, was done in the death of Christ; virtually in his death itself, actually in the application of it unto them. When the sinner ceaseth to be obnoxious unto death, the power of Satan ceaseth also. And this every one doth, that hath an interest in the death of Christ; for 'there is no condemnation unto them that are in Christ Jesus,' Rom. viii. 1. and this because he died: he died for their sins, took that death upon himself which was due unto them; which being conquered thereby, and their obligation thereunto ceasing, the power of Satan is therewith dissolved. The first branch of his power consisted in the bringing of sin into the world. This is dissolved by Christ's taking away the sin of the world, John i. 29, which he did as the Lamb of God, by the sacrifice of himself in his death, typified by the paschal lamb, and all other sacrifices of old. Again, His power consisted in his rule in the world, as cast under sin and death. From this he was cast out, John xii. 31, in the death of Christ; when contending with him for the continuance of his sovereignty, he was conquered, the ground whereon he stood, even the guilt of sin, being taken away from under him, and his title defeated. And actually believers are translated from under his rule, from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of light, and of the Son of God. Nor can he longer make use of death as penal, as threatened in the curse of the law, to terrify and affright the consciences of men; for being justified by faith in the death of Christ, they have peace with God, Rom. v. 1. Christ making peace between God and us, by the blood of his cross, Eph. ii. 14, 15; 2 Cor. v. 19—21, the weapons of this part of his power are wrested out of his hand, seeing death hath no power to terrify the conscience, but as it expresseth the curse of God. And lastly, his final execution of the sentence of death upon sinners, is utterly taken out of his hand by the death of Christ, inasmuch as they for whom he died shall never undergo death penally. And thus was Satan, as

to his power over death, fully destroyed by the death of Christ. And all this depended on God's institution, appointing the satisfactory sufferings of Christ, and accepting them instead of the sufferings of the children themselves.

The Socinians give us another exposition of these words; as knowing that insisted on to be no less destructive of their error, than the death of Christ is of the power of the devil. The reason hereof, saith Slichtingius, is, 'Quia per mortem Christus adeptus est supremam potestatem in omnia; qua omnes inimicos suos, quorum caput est diabolus, coerces, eorum vires frangit, eosque tandem penitus abolebit.' But if this be so, and the abolishing of the power of Satan be an act of sovereign power, then it was not done by the death of Christ, nor was there any need that he should partake of flesh and blood for that purpose, or die. So that this exposition contradicts both the express words of the apostle, and also the whole design of his discourse. No proposition can be more plain than this is, that the power of Satan was destroyed by the death of Christ, which in this interpretation of the words is denied.

5. And hence it lastly appears, what was the deliverance that was procured for the children by this dissolution of the power of Satan. It respects both what they feared, and what ensued on their fear; that is, death and bondage. For the deliverance here intended, is not merely a consequent of the destruction of Satan, but hath regard unto the things themselves, about which the power of Satan was exercised. They were obnoxious unto death on the guilt of sin, as penal, as under the curse, as attended with hell, or everlasting misery. This he delivered the children from, by making an atonement for their sins in his death virtually loosing their obligation thereunto, and procuring for them eternal redemption, as shall afterwards be fully declared. Hereon also they are delivered from the bondage before described. The fear of death being taken away, the bondage that ensues thereon vanisheth also. And these things, as they are done virtually and legally in the death of Christ, so they are actually accomplished in, and towards the children, upon the application of the death of Christ unto them, when they do believe. And we may now close our consideration of these verses, with one or two other observations; as,

X. The death of Christ, through the wise and righteous disposal of God, is victorious, all-conquering, and prevalent. The aim of the world was to bring him unto death: and therein they thought they had done with him. The aim of Satan was so also, who thereby supposed he should have secured his own kingdom. And what could worldly or satanical wisdom have imagined otherwise? He that is slain is conquered. His own followers were ready to think so. 'We trusted,' say they, 'that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel,' Luke xxiv. 21, 'but he is dead;' and their hopes are with him in the grave. What can be expected from him, who is taken, slain, crucified? Can he save others, who it seems could not save himself? *Per mortem alterius, stultum est sperare salutem.* Is it not a foolish thing, to look for life by the death of another? This was that which the Pagans of old reproached the Christians withal, that they believed in one that

was crucified and died himself; and what could they expect from him? And our apostle tells us, that this death, this cross, was a stumbling-block unto the Jews, and folly to the Greeks, 1 Cor. i. 18, 23. And so it would have been in itself, Acts ii. 23, iv. 28, had not the will, and counsel, and wisdom, and grace of God, been in it. But he ordered things so, that this death of Christ should pull out that pin, which kept together the whole fabric of sin and Satan, that, like Sampson, he should in his death pull down the palace of Satan about his ears, and that in dying he should conquer and subdue all things unto himself. All the angels of heaven stood looking on, to see what would be the end of this great trial. Men and devils were ignorant of the great work which God had in hand. And whilst they thought they were destroying him, God was in, and by him, destroying them and their power. Whilst his heel was bruised, he brake their head. And this should teach us, to leave all God's works unto himself; see John xi. 6—10. He can bring light out of darkness, and meat out of the eater. He can disappoint his adversaries of their greatest hopes, and fairest possibilities, and raise up the hopes of his own out of the grave. He can make suffering to be saving, death victorious, and heal us by the stripes of his Son. And in particular, it should stir us up to meditate on this mysterious work of his love and wisdom. We can never enough search into it, whilst our inquiry is guided by his word. New mysteries, all fountains of refreshment and joy, will continually open themselves unto us, until we come to be satisfied with the endless fullness of it unto eternity. Again,

XI. One principal end of the death of Christ, was to destroy the power of Satan; to destroy him that had the power of death. This was promised of old, Gen. iii. 15. He was to break the head of the serpent. From him sprang all the miseries which he came to deliver his elect from, and which could not be effected without the dissolution of his power. He was anointed to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening the prison to them that were bound, Isa. lxi. 1. To this end, he was to conquer him who detained them, which he did by his death, Col. ii. 15, and so lead captivity captive, Psal. lxxviii. 18, stilling this enemy and self-avenger, Ps. viii. 3, binding the strong man, Matt. xii. and dividing the spoil with him, Isa. liii. 12. And this he did by the merit of his blood, and the atonement he made for sin thereby. This took away the obligation of the law unto death and disarmed Satan. And moreover, by the power of the eternal Spirit whereby he offered himself unto God, he conquered and quelled him. Satan laid his claim unto the person of Christ; but coming to put it in execution, he met with that great and hidden power in him which he knew not, and was utterly conquered. And this, as it gives us a particular consideration of the excellency of our redemption, wherein Satan, our old enemy, who first foiled us, who always hates us, and seeks our ruin, is conquered, spoiled, and chained; so it teacheth us how to contend with him, by what weapons to resist his temptations, and to repel his affrightments, even those whereby he hath been already subdued. Faith in the death of Christ, is the only way and



means of obtaining a conquest over him. He will fly at the sign of the cross, rightly made.

VER. 16.—HAVING asserted the incarnation of the Lord Christ, the Captain of our salvation, and shown the necessity of it, from the ends which were to be accomplished by it, and therein given the reason of his concession, that he was for a season made less than the angels, the apostle proceeds in this verse, to confirm what he had taught before, by testimony of the Scripture, and adds an especial amplification of the grace of God in this whole dispensation, from the consideration of the angels, who were not made partakers of the like love and mercy.

VER. 16.—Ου γαρ δηπου αγγελων επιλαμβανεται, αλλα σπερματος Αβρααμ επιλαμβανεται.

Ου γαρ δηπου. The Syriac quite omits *δηπου*, and reads only *ܐܢܝܢ*, non enim, ‘for he did not.’ V. L. nusquam enim. Που, he renders usquam, ‘any where;’ and on the consideration of the negative particle, *ου* nusquam, ‘nowhere.’ Beza, non enim utique: as ours, *for verily* (he took) *not*; not reaching the force or use of *δηπου*. Arias, non enim videlicet, which answers not the intent of this place. Erasmus fully and properly, non enim sane usquam, ‘for verily not any where;’ that is, in no place of the Scripture is any such thing testified unto, which way of expression we observed our apostle to use before, ch. i. 5.

Αγγελων επιλαμβανεται: Syr. *ܡܢ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܠܐܟܐ*, ex angelis assumpsit, ‘he took not of, or from among, the angels;’ that is of their nature. V. L. Arias, angelos apprehendit, ‘he doth not take hold of angels.’ Beza, angelos assumpsit, ‘he assumed not, he took not angels to himself:’ *επιλαμβανεται*, for *επελαβε*, by an enallage of time; which ours follows, ‘he took not on him the nature of angels.’ But this change of the tense is needless. For the apostle intends not to express what Christ had done, but what the Scripture saith and teacheth concerning him in this matter. That no where affirms that he takes hold of angels.

The remaining words are generally rendered by translators, according to the analogy of these. Sed apprehendit, assumpsit, assumpsit semen Abrahæ, ‘he laid hold of, he takes, he took the seed of Abraham;’ only the Ethiopic reads them, ‘Did he not exalt the seed of Abraham?’ departing from the sense of the words, and of the text.

The constant use of this word *επιλαμβανω*, in the New Testament, is ‘to take hold of.’ And so in particular it is elsewhere used in this Epistle, ch. viii. 9, *επιλαβομενου μου της χειρος αυτων*, ‘in the day that I took them by the hand.’ In other authors, it is so variously used, that nothing from thence can be determined, as to its precise signification, in this, or any other place. The first and proper sense of it is acknowledged to be, to take hold of, as it were with the hand. And however the sense may be interpreted, the word cannot properly be translated any otherwise than ‘to take.’ For what some contend, that the effect or end of taking hold of, that is, to help, to vindicate

into liberty, whence, by Castalio, it is rendered opitulatur, yet it belongs to the design of the place, not the meaning of the word, which in the first place is to be respected.

VER. 16.—*For verily not any where doth he take angels, but he takes the seed of Abraham.*

In the words, there is first the reference that the apostle makes unto somewhat else, whereby that which he declareth is confirmed. For verily not any where; that is, that which he denieth in the following words, is no where taught in the Scripture: as, ch. i. 5, 'For unto which of the angels said he at any time;' that is, there is no testimony extant in the Scripture concerning them to that purpose. So here, no where is it spoken in the Scripture, that Christ taketh angels. And what is so spoken, he is said to do. And thus also the affirmative clause of his proposition, 'but he taketh the seed of Abraham,' is to be referred to the Scripture. There it is promised, there it is spoken, and therein it is done by him.

Secondly. That which he asserteth, hath the nature of a discrete axiom, wherein the same thing is denied, and affirmed of the disparates expressed, and that univocally in the same sense: 'he took not angels, but he took the seed of Abraham.' And this, we being referred to the Scripture for the proof and confirmation of, gives light and perfect understanding unto the meaning of the words. For how doth Christ in the Scripture take the seed of Abraham in such a sense, as that therein nothing is spoken of him in reference unto angels? It is evident, that it was in that he was of the posterity of Abraham according to the flesh; that he was promised to Abraham, that he should be of his seed, yea, that he should be his seed; as Gal. iii. 16. This was the great principle, the great expectation of the Hebrews, that the Messiah should be the seed of Abraham. This was declared unto them in the promise, and this accordingly was accomplished. And he is here said to take the seed of Abraham, because in the Scripture it is so plainly, so often affirmed that he should so do; when not one word is any where spoken that he should be an angel, or take their nature upon him. And this, as I said, gives us the true meaning of the words. The apostle in them confirms what he had before affirmed, concerning his being made partaker of flesh and blood, together with the children. This, saith he, the Scripture declares, wherein it is promised that he should be the seed of Abraham, which he therein takes upon him, and which was already accomplished in his being made partaker of flesh and blood; see John i. 14; Rom. ix. 5; Gal. iv. 4, iii. 16. This then the apostle teacheth us, that the Lord Christ, the Son of God, according to the promise, took to himself the nature of man, coming of the seed of Abraham, that is, he took the nature of man into personal union with himself; but took not the nature of angels, no such thing being spoken of him, nor concerning him, any where in the Scripture. And this exposition of the words will be farther evidenced and confirmed by our examination of another, which, with great endeavour, is advanced in opposition unto it.

Some then take the meaning of this exposition to be, that the Lord Christ, by his participation of flesh and blood, brought help and relief not unto angels, but unto men, the seed of Abraham. And they suppose to this purpose, that *ἐπιλαμβανεται* is put for *αναλαμβάνεται* (*αντιλαμβάνεται*), ‘to help, to succour, to relieve, to vindicate into liberty.’ Of this mind are Castalio, and all the Socinians; among those of the Roman church, Ribera. Estius also, and A Lapide speak doubtfully in the case. Of Protestants, Camero, and Grotius, who affirms moreover, that Chrysostom and the Greek scholiasts so interpret the place and words, which I should have marvelled at, had I not long before observed him (Grotius) greatly to fail or mistake in many of his quotations. Chrysostom, whom he names in particular, expressly referreth this whole verse unto the Lord Christ’s assumption of the nature of man, and not of the nature of angels. The same also is insisted on by Theophylact and Eucumenius, without any intimation of the sense that Grotius would impose upon them.

The Socinians embrace and endeavour to confirm this second exposition of the words, and it is their concernment so to do. For if the words express that the Lord Christ assumed human nature, which necessarily infers his pre-existence in another nature, their persuasion about the person of Christ is utterly overthrown. Their exceptions in their controversial writings unto this place have been elsewhere considered. Those of Eniedinus on this text are answered by Paræus, those of Castalio by Beza, and the objections of some others by Gomarus. We shall, in the first place, consider what is proposed for the confirmation of their sense, by Slichtingius or Crellius; and then the exception of a very learned expositor unto the sense before laid down and confirmed. And Slichtingius first argues from the context, ‘Præter ipsa verba,’ saith he, ‘quæ hunc sensum nullo modo patiuntur ut postea dicemus, contextus et ratiocinatio auctoris id repudiat; qui pro ratione et argumento id sumere non potuit debuitve, quod sibi hoc ipso argumento et ratione probandum sumpsisset. De eo enim erat quæstio, cur Christus qui nunc ad tantam majestatem et gloriam est evectus, non angelicam sed humanam, morti et variis calamitatibus obnoxiam habuerit naturam? hujus vero rei, quo pacto ratio redderetur, per id quod non angelicam sed humanam naturam assumpserit; cum istius ipsius rei, quæ in hac quæstione continetur, nempe quod Christus homo fuit natus, nunc causa ratioque quæretur. At vero si hæc verba, de juvandis non angelis, sed hominibus, deque ope iis ferenda intelligamus, pulcherrime omnia cohærent; nempe Christum hominem mortalem fuisse, non angelum aliquem, quod non angelis sed hominibus juvandis, servandisque fuerit destinatus.’ But the foundation of this exposition of the context is a mistake, which his own preceding discourse might have relieved him from. For there is no such question proposed as here is imagined, nor doth he in his following exposition suppose it. The apostle doth not once propose this unto confirmation, that it behoved the Lord Christ to be a man, and not an angel. But having proved at large before, that in nature and authority he was above the angels, he grants, ver. 8, that he was for a little while made

lower than they ; and gives at large the reason of the necessity of that dispensation, taken from the work which God had designed him unto, which being to bring many sons unto glory, he shows and proves by sundry reasons, that it could not be accomplished without his death and suffering ; for which end, it was indispensably necessary that he should be made partaker of flesh and blood. And this he confirms farther, by referring the Hebrews unto the Scripture, and in especial unto the great promise of the Messiah made unto Abraham, that the Messiah was to be his seed ; the love and grace whereof, he amplifies by an intimation that he was not to partake of the angelical nature. That supposition therefore which is the foundation of this exposition, namely that the apostle had before designed to prove that the Messiah ought to partake of human nature, and not of angelical, which is nothing to his purpose, is a surmise suited only to the present occasion. Wherefore Felbinger, in his ‘*Demonstrationes Evangelicæ*,’ takes another course, and affirms that these words contain the end of what was before asserted, ver. 14, 15, namely, about Christ’s participation of flesh and blood, which was not to help angels, but the seed of Abraham, and to take them into grace and favour. But these things are both of them expressly declared in those verses, especially ver. 15, where it is directly affirmed, that his design in his incarnation and death, was to destroy the devil, and to free and save the children. And to what end should these things be here again repeated, and that in words and terms far more obscure and ambiguous than those wherein it was before taught and declared ? For by angels they understand evil angels ; and there could be no cause why the apostle should say in this verse, that he did not assist or relieve them, when he had declared in the words immediately foregoing, that he was born and died, that he might destroy them. Neither is it comely to say, that the end why Christ destroyed the devil was, that he might not help him ; or he end why he saved the children was, that he might assist them. Besides, the introduction of this assertion, *ου γαρ δηπου*, will not allow, that here any end is intimated of what was before expressed, there being no insinuation of any final cause in them.

The context therefore, not answering their occasion, they betake themselves to the words, *Verbum επιλαμβανεται*, (saith he,) significat proprie, manu aliquem apprehendere ; sive ut illum aliquo ducas, sive ut sustentas ; hinc ad opitulationem significandum commode transfertur quos enim adjutos volumus ne cadant, vel sub onere aliquo succumbant, aut si ceciderint erectos cupimus, iis manum injicere solemus, quo sensu, Ecclesiastic. iv. 12. De sapientia dictum est, *και επιλαμβανεται των ζητουντων αυτην*, hoc est, opitulatur quærentibus se, eadem est significatio verbi *αντιλαμβανεται*, quod qui aliquem sublevatum velint illi ex adverso manum porrigere solent.

It is acknowledged that *αντιλαμβανεται* doth frequently signify as here is alleged, namely ‘to help and assist,’ as it were by putting forth the hand to give relief. But if that were intended by the apostle in this place, what reason can be assigned why he should wave the use of a word proper to his purpose, and frequently so applied by him-



self in other places, and make use of another, which signifying no such thing, nor any where used by him in that sense, must needs obscure his meaning, and render it ambiguous? Whereas therefore *αντιλαμβανεται*, signifies to 'help and relieve,' and is constantly used by our apostle in that sense, it being not used or applied by him in this place to express his intention, but *επιλαμβανεται*, which signifies no such thing, nor is ever used by him to that purpose, the sense contended for of help and relief is plainly excluded. The place of Ecclesiasticus, and that alone, is referred to by all that embrace this exposition. But what if the word be abused in that place by that writer? must that give a rule to its interpretation in all other writers where it is properly used? But yet neither is the word used there for to help and relieve, but to take and receive; wisdom, suscipit, 'receiveth,' or taketh to itself, suo more, those that seek it; which is the sense of the word we plead for, and so is it rendered by translators. So the Lord Christ, suo modo, took to himself the seed of Abraham, by uniting it to his person as he was the Son of God. In the very entrance also of his discourse, this author acknowledgeth that *επιλαμβανεται* doth not directly or properly signify to help or to relieve, but signifying to 'take hold of,' is transferred to that use and sense. I ask, where? by whom? in what author? If he says in this place by the apostle, that will not prove it; and where any will plead for the metaphorical use of a word, they must either prove that the sense of the place where it is used enforces that acceptation of it, or at least that in like cases in other places it is so used, neither of which are here pretended.

But he proceeds. *Quod hic dicit, επιλαμβανεσθαι, ver. 18, per βοηθησαι, effert, de eadem enim re utrobique agitur, et rationem consequentiæ argumenti, quod in hoc versiculo proponit, illic explicat. This is but imagined; the contrary is evident to every one, on the first view of the context. Here the apostle discourseth the reason of the humiliation of Christ, and his taking flesh; there the benefit of his priestly office to them that do believe.*

*Επιλαμβανομαι, is therefore properly assumo, accipio, 'to take unto,' or 'to take upon;'* and the apostle teacheth us by it, that the Lord Christ took to him, and took on him our human nature of the seed of Abraham.

That the genuine sense of the place may be yet more fully vindicated, I shall farther consider the exceptions of a very learned man to our interpretation of the words, and his answers to the reasons whereby it is confirmed.

First, he says, that '*επιλαμβανεται*, being in the present tense, signifieth a continued action, such as Christ's helping of us is; but his assumption of human nature was a momentaneous action, which being past long before, the apostle would not express it as a thing present.' It is generally answered to this exception, that an enallage is to be allowed, and that *επιλαμβανεται* is put for *επελαβετο*, which is usual in the Scripture. So John i. 31, xxi. 13. But yet there is no just necessity of supposing it in this place. The apostle in his usual manner disputing with the Hebrews on the principles wherein they had been instructed from the Old Testament, minds them that there is

nothing said therein of his taking on him the nature of angels, but only of the seed of Abraham. So that 'he takes,' is, 'he doth so in the Scripture,' that affirms him so to do; and in respect hereunto the expression in the present tense is proper to his purpose. This way of arguing and manner of expression we have manifested on chap. i. 5.

Again he adds this expression, 'He took not on him angels,' for 'the nature of angels,' is hard and uncouth, as it would be in the affirmative to say, *assumpsit homines*, or *hominem*, 'he took men,' or 'a man;' which, we say not, although we do that he took human nature. But the reason of this phrase of speech is evident. Having before affirmed that he was partaker *σαρκος και αιματος*, 'of flesh and blood,' whereby the nature of man is expressed, repeating here again the same assertion with respect to the promise, and a negation of the same thing in reference to angels, because their nature consisteth not of flesh and blood, he expresses it indefinitely and in the concrete; he took not them, that is, not that in, and of them, which answers to flesh and blood in the children, that is, their nature. So that there is no need to assert, as he supposeth some may do, that *σαρκος και αιματος*, ought to be repeated *εκ του κοινου*, and referred to those bodies which the angels assumed for a season in their apparitions under the Old Testament, there being only an ellipsis, easy to be supplied, of that in them which answers to flesh and blood in the children.

Thirdly. 'The apostle,' he saith, 'showeth ver. 17, that Christ ought in all things to be made like to us, by this reason, *Quod non assumpsit angelos, sed semen Abrahæ*.' But if this be to take on him the nature of man, he comes to prove the same thing by the same. For to be made like to us, and to assume human nature, differ only in words, and not really, or indeed. But, take *επιλαμβανεται*, 'to help or relieve,' and all things agree. For because he came to help us and not angels, it became him to be made like to us. But herein lies a double mistake. First, in the scope and argument of the apostle, for those words in the beginning of the 17th verse are not an inference or conclusion from what is asserted in this verse, but an affirmation of the necessity of what is there asserted, from that which follows in the same verse, 'that he might be a faithful High Priest.' Secondly, those words, 'like unto us,' do not intend his conformity to us in his participation of human nature, which he had on other reasons before confirmed, but in the sufferings and temptations which there he insists on.

Fourthly. 'The seed of Abraham,' he says, 'is a collective expression, and denotes many, at least it must denote the person of some man, which Christ did not assume. And therefore it is the spiritual seed of Abraham that is intended, that is, believers. And the apostle so calls them, because the Hebrews were well pleased with the mention of that privilege.' But this will not abide the examination. The great promise of old to Abraham was, that, 'in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.' The intendment of that promise was, that the Messiah should be his seed, of his posterity. That by this seed one individual was intended, our apostle declares, Gal. iii. 16.

As Christ in like manner is said to be of the seed of David according to the flesh, Rom. i. 3. Of this promise the apostle reminds the Hebrews. So that his taking on him the seed of Abraham, is not the assuming of many, nor of the person of any one of them, but merely his being made of the seed of Abraham according to the promise. And to bend these words unto any other sense, than the accomplishment of the promise made to Abraham, that Christ should be of his seed is plainly to pervert them. And this is all of weight that I can meet with, which is objected unto our interpretation of this place, which being removed, it is further established.

Lastly. In the disparate removed, by angels, the good angels, not fallen angels are principally regarded. Of fallen angels he had newly spoken under the collective expression, the 'devil, who had the power of death.' Nor are (it may be) the devils any where called absolutely by the name of angels, but they are termed either evil angels, or angels that sinned, that left their habitation, that are to be judged, the devil's angels, or have some other peculiar adjunct whereby they are marked out and distinguished. Now it cannot be that this word *ἐπιλαμβανεται*, if it be interpreted to 'help, assist,' or 'relieve,' can in any sense be applied unto the angels, that must be intended if any. For the word must denote either any help, assistance or relief in general, or that especial help and assistance which is given by Christ in the work of reconciliation and redemption. If the first be intended, I much question the truth of the assertion, seeing the angels owe their establishment in grace unto Christ, and their advancement in glory, Eph. i. 10. If it be taken in the latter sense, as is pretended, then the nature of the *discrete axiom* here used by the apostle, requires that there be the same need of the help intimated in both the disparates, which is denied as unto the one, and affirmed as unto the other. But now the angels, that is, the good angels, had no need of the help of redemption and reconciliation unto God, or of being freed from death or the fear of it, which they were never obnoxious unto. And what remains for the clearing of the mind of the apostle, will appear yet farther in the ensuing observations from the words.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is truly God and man in one person, and this is fully manifested in these words. For, first, there is supposed in them his pre-existence in another nature than that which he is said here to assume. He *was* before, he *subsisted* before, or he could not have taken on him what he had not. This was his divine nature, as the like is intimated where he is said to be 'made flesh,' John i. 14; to be 'made of a woman,' Gal. iv. 4; to be 'manifested in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iii. 16; to 'take on him the form of a servant,' Phil. ii. 8, 9, as here he took the seed of Abraham; he *was* before he did so; that is, the Son, the Word of God, the Son of God, as in the places mentioned, eternally pre-existing unto this, his incarnation. For the subject of this proposition, he *took on him*, &c. denotes a person pre-existing unto the act of taking here ascribed unto him, which was no other than the Son of God. 2. He assumed, he took to himself another nature, of the seed of Abraham, according unto the promise; so continuing what he was, he became what he was not. For, 3. He took

this to be his own nature; he so took it, as himself to become truly the seed of Abraham, to whom, and concerning whom the promise was given, Gal. iii. 16; and was himself made of the 'seed of David according to the flesh,' Rom. i. 3; and as 'concerning the flesh, came of the fathers,' Rom. ix. 5; and so was the son of David, the son of Abraham, Matt. i. 1. And this could no otherwise be done, but, 4, by taking that nature into personal subsistence with himself, in the hypostasis of the Son of God; the nature he assumed could no otherwise become his. For if he had by any ways or means taken the person of a man to be united unto him, in the strictest union that two persons are capable of, a divine and a human, the nature had still been the nature of that other person and not his own. But he took it to be his *own nature*, which it could no ways be but by personal union, causing it to subsist in his own person. And he is therefore a true and perfect man; for no more is required to make a complete and perfect man, but the entire nature of man subsisting. And this is in Christ as a man, the human nature having a subsistence communicated unto it by the Son of God. And therefore, 6. This is done without a multiplication of persons in him. For the human nature can have no personality of its own, because it was taken to be the nature of another person, who was pre-existent unto it, and by assuming of it, prevented its proper personality. Neither, 7. Did hence any mixture or confusion of natures ensue, or of the essential properties of them, for he took the seed of Abraham to be his human nature, which, if mixed with the divine, it could not be. And this he hath done, 8, inseparably and for ever. Which things are handled at large elsewhere.

II. The redemption of mankind by the taking of our nature, was a work of mere sovereign grace. He took the seed of Abraham, he took not the nature of angels. And for what cause or reason? Can any be assigned but the sovereign grace, pleasure, and love of God? nor doth the Scripture any where assign any other. And this will the better appear if we consider,

First. That for a sinning nature to be saved, it was indispensably necessary that it should be assumed. The nature of angels being not taken, those that sinned in that nature must perish for ever, and they that fancy a possibility of saving sinners any other way but by satisfaction made in the nature that sinned, seem not to have considered aright the nature of sin, and the justice of God. Had any other way been possible, why doth the perishing of angels so inevitably follow the non-assumption of their nature? This way alone then could it be wrought.

Secondly. That we were carrying away all human nature into endless destruction; for so it is intimated, whence Christ's assumption of it is expressed by his putting forth his hand and taking hold of it, to stop it in its course of apostasy and ruin. Of angels, only some individual persons fell from God, but our whole nature, in every one to whom it was communicated from and by Adam, was running headlong to destruction. In itself there could be no relief, nor any thing to commend it unto God.



Here sovereign grace interposeth. The ‘love of God to mankind,’ Tit. iii. 4. As to the angels, he ‘spared them not,’ 2 Pet. ii. 4. He spared not them, and ‘spared not his Son for us,’ Rom. viii. 32. And if we consider rightly what the Scripture informs us of the number and dignity of the angels that sinned, of their nature and ability to accomplish the will of God, and compare therewith our own vileness and low condition, we may have matter of eternal admiration suggested unto us. And there was infinite wisdom as well as sovereign grace in this dispensation, sundry branches whereof the apostle afterwards holds out unto us.

VER. 17, 18.—HAVING declared the general reasons why the Son or Messiah was for a little while to be made lower than the angels, in his incarnation and sufferings, and showed the ends thereof, the apostle proceeds to declare other especial ends of this divine dispensation, and therein makes way unto what he had to instruct the Hebrews in, about the priestly office of Christ, which was the principal ground and foundation of what he intended more fully afterwards to discourse with them about, and to inform them in.

VER. 17, 18.—‘Ὅθεν ὠφείλε κατα παντα τοις αδελφοις ὁμοιωθηναι, ἵνα ελεημων γενηται και πιστος αρχιερευς τα προς τον Θεον, εις το ἱλασκεσθαι τας ἁμαρτίας του λαου’ Εν ᾧ γαρ πεπονθεν αυτος πειρασθεις, δυναται τοις πειραζομενοις βοηθησαι.

‘Ὅθεν ὠφείλε, Vulg. unde debuit, ‘whence he ought.’ So Beza. Syr. ܪܬܝ ܢܬܝ ܕܢܐ, ‘for which cause, or wherefore it was just,’ meet, or equal. Others, wherefore it was due, it was convenient. ‘Wherefore it behoved him,’ so ours. Ὅφειλω, joined with an infinitive mood, as here it is, signifies commonly oportet me, or necesse est, or debeo; ‘I ought,’ ‘it behoveth me,’ ‘it is necessary for me,’ and denotes more than a mere congruency, conveniency, or expediency; even such a kind of necessity as ariseth from that which in itself is just and equal; which the Syriac expresseth. It is of the same import with ἐπρεπε, ver. 10.

Κατα παντα, per omnia; Syr. ܡܕܝ ܕܒܒܐ, in omni re, ‘in every thing.’ Arab. In cunctis eorum conditionibus, ‘in all conditions,’ that is, every condition and state of life: ours, ‘in all things,’ leaving the words where they are placed in the Original, ‘Wherefore in all things it behoved him;’ whereas, a little transposition of them would more clear up the sense; ‘Wherefore it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren in all things.’ The Ethiopic quite omits the words here, and placeth them after ελεημων, ‘merciful in all things.’

Τοις αδελφοις ὁμοιωθηναι, Vulg. Fratribus simulari: Eras. similis reddi. Beza, similis fieri, as ours, ‘to be made like.’ The article prefixed to αδελφοις restrains the name *brethren* unto those whom he had before discoursed of, under the names of children, disciples, sanctified ones.

Ἰνα ελεημων γενηται και πιστος αρχιερευς, ut misericors fieret (or esset) pontifex; so Vulg. Eras. Bez. The Syriac somewhat otherwise,

‘that he might be merciful, and a great priest,’ or chief priest, *במדתו*, ‘faithful in the things of God,’ so making his mercifulness an attribute of his person absolutely, and faithfulness only to respect him as a high priest. So also the Arabic and Ethiopic. And the word whereby *ελεημων* is rendered, signifies ‘tenderly merciful,’ with that kind of mercy which is called bowels of compassion, from *רחם*. And it may be here observed, that that interpreter throughout the epistle renders *αρχιερεως* by *רב כומרא*, *Rab Comara*; though that word be always used in an ill sense in the Old Testament. Three times it occurs therein, 2 Kings xxiii. 5, where we render it ‘idolatrous priests,’ Zeph. i. 4, the name Chemarims is retained, Hos. x. 5, we express it by priests, but place Chemarim in the margin. For it principally denoted the priests of Baal and Moloch, and their blackness, (as the word is rendered Job. iii. 5,) and not from the garments they wore, but from the colour they contracted in their diabolical sacrifices in the fire. Hence wherever the word *כהן* is applied unto a priest of a false god, or one engaged in false worship, the Targumists constantly render it by *כומרא*, see Judg. xvii. 5, xviii. 4, 30. But this translator respected not so much the use, as the original and extraction of the word: for from *כמר*, in Niphal *נכמר*, is to ‘wax hot,’ and to be moved with internal heat, whence it is taken to signify compassion and pity, the same with *רחם*; hence Deut. xiii. 17, *ונתן לך רחמים*, and shall ‘give thee tender mercy,’ bowels of compassion is rendered by Ben Uzziel, *ויכמור עליכון רחמן ורחם עליכון*, and ‘shall wax hot towards you with compassion, and shall have compassion on you.’ He shall be warmed and moved with compassion towards you. In like manner is the word used, Psal. lxxvii. 10. With respect unto this heat of affections and abundant compassion, the word may well be applied unto the Lord Christ our High Priest.

*Τα προς τον Θεον*, Vulg. *ad Deum*, Pontifex *ad Deum*, an ‘high priest towards God.’ Very defectively. Eras. In his *quæ apud Deum forent agenda*, ‘in the things that were to be done before God;’ so also Beza, noting *forent agenda*, as a supplement unto the text. So Vatablus and others. Syr. *בדא להא*, ‘in the things of God.’ The apostle explains his own meaning, chap. v. 1, where he tells us that every High Priest, *καθίσταται τα προς τον Θεον ινα προσφερη*, ‘is set over the things appertaining unto God, that he may offer sacrifice.’ In things appertaining unto God, what he hath to do with God, is in their behalf for whom he ministers in his office before him. Arab. *res nostras apud Deum peragens*.

*Εις το ιλασκεσθαι τας αμαρτίας του λαου*, Vulg. *ut repropitiaret delicta populi*: aiming to express the sense of the original, it falls upon a barbarous word, yielding no tolerable sense, though that which seems to be intended in it, is to make propitiation or atonement. Ar. Vatab. Eras. Bez. *ad expiandum*: Syr. *מחסא על חטאיו דעמא*, expians super peccata populi; so the word is constantly translated, though it rather signifies to show mercy or pity. *Ιλασκομαι*, is commonly used actively for propitium facio, or propitio, to ‘please, appease, atone, turn away anger:’ and when it is taken in a passive or neuter sense, it signifies to be ‘merciful, appeased, reconciled,’ as Luke xviii. 13, *ὁ Θεος ιλασθητι μοι τω αμαρτωλω*, ‘God be merciful unto me a sinner.’ I

much doubt whether any instance can be given of its signifying to expiate, though because of the construction of it in this place, it be generally so rendered. If it be taken in its first proper sense, then sin cannot be the next object of the act denoted by it. Ours, 'to make reconciliation for the sins of the people,' of the sense whereof we shall deal afterwards at large.

Εν ᾧ γὰρ, In eo enim, Vulg. 'for in that:' Eras. nam ex hoc, 'for from hence;' Beza, nam ex eo; Vat. ex eo, ob id; ours, 'for in that,' that is, inasmuch; not 'in that thing wherein he was tempted,' but, 'whereas, inasmuch, seeing that;' Arab. 'for from those things which happened unto him when he was tempted.'

Πεπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεὶς, Vulg. passus est ipse tentatus, 'in which himself suffered and was tempted.' Et, Erasmus tells us is not in many ancient copies: Ar. in quo passus est ipse tentatus, 'in that he suffered himself being tempted:' Bez. ex eo quod perpassus ipse fuit, quum est tentatus; 'for that which he suffered when he was tempted.' But the words rather signify 'his sufferings by being tempted,' or from his temptations, than his suffering on other accounts when he was tempted. Syr. 'for in that he suffered and was tempted;' as the Vul. Eras. quod ipsi contigit tentatum esse, 'that it befel him to be tempted.' Laying the whole upon temptation, because in the latter clause mention is made of them that are tempted, without any addition of sufferings. It is not certain whether πεπονθα be from πασσω, or from πονεω, from whose active πεπονηκα the middle signification in πεπονα is found, and πεπονθα, by an unusual pleonasm of Theta; and if so, not his suffering, but his labouring under temptation is intended. If, as it is commonly thought, it be from πασσω, I confess that word is sometimes used as it is here rendered by Erasmus, accidit, contigit, usu venit, 'it happened, it befel;' but it is but rarely, and that not without regard unto suffering. But it being evident that the suffering of Christ is here intended, his temptation being mentioned only as an instance of that whereby he suffered, that is, not to be passed over, and the sense carried on unto his temptation only. Πειρασθεὶς, he 'suffered being tempted.' Πειραζω, is in itself but to make a trial or experiment. But this being done from various principles by sundry means, for different ends, and upon divers subjects, there is a great difference in such trials, and great variety in the nature of temptations. How the Lord Christ was tempted, by whom, and of what sort his temptations were, we shall consider afterwards. The Ethiop. reads, 'when he tempted him, and afflicted him;' that is, God.

Δυναταὶ βοηθησαι. Vulg. 'potens est et eis qui tentantur auxiliari,' (Et) again is added, but is retained by Beza, as not copulative, but emphatical; 'potest et eis qui tentantur succurrere,' 'he can,' or is 'able to help, relieve, succour.' Βοηθεω is properly ἐπὶ βοήν θεω, 'to run in to the cry of any one,' that is, to help and relieve him in his distress, to come speedily, and as it were in haste to the help of him that crieth out in danger. So Thucydides, οὗτοι δὲ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις ἐβέβοηθηκεσαν, 'these came in to the help of the Athenians,' in their distress. And this is the direct sense of the word in this place, as it respects them that are distressed under the power of temptation, crying

out for help. And it is plainly expressed in the Latin ‘succurrere,’ and our succour taken from thence. So Chrysostom interprets these words, *δυναται βοηθῆσαι, μετα πολλῆς προθυμίας ὀρεξει χεῖρα*, ‘he gives out his hand unto them with all readiness.’

Ver. 17, 18.—*Wherefore (hence) it behoved him to (it was meet he should) be made like unto his (the) brethren in all things, (every manner of way,) that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the things of (pertaining unto) God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that (whereas) he hath suffered being (when he was) tempted, he is able to succour (come in to the help of) them that are tempted.*

In these two verses, the apostle illustrates what he had taught before, and confirms what he had asserted concerning the Son’s participation of flesh and blood, in like manner with the children, from one especial end thereof. And this end is, his being a high priest, which that Messiah was to be, both the Hebrews granted, and he himself intended more largely afterwards to demonstrate. Moreover, he was to be such a high priest, as was settled and suited for the discharge of his office, unto the benefit of them for whose good he was to minister therein. This the wisdom of God, and the nature of the thing itself doth require. Now they being persons obnoxious unto temptations and sufferings of all sorts, he must in an especial manner be able to help, relieve, and save such persons, And all this the apostle declares in these verses, in the opening whereof we may consider,

1. The importance of the illative expression in the entrance, ‘wherefore,’ or hence.

2. The necessity intimated of what is here assigned to the Messiah, ‘it behoved him,’ or it was meet that he should.

3. What the apostle repeats and re-asserts; namely, that he was ‘in all things,’ or every manner of way, to be made like unto his brethren; or,

4. The general end of this his necessary conformity unto the brethren; that he ‘might be a merciful and faithful high priest.’

5. The especial work and end of that office, which he was so prepared for; in the things of God, ‘to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.’

6. A farther enforcement of the necessity of the foregoing assertion, taken from a double consideration.

1. Of what he did, or what befel him, in the condition wherein he was made like unto the brethren; ‘he suffered being tempted,’ or when he was tempted.

2. Of the blessed effect and consequence thereof, both in his own preparation unto the farther discharge of his office, and the benefit of them whom he ministers in it for, ‘he is able to succour them that are tempted.’

First. There is the illation intimated in the word *ὁθεν*, ‘wherefore.’ Now, this may respect either what had been before discoursed, or what is farther insisted on in the words ensuing. In the first way, the



apostle would seem to infer the necessity of his being made like unto his brethren in all things, from what he had before proved of his participation of human nature ; but this seems not to be the meaning of the word. That expression, ‘to be made like unto his brethren in all things,’ is only a recapitulation of what the apostle had before taught concerning his incarnation and sufferings ; and here, his design is to show the reason and end thereof ; namely, that he might be a high priest, and discharge his office unto the benefit of the people. He gives therefore an account of what he had delivered, and declares the end of it : ‘Wherefore,’ or therefore, ‘ought he thus to be made like his brethren, that he might be a merciful high priest.’ And thus did Chrysostom understand the connection of these words, *ἵνα οὖν, σαίη* he, *προσενεγκῇ θύσιαν δύναμεν ἡμᾶς καθαρῖσαι, δια τοῦτο γεγορ- νεν ἀνθρώπος*, ‘Therefore was he made man, that he might be a sacrifice able to purge our sins.’

Secondly. The necessity of the matter of the apostle’s assertion is expressed in the word *ὀφείλει*, he ought—it must be so ; it could not be otherwise, on supposition that he was to be a high priest. God having designed him unto that office, and the work thereof, it was indispensably necessary for him to be made like unto his brethren in all things.

Thirdly. That which the apostle thus asserts, is his being made like unto his brethren in all things. The proposition is of the nature of them that are *καθολου ὡς μη καθολου* ‘universal, but not to be understood universally.’ For that expression, *κατα παντα*, is capable of sundry limitations. As, first, It respects only all those things which are necessary unto the end assigned ; and, secondly, In them also, there may be a great difference. The things it respects are nature, with the essential properties thereof, attended with temptations and sufferings. But whereas the brethren are sinners, he was not made like unto them in sin, which exception the apostle elsewhere puts in unto this assertion, ch. iv. 15. For this would have been so far from conducing unto the end aimed at, that it would have been utterly destructive thereof. In the things also wherein he was made like unto them, still the regulation from the end is to be carried along with us. That therein which was needful thereunto, this assimilation or conformity extends unto ; that which was otherwise, it supposeth not. And as the first part of this double limitation is made evident in the instance of sin, so the truth and necessity of the latter will appear in the consideration of the things wherein this conformity doth consist. As,

First. He was made like unto them in the essence of human nature, a rational spiritual soul, and a mortal body, quickened by its union therewithal. This it was necessary he should be like the brethren in ; and not have a fantastical body, or a body animated by the deity, as some fancied of old. But that he should take this nature upon him by natural generation, after the manner of the brethren, this was not necessary ; yea, so to have done, would not have farthered the end of his priesthood, but have enervated the efficacy of it, and have rendered him incapable of being such a priest as he was to be. For whereas the original contagion of sin is derived by natural procreation,

had he been by that means made partaker of human nature, how could he have been holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; as it became our high priest to be, ch. vii. 26. Again, it was not necessary that this human nature should have its individuation from itself, and a particular subsistence in and by itself; yea, this also would have overthrown his priesthood. For whereas the efficacy thereof depends on the excellency of the divine nature, this could not have given its influence thereunto, had not the human nature been taken into the same personal subsistence with itself. Only, as we said, that he should have a human nature, truly and really as the brethren, and therein be like unto them, this was necessary, that he might be an offering priest, and have of his own to offer unto God.

Secondly, It was also necessary, that in and with his human nature, he should take upon him all the properties and affections of it, that so he might be made like unto the brethren. He was not to have an ubiquitarian body, a body commensurate to the deity, that is immense, and consequently no true body at all; nor was his soul to be freed from the affections which are connatural to a human rational soul, as love, joy, fear, sorrow, shame, and the like; nor was his body to be free from being obnoxious unto hunger, thirst, cold, pain, death itself. But now, whereas these things in the brethren are attended with irregular perturbations for the most part, and whereas all the individuals of them have their proper infirmities in their own persons, partly by inordinate inclinations from their tempers and complexions, partly in weaknesses and sicknesses, proceeding either from their original constitutions, or other following inordinacies; it was no way needful that in any of these he should be made like unto the brethren, yea, a conformity unto them therein, would have absolutely impeded the work he had to do.

Thirdly. He was also like unto us in temptations, for the reason which the apostle gives in the last verse; but herein also some difference may be observed between him and us. For the most of our temptations arise from within us, from our own unbelief and lusts. Again, in those that are from without, there is somewhat in us to take part with them, which always makes us fail in our duty of resistance, and oftentimes leads to farther miscarriages. But from these things he was absolutely free. For as he had no inward disposition or inclination unto the least evil, being perfect in all graces, and all their operations, at all times; so when the prince of this world came unto him, he had no part in him, nothing to close with his suggestions, or to entertain his terrors.

Fourthly. His sufferings were of the same kind with them that the brethren underwent, or ought so to have done; yet they had far different effects on him, from what they would have had on them. For whereas he was perfectly innocent, and perfectly righteous, no way deserving them in his own person, he was free from all impressions of those sinful consequents, which attend the utmost sufferings under the curse of the law by sinners themselves.

Thus the *ὁμοιωσις κατὰ πάντα*, the likeness in all things here asserted, is capable of a double limitation; the first concerning some things

themselves, as sin; the other, the mode or manner of the things wherein the conformity doth really consist.

Now thus to be made like unto them, 'it became him;' it was meet, just, and necessary, that God should make him so, because of the office, duty, and employment, that he had assigned him unto; which, as the end hereof, is next to be inquired after.

Fourthly. The general end of his conformity unto the brethren is, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest.—Two things are comprised herein; First, The office that he was designed unto: he was to be a high priest. Secondly, His qualifications for that office: he was to be merciful and faithful. His conformity unto the brethren, as we have seen, consisted in two things: 1st. His participation of the nature; 2ndly. His copartnership with them in their condition of suffering and temptation. The first of these was necessary unto his office; the latter unto his qualifications. He was made man, that he might be a high priest; he suffered being tempted, that he might be merciful and faithful. There was no more required that he might be a high priest, but that he should partake of our nature; but that he might be *merciful* and *faithful*, with that kind of mercy and faithfulness which the brethren stood in need of; it was moreover required, that he should suffer and be tempted, which things must be distinctly considered.

First. That he might be a high priest, it was necessary that he should be partaker of the nature of them, for whom he was to administer in the things of God. So the apostle informs us, ch. v. 1, 'Every high priest for men, must be taken from among men.' This is not work for an angel, nor for God himself as such. And therefore, although the benefits of the priesthood of Christ were communicated unto all believers from the foundation of the world, by virtue of the compact and agreement between the Father and him, for the undertaking and execution of that office at the time appointed; yet he was not actually, nor could be a high priest, until he was clothed with flesh and made partaker of the nature of the children. The duty which, as a high priest, he had to perform, namely, to offer gifts and sacrifices unto God, ch. viii. 3, with the special nature of that great sacrifice that he was to offer, which was himself, his body and soul prepared and given him for that purpose, ch. x. 10, require and make necessary this conformity. For this cause then was he made like unto the brethren in a participation of human nature.

Secondly. That in this nature he should be perfectly holy, and exactly discharge his duty according unto the mind and will of God, was all that was required of him as to his being a high priest. But this was not all that the estate and condition of the brethren required. Their sorrows, tenderness, weakness, miseries, disconsolations, are such, that if there be not a contemperation of his sublime holiness, and absolute perfection in fulfilling of all righteousness, with some qualifications inclining him to condescension, pity, compassion, and tender sense of their condition, whatever might be the issue of their safety in the life to come, their comforts in this life would be in continual hazard. For this cause, therefore, was he made like unto them in the

infirmities of their nature, their temptations and sufferings, from whence all their disconsolations and sorrows do arise. Hence was the necessity of the qualifications for his office, which by his sufferings and temptations he was furnished withal; and they are two.

First. Mercifulness. He was *ελεημων*, 'merciful, tenderly compassionate,' as the Syriac version renders the word: misericors, 'one that lays all the miseries of his people to heart, so caring for them, to relieve them.' Mercy in God is but a naked simple apprehension of misery, made effective by an act of his holy will to relieve. Mercy in Christ is a compassion, a condolency, and hath a moving of pity and sorrow joined with it. And this was, in the human nature of Christ, a grace of the Spirit in all perfection. Now, it being such a virtue, as in the operation of it deeply affects the whole soul and body also, and being incomparably more excellent in Christ, than in all the sons of men, it must needs produce the same effects in him, wherewith in others in lesser degrees it is attended. Thus we find him at all times full of this compassion and pity towards all the sons of men, yea, the worst of his enemies, expressing itself by sighs and tears, intimating the deep compassion of his heart. And this made him, as it were, even forget his own miseries in his greatest distress, when seeing the daughters of Jerusalem mourn for him, as he was going to his cross, he minds them of that which his compassionate heart was fixed on, even their approaching misery and ruin, Luke xxiii. 28. But yet neither is this mercifulness in general that which the apostle intends; but he considers it as excited, provoked, and drawn forth by his own temptations and sufferings. He suffered and was tempted, that he might be merciful, not absolutely, but a merciful high priest. The relation of the sufferings and temptations of Christ unto his mercifulness, is not as unto the grace or habit of it, but as unto its especial exercise as our high priest. And this mercifulness of Christ is the gracious condolency and compassion of his whole soul with his people in all their temptations, sufferings, dangers, fears, and sorrows, with a continual propensity of will and affections unto their relief, implanted in him by the Holy Ghost, as one of those graces which were to dwell in his nature in all fulness, excited and provoked, as to its continual exercise in his office of high priest, by the sense and experience which he himself had of those miseries which they undergo; whereof more on the last verse.

Secondly. The other qualification mentioned is, that he should be *πιστος*, 'faithful.' Some understand by *πιστος*, verus, legitimus, 'true and rightful,' made so in a due manner, whereof the apostle treats expressly, ch. v. 5. Others, his general faithfulness, integrity, and righteousness in the discharge of his office, being faithful unto him that appointed him, as ch. iii. 2. But neither of these senses answer the especial design of the apostle, nor his referring of this qualification unto his conformity with the brethren in sufferings and temptations. It must also answer that mercifulness which we have before described. It consists, therefore, in his exact, constant, careful consideration of all the concerns of the brethren under their temptations and sufferings. This he is excited unto by his own experience of what it is



to serve God in such a condition. It is described, Isa. xl. 11. Not his faithfulness then in general, whereby he discharged his whole office, and accomplished the work committed unto him, mentioned John xvii. 4; but his constant care and condescension unto the wants and sorrows of his suffering and tempted brethren, is here intended.

Before we proceed unto the explication of the remaining passages of these verses, what offers itself from what hath been already discoursed unto our instruction, may be observed: As,

I. The promised Messiah was to be the great high priest of the people of God. This the apostle here presumes and proves elsewhere. And this we have elsewhere confirmed. The especial office of priesthood, for one to perform it in the behalf of others, came in after sin, upon the first promise. In the state of innocence, every one was to be priest for himself, or perform in his own name the things which with God he had to do, according unto the law of his creation. This privilege failing by sin, which cut off all gracious intercourse between God and man, a new way was provided and included in the first promise, for the transaction of things between God and sinners. This was by Christ alone, the promised seed. But because he was not to be immediately exhibited in the flesh, and it was the will of God that sundry sacrifices should be offered unto him, partly for his honour and glory in the world, and to testify the subjection of his people unto him, partly to teach and instruct them in the nature and benefits of the priesthood which he had designed for them, and to exemplify it in such representations as they were capable of; he did at several seasons institute various sorts of temporary fading typical priests; this he did both before and after the law. Not that ever there was amongst them a priest properly and absolutely so called, by whom the things of men might be completely and ultimately transacted with God. Only those who were appointed to administer before the Lord in the behalf of others were called priests, as rulers are called gods; because they represented the true priest, and outwardly expressed his actings unto the people. The true, proper, and absolute high priest, is Jesus Christ alone, the Son of God; for he alone had all the solemnities that were necessary for the constitution and confirmation of such a priest. As in particular, the oath of God was necessary hereunto, that his priesthood might be stable and unchangeable. Now, none was ever appointed a priest by the oath of God, but Christ alone, as the apostle declares, ch. vii. 20, 21. And how this differences his office from that of others, shall on that place be made manifest. 2. He alone had somewhat of his own to offer unto God; other priests had somewhat to offer, but nothing of their own, only they offered up the beasts that were brought unto them by the people. But the Lord Christ had a body and soul of his own prepared for him to offer, which was properly his own, and at his own disposal, ch. x. 5. 3. He alone was set over the whole spiritual house of God, the whole family of God in heaven and earth. This belongs unto the office of a high priest, to preside in and over the house of God, to look to the rule and disposal of all things therein. Now, the priests of old were, as unto this part of their office,

confined unto the material house or temple of God; but Jesus Christ was set over the whole spiritual house of God, to rule and dispose of it, ch. iii. 6. 4. He alone abides for ever. The true and real high priest was not to minister for one age or generation only, but for the whole people of God unto the end of the world. And this prerogative of the priesthood of Christ, the apostle insists upon, ch. vii. 23, 24. 5. He alone did, and could do, the true and proper work of a priest; namely, make reconciliation for the sins of the people. The sacrifices of other priests could only represent what was to be done, the thing itself they could not effect; for it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin, as the apostle shows, ch. x. 4, but this was done effectually by that one offering which this high priest offered,—ver. 11—14. All which things must be afterwards insisted on in their proper places, if God permit. This, then, is his prerogative, this is our privilege and advantage.

II. The assumption of our nature, and his conformity unto us therein, was principally necessary unto the Lord Jesus, on the account of his being a high priest for us. It behoved him to be made like unto us, that he might be a high priest. It is true, that as the great prophet of his church, he did in part teach and instruct it, whilst he was in the flesh in his own person; but this was in a manner a mere consequence of his assuming our nature to be our high priest. For he instructed his church before and after, principally by his Spirit. And this he might have done to the full, though he had never been incarnate. So also might he have ruled it with supreme power, as its King and Head. But our high priest, without the assumption of our nature, he could not be, because, without this, he had nothing to offer; and of necessity, saith the apostle, he must have somewhat to offer unto God. A priest without a sacrifice, is as a king without a subject. Had not God prepared him a body, he could have had nothing to offer. He was to have a self to offer to God, or his priesthood had been in vain. For God had shown that no other sacrifice would be accepted, or was effectual for that end which was designed unto this office. On this therefore is laid the indispensable necessity of the incarnation of Christ.

III. Such was the unspeakable love of Christ unto the brethren, that he would refuse nothing, no condition, that was needful to fit him for the discharge of the work which he had undertaken for them. Their high priest he must be: this he could not, unless he were made like unto them in all things. He knew what this would cost him, what trouble, sorrow, suffering, in that conformity unto them, he must undergo; what miseries he must conflict withal, all his life; what a close was to be put unto his pilgrimage on the earth; what woeful temptations he was to pass through: all lay open and naked before him. But such was his love, shadowed out unto us by that of Jacob to Rachel, that he was content to submit unto any terms, to undergo any condition, so that he might save and enjoy his beloved church; see Eph. v. 25, 26. And surely he who was so intense in his love, is no less constant therein. Nor hath he left any thing undone that was

needful to bring us unto God. But we are yet farther to proceed with our explication of the words.

Fifthly. The apostle having asserted the priesthood of Christ, describes in the fifth place the nature of the office itself, as it was vested in him. And this he doth two ways: 1. By a general description of the object of it, or that which it is exercised about; *τα προς τον Θεον*, 'the things appertaining unto God.' 2. In a particular instance taken from the end of his priesthood, and the great work that he performed thereby, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

First. He was to be 'a high priest in the things pertaining unto God,' that is, either in things that were to be done for God with men, as the apostle speaks, 'We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us,' 2 Cor. v. 20. Or in things that were to be done with God for men. For there were two general parts of the office of the high priest, the one to preside in the house and over the worship of God, to do the things of God with men. This the prophet assigns to Joshua the high priest, an especial type of Christ, Zech. iii. 7. 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and thou shalt also keep my courts.' And of Christ himself, even 'he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a Priest upon his throne,' chap. vi. 13, that is, 'the high priest of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1. He was set authoritatively over the house of God, to take care that the whole worship of it were performed according to his appointment, and to declare his statutes and ordinances to the people. And in this sense the Lord Christ is also the high priest of his church, *τα προς τον Θεον*, feeding and ruling them in the name and authority of God, Micah v. 4. Yet this is not that part of his office which is here intended by the apostle. The other part of the high priest's office was to perform the things toward God, which on the part of the people were to be performed. So Jethro adviseth Moses, Exod. xviii. 19, *היה אתה לעם מול האלהים*, 'Be thou unto the people before God;' which words the LXX. render, *γινου συ τῷ λαῷ τα προς τον Θεον*, in the phrase here used by the apostle, 'Be thou to the people in things appertaining to God.' And this was the principal part of the office and duty of the high priest, the other being only a consequent thereof. And that it was so as to the office of Christ, the apostle manifests in the special limitation which he adjoins to this general assertion: he was a high priest in things appertaining to God, *εις το ιλασκεσθαι τας ἁμαρτίας του λαου*, 'to reconcile,' that is, make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Two things are to be considered in these words. 1. The object of the priestly action here assigned to the Lord Christ. 2. The action itself, which with respect thereunto he is said to perform.

The first is, *ο λαος*, 'the people,' that is, say some, the seed of Abraham, whose interest in the mediation of Christ, and their privilege therein, the apostle here reminds them of, to provoke the Hebrews to constancy in their faith and profession. And so also they limit the

term brethren before used, not as they say, that the elect among the Gentiles are excluded, but that he expressly mentions only the first-fruits in the Jews. But this sense is not necessarily included in the words; the intention of the apostle in the expression is only to give some light into the effect of the priesthood of Christ, from the office of the high priest under the Old Testament, and the discharge thereof. For as he had a peculiar people for whom he made atonement, so also hath Christ, that is, all his elect.

2. The action ascribed to him is expressed in those words *εις το ιλασκεσθαι τας αμαρτίας*, which want not their difficulty, the construction of the verb being inconsistent with its native and proper signification; *ιλασκομαι* is properly and usually in all writers, sacred and others, 'to appease,' 'to atone,' 'to please,' 'to propitiate,' 'to reconcile.' But the following word seems not to admit of that sense in this place, *τας αμαρτίας*. For how can any one be said to please, or atone, or reconcile sin? Wherefore some laying the emphasis of the expression on the construction, do regulate the sense of the verb by the noun, of the act by the object, and so will have it signify to expiate, cleanse, and do away sin, to cleanse the sins of the people, to do away the sins of the people. The Vulgar Latin renders the word *reproposito, ut repropitiaret*, which as Anselm tells us, and he hath those that follow him, is composed of *re, prope*, and *cio*, a barbarous etymology of a barbarous word. *Propitio* is a Latin word, and used not only by Plautus, but by Suetonius and Pliny, and that 'to appease, atone, please,' or turn away anger. Most translations render it by *expio, ad expiandum peccata*, but the signification of that word is also doubtful. It is indeed sometimes used for to 'cleanse,' 'make pure,' and 'to take away sin,' but never in any good author, but with reference to atonement, to take them away by sacrifice, by public punishments, by men's devoting themselves to destruction. So Livy, speaking of Horatius, who killed his sister, 'Ita ut cædes manifesta aliquo tamen piaculo lueretur, imperatum patri, ut filium expiaret pecunia publica.' *Expiare*, is the same with *luere piaculo*, which is to take away the guilt of a crime by a commutation of punishments. There may then be a double sense of these words. 1. To make atonement and reconciliation for sin, appeasing the anger and wrath of God against it. 2. To remove and take away sin, either by the cleansing and sanctifying of the sinner, or by any means prevailing with him not to continue in sin. Against the first sense the construction of the word with *τας αμαρτίας*, 'sins,' is objected. Against the latter, the constant sense of the word itself, which is not to be deserted. It is the former sense therefore which we do embrace, and shall confirm.

1. The constant use of the word in all good authors of the Greek tongue, will admit no other. 'Ιλασκομαι is of an active import, and denotes propitium facio, placo, as we observed before, 'to appease and atone.' And this is that whereby the heathen generally expressed their endeavours to turn away the wrath of their gods, to appease them; and then they use it transitively, with an accusative case of the object;



as Homer, *Iliad* 3. *πρωτος εγω κελομην θεον ιλασκεσθαι*. ‘To propitiate or appease God.’ And, *Iliad* 1.

Φοιβω δ' ἱερὴν ἑκατομβὴν  
 ῥέξαι ὑπερ Δαναῶν, ὅφρ' ἱλασκώμεθ' ἀνακτα,  
 Ὅς νυν Ἀργεῖοισι πολυστονα κηδε' ἔφηκεν.

‘To offer a hecatomb unto Apollo for the Greeks, and appease him who hath sent unto them so many sorrows,’ or atone him. And when it hath the accusative case of the person joined with it, it can bear no other sense. So Plutarch, *ιλασο θυσιαῖς ἡρώας*; and Lucian, *ιλασατο τον θεον*, ‘to appease God.’ Sometimes it is used with a dative case, as Plutarch in *Public*. *ιλασομενος τῷ ἄδῳ*; and then it hath respect unto the sacrifice whereby atonement is made, and anger turned away; and is rendered *piaculare sacrum facere*, ‘to offer a piacular sacrifice.’ So that the word constantly hath regard unto the anger and wrath of some person, which is deprecated, turned away, appeased, by reconciliation made.

2. The use of the word by the LXX. confirms it unto this sense. Commonly they render the Hebrew כפר by it; which, when regarding God, always signifies ‘atonement,’ and ‘to atone.’ So the noun, *Psal.* xlix. 8. *לֹא יִתֵּן לְאֱלֹהִים כֹּפֶר*, ‘nor can he give to God his ransom,’ or the price of his redemption, *ἐξίλασμα*. And unto the verb where it respecteth the offence to be atoned for, they usually annex *περι* to it, *Exod.* xxxii. 30. ‘You have sinned a great sin, and now I will go up unto the Lord, *אֲנִי אֶכַּפֵּר בְּעַד חַטֹּאתֶיךָ*, *ἵνα ἐξίλασωμαι περι τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὑμῶν*, that I may atone for your sins.’ And it is God who is the object of the act of appeasing, or atoning; ‘to make atonement with God for your sin.’ So *Numb.* xxviii. 22, 30; *Neh.* x. 33. Once in the Old Testament it is used transitively, and sin placed as the object of it, *Dan.* ix. 24. *וַיַּכְפֵּר עַד, καὶ τοῦ ἐξίλασασθαι τῆς ἀδικίας*, ‘to atone sin, or unrighteousness;’ that is, *ἐξίλασασθαι τον θεον περι τῆς ἀδικίας*, ‘to make atonement with God for sin.’ And so also they express the person with *περι*, for whom the atonement is made. *Εξίλασασθαι περι αὐτου, αὐτων, ψυχης αὐτου*, *Exod.* xxx. 15, 16; *Lev.* i. 4, iv. 20, 26, vi. 30; *Num.* xv. 25, 28. And still God is respected as he who is offended, and is to be reconciled; as it is expressed, *Lev.* x. 17, *καὶ ἐξίλασῃσθε περι αὐτων εναντι Κυριου*, ‘shall make atonement for them before the Lord.’ And sometimes they add that wherewith the atonement is made, namely, offerings or sacrifices of one sort or another, *Levit.* viii. 17. And they will give us the sense of the word in another place, *Prov.* xvi. 15. ‘The wrath of a king is as messengers of death,’ *ανηρ δε σοφος ἐξίλασεται αὐτον*, ‘a wise man shall appease him;’ referring that to the king, which the original doth to his wrath, *יכפרה*, ‘shall turn away,’ that is, by appeasing him. In the use of this word then, there is always understood, 1. An offence, crime, guilt, or debt, to be taken away. 2. A person offended, to be pacified, atoned, reconciled. 3. A person offending to be pardoned, accepted. 4. A sacrifice, or other means of

making the atonement, sometimes one is expressed, sometimes another, but the use of the word hath respect unto them all. And in vain doth Crellius pretend, ad Grot. ad cap. 7. p. 360, that *ἱλασκεσθαι τινα* and *ἱλασκεσθαι περι τινος*, are the same, and denote the same thing, the former always denoting the person offended, the latter the person offending, or the offence itself; the one is to atone or appease another, the other to make atonement for another, which surely are sufficiently different.

3. The Jews to whom Paul wrote, knew that the principal work of the high priest was to make atonement with God for sin; whereof their expiations and freedom from it was a consequent; and therefore they understood this act and duty accordingly, it being the usual expression of it that the apostle applies unto it. They knew that the great work of their high priest was to make atonement for them, for their sins and transgressions, that they might not die, that the punishment threatened in the law might not come upon them, as Lev. xvi. 10, 21, is fully declared. And the apostle now instructs them in the substance of what they had before attended unto in types and shadows. Nor is there any mention in the Scripture of the expiation of sins but by atonement, nor doth this word ever in any place signify the real cleansing of the sinner for sin inherent; so that the latter sense proposed, hath no consistency with it.

The difficulty pretended from the construction, is not of any moment. The sense and constant use of the word being what we have evinced, there must be an ellipsis supposed, and *ἱλασκεσθαι τας ἁμαρτίας*, is the same in sense with *ἱλασκεσθαι τον Θεον περι των ἁμαρτιων*, 'to make reconciliation with God for sins;' as the same phrase is in other places explained.

Sixthly. There is a farther double enforcement of the necessity of what was before affirmed, concerning his being made like unto his brethren in all things, with reference unto his priesthood; and the first is taken from what he did or suffered in that condition; the other, from the benefits and advantages which ensued thereon. The first in those words, 'For that he himself hath suffered being tempted.'

*Εν ᾧ γαρ*, 'for in that;' that is, say some, in the same nature, he suffered in the flesh that he took, being tempted. But the words seem rather only an illation of what the apostle concludes or infers from that which he had before laid down; *כאשר*, 'whereas,' inasmuch, seeing that; so both *εφ' ᾧ* and *εν ᾧ* are often used, Rom v. 12.

Now, it is here affirmed of Christ, that *πεποιθε πειρασθεις*, 'he suffered being tempted;' not, 'it happened unto him to be tempted,' which we before rejected. The Vulgar Latin, and expositors, following that translation, 'He suffered, and was tempted.' But the *and* inserted, we have shown to be superfluous, and it is acknowledged to be so by Erasmus, Estius, A Lapide, though Tena, with some others, contend for the retaining of it. It is not the suffering of Christ in general that is here intended; nor is the end mentioned of it, that of his suffering in general, which was to make reconciliation, but the succouring and relieving of them that are tempted, which regards the sufferings that befel him in his temptations. It is not his sufferings, absolutely

considered, nor his being tempted, that is peculiarly designed, but his suffering in his temptation, as was before observed. To know then what were those sufferings, we must enquire what were his temptations, and how he was affected with them.

To tempt, and temptations, are things in themselves of an indifferent nature, and have no moral evil in them, absolutely considered. Whatever attends them of that kind, proceeds either from the intention of the tempter, or the condition of them that are tempted. Hence God is said to tempt men, but not to induce them unto sin, Gen. xxii. 1; James i. 13. What of evil ensues on temptation, is from the tempted themselves. Moreover, though temptation seems to be of an active importance, yet in itself it is merely for the most part neutral. Hence it compriseth any thing, state, or condition, whereby a man may be tried, exercised, or tempted. And this will give us light into the various temptations under which the Lord Christ suffered. For although they were all external, and by impressions from without, yet they were not confined unto the assaults of Satan, which are principally regarded under that name. Some of the heads of them we may briefly recount.

1. His state and condition in the world He was poor, despised, persecuted, reproached, especially from the beginning unto the end of his public ministry. Herein lay one continued temptation, that is, a trial of his obedience by all manner of hardships. Hence he calls this whole time, the time of his temptations: 'You have abode with me in my temptations,' Luke xxii. 28, or in the work that he carried on in a constant course of temptation, arising from his outward state and condition; see James i. 2; 1 Pet. v. 9. In this temptation he suffered hunger, poverty, weariness, sorrow, reproach, shame, contempt, wherewith his holy soul was deeply affected. And he underwent it cheerfully, because it was to be the condition of them, whose preservation and salvation, as their high priest, he had undertaken, as we shall see. And his experience hereof is the spring of their comfort and safety.

2. Whilst he was in this state and condition, innumerable particular temptations befel him, under all which he suffered. 1. Temptations from his relations in the flesh, being disregarded and disbelieved by them, which deeply affected his compassionate heart with sorrow. 2. From his followers, being forsaken by them upon his preaching the mysteries of the gospel. 3. From his chosen disciples, all of whom left him, one denied him, and one betrayed him. 4. From the anguish of his mother, when a sword pierced through her soul in his sufferings. 5. From his enemies of all sorts. All which are at large related in the gospel; from all which his sufferings were inexpressible.

3. Satan had a principal hand in the temptations wherein he suffered. He set upon him in the entrance of his ministry immediately in his own person, and followed him in the whole course of it by the instruments that he set on work. He had also a season, an hour of darkness allowed unto him, when he was to try his utmost strength and policy against him; under which assault from him he suffered, as was foretold from the foundation of the world, the bruising of his heel or the temporal ruin of all his concernments.

4. God's desertion of him was another temptation under which he suffered. As this was most mysterious, so his sufferings under it were his greatest perplexity, Ps. xxii. 1, 2; Heb. v. 7.

These are some of the heads and springs of those various and innumerable temptations that the Lord Christ suffered in and under.

Lastly. The blessed effect and consequent hereof, is expressed in those words, "He is able to succour them that are tempted;" wherein we have, 1. The description of them for whose sake the Lord Christ underwent this condition. 2. The ability that accrued unto him thereby for their relief. And, 3. The advantage that they are thereby made partakers of.

First. They for whose sakes he underwent this condition, are those whom he reconciled unto God by his sacrifice as a high priest, but are here described by an especial concernment of their obedience, which producing all their sorrow and trouble, makes them stand in continual need of aid and assistance. They are *οἱ πειραζόμενοι*, 'tempted ones.' Notwithstanding their reconciliation unto God by the death of Christ, they have a course of obedience prescribed unto them. In this course, they meet with many difficulties, dangers, and sorrows, all proceeding from the temptations that they are exercised withal. Hence is this description of them, they are those who are tempted, and suffer greatly on that account. Others are little concerned in temptations; outward, it may be, as unto danger, they have not many, and if they have, it is the trouble, and not the temptations, which they regard; inward, and unto sin, they yield obedience unto, and the trouble from temptation is in the opposition made unto it. It is reconciled persons who emphatically are the tempted ones, especially as temptations are looked on as the cause of sufferings. They are the mark of Satan and the world, against which all their arrows and darts are directed, the subject whereon God himself exerciseth his trials. And besides all this, they maintain a continual warfare within them against temptations in the remainder of their own corruptions; so that with, in, and about them, are they conversant in the whole course of their lives. Moreover, to this constant and perpetual conflict, there do befall them in the holy wise providence of God, certain seasons wherein temptations grow high, strong, impetuous, and are even ready to ruin them. As Christ had an hour of darkness to conflict withal, so have they also. Such was the condition of the believing Hebrews, when Paul wrote this Epistle to them. What through persecution, wherein they 'endured a great fight of afflictions,' and what through the seductions of false brethren, alluring them to an apostasy to Judaism, and an acquiescence in Mosaical ceremonies, they were even ready to be utterly ruined. To them therefore, and by them to all others in the like condition, the apostle hath respect in his description of those whom the Lord Christ is ready to succour, they are tempted ones. This is the proper name of believers. As Satan from what he doth, is called the tempter, so they from what they endure, may be called the tempted ones. Their calling is to oppose temptations, and their lives a conflict with them. The high priest having suffered the like things with them, they have an assured ground of consolation in all their



temptations and sufferings. Which he confirms by what is added in the second place, namely, his ability to help them.

2. *Δυναται*, 'he is able.' Now this ability is such, as ariseth from that peculiar mercifulness, which he is disposed to from that experience which he had of suffering under temptation. A moral power, not a natural. It is not *δυναμις ενεργητικη*, an executive power, a power of working or operation, not a power of the hand, but *δυναμις συμπαθητικη*, a power of heart and will, an ability in readiness of mind, that is here assigned to Christ. It is this latter, and not the former, that was a consequent of his temptations and sufferings. A gracious, ready, enlargedness of heart, and constant inclination to the succour of them that are tempted, is the ability here designed. For as this power was originally and radically implanted in the human nature of Christ, by the communication of all habitual grace to him, so its next inclination to exert itself in suitable effects, with a constant actual excitation thereunto, he had on the account of his suffering in temptations. For,

1. He had particular experience thereby of the weakness, sorrows, and miseries of human nature under the assaults of temptations; he tried it, felt it, and will never forget it.

2. His heart is hereby inclined to compassion, and acquainted with what it is that will afford relief. In his throne of eternal peace and glory, he sees his poor brethren labouring in that storm, which with so much travail of soul himself passed through, and is intimately affected with their condition. Thus Moses stirs up the Israelites to compassion to strangers, for the experience they had themselves of the sorrows of their hearts, 'Thou knowest the heart of a stranger.' And the Jews tell us, that the *שטרים*, or 'officers' that he set over the people in the wilderness, were of those elders who were so evilly entreated by the taskmasters in Egypt; that from their own sufferings, they might know how to exercise tenderness over their brethren now put under their rule.

3. This compassion moves and excites him to their relief and succour. This is the proper effect of mercy and compassion. It sets power on work for the relief of them whose condition it is affected withal. So said she,

*Haud ignara mali miseris succurrere disco.*

'Being exercised with evils and troubles herself, she had thence learned to relieve the miserable so far as she was able. This is the ability ascribed to our high priest. Compassion and mercy, arising from an experience of the sufferings and dangers of human nature under temptations, exciting his power for the relief of them that are tempted.

3. Lastly. The advantage of the brethren from hence lies in the succour that he is thus able to afford unto them. This in general, as as we have shown, consists in a speedy coming in with relief unto them who being in distress, do cry out or call for it. There are three things that tempted believers do stand in need of, and which they cry out for, 1. Strength to withstand their temptations, that they prevail not against them. 2. Consolation to support their spirits under them. 3. Seasonable deliverance from them. Unto these is the succour afforded by our high priest suited, and it is variously administered unto them. As, 1st.

By his word or promises. 2d. By his Spirit ; and that, 1. By communicating unto them supplies of grace or spiritual strength. 2. Strong consolation. 3. By rebuking their tempters and temptations. 3d. By his providence disposing of all things to their good and advantage in the issue ; and what is more in the words, will be manifest in the ensuing observations taken from them.

I. The principal work of the Lord Christ as our high priest, and from which all other actings of his in that office do flow, was to make reconciliation or atonement for sin. This John declares, 1 John ii. 22, 'We have an advocate with the Father, and he is a propitiation for our sins.' What he doth for us in heaven as our advocate, depends on what he did on earth, when he was a propitiation for our sins. This work was that which was principally regarded in the first promise, Gen. iii. 15, namely, that which he was to do by his sufferings. To shadow out and represent this unto the church of old, were all the sacrifices of the law, and the typical priesthood itself instituted. They all directed believers to look for, and to believe the atonement that was to be made by him. And that this should be the foundation of all his other actings as a high priest, was necessary.

First. On the part of his elect, for whom he undertook that office. They were by nature enemies of God, and children of wrath ; unless peace and reconciliation be made for them in the first place, they could neither have encouragement to go to him with their obedience, nor to expect any mercy from him, or acceptance with him. For as enemies, they could neither have any mind to serve him, nor hope to please him. Here lie the first thoughts of all who have any design seriously to appear before God, or to have to do with him ; where-with shall we come before him, how shall we obtain reconciliation with him ? Until this inquiry be answered and satisfied, they find it in vain to address themselves unto any thing else, nor can obtain any ground of hope to receive any good thing from the hand of God. This order of things the apostle lays down, Rom. v. 8—10. The first thing to be done for us was to reconcile us to God whilst we were sinners and enemies ; this was done by the death, by the blood of Christ, when as our high priest he offered himself a sacrifice for us. This being performed, as we have abundant cause of, and encouragement unto, obedience, so also just ground to expect whatever else belongs unto our salvation, as he also argues, Rom. viii.

Secondly. It was so on his own part also. Had not this been first accomplished, he could not have undertaken any other act of his priestly office for us. What the Lord Christ doth in heaven on our behalf, was prefigured by the entrance of the high priest into the holy place. Now this he could not do, unless he had before offered his sacrifice of atonement, the blood whereof he carried along with him into the presence of God. All his intercession for us, his watching for our good, as the merciful high priest over the house of God, is grounded upon the reconciliation and atonement which he made ; his intercession indeed being nothing but the blessed representation of the blood of the atonement. Besides, this was required of him in the first place, namely, that he should make his soul an offering for sin,

and do that, in the body prepared for him, which all the sacrifices and burnt-offerings of old could not effect nor accomplish. And therefore hereon depended all the promises that were made to him about the success of his mediation, so that without the performance of it, he could not claim the accomplishment of them.

Thirdly. It was so on the part of God also. For herein principally had he designed to manifest his righteousness, grace, love, and wisdom, wherein he will be glorified, Rom. iii. 25. He set him forth to be a propitiation to declare his righteousness. The righteousness of God was most eminently glorified in the reconciliation wrought by Christ, when he was a propitiation for us, or made atonement for us in his blood. And herein also God commendeth his love to us, Rom. v. 8; John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9. And what greater demonstration of it could possibly be made, than to send his Son to die for us when we were enemies, that we might be reconciled to him. All after actings of God towards us indeed are full of love, but they are all streams from this fountain, or rivers from this ocean. And the apostle sums up all the grace of the gospel in this; that God was in Christ reconciling us to himself; and that by this way of atonement, making him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 19, 21. And so also he declares, that this was the mystery of his will wherein he abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, Eph. i. 8—10. So that in all things the great glory which God designed in the mediation of Christ, is founded alone in that act of his priesthood, whereby he made reconciliation for the sins of his people. And therefore,

1. They who weaken, oppose, or take away this reconciliation, are enemies to the salvation of men, the honour of Christ, and the glory of God. From men they take their hopes and happiness, from Christ his office and honour, from God his grace and glory. I know they will allow of a reconciliation in words, but it is of men to God, not of God to men. They would have us reconcile ourselves to God by faith and obedience, but for the reconciliation of God to us, by sacrifice, satisfaction, and atonement, that they deny. What would they have poor sinners do in this case? they are enemies to God; go say they, and be reconciled to him; lay aside your enmity, and be no more his adversaries: but alas, he is our enemy also; we are children of wrath, obnoxious to the curse as transgressors of his law, and how shall we be delivered from the wrath to come? Take no care of that, there is no such justice in God, no such indignation against sin and sinners as you imagine. But our consciences tell us otherwise; the law of God tells us otherwise; the whole Scripture testifies to the contrary; all the creation is filled with tokens and evidences of this justice and indignation of God against sin, which you deny: and would you have us to give credit to you, contrary to the constant dictates of our own consciences, the sentence of the law, the testimony of the word, the voice of the whole creation, and that in a matter of such importance and everlasting concernment unto us? What if all these should prove true, and you should prove liars, should we not perish for ever, by relying on your testimony? Is it reasonable we should

attend unto you in this matter? Go with your sophisms unto men who were never burdened with a sense of the guilt of sin, whose spirits never took in a sense of God's displeasure against it, who never were brought under bondage by the sentence of the law, who never were forced to cry out in the bitterness and anguish of their souls, what shall we do to be saved? wherewith shall we come before the Lord, or appear before the High God? and it may be they will be entangled and seduced by you; but for those who have thus in any measure known the terror of the Lord, they will be secured from you by his grace. Besides, what ground do such men leave to the Lord Christ to stand upon, as it were, in his intercession for us in heaven? do they not take that blood out of his hand, which he is carrying into the holy place? and how do they despoil him of his honour, in taking off from his work?—a miserable employment; when men shall study and take pains to persuade themselves and others, that Christ hath not done that for them, which he hath done for all that are his; and which if he hath not done for them, they must perish for evermore. It is worth the while for them to weaken faith, love, and thankfulness to Christ? From whom can such men look for their reward? Can right reason, or a light within, be no otherwise adored, but by sacrificing the blood of Christ to them? no otherwise be enthroned, but by deposing him from his office, and taking his work out of his hand; and by a horrible ingratitude, because they know no other could do that work, to conclude that it is needless? Are men so resolved not to be beholden to Jesus Christ, that rather than grant that he hath made reconciliation for us by his blood, they will deny that there was any need that any such reconciliation should be made? O the depths of Satan! O the stupidity and blindness of men that are taken alive by him, and led captive at his pleasure!

2. They who would come to God by Christ, may see what in the first place, they are to look after. Indeed if they are once brought into that condition wherein they will seriously look after him, they will not be able to look from it, though for a while it may be they will be unwilling to look to it. Reconciliation they must have, or they can have no peace. This lies straight before them: they are willing it may be to look upon the right hand and the left, to see if there be any thing nigh them that will yield them relief; but all is in vain. If any thing else gives them ease, it gives them poison; if it gives them peace, it gives them ruin. Reconciliation by the blood of Christ is the only relief for their souls. And nothing more discovers the vanity of much of that religion which is in the world, than the regardlessness of men in looking after this, which is the foundation-stone of any durable building in the things of God. This they will do, and that they will do, but how they shall have an interest in the reconciliation made for sin, they trouble not themselves withal.

II. The Lord Christ suffered under all his temptations, sinned in none.—He suffered being tempted, sinned not, being tempted. He had the heart of a man, the affections of a man, and that in the highest degree of sense and tenderness. Whatever sufferings the soul of a man may be brought under by grief, sorrow, shame, fear, pain, dan-



ger, loss, by any afflictive passions within, or impressions of force from without, he underwent, he felt it all. Because he was always in the favour of God, and in the assurance of the indissolubility of the union of his person, we are apt to think, that what came upon him, was so overbalanced by the blessedness of his relation to God, as not to cause any great trouble to him. But we mistake when we so conceive. No sorrows were like to his, no sufferings were like to his. He fortified not himself against them, but as they were merely penal, he made bare his breast to their strokes, and laid open his soul that they might soak into the inmost parts of it, Isa. 1. 6. All those reliefs and diversions of this life which we make use of, to alleviate our sorrows and sufferings, he utterly abandoned. He left nothing in the whole nature of sorrow or suffering, that he tasted not, and made experience of. Indeed in all his sufferings and temptations, he was supported with the thoughts of the glory that was set before him; but our thoughts of his present glory should not divert us from the contemplation of his past real sufferings. All the advantage that he had above us by the excellency of his person, was only that the sorrows of his heart were enlarged thereby, and he was made capable of greater enduring without sin. And it was to be thus with him,

1. Because, although the participation of human nature was only necessary that he might be a high priest, yet his sufferings under temptations were so, that he might be a merciful high priest for tempted sufferers. Such have need not only to be saved by his atonement, but to be relieved, favoured, comforted by his grace. They did not only want one to undertake for them, but to undertake for them with care, pity, and tenderness. Their state required deliverance with compassion. God, by that way of salvation that he provides for them, intends not only their final safety in heaven, but also that in the sense of the first-fruits of it in this world, they may glorify him by faith and thankful obedience. To this end it was necessary that they should have relief provided for them in the tenderness and compassion of their high priest, which they could have no greater pledge of, than by seeing him for their sakes, exposing himself to the miseries which they had to conflict withal; and so always to bear that sense of them, which that impression would surely leave upon his soul. And,

2. Because although the Lord Jesus, by virtue of the union of his person and plenary unction with the Spirit, had an habitual fulness of mercy and compassion, yet he was to be particularly excited to the exercise of them towards the brethren, by the experience he had of their condition. His internal habitual fulness of grace and mercy was capable of excitation unto suitable actings by external objects, and sensible experience. It added not to his mercifulness, but occasioned his readiness to dispose it to others; and shut the door against pleas of delaying succour. He bears still in his holy mind the sense he had of the sorrows wherewith he was pressed in the time of his temptations: and thereon seeing his brethren conflicting with the like difficulties, is ready to help them; and because his power is proportioned to his will, it is said he is able. And whatever may be the real effects on

the mind of Christ from his temptations and sufferings now he is in heaven; I am sure they ought to be great on our faith and consolation, when we consider him undergoing them for this very end and purpose, that seeing he was constituted our high priest to transact all our affairs with God, he would be sensible of that condition in his own person, which he was afterwards to present to God, for relief to be afforded to it.

III. Temptations cast souls into danger.—They have need under them of relief and succour. Their spring, rise, nature, tendency, effects, all make this manifest. Many perish by them, many are wounded, none escape free that fall into them. Their kinds are various; so are their degrees and seasons, but all dangerous. But this I have elsewhere particularly insisted on.

IV. The great duty of tempted souls, is to cry out unto the Lord Christ for help and relief.—To succour any one, is to come to his help upon his cry and call. This being promised by Christ to those that are tempted, supposeth their earnest cry unto him. If we be slothful, if we be negligent under our temptations, if we look other ways for assistance, if we trust unto, or rest in our own endeavours for the conquest of them, no wonder if we are wounded by them, or fall under them. This is the great arcanum for the cure of this disease, the only means for support, deliverance, and conquest, namely, that we earnestly and constantly apply ourselves unto the Lord Christ for succour, and that as our merciful high priest, who had experience of them. This is our duty upon our first surprisal with them, which would put a stop to their progress, this our wisdom in their success and prevalency. Whatever we do against them without this, we strive not lawfully, and shall not receive the crown. Were this more our practice than it is, we should have more freedom from them, more success against them than usually we have. Never any soul miscarried under temptation, that cried to the Lord Christ for succour in a due manner, that cried unto him under a real apprehension of his danger, with faith and expectation of relief. And hereunto have we encouragement given us, by the great qualifications of his person in this office; he is faithful, he is merciful, and that which is the effect of them both, he is able; he is every way sufficient to relieve poor tempted souls. He hath a sufficiency of care, wisdom, and faithfulness, to observe and know the seasons wherein succour is necessary to us; a sufficiency of tenderness, mercy, and compassion, to excite him thereunto; a sufficiency of power to afford succour that shall be effectual; a sufficiency of acceptance at the throne of grace, to prevail with God for suitable supplies and succour. He is every way able to succour them that are tempted.—To him be praise and glory for evermore!

## CHAPTER III.

THE general nature of this whole Epistle, as in the former part of our exposition was declared, is parenetical. And therefore the doctrines proposed and insisted on in it, are constantly improved to press and enforce the exhortations intended; as such is the end and use of all principles in sciences that are practical; especially of that taught us in the Scripture, which is a wisdom and a knowledge of living to God. Wherefore our apostle, having in the foregoing chapters manifested the excellency of Christ (who was the author of the gospel) both in his person and his work, and that both absolutely and comparatively with the angels, the most glorious ministers employed in the dispensation of the will of God to the church of old, with some respect to Joshua the captain of the people, under whose conduct they entered into Canaan—in the entrance of this chapter he acquaints the Hebrews to what end he insisted on these things, namely that by the consideration of them, they might be prevailed with to constancy and perseverance in the faith and worship of God, by him declared and revealed. This is the design of his discourse in this chapter. But as his manner is throughout this Epistle, he hath no sooner intimated his intention in the first verse, but he adds a new enforcement to his exhortation to the end of the sixth verse. From thence again he proceedeth to his general exhortation, with a supply of new reasons, arguments, and inferences taken from the consideration or enforcement newly and occasionally insisted on.

There are therefore three general parts of this chapter.

First. An exhortation to constancy and perseverance in the profession of the gospel; and therein are observable, 1. The means of accomplishing the duty exhorted to, ver. 1, 8, 9, 12, 13. 2. The nature of it, ver. 6, 14. 3. The things that are contrary to it, ver. 12, 15. 4. The benefits of it, ver. 14. 5. The dangers of its neglect, ver. 8—10, 15—19.

Secondly. A new enforcement of the exhortation taken from the fidelity of Christ in the discharge of the office committed to him, ver. 2—6. Wherein occur, 1. The reason itself, or the fidelity of Christ asserted. 2. The manner of its proposal, by comparing him with, and preferring him above Moses. And therein the apostle, 1. Prevents an objection that might yet remain on the behalf of the Judaical church-state on the account of Moses, the principal revealer of it; and, 2. Lays down a concession of the faithfulness of Moses in his trust and employment; with, 3. A comparison of him with the Lord Christ, as to the dignity of his person and work; and, 4. The eviction of his coming short of him therein.

Thirdly. Especial reasons relating to his general argument, taken

from express testimonies of Scripture, ver. 7—10, and the dealings of God towards others failing in the duty exhorted to, which he pursues at large in the next chapter. The whole therefore of this chapter is a pathological exhortation, pressed with many cogent reasons, to constancy and perseverance in the faith and obedience of the gospel.

VER. 1, 2.—‘Ὁθεν ἀδελφοὶ ἅγιοι, κλησεως ἐπουρανίου μετοχοὶ, κατανοήσατε τὸν ἀποστολὸν καὶ ἀρχιερεὰ τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν· Πιστὸν ὄντα τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτὸν, ὡς καὶ Μωσῆς ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκῇ αὐτοῦ·

THE Vulgar leaves out Χριστὸν, ‘Christ;’ all ancient copies and translations beside, retain it.

‘Ὁθεν, that is, *unde*, properly ‘from whence.’ But these words are used as illatives, as *proinde*, *itaque*, *quamobrem*, *quocirca*, *quare*, all which are made use of by translators in this place, ‘wherefore.’ Respect is had to the preceding discourse, from whence the apostle infers his ensuing exhortation, ‘Seeing that things are thus, that the Author of the gospel is such an one as hath been described.’

Κλησεως ἐπουρανίου. *Vocationis cœlestis*, ‘of the heavenly calling.’ Syr. כּוּמַשׁ מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, ‘which is from heaven.’ Some render it *supra cœlestis*, ‘above the heavens;’ as *ἐπιχθονία*, are things on the earth and so above it. And Plato, *Apolog. Socrat.* opposeth *τα ὑπο γην*, ‘things under the earth,’ and *τα ἐπουρανία*, ‘things above the heavens.’ And this word is almost peculiar to our apostle, being used frequently by him in this and his other epistles, and but twice besides in the whole New Testament. Matt. xviii. 35; John iii. 12. See Cor. xv. 40, 48, 49; Eph. i. 3, ii. 6, iii. 10, vi. 12; Phil. ii. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Heb. vi. 4, viii. 5, ix. 23, xi. 16, xii. 22. And as he useth this word frequently, opposing it to *ἐπιγίαιος*, so he expresseth the same thing in other words of the same signification, Phil. iii. 14, *ἡ ἀνω κλήσις*, the ‘supernal calling,’ that is, *ἐπουρανίος*. For *οὐρανός*, saith Aristotle de Mund. is *τὸν κόσμον τὸ ἀνω, Θεοῦ οἰκητήριον*, ‘that of the world which is above, the dwelling place of God.’ And as our apostle opposeth *τα ἐπουρανία*, ‘heavenly things,’ so he doth also *τα ἀνω*, ‘things above,’ absolutely to *τα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, ‘things that are on the earth,’ Col. iii. 1, 2. This phrase of speech is therefore the same, and peculiar to our apostle. And both these expressions denote God the Author of this calling, who is *יְהוָה מֵעַל*, Job xxxi. 28, ‘God above.’ Θεὸς ἐπὶ πάντων, ‘God over all,’ Eph. iv. 6, and *ἐπουρανίος*, ‘heavenly,’ Matt. xviii. 35.

Μετοχοὶ, *participes*, ‘partakers;’ *consortes*, Beza. To the same purpose, Syr. *מְקֻרְבִּים*, ‘who are called,’ with a holy calling; omitting the force of this word intended to express their common interest in the same calling. The signification of this word was declared on chap. ii. 14. The matter intended is fully expressed by the same apostle, Eph. iv. 4, *ἐν σῶμα, καὶ ἐν πνεῦμα, καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλησεως ἡμῶν*. ‘One body, and one spirit, even as you



were called in one hope of your calling.' That is, partakers of, and companions in the same heavenly calling.

Κατανοησατε, considerate, contemplamini, 'consider, meditate on.' Κατανοεω, is properly animadverto, to set the mind diligently to mark and consider, so as to understand the thing considered. Whence it is often rendered (as by Cicero) by intelligo and perspicio, 'to understand and perceive.' See Rom. iv. 19, where it is denied of Abraham. 'Consider diligently.'

Τον αποστολον, Apostolum, legatum, 'the apostle, legate, ambassador.' Syr. שלחא דה: hunc apostolum, 'this apostle,' he is so only. 'He that was sent of God,' namely, to the work of revealing him by the gospel. And by a periphrasis hereof, he often describes himself, calling his Father τον αποστειλαντα, 'him that sent him.' Ethiopic, apostolum vestrum, 'your apostle.'

Και αρχιερα, et pontificem, 'and the High Priest,' or Chief Priest; Syr. רב כומר, 'prince of priests,' whereof we have spoken before, chap. ii. 17.

Της ομολογιας ημων. 'Ομολογια, is properly 'a joint agreement,' consent, or concurrence in the declaration of any thing. It is used also in good authors for a convention, covenant, or agreement. Syr. דהודית, 'of our confession.' And so the Vulgar, 'confessionis nostræ;' both with respect to the Greek Translation of the Old Testament, wherein ידד in Hiphil, signifying properly 'to celebrate,' to praise, to set forth praise by words, is constantly rendered εξομολογεω, 'to confess.' Hence these words of our apostle, 2 Cor. ix. 13, δοξαζοντες τον Θεον επι τη υποταγη της ομολογιας υμων, εις το ευαγγελιον του Χριστου, are rendered by the Vulgar, Deum glorificamus quod subjeti sitis confessioni evangelii, 'We glorify God, that you are subject to the confession of the gospel,' very imperfectly, and without any clear sense. The 'subjection of your profession,' is a Hebraism for 'professed subjection,' as ours well render the words. 'Ομολογεω is but once used in the New Testament for 'to confess,' 1 John i. 9, any otherwise than as 'to confess,' is coincident in signification with 'to profess,' or 'make profession.' And this hath obtained in common use; whence the doctrines that men profess, or make profession of, being declared, are called their confession, or the confession of their faith. So our apostle calls it την καλην ομολοgian, 'that good confession,' 1 Tim. vi. 12, 13, and absolutely την ομολοgian, 'profession,' chap. iv. 14, of this Epistle. And την ομολοgian της ελπιδος, chap. x. 23, the 'profession of hope.' And it is to be observed, that this word also is peculiar to our apostle, and by him frequently used. It is public or joint profession. Some copies of the Vulgar read 'vestra,' your profession, but without countenance from ancient copies or translations.

Τω ποιησαντι αυτον, facienti ipsum; ei qui fecit ipsum, 'To him that made him.' Some Socinians from these words would prove that Christ is a mere creature, because God is said to make him. But it is not of the essence or nature of Christ that the apostle treateth, as Slichtingius himself acknowledgeth, but of his office and work. See Acts ii. 36, Κυριον και Χριστον αυτον ο Θεος εποιησε, 'God hath

made him both Lord and Christ.' The same with *εθηκε*, Heb. i. 2, 'He hath made, appointed, designed, exalted him.' So in the Hebrew *עשה* fecit, 'he made,' is used and applied, 1 Sam. xii. 6. *אשר עשה את משה ואת אהרן*, which the LXX. render, *ὁ ποιησας του Μωσση*, 'who made Moses and Aaron,' that is, *רם* or *גדל* 'raised up,' or 'exalted,' or 'appointed them;' that is, to their office. For, whom God raiseth up or exalteth, he doth it to some work and service; and whom he appointeth to any service, he doth therein exalt.

*Ὡς και Μωσης εν ὅλῳ τῷ οίκῳ αὐτου*, 'Even as Moses in his whole house.' These words, 'in his whole house,' may be referred to the former expression concerning Christ, 'Faithful to him that appointed him in his whole house, even as was Moses.' So the Arabic translation disposeth the words. Thus a comma is to be placed after Moses, or 'even as Moses,' is to be enclosed in a parenthesis. Or they may be referred to Moses; and then they are to be rendered as by ours, 'as was Moses,' and then the sense is to be supplied by repeating *πιστος*, 'faithful,' 'as Moses was faithful in his whole house.' But as to the matter itself both are intended; and the same words are used of Moses elsewhere, Num. xii. 7.

VER. 1, 2.—*Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider (diligently) the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, CHRIST JESUS, who was faithful (being faithful) to him that appointed him, (made him so,) even as Moses in all his house, (in his whole house.)*

THE apostle in these two verses entereth upon the application of the doctrine which he had declared and confirmed in the two foregoing chapters. Herewithal, according to his constant method in this Epistle, he maketh way for what he had further to deliver, of the same nature and importance.

*Ὡςεν*, The first word respects that which went before; wherefore, or seeing things are as I have manifested; namely, that he of whom I speak unto you, is so excellent, and so highly exalted above all; and that whereas he was humbled for a season, it was unspeakably for the benefit and advantage of the church, it cannot but be your duty to consider him; that is, both what he is in himself, and what he is to us. His design is to press upon them his general exhortation to constancy and perseverance in the profession of the gospel; but he doth not express it in these verses, insisting only upon an intermediate duty, subservient unto that principally intended. Now this is their diligent consideration of Jesus Christ, with what he had delivered concerning him, and what he was yet further to declare unto them. And this he urgeth as the only way whereby they might be prevailed on unto, and assisted in the stability aimed at. This is the connexion of his discourse, and the intention of his interference; whence observe, that,

1. All the doctrines of the gospel, especially those concerning the person and offices of Christ, are to be improved to practice in faith and obedience. This course our apostle insists on. Having before laid down

the doctrine of the person and offices of Christ, here he applies it unto their duty and establishment in the profession of the truth. These things are not revealed to us only to be known, but to be practically used for the ends of their revelation. We are so to know Christ, as to live to him in the strength of his grace, and unto the praise of his glory. 'If you know these things,' saith he, 'happy are ye if you do them,' John xiii. 17. It is our privilege to know them, a great privilege; but it is our blessedness to do them. When men content themselves with the notion of spiritual things, without endeavouring to express their power and efficacy, in the practical conformity of their minds and souls unto them, it proves their ruin. That word which is preached to us, ought to dwell in us. See what it is to learn Christ in a due manner, Eph. iv. 20—24. There is a miserable profession, where some preach without application, and others hear without practice.

To hear, that we may learn; to learn, that we may learn, is but part of our duty; indeed, in and for themselves, no part of it. To hear and to learn are good; but not for themselves, for their own sake, but only for the practice of what we hear and learn. The apostle tells us of some who are always learning, but are never able to come *εις επιγνωσιν της αληθειας*, 2 Tim. iii. 7, that is, to a practical acknowledgment of it so as to have an impression of its power and efficacy upon their souls. And such are some who are *παντοτε μανθανοντες*, such as make it their business to hear and learn, so that they scarcely do any thing else. Gospel truths are *medicina animæ*, physic for a sin-sick soul. Now of what use is it, to get store of medicines and cordials, and never to take them? No more is it to collect at any price or rate, sermons, doctrines, instructions, if we apply them not, that they may have their efficacy in us, and proper work towards us. There is in some a dropsy of hearing; the more they hear, the more they desire: but they are only pleased with it at present, and swollen for the future; are neither really refreshed, nor strengthened. But every truth hath, as the Hebrews express it, *ציד בפי* 'meat in its mouth;' something for our own nourishment. We should look unto sermons as Elijah did to the ravens that brought him 'bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening,' 1 Kings xvii. 6. They bring food with them for our souls, if we feed on it; if not, they are lost. When the Israelites gathered manna to eat, it was a precious food, bread from heaven, angels' meat, food heavenly and angelical; that is, excellent and precious. But when they laid it up by them, it stank and bred worms, Exod. xvi. 20. When God scatters truths amongst men, if they gather them to eat, they are the bread of heaven, angels' food; but if they do it only to lay them by them, in their books, or the notions of their mind, they will breed the worms of pride and hypocrisy, and make them an offensive savour to God. When therefore any truth is proposed unto you, learn what is your concernment in it, and let it have its proper and perfect work upon your souls.

Secondly. In the manner of his pressing his exhortation, two things occur: 1. His compellation of them; in those words, 'holy brethren.'

2. His description of them by one property or privilege, ‘partakers of the heavenly calling.’

In the former, two things are also observable: 1. The appellation itself which he makes use of, ἀδελφοί, ‘brethren.’ 2. The adjunct of that appellation, ‘holy.’

This term of relation, ‘brethren,’ is variously used in the Scripture, sometimes naturally, and that most strictly for children of the same father or mother, Gen. xlii. 13; or more largely for near kinsmen. And among the Hebrews, the descendants of the same grandfather, are almost constantly so called: whence is that expression of the brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ, who were descendants of his grandfather according to the flesh, Gen. xiii. 8, and xxiv. 27; Matt. xii. 46, and xiii. 55; Mark iii. 31, 32; John ii. 12, and vii. 3, 5, 10; Acts i. 14, or in analogy thereunto, all the branches of one common stock, though a whole nation, yea though of many nations, are called brethren. So all the Hebrews were brethren, Deut. xv. 12. And the Edomites are said to be their brethren, because of the stock of Abraham, Deut. xxiii. 7. And in this case, in another place, our apostle calls all the Jews his brethren, that is, his kinsfolk in the flesh, Rom. ix. 3. Sometimes it is used civilly, and that 1st. on the mere account of cohabitation, Gen. xix. 7. 2nd. Of combinations in some society; as, 1. for evil, Gen. xlix. 5; 2. for good, Ezra iii. 2. And sometimes it expresseth a joint profession of the same religion; on which account the Jews called themselves brethren all the world over, Acts xxviii. 21. Lastly, it is also an expression of spiritual cognation, founded on that of our Saviour, ‘All ye are brethren, and one is your Father which is in heaven,’ Matt. xxiii. 8, 9. And herein is an allusion to the first proper signification of the word. That men be brethren properly, and strictly, it is required that they have one father, be of one family, and be equally interested in the privileges and advantages thereof. This is the nearest bond of alliance that is or can be between equals, the firmest foundation of love. And thus it is with those who are brethren spiritually, as will afterwards appear.

Now, though the apostle stood in the relation intimated with the Hebrews upon a natural account, yet he here calls them brethren principally in the latter sense, as spiritually interested in the same family of God with himself; although I am apt to think that in the use of this expression to the Jews, the apostle had respect also to that brotherhood which they had among themselves before in their ancient church-state. So Peter, writing to some of them, tells them that the same afflictions which they suffered would befall, *την εν κοσμῳ υμων αδελοφωτην*, the whole “brotherhood of them in the world,” 1 Peter v. 9, that is, all the believing Jews. And whereas they had a particular and especial mutual love to each other on that account, our apostle warns them, that they should not think that that relation or love was to cease upon their conversion to Christ, Heb. xiii. 1. *φιλαδελφια μενετω*, let that brotherly love continue which hath been amongst you. But principally, I suppose, he respects their new relation in Christ, which further appears from the adjunct of this compellation annexed, ‘holy.’



Holy, Ἅγιοι; this is the usual epithet wherewith our apostle adorns believers, Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1; Eph. i. 4; Phil. i. 1. And in many places he joins their calling with it, which here he subjoins unto it. And this is peculiar to Paul. What he means by ἅγιοι, 'holy,' he declares, where he terms the same persons ἡγιασμένοι, 'sanctified ones,' 1 Cor. i. 2; Eph. v. 26; 1 Cor. vi. 11; 1 Thess. v. 23; John xvii. 19. He accounted them holy, not upon the account of an external separation, as of old all the people were holy, but also of internal real sanctification and purity. This he judged the professing Hebrews to be interested in, as being called by a holy calling. And it may be in the present use of this expression, he hath respect unto what he had before affirmed of believers, namely, their being ἁγιαζόμενοι, 'sanctified,' or made holy by Christ, ch. ii. 11, considering that from thence he infers their relation to Christ, as his brethren, ver. 12, and so becoming in him brethren to one another, even all of them, ἀδελφότης, a brotherhood or fraternity, 1 Pet. v. 9. And by this compellation of holy brethren, doth the apostle manifest his high regard of them, or respect unto them, looking on them as persons sanctified by the Spirit and word of Christ; and a dear affection for them as his brethren. By this treatment also of them, he gives a great evidence of his sincerity in dealing with them; for they might not fear that he would impose any thing on them, whom he honoured as holy, and loved as brethren. And hereby he smooths his way to his ensuing exhortation.

Secondly. He describes them from their calling, κλησεως επουρανιου μετοχοι. This is usual with our apostle, 'called to be saints, sanctified in Christ Jesus.' And this calling or vocation he first describes by its quality,—it is heavenly or supercelestial; or as elsewhere, 'the calling that is from above;' and then ascribes an interest unto them therein. And he calls it heavenly, 1st. From the fountain and principal cause of it, that is, God, 'even the Father which is in heaven.' As our election, so our calling is in an especial manner ascribed unto him, 1 Cor. i. 9; 1 Thess. ii. 12; Rom. viii. 28—30; 1 Pet. i. 15, ii. 9, v. 10; Phil. iii. 14; Gal. v. 8. For no man can come unto the Son unless the Father draw him. Believers indeed are termed, κλητοι του Ιησου Χριστου, Rom. i. 6, 'the called of Jesus Christ;' that is, to him, not by him; or, by him, as executing the counsel, and dispensing the grace of the Father, 2 Cor. v. 20. 2. In respect of the means whereby this calling is wrought, which are spiritual and heavenly, namely, the word and Spirit both from above, John xvi. 7—10. For the word of the gospel is on many accounts heavenly, or from heaven; whence our apostle calls it 'the voice of him that speaketh from heaven,' Heb. xii. 25. And Christ, who is the author of it, is called 'the Lord from heaven,' 1 Cor. xv. 47. And that on this account, that he who is in heaven, came down from heaven to reveal the gospel, John iii. 13, vi. 38. And so also the Spirit is poured out from above, being given of Christ after he was ascended into heaven, Acts ii. 33. 3. Of the end also; which is to heaven and heavenly things, wherein lies the hope of our calling, Eph. i. 18, iv. 4. So that effectual vocation from God above, in his grace and mercy by Jesus Christ, is here intended.

Herein the apostle assigns a participation unto these Hebrews; they were *μετοχοι*, partakers of it, had an interest in it together with himself, were so called. And this he doth for several reasons.

First. That he might manifest wherein their great privileges consisted, and which, as such, they were to value. They were apt to boast of the privileges they enjoyed in their Judaism, John viii. 33; Rom. ii. 17, 18; which also were great, Rom. iii. 1, 2, ix. 4, 5. But they are all of no esteem, in comparison of what they had now obtained an interest in, by the grace of Jesus Christ, in their high, holy, and heavenly calling. This he manifests in the instance of himself, Phil. iii. 4—9. The call of Abraham, which was the foundation of all their privileges in their Judaism, was but an earthly call, on the earth and to the earth; but this is every way more excellent, being heavenly.

Secondly. To set forth the grace of God towards the Jews, and his own faith concerning them, that they were not all rejected of God, notwithstanding the hardness and obstinacy of the most of them; as Rom. xi. 2, 4, 5. And on the other hand, he insinuates that they were not to make an inclosure of this privilege, like those wherewith of old they were intrusted; the Gentiles being fellow-heirs with them therein, they were partakers with others in this heavenly calling; as Eph. iii. 6.

Thirdly. He declares his own communion with them in that great privilege, whereby they might understand his intimate concernment in their state and condition.

Fourthly. He reminds them of their duty, from their privilege. Being partakers of this calling unto Christ, it must needs be their duty diligently to consider him, which he exhorts them unto. But we may make some observations on the words unfolded already.

II. Dispensers of the gospel ought to use holy prudence in winning upon the minds and affections of those whom they are to instruct.—So dealeth Paul with these Hebrews. He reminds them here of their mutual relation, calls them brethren, ascribes unto them the privileges of holiness, and participation of a heavenly calling;—all to assure them of his love, to remove their prejudices against him, and to win upon their affections. And indeed, next unto our Lord Jesus Christ himself, he is the most signal pattern and example of holy wisdom, tenderness, compassion, and zeal to all ministers of the gospel. The image of his spirit expressed in his instructions given unto his two beloved sons, Timothy and Titus, sufficiently testifies hereunto. Yea, so great was his wisdom and condescension in dealing with his hearers, that seducers and false apostles took occasion from thence to say, that being crafty he caught them with guile, 2 Cor. xii. 16. The words are an objection of his adversaries, not a concession of his. He shows how in all things he was tender towards them, and put them neither to charge nor trouble. Hereunto he supposeth a reply by the false apostles; *εστω δε, εγω ου κατεβαρησα υμας, αλλ' υπαρχων πανουργος, δολω υμας ελαβον*: 'Be it so, that I myself did not burden you, nor put you to charge, yet being every way crafty, I took you by deceit.' This is their reply to his plea, and not any concession of his; for both the words, *πανουργος* and *δολος*, are such as will admit no interpretation in a good sense, so that the apostle should ascribe them unto himself. But

wherein did that craft and deceit consist, which they would impute unto him? it was in this; that although he himself put them to no charge, he burdened them not; yet when he was gone, and had secured them to himself, then he sent those to them, which should receive enough for him and themselves. Unto this calumny the apostle replies, ver. 17, 18, showing the falseness of it; 'Did I,' saith he, 'make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent to you?' This was that which was imputed to him, which he rejects as false and calumnious. And he confirms what he says by an especial instance: 'I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?' So that this reproach is every way false, and such as may be evicted so to be. And this is the true sense of this place. This was not his way. But this he always did, and on all occasions he testified to them his great affections, his readiness to spend, and to be spent for them, 2 Cor. xii. 14, 15, his gentleness towards them, cherishing them as a nurse cherisheth her own children, 1 Thess. ii. 7, or as a father his, ver. 11. He forewent that, which in earthly things was due to him by the appointment of Christ, that he might no way burden them, 2 Cor. xi. 9—11; Acts xx. 33—35; 'enduring all things for their sakes,' 2 Tim. ii. 10; amongst which were many, able to make the stoutest heart to tremble. His care, pains, travel, watchfulness, patience, love, compassion, zeal, who can declare or sufficiently admire! By these means he removed, or rendered ineffectual, the great prejudice of forsaking Judaism; kept up a regard in his hearers against the insinuations of seducers and false prophets, raised their attentions, prepared them every way for instruction, and won them over to Christ. Blessed Jesus! what cause have we to mourn when we consider the pride, covetousness, ambition, wrath, negligence, self-seeking, and contempt of thy flock, which are found amongst many of them who take upon themselves to be dispensers of thy word, whereby the souls of men are scandalized and filled with offences against thy holy ways every day!

III. Believers are all related unto one another, in the nearest and strictest bond of an equal relation. They are all brethren, 'holy brethren.' So the Holy Ghost calls them in truth; so the reproaching world calls them in scorn. They have 'one Father,' Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 'one Elder Brother,' Rom. viii. 29, 'who is not ashamed to call them brethren,' Heb. ii. 11, 'have one Spirit, and are called in one hope of calling,' Eph. iv. 4; which being a Spirit of adoption, Gal. iv. 6, interesteth them all in the same family, Eph. iii. 14, 15, whereby they become 'joint-heirs with Christ,' Rom. viii. 29. The duties of unity, Ps. cxxxiii. 1; love, Heb. xiii. 1; usefulness and compassion, which depend on this relation, are more known than practised, and ought to be continually pressed. Of old, indeed, the Pagans spake proverbially of the Christians, 'See how they love one another!' in a way of admiration. The contrary observation hath now prevailed, to the shame and stain of the profession of these latter days. What through dissensions and divisions amongst them who have any real interest in the privilege of sonship; what through an open visible defect as to any relation unto God as a Father, or unto the Lord Christ as an elder

brother, in the most of them that are called Christians, we have lost the thing intended, and the name is become a term of reproach. But when iniquity abounds, love will wax cold. In the meantime, it were well if those who are brethren indeed, could live as brethren, and love as brethren, and agree as brethren. The motives unto it are great and many. That mentioned in the business of Abraham and Lot seems to me of weight, Gen. xiii. 7, 8. 'There was a strife between the herdsmen of Abraham's cattle, and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanites and the Perizzites dwelt then in the land. And Abraham said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be men that are brethren.' Abraham and Lot were brethren naturally as near kinsfolks; for Abraham was Lot's uncle; and spiritually as the children of God. A difference happening between their herdsmen, Abraham, as a wise man, fears lest it should proceed to some distance and variance between themselves. Thereupon he takes into consideration the state of things, in the place where they were. The Canaanite and the Perizzite, saith he, are in the land. The land is full of profane men, enemies to us both, who would rejoice in our divisions, and take advantage to reproach the religion which we profess. This prevailed with them to continue their mutual love; and should do so with others. But our condition is sad, whilst that description which the Holy Ghost gives of men whilst uncalled, whilst unbelievers, is suited unto them who profess themselves to be Christians. See Titus iii. 3.

IV. All true and real professors of the gospel are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and made truly and really holy.—So Paul here terms those Hebrews, exercising towards them the judgment of charity, declaring what they ought to be, and what they professed themselves to be, what he believed them to be, and what, if they were living members of Christ, really they were. It is true, some that profess holiness, may not be really holy. But, first, if they do not so profess it, as not to be convinced by any gospel-means of the contrary, they are not to be esteemed professors at all, Acts viii. 20—23; Phil. iii. 18, 19; 2 Tim. iii. 5. Secondly. If that holiness which men profess in their lives, be not real in their hearts, they have no right to the privileges that attend profession, John iii. 5.

V. No man comes unto an useful saving knowledge of Jesus Christ in the gospel, but by virtue of an effectual heavenly calling. These Hebrews came to be holy brethren, children of God, united to Christ, by their participation in a heavenly calling. We are called out of darkness into his marvellous light, 1 Pet. ii. 9; and this not only with the outward call of the word, which many are made partakers of, who never attain the saving knowledge of Christ, Matt. xx. 16, but with that effectual call, which being granted in the pursuit of God's purpose of election, Rom. viii. 28, is accompanied with the energetical quickening power of the Holy Ghost, Eph. ii. 5, giving eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to obey the word, according to the promise of the covenant, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. And thus no man can come to Christ unless the Father draw him, John vi. 44.

VI. The effectual heavenly vocation of believers is their great privi-



lege, wherein they have cause to rejoice, and which always ought to remind them of their duty unto him that hath called them. For these two ends doth the apostle remind the Hebrews of their participation in the heavenly calling. First. That they might consider the privilege they enjoyed by the gospel, far above and beyond whatever they boasted of under the law; and, secondly, That he might stir them up to the performance of their duty in faith and obedience, according as God requires of them who are called. And this calling will appear a signal privilege if we consider, 1. The state from whence men are called, which is a state of death, Eph. ii. 1; and of darkness, Col. i. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 9; and of enmity against God, Col. i. 21; Eph. iv. 18; Rom. viii. 7; and of wrath, John iii. 36; Eph. ii. 2. It is a state of all that misery which the nature of man is capable of, or obnoxious to in this world, or to eternity. Or, 2. By whom they are called, even by God above, or in heaven, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. i. 9; Rom. viii. 28; 1 Pet. i. 15; Phil. iii. 14; Gal. v. 8. And 3. From whence, or what inducement it is that he calls them; which is from his own mere love and undeserved grace, Tit. iii. 3—5. And 4. The discrimination of persons in this call. All are not thus called, but only those that are in the eternal purpose of the love of God, designed to so great a mercy, Rom. viii. 28, 31, 32. And 5. The outward condition for the most part of them that are called; which is poor and contemptible in this world, 1 Cor. i. 26—28; James ii. 5. And 6. The means of this calling, which are the holy word, and Holy Spirit; John xvii. 17; 1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 14. And 7. What men are called unto, which is, to light, 1 Pet. ii. 9; Col. i. 13; and to life, John v. 24, 25; to holiness, Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 7; and unto liberty, Gal. v. 13; unto the peace of God, Col. iii. 15; 1 Cor. vii. 15; and unto his kingdom, 1 Thess. ii. 12; Col. i. 13; unto righteousness, Rom. viii. 30; and to mercy, Rom. ix. 23, 24; and to eternal glory, 1 Pet. v. 10. Of all these benefits, with the privilege of the worship of God attending them, are believers made partakers by their heavenly calling. And this minds them of their whole duty, 1. By the way of justice, representing it to them as meet, equal, and righteous, 1 Pet. i. 15. 2. Of gratitude, or thankfulness for so great mercy, 1 John iii. 1; 1 Pet. iii. 9. 3. Of encouragement, &c. Proceed we again to the exposition of the words.

‘Consider, *κατανοήσατε*, the apostle and high priest of our profession, Jesus Christ.’ The words may be read either, ‘consider Christ Jesus the apostle and high priest of our profession; and so the person of Christ is placed as the immediate object of the consideration required, and the other words are added only as a description of him by his offices; or consider ‘the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;’ and then the apostle and high priest of our profession, are the proper object of this consideration, and the name added doth but indigitate the individual person, who was clothed with those offices.

This is the immediate duty which the apostle here presseth them unto; namely the consideration of that apostle and high priest of our profession, whose greatness, glory, excellency, and preeminence in all

things he had declared. And herein the nature of the duty, and the object of it, are represented to us,

First. The nature of it in the word *consider*; some suppose that faith, trust, and confidence are intended, or included in this word. But *κατανοεω* is nowhere used in any such sense, nor will the present design of the apostle admit of any such interpretation in this place. For the duty he exhorts to, is in order to faith and constancy therein. And this is no other but a diligent intention of mind in their considerations, thoughts, meditations, and conceptions about Jesus Christ; that they may understand and perceive aright, who, and what he is, and what will follow upon his being such. And this rational consideration, is of singular use unto the end proposed. And, as he afterwards blames them for their remissness, and backwardness in learning the doctrine of the gospel, ch. v. 11—14; so here he seems to intimate, that they had not sufficiently weighed and pondered the nature and quality of the person of Christ and his offices, and were thereupon kept in their entanglements unto Judaism. This therefore he now exhorts them unto, and that by fixing their minds unto a diligent, rational, spiritual consideration of what he had delivered, and was yet further to deliver concerning him and them.

VII. The spiritual mysteries of the gospel, especially those which concern the person and offices of Christ, require deep, diligent, and attentive consideration. This is that which the Hebrews are here exhorted unto: *Κατανοησατε*, consider attentively or diligently. This is assigned as one means of the conversion of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14. *προσεχει*, she attended diligently to the things spoken by Paul, as an effect of the grace of God in opening\* her heart. Careless, wayside hearers of the word, get no profit by it, Matt. xiii. 19. The nature and worth of the doctrines of the gospel, with our own condition, call for this duty.

First. In their nature they are mysteries; that is, things deep hidden, and full of divine wisdom, 1 Cor. ii. 7, *σοφία Θεου εν μυστηριω*, 'the wisdom of God in a mystery.' Such as the angels desire to bow down' (not in a way of condescension, but of endeavour, *επιθυμουσι παρακυψαι*) 'and look into,' 1 Pet. i. 12. For in Christ, and through him in the gospel (*εις επιγνωσιν του μυστηριου του Χριστου, εν ω*, unto the acknowledgment of the mystery of Christ in whom or wherein) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 2, 3. And hence we are directed, 'to cry after knowledge, to apply our hearts to understanding, to seek her as silver, to search for her as hid treasures,' Prov. ii. 3, 4, and not to consider these things, as easily exposed to every wandering eye and lazy passenger. Such persons find not mines of silver, or the hid treasures of former generations. Of this search the prophets and holy men of old are proposed for our example, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. Unto this purpose they are said *ερευναν*, to investigate or diligently search into the Scriptures, as we are commanded to do if we intend to attain eternal life, John v. 39. For the most part, men content themselves with an overly consideration of these things; it is the *παρεργον* of their lives; what they do on the by, or when they have nothing else to do, whereby they come to know

no more of them than they must, as it were, whether they will or no, which upon the matter is nothing at all. Carnal sloth is not the way to an acquaintance with spiritual things or mysteries.

Secondly. The worth and importance of these things bespeaks the same duty. Things may be dark and mysterious, and yet not weighty and worthy, so that they will not defray the charge of a diligent search after them. Solomon's merchants would not have gone to Ophir, had there not been gold there, as well as apes and peacocks. But all things are here secure. There are unsearchable treasures in these mysteries, Eph. iii. 8, *πλουτος ανεξιχνιαστος*; riches not in this world to be searched out to perfection. No tongue can fully express them, no mind perfectly conceive them. Their root and spring lies in the divine nature, which is infinite, and therefore inexpressible and inexhaustible. There is in it *μαργαριτη πολυτιμος*, Matt. xiii. 46, an exceeding precious pearl, a pearl of great and invaluable price. A stone which, though by some rejected, yet esteemed of God elect and precious; and so also by them that believe, 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. 'The merchandise whereof is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold: It is more precious than rubies,' Prov. iii. 14, 15. Whatever is of worth and value in the glory of God, and the everlasting good of the souls of sinners, is wrapped up in these mysteries. Now every thing is (at least comparatively) despised, that is not esteemed according to its proper worth. So undoubtedly are these things by the most of them to whom they are preached.

Thirdly. Our own condition calls for diligence in the discharge of this duty. We are for the most part, like these Hebrews *νωθροι ταις ακοαις*, ch. v. 11, slothful or dull in hearing: we have a natural unreadiness unto that hearing whereby faith cometh, which is the consideration here called for: and therefore cannot sufficiently stir up our spirits and minds unto our duty herein. The manner of the most in attending to the mysteries of the gospel, should cause our sorrow here, as it will theirs (if not prevented) unto eternity.

The object of this consideration, is Jesus Christ, who is the apostle and high priest of our profession. Together with the especial indignation of the person intended, by his name, Jesus Christ, we have the description of him, as he is to be considered, by his offices, an apostle, and a high priest, with their limitations, of 'our profession.'

First. He is said, and he is here only said to be *τον αποστολον*, an apostle, or the apostle. An apostle is one sent; a legate, ambassador, or public messenger. And this is one of the characteristical notes of the Messiah. He is one sent of God upon his great errand unto the children of men. His apostle. Speaking of himself by his Spirit, Isa. xlviii. 16, he saith, *אני יהוה שלחני ורוחי* 'The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me.' And again, ch. lxi. 1. *יהוה שלחני*, The Lord hath sent me.' Namely, according to the promise that God would send him unto the church to be a Saviour, Isa. xix. 20. And this he tells the church, that they may gather and know from his love and care, namely, that the Lord God 'had sent him,' Zech. ii. 8, 9, that he was his Legate, his Apostle. And because God had promised from the foundation of the world, thus to send him, this became a periphrasis

or principal notation of him, 'He whom God would send,' that is, his great Legate. Hereunto Moses seems to have had respect in these words, *Exod. iv. 13.* שלח נא ביד השלח, 'Send now I pray thee by the hand of him whom thou wilt send;' namely, to be the deliverer and saviour of thy people. Hence in the old church, he became to be emphatically called, *ὁ ἐρχομενος*, 'he that was to come,' that was to be sent. So when John sent his disciples to Jesus to inquire whether he was the Christ, he doth it in these words, *συ εἶ ὁ ἐρχομενος*, 'art thou he that was to come?' that is to be sent of God, *Matt. xi. 3*; *John xi. 27*. And thence the ancient Latin translation renders שלח, 'Shilo,' *Gen. xlix. 10*, qui mittendus est, 'he that is to be sent;' it may be, deriving the word by a mistake from שלח, 'to send.' But it well expresseth the common notion of him in the church, after the giving of the first promise, 'He that was to be sent.' And in the gospel he doth not himself more frequently make mention of any thing than of his being sent of God, or of being his apostle. 'He whom the Father sent,' is his description of himself, *John iii. 34*, and Him he calls *τον ἀποστέλαντα*, 'him that sent him,' or made him his apostle, *Matt. x. 40*. And this is most frequently repeated in the gospel by John, that we may know of what importance the consideration of it is: see *ch. iii. 17, 34*, *iv. 34*, *v. 23, 24, 30, 36—38*, *vi. 29, 38—40, 44, 57*, *vii. 16, 28, 29, viii. 16, 18, 29, 42*, *ix. 4*, *x. 36*, *xi. 42*, *xii. 44, 45, 49*, *xiv. 24, xv. 21*, *xvi. 5*, *xvii. 3*, *xviii. 21, 23, 25*, *xx. 21*. Two things are then included in this expression or title. First. The authority he had for his work: he came not of himself, but 'was sent of God,' even the Father, and therefore spake in his name, and fed the church 'in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God,' *Micah v. 4*. And as he became the Apostle of the Father by his being sent of him, so by his sending of others in his name, he made them his apostles, *John xx. 21*. As the love therefore, so the authority of the Father is much to be considered in this matter. Secondly. His work itself, which is here included, and elsewhere largely declared. It was to reveal and declare the will of the father to the children of men, to declare the Father himself, *John i. 18*, and his name, *xvii. 3, 6, 26*, that is the mystery of his grace, covenant, and whole will concerning our obedience and salvation, *Heb. i. 1, 2*. For this end was he the Apostle and Ambassador of the Father, sent into the world by him, *Mal. iii. 1*. In brief, the prophetic office of Christ, with respect to his immediate authoritative mission by the Father, is intended in this title. And it is a title of honour as well as of office that is here given him. Hence the impious Mahometans, when they would persuade or compel any one to their sect, they require no more of him, but that he acknowledge Mahomet to be *Resul Ellahi*, 'the apostle of God.' In this sense then is the Lord Christ called 'the Apostle of our profession,' in that he was sent of God to declare his mind and will in his name, and with his authority, as ambassadors are wont to do in reference to them that send them.

But whereas our Lord Jesus Christ was in an especial manner, as to the time of his conversation in the flesh, and his personal revealing the will of God, sent to the Jews, and therefore says, *Matt. xv. 24*,



‘that he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,’ that is, as to his personal ministry on the earth. And our apostle affirms, that he was a ‘Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers,’ Rom. xv. 8, and being only in this place to the Hebrews called an Apostle, I leave it to consideration whether there may not be some especial respect to his peculiar mission, in his person and ministry to them intended in this name and title, here only given him.

Hereunto is added, *τον Αρχιερεα*, ‘the high priest.’ Both in one, as the kingdom and priesthood are also promised, Zech. vi. 13. Both the Hebrews and we are now to look for all in him. These offices of old were in several persons, Moses was the apostle or ambassador of God, to declare his will and law to the people. And Aaron was the high priest, to administer the holy things in the worship of God. This was the poverty of types, that no one could so much as represent the work between God and the church. I will not deny but that Moses was a priest in an extraordinary manner, before the institution of the Aaronical priesthood. But his officiating in that office, being but a temporary thing, which belonged not to the condition of the Judaical church, it was not considered by our apostle in his comparing of him with Christ. To manifest therefore to the Hebrews how the Lord Christ hath the preeminence in all things, he instructs them that both the offices, that of an apostle which of old was executed by Moses, and that of the high priesthood committed to Aaron, were vested in him alone; intending afterwards to evince how far he excelled them both, and how excellent were his offices in comparison of theirs, though they came under the same name.

Thirdly. The limitation adjoined is, *της ὁμολογιας ἡμων*, ‘of our profession,’ ‘The Apostle and High Priest of our profession.’ The words may be taken objectively and passively: the Apostle and High Priest whom we profess, that is, believe, declare, and own so to be. Or they may actively denote the Author of our profession. The Apostle and High Priest who hath revealed and declared the faith which we profess, the religion which we own, and therein exerciseth in his own person the office of the priesthood. In this sense he is called ‘the Author and Finisher of our faith,” chap. xii. 2. Our faith objectively and our profession are the same. Our profession is the faith and worship of God which we profess. This is our *ὁμολογια*, even the gospel, with the worship and obedience required therein. And the Lord Christ was and is the Apostle of this profession, as he revealed the will of God to us in the gospel; as he brought life and immortality to light thereby, teaching and instructing us in the whole will of God, as Moses did the Jews of old. He is also the High Priest of our profession, inasmuch as he himself offered the one and the only sacrifice, which in our religion we own and profess; and continues alone to perform the whole office of a priest therein, as Aaron and his successors did in that of the Jews. It belonged not to the office of the high priest to institute and appoint any thing in the worship of God, but only to execute his own duty, in offering sacrifices, and interceding for the people. So the Lord Christ, who, as the A-

postle of our profession, instituted the whole worship of God to be observed therein, as our High Priest doth only offer the sacrifice of the church and intercede for the people.

The word 'our,' is added by way of discrimination, and is regulated by the compellation and description foregoing, 'Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling;' he is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. Whatever by others he be esteemed, he is so to us; and our inestimable privilege and honour it is, that he is so.

This is the present exhortation of the apostle. That which he finally aims at, is to prevail with these Hebrews to hold fast the beginning of their confidence to the end. To this purpose he exhorts, warns, and chargeth them by all bonds of mutual love and endearedness, by the greatness of the privilege which they are made partakers of, and the inexpressibleness of their concernment therein, that they would fix themselves to a diligent consideration of him, in whom all those offices now in our profession, which of old were shared amongst many, in a low carnal administration of them, are gloriously vested; and how useful this would be to them, and wherein this consideration doth consist, shall afterwards be made to appear. For the present we shall make some observations on the passages of the text that have been opened.

VIII. The business of God with sinners, could be no way transacted, but by the negotiation and embassy of the Son.—HE must become 'our Apostle,' that is, be sent to us. He did indeed at sundry times send servants and messengers into the world about his affairs with us; but whereas they could never accomplish it, 'last of all he sent his Son,' Matt. xxi. 37; Heb. i. 1. There was a threefold greatness in this matter, which none was fit to manage but the Son of God.

I. A greatness of grace, love, and condescension.—That the great and holy God should send to treat with sinners for the ends of his message, for peace and reconciliation, it is a thing that all the creation must admire, and that to eternity. He is every way in himself, holy, good, righteous, and blessed for evermore. He stood in no need of sinners, of their service, of their obedience, of their being. But he was justly provoked by them, by their apostasy and rebellion against him, and that to an indignation beyond what can be expressed. His justice and law required their punishment and destruction, which, as he could have inflicted to his own eternal glory, so they did not in any thing, nor could by any means, seek to divert him from it. Yet in this condition God will send a message to these poor perishing rebels; an embassy to treat with them about peace and reconciliation. But this now is so great a thing, includes such infinite grace, love, and condescension in it, that sinners know not how to believe it. And indeed who is fit to testify it to them? Objections that arise against it are able to shake the credit and reputation of any angel in heaven. Wherefore God commits this message to his Son, his only Son; makes him his apostle, sends him with these tidings, that they may be believed and accepted, 1 John v. 20. 'The Son of God came, and gave this understanding' It is true, that God sent others with some parts

of this message before, 'for he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets from the beginning of the world,' Luke i. 70. But yet, as the first promise was given out by the Son of God himself, as I have elsewhere declared; so all the messages of the prophets in or about this matter, depended on the confirmation of them, that he was afterwards to give in his own person. So saith our apostle, Rom. xv. 8, 'Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.' The truth of God in this matter delivered by the prophets, was further to be attested by Jesus Christ, to whose testimony they referred themselves. And with respect hereunto, he tells the Pharisees, that if he had not come and spoken to them they had had no sin. If the sealed book of prophecies, concerning the judgment of God in the Revelation, was of so great concernment, that none in heaven, nor in the earth, nor under the earth, that is, that no creature 'was able to open it, or look therein,' Rev. v. 3, until the Lamb himself undertook it, ver. 6—8; how much less was any creature meet or worthy to open the eternal secret counsels of the bosom of the Father, concerning the whole work of his love and grace, but the Son only. The grace of this message was too great for sinners to receive, without the immediate attestation of the Son of God.

II. There is a greatness in the work itself, that is incumbent on the apostle of God, which requireth, that the Son of God should be engaged therein. For,

I. As the ambassador or apostle of the Father, he was perfectly to represent the person of the Father unto us. This an ambassador is to do, he bears and represents the person of him by whom he is sent. And no king can more dishonour himself, than by sending a person in that employment, who, by reason of any defect shall be unmeet so to do. God had, as was said, sent other messengers unto the children of men, but they were all but envoys of heaven, *ante-ambulones*, some that ran before as particular messengers, to give notice of the coming of this great apostle or ambassador of God. But themselves were not to represent his person, nor could so do. See Mal. iii. 1. Indeed he once, in a particular business, made Moses his especial legate, to represent him to Pharaoh, and therefore he says to him, נחתך אלהים לפרעה, Exod. vii. 1. That is, instead of God, one that may represent me in my terror and severity unto him. But this was in one particular case and business. But who could fully represent the person of the Father unto sinners in this great matter? None certainly but he, who is in himself, 'the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,' Heb. i. 3, and so represents unto us, the holiness, the goodness, the grace, the love of the Father by whom he was sent. Hence he tells his disciples, that 'he who hath seen him, hath seen the Father,' John xiv. 9. And that because he is so in the Father, and the Father in him, that he represents him fully unto us, ver. 10. He is 'the image of the invisible God,' Col. i. 16. That is, the Father, who in his own person dwells in light, whereunto no creature can approach, hath exhibited and expressed the glorious properties of his nature unto us in the person of his Son, as our apostle expresseth it,

2 Cor. iv. 4. None then was fit to be this great apostle but he, for he only could fully represent the Father unto us. Any creature else undertaking this work, would or might have led us into false notions and apprehensions of God. And the great wisdom of faith consists in teaching us to learn the Father, his nature, and will, his holiness, and grace in the person of the Son incarnate, as his apostle and ambassador unto us. For beholding his glory, the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth, we behold the glory of his Father also: so he and the Father are one.

2. The greatness of the work requires, that he who undertakes it be intimately acquainted with all the secret counsels of God, that lay hid in his infinite wisdom and will from all eternity. None else could undertake to be God's apostle in this matter. But who must this be? It is true, that God was pleased to reveal sundry particular things, effects of his counsels, unto his servants the prophets; but yet it is concerning them that the Holy Ghost speaks, John i. 18, 'No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him.' The best of them had but a partial acquaintance with God. Moses saw but a glimpse of his back parts in his passage before him; that is, had but a dark and obscure revelation of his mind and will, sufficient for his work and employment. This will not suffice him who is to manage the whole treaty between God and sinners. Who then shall do it? 'The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father.' In his bosom; that is, not only in his especial love, but who is partaker of his most intimate and secret counsels. This the design of the place requires to be the meaning of it. For so it follows, 'He hath declared him;' he hath revealed him, he hath made him known, in his nature, his name, his will, his grace; he hath exhibited him to be seen by faith, for he only is able so to do, as being in his bosom, that is, acquainted with his nature, and partaker of his most intimate counsels. Without this, none could in this matter be God's apostle. For the work is such, as wherein God will reveal and make known not this or that portion of his will, but himself, and all the eternal counsels of his mind; about all that he will have to do with sinners in this world, and the whole glory which he aims at therein to eternity. This knowledge of God and his counsels, no creature was capable of. The Son alone thus knows the Father, and his mind. If it were otherwise, if our apostle did not know the whole counsel of God in this matter, all that is in his heart and mind, it is impossible but that in this great concern, sinners would have been left under endless fears and doubts, lest some things might yet remain, and be reserved in the unsearchable abyss of the divine understanding and will, that might frustrate all their hopes and expectations. Their sin, and guilt, and worthlessness, would still suggest such thoughts and fears unto them. But in this embassy of the Son, there is full and plenary satisfaction tendered unto us, that the whole counsel of God was originally known unto him. So that there is no ground of the least suspicion that there is any reserve in the counsels of God concerning us, that he hath not made known.



3. To this end also it was necessary, that he should have these counsels of God always abiding with him, that at all times, and on all occasions, he might be able to declare the mind and will of God. It was not enough that originally, as he was God, he knew all things of God, but also as he was sent; as he was the apostle of God, the counsel of God was constantly to abide with him. This is another thing. For the wisdom and knowledge of Christ, as Mediator, to be acted in the human nature, was distinct from his knowledge, as he was in himself God over all, blessed for ever. And without this, none could have been a meet apostle from God unto sinners. For how else should he reveal the will of God unto them according unto all emergencies and occasions? When the council of Trent was sitting, and any hard matter (indeed almost any thing) came to be determined amongst them, the leaders of them not knowing what to do, always sent to Rome to the pope and his cardinals for their determination. When this came to them, they decreed it under the usual form, 'It pleaseth the Holy Ghost, and Us.' Hence there grew a common by-word amongst the people, that the Holy Ghost came once a-week from Rome to Trent in a portmanteau. But when any men are not sufficiently furnished in themselves for the discharge of their duty, according to the variety of occasions and emergencies that they may meet withal, they will put themselves, as will also those with whom they have to do, unto great difficulties and distresses. It was necessary, therefore, that God's apostle unto sinners should, in the whole discharge of his office, be furnished with a full comprehension of the whole mind of God, as to the affair committed unto him. Now this never any was, nor ever can be capable of, but only Jesus Christ the Son of God. It wholly exceeds the capacity of any merely created person, to comprehend at once, and have resident with him, the whole of the will and mind of God, in the business of his transaction with sinners. For after the utmost of their attainments, and the communications of God unto them, they still know but in part. It is true, they may be able to know so much of the mind of God, as to declare unto others the whole of their duty; whence Paul tells the elders of Ephesus, that 'he had not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God,' Acts xx. 27. Yet, as to a full habitual comprehension of the whole mind of God in this matter, to reside with them, answering all occasions and emergencies, and that originally and immediately, that no mere creature was capable of. But, as this was needful to the great apostle, so it was found in Jesus Christ the Son of God. 'The Spirit of the Lord did rest upon him,' (not came upon him at times, but did *rest* upon him, remained on him, John i. 32, 33,) 'the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and made him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord,' Isa. xi. 2, 3. It may be, you will say, it did so in some degrees of it only, or in a singular measure above others. Nay, God gave not the Spirit unto him by measure, John iii. 34, when he was sent to speak the words of God. Not in such a way as that he should only have a greater measure of the Spirit than others; but in a way wholly different from what they

received. So that when it is said, 'He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows,' Heb. i. 9, it is not intended only that he received the Spirit in a degree above them, but the same Spirit in another kind; 'for it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell,' Col. i. 19. All fulness of wisdom and counsel, in a complete comprehension of the whole will and mind of God. And accordingly 'in him were hid (laid up safely) all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' Col. ii. 3. This also was requisite unto this great apostle, and it was possible to be found only in the Son of God.

4. The nature of the work required, that the ambassador of God to sinners should be able to make his message to be believed, and received by them. Without this, the whole work and undertaking might be frustrated. Nor is it sufficient to say, that the message itself is so great, so excellent, so advantageous unto sinners, that there is no doubt but that upon the first proposal of it, they will receive it and embrace it; for we find the contrary by multiplied experience. And not only so, but it is certain also, that no sinner is able of himself, and in his own strength, to receive it, or believe it; 'for faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.' Now, if this ambassador, this apostle from God, have not power to enable men to receive his message, the whole design of God must needs be frustrated therein. And who shall effect or accomplish this? Is this the work of a man to quicken the dead, to open the blind eyes, to take away a stony heart, to create a new spiritual light in the mind, and life in the will? all which are necessary, that God's message unto sinners may be savingly received. This also could be done only by the Son of God; 'for no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him,' Matt. xi. 27. And this he doth by the effectual working of his Spirit, the dispensation whereof is committed wholly unto him, as hath been elsewhere declared. By him doth he write the law of his message, in the fleshly tables of the hearts of them to whom he is sent, 2 Cor. iii. 5, as Moses wrote his message, or had it written in tables of stone. So that the nature of this work required, that it should be committed unto the Son of God. And so did,

III. The end of it. This was no less than to proclaim and establish peace between God and man. It is not a place to show how old, fixed, lasting, and universal, this enmity was; nor yet how great, excellent, and precious, in the means, causes, and nature of it, that peace was, which God sent about. These things are known and confessed. These things were such as none were fit to intermeddle withal, but the Son of God only. He alone who made this peace, was meet to declare it. He is our peace, and he came and preached peace, Eph. ii. 14, 17. And on the account of the discharge of this work, is he called *ὁ λόγος*, 'the Word of God,' John i. 1, as he by whom God was declared; and *מלאך פניו*, 'the angel of his (God's) presence,' Isa. lxiii. 9.; and *מלאך מליץ*, Job xxxiii. 23. 'the angel, the interpreter, the great interpreter of the mind of God;' and *יועץ*, Isa. ix. 6, 'the counsellor;' and *מלאך הברית*, Mal. iii. 1, 'the angel or messenger of the covenant;' as here, 'the apostle of our profession.'

And hence we may see the great obligation that is upon us to hearken unto this message, not only upon the account of the message itself, but also on the account of him that brings it. The message itself is worthy of all acceptation. And everlasting woe will be unto them by whom it is rejected. He that refuseth peace with God, shall have war and wrath from him to eternity, and that deservedly. But God expects that great weight should be laid on the consideration of the person that brings it. Surely, saith he, they will reverence my Son. It may be, men may think in their hearts that if they had heard Christ himself delivering this message, if they had heard him preaching this peace, they would undoubtedly have received and embraced it. So indeed thought the Jews of old, that if they had lived in the days of the former prophets, they would not have dealt with them as their forefathers did, but would have believed their word, and obeyed their commands; as the rich man thought that his brethren would repent if one might rise from the dead, and preach unto them. All men have pretences for their present unbelief; and suppose, that if it were not for them, they should do otherwise. But they are all vain and foolish, as our Lord Jesus manifested, in the former instances of the Jews, and of the rich man in hell. Here there is no pretence of this nature that can take place; for this great apostle and ambassador of God continueth yet to speak unto us, and to press his message upon us. So saith our apostle, ch. xii. 25. 'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for how should we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven?' He did not only speak of old, but he continueth to speak, he speaketh still. He still speaketh in the word of the gospel, and in the administration of it, according to his mind and will. When from thence we are pressed to believe, and to accept the terms of peace that God hath prepared for us, and proposeth unto us, if we refuse them, we reject this great apostle, which God hath sent unto us, to treat with us in his name. And what will be the end of such men? what will be the end of us all, if the guilt hereof should be found upon us? Another observation also the words will afford us, according to the foregoing exposition, which shall only be briefly mentioned. Namely,

IX. Especial privileges will not advantage men without especial grace.—The Lord Christ was, in an especial manner, an apostle unto the Jews. To them was he sent immediately, and unto them was his ministry in the flesh confined. Greater privileges could none be made partakers of. And what was the issue? 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not,' John i. 11. Incomparably the greatest part of them rejected him, and the tidings of peace that he came to bring. It is worth your consideration, who are entrusted with all gospel privileges. They will not save you, they may ruin you. Look after grace to make them effectual, lest they prove the savour of death unto death to any of you. Once more, from the ascribing of both these offices to our Lord Jesus Christ.

X. The Lord Christ is all in all, in and unto his church, the king, priest, and apostle, or prophet of it, all in one.—So our apostle tells us, that Christ is, *τα πάντα και εν πασι*, unto believers, 'All things,

and in all things,' Col. iii. 11, supplying all wants, answering all privileges, the spring of all grace, effecting all mercy; so that in him alone they are complete, as chap. ii. 10, of the same epistle. Here he proposeth it as a privilege and advantage, that we have in him, above what was enjoyed under the Old Testament. And this consisteth in two things: 1. That what they had in the type only, that we have in reality and substance. 2. Such was the poverty of the types, that no one of them could so much as shadow out, or represent all that advantage which we really enjoy; and therefore they were multiplied, and the work distributed amongst them which they were to represent. This made them a yoke, and that grievous and burdensome. The way of teaching in them, and by them, was hard and obscure, as well as their observance was difficult. It was a hard thing for them to learn the love, grace, and mind of God by them. God revealed himself in them, *πολυμερως*, by many parts and pieces, according as they were capable to receive impression from, and make representation of, divine wisdom, goodness, and grace. Whence our apostle says, that the law had but *σκιαν*, 'a shadow,' and not *αυτην την εικονα πραγματων*, ch. x. 1, 'the image itself of things.' It had some scattered shades, which the great Limner had laid the foundation of symmetry in, but so as discernible only unto his own infinite wisdom. A perfect image, wherein all the parts should exactly answer unto one another, and so plainly represent the thing intended, that it had not. Now, it was a work beyond their wisdom, out of these scattered pieces and parts of revelation, especially being implanted on carnal things, to gather up the whole of the grace and good-will of God. But in Christ Jesus, God hath gathered all into one head, Eph. i. 10, wherein both his person and grace are fully and at once represented. Thus they had no one that was king, priest, and prophet, to the church, nor could any be so, after the giving of the law; the kingdom being promised unto the tribe of Judah, and the priesthood confined to the house of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi. Neither could any typical person alone of himself, answer exactly and completely that wherein he was a type. For besides their own imperfections and failings, even in the discharge of their typical office, which rendered them a weak and imperfect representation of him who was absolutely perfect in all things, they could not in and by themselves at all discharge their office. Kings who were his types, were to act, and did act, according to the counsel of others, and those sometimes none of the best; as David was much guided by the counsel of Ahithophel, which was to him as if he inquired at the oracle of God, 2 Sam. xvi. 23. But Christ our king hath all stores of wisdom and counsel in himself, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man; John ii. 25. So it was prophesied of him, that upon one stone, the foundation-stone of the house of God, there should be seven eyes, Zech. iii. 9. Counsellors are *οφθαλμοι Βασιλεων*, 'the eyes of kings.' And in the monarchy of Persia, whence this prophet was newly come, there were always seven of them, Ezra vii. 14, 'Thou art sent of the King, and his seven counsellors;' and their names at that time are reckoned up, Esth. i. 14. But, saith he, all these eyes shall be on



the foundation-stone itself, so that he shall no way need the advice or counsel of others. Or, to the same purpose it may denote a perfection of wisdom and knowledge, which by that number is frequently signified. And for the high priest, he could do nothing alone. Unless he had an altar and a sacrifice, fire from above, and a tabernacle or temple, his office was of no use. But our Lord Jesus is all this, both priest and altar, Heb. xiii. 10, and sacrifice, Eph. v. 2, and tabernacle and temple, John ii. 19, 21, Col. ii. 9, and the fire, Heb. ix. 14, all in his own person, as shall (God willing) be afterwards declared. The like may be said of the prophets. Who sees not then herein the great privilege of the New Testament, seeing we have these things all really, which they had only in type; and all in one, which among them were distributed amongst so many, and those all weak and imperfect.

Now seeing that he is thus all unto us, two things do naturally and necessarily follow:—

First. That we should seek for all in him. To what end were all typical offices with their attendancies instituted in the church of old? was it not that in them, one thing in one, another in another, they might find and obtain, whatever was needful or useful for or unto the worship of God, or for their own edification and salvation? And shall we not seek for all in him, who was represented, and that but darkly and infirmly, by them all? Whatever any one stood in need of in the commonwealth of Israel, he might have it fully answered either by king, priest, or prophet. And shall we not be perfectly justified by him, who is really and substantially all in one? Yea, all our defects, weaknesses, and troubles, arise from hence, that we make not our applications unto him for that assistance which he is able, ready, and willing, to give unto us.

Secondly. As we must go to him for all, so we must receive and take him for all, that he may be all and in all. We are not only to address ourselves to him as a priest, to be interested in his sacrifice and the atonement made thereby, but as to our king also, to rule us by his Spirit, and to instruct us as the apostle of our profession. To take Christ, as some do, for a prophet, the apostle of God, but not as a high-priest, or a priest properly so called, is to reject the true Christ, and to frame an idol to themselves in their own imaginations. It is the same to divide him with respect unto any of his other offices, or parts of his work whatever.

The exposition of the second verse yet remaineth, which will make way for that observation, which is comprehensive of the principal design of the apostle in this place. Having laid down the sum of his exhortation, by an addition of the fidelity of Christ, the apostle maketh a transition to the comparing of him with Moses, as to his office apostolic or legatine, as afterwards he proceeds to compare him with Aaron in his office sacerdotal.

VER. 2.—*Being faithful to him who appointed him, even as Moses in his whole house.*

Entering upon a comparison of the Lord Christ with Moses, as he

was the apostle of God, or one sent by him to reveal his will, he recommends him to the faith of the Hebrews under the principal qualification of a person in that office. He was faithful. This being a term of relation, he further describes it by its respect unto God, and that act of God whereunto it answered; 'to him that appointed him.' And then in general expresseth the comparison intended. 1. By naming the person with whom he compared him, 'even as Moses.' And 2, the subject of his employment, 'the whole house of God.'

First. The chief qualification of an apostle or ambassador is, that he be faithful *πιστον οντα*. God's apostle is the chief steward, or dispenser of his mysteries. And it is principally required in stewards, 'that a man be found faithful,' 1 Cor. iv. 2. *Αποστολος εν οικω*, 'an apostle in the house,' is *οικονομος*, the steward and dispenser of all things in and unto the house. This therefore the apostle expresseth in the first place, and that absolutely and comparatively. He was faithful, and faithful as was Moses. His faithfulness as a high priest and wherein that faithfulness did consist, we have declared, chap. ii. 17, 18.

Here, though that expression, *πιστον οντα*, 'being faithful,' is annexed unto the mention of two offices, apostolical and sacerdotal; yet, as appears from the ensuing discourse, it relates only to the former.

Now the fidelity of a legate, an ambassador, or an apostle, consists principally in the full revelation and declaration of the whole mind and will of him by whom he is sent, as to the end for which he is sent, and nothing in his name, but what is so his mind and will. Thus, our apostle, to declare his faithfulness in his office apostolical affirms that he had 'kept nothing back' from them to whom he was sent, 'that was profitable unto them,' Acts xx. 20, nor shunned to declare unto them 'the whole counsel of God,' ver. 27.

There are two things in faithfulness. First, trust; and secondly, the discharge thereof. Faithfulness respects trust. Our Lord therefore must have a trust committed unto him, wherein he was faithful, which also he had. For it pleased the Father to lay up in him all the 'treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' Col. ii. 3, to commit unto him the whole mystery of his will and grace, and so send him to declare himself, John i. 18, and his name, John xvii. 6, to make known the last full declaration of his mind and will, as to his worship, with the obedience and salvation of the church, Heb. i. 1, and therewithal to 'seal up vision and prophecy,' Dan. ix. 24, that no new, or further revelation of the will of God should ever be made or added unto what was made by him, Rev. xxii. 18, 19. Being entrusted with this work, his authority for it is proclaimed, the Father giving command from heaven unto all, to hear him, Mat. xvii. 5, who was thus sent by him. And therein he received from God the Father honour and glory, 2 Pet. i. 17, being declared to be that great prophet, whom all were obliged to hear on pain of utter extermination, Deut. xviii. 18, 19; Acts iii. 23, 24.

This was the trust of the Lord Christ in this matter, and in the discharge hereof did his fidelity consist. And this he manifested in three things. First, in that, in this great work, he sought not his own

glory, but the glory of him that sent him, John viii. 50, declaring that he came not in his own, but in his Father's name, John v. 43. He turned not the message unto his own advantage, but unto the advantage or honour of him that sent him. Secondly. In that he declared his word or message not to be his own, that is, originally, or principally, but his Father's. 'The word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me,' John xiv. 24.—Thirdly, in that he declared the whole will or word of God, that was committed unto him for the end mentioned; 'I have given them the words which thou gavest me,' John xvii. 8, 'witnessing therein a good confession,' 1 Tim. vi. 13, sealing the truth with his blood, which he came into the world to bear witness unto, John xviii. 37. And greater faithfulness could not be expressed.

Secondly. This faithfulness he discharged towards him that appointed him. The apostle mentioning the offices of Christ distinctly, addeth unto every one of them his designation, or appointment to them. Unto his kingly office, chap. i. 1, 2. 'He was appointed heir, or Lord of all;' unto his sacerdotal, chap. v. 5, 'He took not on himself the office of a priest,' without the call of God. And here, as to his apostolical or prophetic office, he was appointed of God. And this he doth for two ends; first, to evidence that the Lord Christ took not any thing upon him in the house of God, without call or authority. Secondly, that we might see the love and care of God, even the Father, in the mediation of the Lord Christ, as appointing him to his whole office and work.

'To him that appointed him,' *Τῷ ποιησαντι αὐτον*. This appointment of Christ, or his being made the apostle of God, consists in a five-fold act of God, in reference thereunto.

First. In his eternal designation of him to his work and office. For as he was in general *προεγνωσμενος προ καταβολης κοσμου*, 1 Pet. i. 20, 'fore-ordained before the foundation of the world,' so was he in particular designed of God to be his apostle for the instruction of the church, Isa. xlviii. 16; Zech. vi. 13; Prov. viii. 22, 30—32. Hence that eternal life which he was to manifest, 1 John i. 2, and to bring to light by the gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10, is said to be promised before the world was, Tit. i. 2, even because of his purpose of sending the Son to declare it; on which account also, it is said to be with the Father, before it was manifested by him, 1 John i. 2. And herein lies the foundation of the appointment of Christ unto his office.

Secondly. In the solemn promise made from the beginning to send him to this purpose. This gave him a virtual law-constitution, whereby he became as its prophet, the object of the church's faith and expectation. And this was included in the first promise, Gen. iii. 15. Darkness, blindness, and ignorance, being come upon us by sin, he that was to deliver us from all the effects and consequences of it, must of necessity be our instructor in the light and knowledge of God. But the first open, plain expression of it by the way of promise, is Dent. xviii. 18, which is confirmed by following promises innumerable. See Isa. xi. 2—5, and chap. xl. 11, and xlii. 1—6, and xlix. 1—9, and lii. 15; Zech. vi. 12, 13; Mal. iii. 1—4.

Thirdly. In sending him actually into the world, to be the light of men, John i. 4. And to manifest that eternal life which was with the Father, 1 John i. 2. To which end he furnished him with his Spirit, and all the gifts thereof in all fulness, for the discharge of his office, Isa. xi. 2, 3, and chap. lxi. 1, 2. For to this end he received not the Spirit by measure, John iii. 34, but was 'anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows,' Heb. i. 9, of which unction we have treated at large before.

Fourthly. In the declaration he made of him to be his apostle and ambassador by a visible sign. This was done in the descending of the Holy Ghost upon him in the likeness of a dove, John i. 32, 33.

And herewithal, did God commit his charge and trust unto him, which he was to keep and preserve, Zech. vi. 12, 13. Being thus sent by the Lord of hosts, Zech. ii. 8, and therein clothed with his name, authority, and majesty, Mich. v. 4, he acted in all things as his legate and apostle, by his commission and authority, in his name, and unto his glory.

Lastly. Unto these acts of his appointment, God added his command, and published it from heaven unto all, to hear and obey him as the great teacher sent from God, as his apostle, speaking in his name, Matt. xvii. 5. By these means was the Lord Christ appointed to be the apostle of God, and he 'faithful unto him that appointed him,' as hath been declared.

'As was Moses in his whole house.' Ὡς καὶ Μωσῆς. The last thing in these words, is the further assertion of the fidelity of Christ, by a comparison with Moses, who was faithful in his whole house. We observed before, that it is not evident unto whom these words are immediately applied. But whoever they have respect unto, they belong also to the other, for the one and the other was faithful in the whole house of God. But the apostle seems directly to express the words used by God himself concerning Moses, Num. xii. 7. בכל ביתי נאמן הוא, In toto domo mea fidelis ipse, 'he is faithful in all my house.' And they are therefore here first intended of him. Three things are then considerable in these words. 1. The commendation of Moses, 'he was faithful.' 2. The extent of his faithfulness; it was in 'all the house of God;' both which are expressed in the words. 3. The comparison implied between Christ and him.

First. Moses was נאמן, 'faithful.' It is true, he failed personally in his faith, and was charged of God that he believed him not, Num. xx. 12. But this was in respect of his own faith in one particular, and is no impeachment of his faithfulness in the especial office intended. As he was the apostle, the ambassador of God, to reveal his mind, and institute his worship, he was universally faithful, for he declared and did all things according to his will and appointment, by the testimony of God himself, Exod. xl. 16, 'According to all that God appointed him, so did he.' He withheld nothing of what God revealed or commanded, nor did he add any thing thereunto; and herein did his faithfulness consist.

Secondly. The extent of his faithfulness was, unto the whole house of God, ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκῇ, that is, saith Chrysostome, ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ λαῷ, in



‘the whole people.’ In his house, that is, in his household, his family, Acts ii. 36, *ασφαλως γινωσκετω πας οικος Ισραηλ*, ‘let the whole house of Israel know,’ that is, the whole family, the posterity of Jacob, or Israel. See house for household, Acts xvi. 15; 1 Cor. i. 16; 2 Tim. i. 16. The house of God then is his household, his family, his church; called his house, 1. By way of appropriation; his lot, his portion, as a man’s house is to him. Deut. xxxii. 9, ‘The Lord’s portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.’ 2. Because of his inhabitation. He dwells in his church by his especial and glorious presence, as a man in his own house. Rev. xxi. 3. Both which are springs of care, love, and delight. In this house was Moses faithful. And this commendation of Moses is on all occasions celebrated by the Jews. So they do in their hymns in the rituals of the Sabbath, in Machzor, part i. fol. 49. *כי עבד נאמן קראה לו כלל תפארת בראשו נחת בעמדו לפניך על הר סיני ושני לזדות אבנים הוריד בידו דכחוב בה שבת*: ‘Thou calledst him thy faithful servant, and didst put a glorious crown on his head, when he stood before thee in Mount Sinai, and brought down the two tables of stone, wherein was written the observation of the Sabbath,’ &c.

Thirdly. As to the comparison in these words, ‘as Moses;’ we may consider.

First. That the apostle was now entering upon the greatest strength of the Hebrews, and that wherein they were most warily and tenderly to be dealt withal. For although they would allow that the angels were in some respect above Moses, yet they adhered unto their own institutions principally on his account, as one who was so eminently testified unto by God himself. He was the visible *INTERNUNCIUS* and Mediator between God and their forefathers, when their church state was erected, wherein they were exalted above all the nations of the world. The apostle therefore deals not with them in this matter directly, until he had made such a declaration of the person of Christ, and proved him to be so incomparably exalted above angels, that they could not be justly prejudiced, if he preferred him before Moses also; and which that he should do, was of indispensable necessity unto his design.

Secondly. That whereas, treating concerning the angels, he urgeth those testimonies concerning them, which respect their service and subjection, coming to speak of Moses, he produceth the highest and most honourable testimony that is given concerning him in the whole Scripture. And hereby he both at once grants all that they had to plead concerning him in this matter, and removes all suspicion from himself, as though he intended to derogate any thing from him, under a jealousy whereof he suffered much, as is known, amongst the Jews. Moreover, he discovers a consistency between the true honour of Moses, and the exaltation of Christ, which as yet many of them did not understand, but thought that if Christ and the gospel were established, Moses must be cast off and condemned.

Thirdly. In this comparison he minds them that the Lord Jesus Christ was the great promised prophet of the church, whom they were to attend unto, on pain of being cut off from the people of God. God

says unto Moses, Deut. xviii. 18, 'I will raise up a prophet, כִּמֹּדֶי, like unto thee,' as thou art. And yet it is said, Deut. xxxiv. 10, that 'there was no prophet in Israel, כִּמֹּשֶׁה, like unto Moses,' or as Moses. One signal prophet there was to be raised up, that should be like unto him; that is, who should give new laws and ordinances unto the church, which no other prophet was to do.

And thus doth the apostle make an entrance into his intended proof of the preference or preeminence of Christ above Moses. 1. He grants that they were both prophets, both apostles of God, sent by him to declare his mind and will. 2. That they were both faithful to the discharge of their office and trust. 3. That this trust extended itself to the whole church, and all that was to be done therein in the worship of God. Wherein the difference lay, he declares in the next verse.

And in these two verses, we may observe much of that wisdom which Peter ascribes unto Paul in his writing of this Epistle. He is, as was said, entering upon the strongest hold of the Jews, that whereon they abode most pertinaciously in the observance of their ceremonial institutions, namely, the dignity and fidelity of Moses. At the entrance therefore of this discourse, he useth a compellation manifesting his intense love towards them, and care of them; calling them his brethren, and therewithal minds them of that eminent privilege whereof by Jesus Christ they were made partakers, even the heavenly calling, which by the gospel they had received. Then, entering upon his designed comparison between Christ and Moses, wherein he was to be preferred above him, he doth it not before he had evinced, not only that he was more excellent than the angels, but also far exalted above the whole creation of God; and besides, the Author of such incomparable and unspeakable mercies, as no otherwise were, or could be, communicated unto men. Again, he lets them know, that he was so far from derogating any thing from the honour and authority of Moses, as he was falsely accused of doing, that he grants as much concerning him, and ascribes as much unto him, as any of themselves could justly grant or ascribe. And therefore, in the entrance of his discourse, he declares him to have been the legate, apostle, or ambassador of God unto the people, in the sense before declared; and that in the discharge of his office and duty, he behaved himself with that fidelity which God himself approved of. This being the sum of what was pleaded by the Jews, on the account of Moses, it is all granted and confirmed by the apostle. How suitable this course of procedure was to the removal of their prejudices, to inform their minds, to endear (engage) their affections, and consequently what wisdom was used in it, is open and evident. It remains that we consider the observation which is principally intended in the words, leaving others to be afterwards expressed.

XI. A diligent attentive consideration of the person, offices, and work of Jesus Christ, is the most effectual means to free the souls of men from all entanglements of errors and darkness, and to keep them constant in the profession of the truth. These are the ends for which it is here called for by the apostle. These Hebrews were yet entangled in their old Judaism; and by reason of their temptations, prejudices,

and persecutions, were ready to decline from the truth. To free them from the one, and to prevent the other, the apostle calls them to the consideration of what he had delivered, and what he was yet to deliver, concerning the person, offices, and work of Christ. This being the principal intention of the place, we should abide a little in the confirmation and application of our observation.

What is in this duty, considered subjectively, was declared in the exposition of the words. We must now farther unfold the manner of performing this duty, and the special object of it. In the manner of performing it, there are these things ensuing.

First. A diligent searching into the word, wherein Christ is revealed unto us. This himself directs unto, John v. 39. The Scriptures reveal him, declare him, testify of him. To this end are they to be searched, that we may learn and know what they so declare and testify. And this Peter tells us was done by the prophets of old, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. They searched diligently into the revelation made in them by the Spirit, of the person, sufferings, and grace of Christ, with the glory that ensued thereon. Christ is exhibited unto us in the gospel, which is therefore called the gospel of Christ, and the word of Christ, that is, concerning him, as our apostle declares, Rom. i. 1—3. Both the prophets of old, saith he, and the gospel also, treat concerning the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. Herein then consists the first part of this great duty. Search the Scriptures, with all the advantages of help afforded, that you may find out, discern, and understand what is revealed concerning him in them, as he is the end of the law, and the fulness of the gospel, the centre in whom all the prophecies, promises, rules, and precepts of them, do meet. Without this aim in our reading, hearing, searching the word, we labour in vain, and contend uncertainly, as men beating the air. Unto him, and the knowledge of him, is all our duty of the Scripture to be referred. And the reason why some in the perusal of it, have no more light, profit, or advantage, is, because they have no more respect unto Christ in their inquiry. If he be once out of our eye, in searching the Scripture, we know not what we do, nor whither we go, no more than doth the mariner at sea without regard to the pole-star. Truths to be believed, are like believers themselves. All their life, power, and order, consist in their relation unto Christ; separated from him, they are dead and useless.

Secondly. Meditation upon what is discovered unto us, is also included in this duty. When a revelation was made of Christ and his work, unto the blessed virgin his mother, it is said, 'She kept the sayings, and pondered them in her heart,' Luke ii. 19, as Job adviseth all to do, ch. xxii. 22. And the apostle bids us take care, that the word of Christ may dwell in us richly, Col. iii. 16, that it may not pass through our minds with some transient effects; as it doth in reading and hearing, if it only casts some glances of light upon the understanding, some motions on the affections; but that it may make its abode, and dwell with us, that is, by constant meditation. But this duty is by many spoken unto, and the evil of the neglect of it sufficiently declared.

Thirdly. A spiritual endeavour, in this search and meditation, to

bring the soul unto a conformity with that revelation which is made of Christ in the word. This is the genuine effect of them, if duly attended, 2 Cor. iii. 18. The glory of Christ is revealed in the gospel, as a face is represented in a glass. This we behold by a spiritual search into it, and meditation on it. By this intuition, we are assimilated unto the glory so revealed. The Holy Ghost thereby brings upon our hearts that very likeness and image which we so contemplate. And although properly this be rather an effect of the duty treated of, than any part of it; yet because it is that which we ought continually to aim at, and without the attainment whereof, we labour in vain, I reckon thereto. When the image of Christ is wrought upon our hearts, and the dying and life of Christ made manifest in us, 2 Cor. iv. 10, then hath this duty its perfect work.

Secondly. The object of it is to be considered. This in our proposition, following the apostle, is confined unto his person, his offices, and his work. These he dealeth with the Hebrews about.

First. He treateth about his person, and concerning that, proposeth two things unto consideration. 1st. His glorious excellency. 2dly. His condescension and grace. The one is the sole subject of the first chapter; the other, the principal subject of the second. First. He calls them to consider the glorious excellency of the person of Christ. He had instructed them, how in his divine nature he was the eternal Son of God, the brightness of his glory, and express image of his person, by whom the worlds were made, and therefore deservedly exalted, even as Mediator, being incarnate, incomparably above the most glorious beings of all God's creation. This he would have us especially to regard in our consideration of him. So did the apostles of old, John i. 14. They considered his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, therefore full of grace and truth. This excellency of the person of Christ brancheth itself into many instances, not here to be recapitulated. It may suffice in general, that this is to be the principal object of our meditation. The revelation which he made of himself under the Old Testament, had an especial respect unto his glory. Such is the description of him, Ps. lxxviii. 17, 18, applied unto him, Eph. iv. 8, as that also, Isa. vi. 1, 3, applied unto him, John xii. 41. And it is a signal promise, that under the gospel we shall see the king in his beauty, Isa. xxxiii. 17, or see by faith the uncreated excellencies and glory of this king of saints. And indeed the faith of the saints of the Old Testament did principally respect the glorious person of the Messiah. In other things they were very dark, and little can be gathered from the Scripture, of what spiritual apprehension they had concerning other things, whereby they are instructed. But their minds and faith were distinctly fixed on his person, and his coming, leaving his work, and the mystery of redemption, unto his own wisdom and grace. Hence had they so many glorious descriptions of him granted unto them, which was always to keep up their hearts in a desire and expectation of him. And now under the New Testament, it is the greatest trial of faith, whether it be evangelical, genuine, and thriving; namely, by the respect that it hath to the person of Christ. If that be its immediate and principal object, if it respect other things with regard



unto him, and in subordination unto him, it is assuredly of a heavenly extract; if otherwise, it may justly be suspected. This is that head of gold which the spouse admires in her beloved, Cant. v. 11. And unspeakable is the influence, which the consideration of this glorious excellency of Christ, attended with infinite wisdom and power, hath upon our preservation in the truth. Secondly. His grace and condescension. This the apostle insists upon, ch. ii. His design therein is, to show what this glorious and excellent person submitted himself unto, that he might save and deliver sinners. And this he greatly presseth, Phil. ii. 5—8. This glorious One humbled himself into the form of a man, of a servant, unto death, the death of the cross. A due mixture of greatness, and grace, or goodness, is the most powerful attractive and load-stone of affections. Hence God, who is infinitely great, and infinitely good, is the ultimate object of them. In the person of Christ, it is incomparably and inimitably, so that there is nothing in the creation to shadow it out unto us; see Rev. i. 5, 6, 11, 13 16. He who is Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Prince of the kings of the earth, even he loved us, and washed us in his own blood. Hence unto a believing soul, he becomes white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand, Cant. v. 10, see Ps. xlv. 2—4. This is a means of preservation. Hence the apostle wonders at the Galatians, that they should depart from the truth, after that Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth before their eyes, crucified amongst them, Gal. iii. 1. For an evident declaration of him, and representation of his love in the preaching of the gospel, is a sufficient means to preserve men from such miscarriages. We see what a warm, natural, blind devotion, will be stirred up in the Papists, by the superstitious pictures of Christ, which they have amongst them. And if a false means shoul be effectual to stir up a false love and devotion, shall not the true proper instituted means of the representation of the glory of Christ in the gospel, be effectual to beget constancy and preseverance in faith and obedience? These things the apostle minds them of concerning his person, to be improved unto the end proposed.

Secondly. Consider him as to his offices. In these verses the apostle minds the Hebrews of his prophetic and sacerdotal; but he directs them to his regal also, which he had treated of, chap. i. Neither doth he mind them so directly of the offices themselves, as of the qualifications of his person on their account. His authority as a King, his mercifulness as our High Priest, and his faithfulness as a Prophet, or God's Apostle, are the things he would have them consider.

First. His authority as King, Lord, and Heir of all, chap. i. 1—3. His dealing with the Hebrews was principally about the institution of new ordinances of worship, and abolishing of the old. For this sovereign authority was required. This the Lord Christ was furnished withal, as the Son, as the Heir, and Lord of all. A due consideration hereof, would thoroughly remove all doubts and scruples in this matter. And the neglect hereof is the cause of all that confusion and disorder that is at this day in the world about the worship of God. Men not considering the authority of Christ, either as instituting the ordinances of the gospel, or as judging on their neglect and abuse, are careless

about them, or do not acquiesce in his pleasure in them. This hath proved the ruin of many churches, who neglecting the authority of Christ, have substituted their own in the room thereof. The consideration therefore, of this kingly legislative authority of the Lord Christ by men, as to their present duty, and future account, must needs be an effectual means to preserve them in the truth, and from backslidings. See Rom. xiv. 9—12; 2 Cor. v. 9, 10.

Secondly. His mercifulness as the High Priest of his church. This he had asserted, chap. ii. 17, and that on a full and evident demonstration. Consider him that is so, and as he is so. This because of its importance, he often presseth, chap. iv. 14—16, vii. 25—28, ix. 12—14, x. 21, 22. And this is of singular use to preserve believers from decays and fainting in the profession of the truth. For from his mercifulness, unspeakable encouragements, strength, and consolation, in obedience and profession of the gospel may be educed, as in our progress, God assisting, we shall manifest. Want of a due improvement of this encouragement, and the assistance that may be obtained thereby, is the occasion of all the decays and backslidings that are found among professors. What can thrive in the soul, if the love, care, kindness, and ability to save, that are in Christ, all which are included in this mercifulness, are neglected?

Thirdly. His faithfulness. This relates to his prophetic office, which is by the apostle ascribed to him, and confirmed to be in him in these verses. Yea, this is that which he would have them immediately and in the first place to consider, and which being once fixed on their minds, those other things must needs have the more effectual influence on them. For, if he be absolutely faithful in his work, his authority and mercy ought surely diligently to be heeded. To this end the apostle compares him in particular with Moses in these verses, and in the next exalts him above him. And no better medium could be used to satisfy the Hebrews, who were sufficiently persuaded of the faithfulness of Moses. He being then ultimately to reveal the will of God, and being absolutely faithful in his so doing, is to be attended to. Men may thence learn what they have to do in the church or worship of God, 'even to observe and to do whatever he hath commanded,' and nothing else, Matt. xxviii. 20; Rev. i. 5, iii. 14.

Thirdly. As his person and offices, so his work also is proposed to our consideration for the ends mentioned. This the apostle fully discourseth, chap. ii. 9, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18. The specialties of this work are too many to be here so much as recounted. In general, the love and grace that was in it, the greatness of it, the benefit we receive by it, the glory of the wisdom, goodness, grace, holiness, and righteousness that shines forth in it, are the principal immediate objects of our faith and consideration.

These things we have instanced in particular, as those, which being of great importance in themselves, we are likewise directed to by the series of the apostle's discourse. But we mention them not exclusively to their concernments of the Lord Christ. Whole Christ, and all of him, is by us diligently to be considered, that we may attain, and we shall attain the ends laid down in the precedent observations. For,

First. Our faith and our obedience is our 'walking with God,' Gen. xvii. 1, or our 'walking in the truth,' 2 John 4; 3 John 4. And that which is principally incumbent on them that would walk aright, is to have a due regard to their way. This way is Christ, John xiv. 6. 'I am the way,' saith he; 'no man cometh unto the Father but by me.' Such a way, 'as wayfaring men shall not err in,' Isa. xxxv. 8. Such a 'living way,' as is also a guide. In attendance therefore to him, we shall neither err nor miscarry. And as all mistakes in faith arise from a want of a due respect to him, as the real way of going to God, so all aberrations in doctrine or worship, spring out of a neglect of a due consideration of his person and offices, wherein all truths do centre, and whereby they are made effectual and powerful.

Secondly. They that consider him in the way and manner explicated, cannot but take him for their only guide in the things of God. See John i. 14, with vi. 68, 69. To whom also should they go or betake themselves? This is foretold concerning him, Isa. xlii. 4. And for this duty we have the command of God, Matt. xvii. 5, 'HEAR HIM.' This they will do who consider him. And to them who do so, he is given to be a Guide and a Leader, Isa. lv. 4, and a Light, li. 4, and a Shepherd to direct them in the fresh pastures of the gospel, with care and tenderness, xl. 11. And no soul shall miscarry under his conduct, or wander into danger under his care. But here lies the root of men's failings in this matter: they seek for truth of themselves, and of other men, but not of Christ. What they can find out by their own endeavours, what other men instruct them in, or impose on them, that they receive. Few have that faith, love, and humility; are given up to that diligent contemplation of the Lord Christ and his excellencies, which are required in those who really 'wait for this law,' so as to learn the truth from him.

If it be yet inquired, Whether those who duly consider Jesus Christ, may not yet mistake the truth, and fall into errors? I answer, They may. But,

*First.* Not into any that are pernicious. He will assuredly preserve such persons from destructive errors. As he hath not prayed that they 'may be taken out of the world,' but preserved in it; so he doth not take them out of all possibility of errors or mistakes, but from such only as may prejudice the eternal condition of their souls.

*Secondly.* They shall not act their mistakes and errors from a spirit of envy, malice, and disquietude against the truth. For none that duly considereth Jesus Christ, can be captivated under the power of such a frame of spirit, seeing there is nothing more unlike to him.

*Thirdly.* Even their mistakes are from failures in their consideration of the Lord Christ, either in the matter or manner of it. Either they search not after him with that spiritual diligence which they ought; or they meditate not on the discoveries that are made of him, in the word; or they labour not after assimilation and conformity to him. And on these neglects it is no wonder if errors and mistakes do arise.

*Thirdly.* Because all the 'treasures of wisdom and knowledge are

hid in Christ,' Col. ii. 3; and therefore from him alone are they to be received, and in him alone to be learned. Now wisdom and knowledge have both of them respect to truth. Where they are obtained, there truth itself doth dwell. In the due consideration of the Lord Christ are these treasures opened to us. And although we may not at once clearly and fully discern them, yet we are in the proper way to know them and possess them. There is not the least line of truth, how far soever it may be extended, and how small soever it may at length appear, but the springs of it lie in the person of Christ; and then we learn it aright, when we learn it in the spring, or 'as it is in him,' Eph. iv. 21; which when we have done we may safely trace it down, and follow it to its utmost extent. But he that looks on gospel-truths, as *sporades*, as scattered up and down independently one of another, who sees not the root, centre, and knot of them in Jesus Christ; it is most probable, that when he goes about to gather them for his use, he will also take up things quite of another nature. They say that all moral virtues are knit up in one, that is righteousness, so that he who hath that, hath all the rest, at least radically and virtually. This I know, that all spiritual truths are knit up and centred in him who is the truth. And they who have learned him, as the apostle speaks, Eph. iv. 20, have with him received the seeds of all truth, which being watered and attended as they ought, will in due time flourish into all their proper branches, and fruits, for all 'things are gathered into one head in him,' Eph. i. 10.

Fourthly. The right performance of this duty enlivens, excites, and acts all those graces and gracious affections which are effectual to preserve us in the truth, and to keep us from decays in our profession. The Lord Christ being the proper object of them, and this consideration consisting in the application of the faculties of our souls to that object, by a due exercise of those graces, they must needs be increased, and augmented thereby; as all grace grows and thrives in and by its exercise, and ordinarily not otherwise. And when any grace is so applied to Christ, as spiritually to touch him, virtue goes forth from him for its strengthening. The neglect then also hereof, must of necessity produce the contrary effect, John xv. 5, 6.

Thus in particular is faith increased. For according as the object of it is cleared, manifested, represented, suitable and desirable to the soul; so is faith itself excited, stirred up, and strengthened. Now this is no otherwise done, but when the soul is enabled graciously to ponder on the person and offices of Christ. There it finds all that is needful to it to make it happy and blessed, to procure pardon, peace, righteousness, and glory for it. This faith receives, and is improved by it. So the apostle informs us, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Having boldness and liberty given us in the gospel to consider and behold by faith the glory of Christ, we are thereby transformed into his likeness, and image, namely, by an increase of faith, whereby we grow up to him who is the Head. And this brings along with it an increase in all other graces, whereby we are preserved in the profession and practice of the truth.

By this means also a fountain of godly sorrow is opened in the



hearts of believers, which is a precious grace, Zech. xii. 10. The consideration of the Lord Christ, as pierced for us, or by us, will melt and humble the soul, or it will never yield to any ordinance of God.

The spouse in like manner in the Canticles, giving an account of her great and incomparable love to her beloved, manifests that it arose from the exact consideration that she had taken of his person, and all that belonged thereunto, chap. v. 9—16. The like may be said of all other graces, and by these we must be preserved, or utterly fail. As to the use of these things,

First. We may see hence the reason why so many turn aside, and fall off from the truth and ways of the gospel. They have given over a due consideration of Jesus Christ, his person, offices, and mediation, and so have lost the means of their preservation. They have been weary of him, not seeing a form or loveliness in him for which he should be desired. What a sad instance have we hereof in those poor deluded creatures, who neglecting him, pretend to find all light and life within themselves ! this is their Bethel, the beginning of their transgression. For when men have neglected the person of Christ, is it any wonder if they despise his ways and ordinances, as is their manner ? Indeed the ordinances of the gospel, its worship, and institutions have no excellency, no beauty in them, but what ariseth from their relation to the person and offices of Christ, and if they are neglected, these must needs be burdensome and grievous. And as it is in vain to draw men to the embracement of these ordinances who know him not, who are not acquainted with him, seeing these appear to them the most grievous and intolerable of all things that can be imposed on them : so they who on any account cease to consider him by faith, as he is proposed to them in the gospel, cannot long abide in the observance of these ordinances. Give such men the advantages of liberty, and keeping up a reputation of profession without them, which they suppose a new and singular opinion will furnish them withal, and they will quickly cast them off as a burden not to be borne. And as it is with gospel worship, so it is with all the articles of faith, or important truths that we are to believe. The centre and knot of them all is in the person of Christ. If they are once loosed from thence, if their union in him be dissolved, if men no more endeavour to learn the truth ‘as it is in Jesus,’ or to acquaint themselves with the will of God, as he hath gathered all things unto an head in him, they scatter as it were of their own accord from the minds, so that it may be they retain not one of them ; or if they do so, yet not in a right manner, so as to have an experience of the power of them in obedience. This is the cause of the apostasies amongst us ; Christ is neglected, not considered, not improved. A light within, or a formal worship without, are enthroned in his stead, and thence all sorts of errors and evils do of their own accord ensue. Deal with any whom you see to neglect his ways and truths, and you will find this to be the state of things with them ; they have left off to value and esteem the person of Christ, or they had never any acquaintance with him. And in vain is it to dispute with men about the streams, whilst they des-

pise the fountain. The apostle gives us a threefold miscarriage in religion, Col. ii. 18. 1. A pretence of a voluntary uncommanded humility; a pretended mortification, indeed a bare covering of base and filthy pride. 2. A worshipping of angels, an instance to express all false self-invented worship. And, 3. Curiosity in vain speculations, or men's intruding themselves into the things which they have not seen, setting out things with swelling words of vanity, wherewith in truth they have no acquaintance, whereof they have no experience. And all these, saith he, ver. 19, proceed from hence, that they hold not the Head, they have let go the Lord Christ from whom all truths are to be derived, and consequently all truth itself. Here lies the spring of our frequent apostasies. Again, we may hereby examine and try ourselves. Do we at any time find any of the ways, institutions, or ordinances of Christ grievous or burdensome to us? do we find a secret dislike to them, or not that delight in them which we have formerly enjoyed? If we search into the root of our distempers, we shall find that our hearts and spirits have not been exercised with that consideration of the person and office of Christ which our duty calls for. We have not been kept in a constant adoration of his majesty, admiration of his excellency, delight in his beauty, joy in his undertaking, holy thoughtfulness of his whole mediation. This hath betrayed us into our lukewarmness and indifferency, and made us faint and weary in his ways. Hence also all endeavours for a recovery from such a frame, that regard only the particular instances that we are sensible of, are languid and successless. He that finds himself faint in, or weary of any of the ways of Christ, or any duties of obedience to him, or that discovers an undervaluation of any of the truths of the gospel, as to their use or importance, and thinks to recover himself and retrieve his spirit only by applying himself to that particular wherein he is sensible of his failure, will labour in the fire and to no purpose. It may be that after some days, or months, or years, he will find himself more at a loss than ever, and that because although he striveth, yet he striveth not lawfully. If we would recover ourselves, we must go to the source and beginning of our decays.

Thirdly. This tends directly to our instruction in these perilous days, such as the latter days are foretold to be. All means that ever the devil made use of from the foundation of the world, to draw off, or deter men from gospel obedience, are at this day displayed. The world smiles on apostates, and promiseth them a plentiful supply of such things as the corrupt nature of man esteems desirable. Errors and false worship, with temptations from them, spread themselves with wings of glorious pretences over the face of the whole earth. Trials, troubles, storms, persecutions, attend and threaten on every hand, and he only that endureth to the end shall be saved. He that like Jonah is asleep in this tempest, is at the door of ruin; he that is secure in himself from danger, is in the greatest danger of falling by security. What then shall we do? what means shall we use for our preservation? Take the counsel of our blessed apostle. 'Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession.' And again, chap. xii. 3, 'Consider him who endured

such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be weary and faint in your mind.' Be much in the consideration of the person, office, and work of Christ. This will conform you to him, derive strength from him, arm you with the same mind that was in him, increase all your graces, keep you from being weary, and give you assured victory. He deserves it, you need it, let it not be omitted.

Fifthly. This will give direction unto them who are called to the work of teaching others. The person and offices of Christ are the things which principally they are to insist upon. For that which is the chief object of the church's faith, ought to be the chief subject of our preaching. So Paul tells the Galatians, that in his preaching, Christ was evidently crucified before their eyes, Gal. iii. 1. He proposed Christ crucified unto their consideration, determining, as he speaks in another place, to know nothing amongst them but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. For if the consideration of Christ be such an important duty in believers, certainly the due proposal of him unto their consideration is no less in preachers. Christ alone is to be preached absolutely, and all other truths, as they begin, end, and centre in him. To propose the Lord Christ amiable, desirable, useful, and every way worthy of acceptance, is the great duty of the dispensers of the gospel.

I have insisted the longer on this observation, because it compriseth the main design of the apostle's words, and is also of singular use to all that profess the gospel. Those which remain shall be only named.

XII. The union of believers lies in their joint profession of faith in the person and offices of Christ, upon a participation in the same heavenly calling.—So it is described by the apostle, and the addition of other things, as necessary thereunto, are vain.

XIII. The ordering of all things in the church, depends on the sovereign appointment of the Father.—He appointed the Lord Christ unto his power, and his office in the church.

XIV. The faithfulness of the Lord Christ in the discharge of the trust committed unto him, is the great ground of faith and assurance unto believers in the worship of the gospel.—To that end is it mentioned by the apostle.

XV. All things concerning the worship of God, in the whole church or house now under the gospel, are no less perfectly and completely ordered and ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ, than they were by Moses under the law.—The comparison is to be taken not only subjectively, but objectively also, or it will not suit the apostle's purpose. As the faithfulness of Moses extended itself unto the whole worship of God, and all things concerning it under the Old Testament, so that of Christ must be extended to the whole worship of God, and all the concernments of it under the New Testament. It is true, the faithfulness of Christ intensively, would be no less than that of Moses, if he revealed all that was committed unto him of his Father to that purpose: for Moses did no more. But herein would Moses be preferred before him: If all things any way needful or useful to, or in the worship of God, in matter and manner, were committed unto him, so that

nothing might be added thereunto, and not so unto Jesus Christ; which surely neither the design of the apostle in this place, nor the analogy of faith will allow.

VER. 3—6.—The apostle, having made his entrance into the comparison designed by him between Christ and Moses, and shown in general wherein they were alike, and as to his purpose equal, (which, that those who are compared together should be in some things, is necessary,) he proceeds to evince the prelation of Christ, and his exaltation above him, in sundry signal instances, the matter principally aimed at.

VER. 3—6.—Πλειονος γαρ δοξης ούτος παρα Μωσην ηξιωται, καθ' όσον πλειονα τιμην εχει του οικου ο κατασκευασας αυτον. Πας γαρ οικος κατασκευαζεται υπο τινος· ο δε τα παντα κατασκευασας, Θεος. Και Μωσης μεν πιστος εν ολω τω οικω αυτου, ως θεραπων, εις μαρτυριον των λαληθησομενων· Χριστος δε, ως υιος επι τον οικον αυτου· ου οικος εσμεν ημεις, εανπερ την παρόρησιαν και το κανχημα της ελπιδος μεχρι τελους βεβαιαν κατασχωμεν.

Πλεινος; Vulg. Lat. Amplioris enim gloriæ iste præ Mose dignus est habitus. Retaining the case of the Greek substantive, the Latin is corrupt, as Valla, Erasmus, and Vatablus, observe. But the sense is not obscured. The Syriac renders not *ηξιωται* at all, but reads the words, ‘for the glory (or honour) of this man is more (or greater) than that of Moses).’

Erasmus and Beza supply tanto at the beginning of the verse, to answer *καθ' όσον*, which they translate quanto, in the next words; or they take that expression to answer tanto, quanto. Ours, in quantum ‘inasmuch,’ properly.

Ούτος, iste, ‘this man.’ A demonstrative pronoun, used sometimes in a way of contempt, as John ix. 29. *Τουτον ουκ οιδαμεν ποθεν εστιν*; where we render it, ‘this fellow,’ as being spoken with contempt. But more frequently in a way of excellency, as *ούτος εστιν ο Δημοσθενης* ‘this is that Demosthenes.’ So Lucian, *Δειξει σε τω δακτυλῳ, ούτος εκεινος*, λεγων, ‘he shall point at thee, saying, this is that excellent person.’ Which the poet expresseth,

At pulchrum est digito monstrari et dicier, Hic est.

In most instances it is simply demonstrative and distinctive, as in this place. This man of whom we speak, or person.

The words of comparison are doubled; *πλειονος παρα Μωσην*, for *η Μωσης*, or *του Μωσεως*, or absolutely, *δοξης παρα Μωσην*, but the conjunction of *παρα* with an adjective comparative, as it is not unusual, so it is emphatical, and denotes the greatness of the prelation of Christ above Moses.

*Ηξιωται*, dignus habitus est, is, or ‘was counted worthy.’ But the word signifies not only a bare being accounted worthy, but so as also to be possessed of that, whereof one is so esteemed worthy. *Λξιωθεις δωρων*, is not only ‘worthy of gifts,’ or a reward, but he that is muneribus donatus quibus dignus censetur, that is, ‘possessed



of the rewards whereof he is worthy.' So that *αξιωθεις τιμης* and *δοξης*, is he that 'hath that honour and glory whereof he is esteemed worthy.' And therefore the Syriac leaves this out, namely, 'esteem' or 'accounting,' and expresseth that which is principally intended. 'His glory was greater than that of Moses.'

*Πλειονα τιμην εχει του οικου*, Vulg. Lat. Quanto ampliore honorem habet domus, qui fabricavit illam: rendering the Greek construction by the same case, *οικου* by *domus*, not only is the speech barbarous, but the sense is also perverted; yet the Rhemists retain this ambiguity. 'By so much as more ample glory than the house, hath he that framed it;' but *πλειονα τιμην εχει του οικου*, is *Majorem or ampliore habet honorem quam ipsa domus*, 'hath more honour than the house, or the house itself.'

*Δοξη* and *τιμη*, 'glory' and 'honour,' are used by the apostle as *ισοδυναμουντα*, words of the same importance and signification. And so are they frequently used elsewhere in the Scripture.

*Του οικου*, 'the house.' Many of the old translators render it 'the temple,' because the temple of old was frequently called *הבית* 'the house.' But the allusion of the apostle is general unto any house, and the building of it.

And Moses was faithful, *ὡς θεραπων*, *tanquam famulus*; Syr. *עבדא servus*, a 'servant.' *Θεραπων* is properly and most usually one that doth inservire sacris, that attends upon, and ministers about holy things *λειτουργος*. So amongst the heathen, *θεραπευειν τους θεους*, and *η περι τους θεους θεραπεια*, 'the sacred service of the gods.' So Pollux, Onomast. lib. i. *ονοματα τους θεους θεραπευοντων; των θεων θεραπευται, ιερεις, νεωκοροι*; the same with priests, sacred officers. The word is used in the New Testament only in this place; *θεραπεια* and *θεραπευω* often, but always for healing or curing the sick and infirm, which is another sense of the word. And in this sense it is derived from the Hebrew, *שפא*, 'to heal,' whence is *רפאים*, rendered sometimes 'physicians,' sometimes 'dead men.' *Θεραπευειν*, when it is used elsewhere for to serve, is applied unto the service of a freeman, and is more honourable than *δουλευειν*, although that also is translated into an honourable use in the gospel, from the object and Lord or author of it. *Δουλος Ιησου Χριστου, αφωρισμενος εις ευαγγελιον*, Rom. i. 1, 'A servant of Jesus Christ, separated to the service of the gospel.'

*Ὁ κατασκευασας*, qui præparat, 'prepareth, frameth' it; and as respecting *τον οικον*, a house; 'built it.'

'If we hold fast,' *την παρρησιαν*, Vulg. Lat. *Fiduciam*; 'trust or confidence.' Syr. *שפא פתח*, the 'revelation,' or 'opening of the face,' alluding to that of the apostle, 2 Cor. iii. 18, *ανακεκαλυμμενη προσωπη*, 'with open face' behold the glory of God; an Hebraism for confidence. Beza, *Loquendi libertatem*, 'freedom,' or boldness of speaking unto God. So *παρρησιαζομαι* is most frequently used, 'to speak openly or boldly.' And as *παρρησια* is joined here with *καυχημα*, 'glorying or boasting,' it may have that sense. And the rise of the word refers to speaking. It is from *ρησις*, *dictio*, a saying or speaking; from *ειπω*, *dico*, and is as much as *πανησια*, the speaking of all that is, or ought to be spoken. *Fandi libertas*, a 'liberty'

of speaking, and ‘boldness’ in speaking, notwithstanding opposition and danger. So he in the poet:—

Dicam equidem, licet ille mihi mortemque minetur.

‘He would speak truth, though it cost him his life.’

And so *παρρησιαν διδοῦναι* is to give ‘liberty of speech.’ Boldness and confidence absolutely is *θάρρος*. Ours leave Beza, (which they do seldom) and render this word ‘confidence.’ It is used frequently in the New Testament, sometimes adverbially, for boldly, openly, plainly, especially by John in the gospel; sometimes substantively, for boldness or confidence; but constantly in an indifferent sense. Nowhere doth it denote any Christian grace, but only in this Epistle of Paul, and the first epistle of John.

*Και το καυχῆμα της ἐλπίδος*: Vulg. Lat. Et gloriam spei, ‘the glory of hope.’ So the Rhemists. Gloriationem spei, the ‘glorying or boasting of hope.’ Arias, Eras. Vatab. Ours, ‘the rejoicing of hope,’ wanting a word to render *gloriatio*, usual, and not restrained to an ill sense. And *καυχῆμα* is sometimes used for *αγαλλίαμα*. Beza, Spem illam de qua gloriamur, ‘that hope whereof we boast.’ This word is peculiar to Paul, and not used in the New Testament but by him, and by him frequently, as are also *καυχασμαι* and *καυχῆσις*. And it is a word, as that foregoing, *ἐκ των μεσων*, of an indifferent sense and acceptation, which may be applied either unto good or evil. Some *καυχῆμα*, or ‘boasting,’ is not good, James iv. 16. And there is a *καυχῆμα*, which here and elsewhere our apostle commends; a rejoicing or exultation in that which is good.

*Της ἐλπίδος*: Syr. *דבריו*, ‘of his hope,’ that is, the hope we have in him. Ethiop. ‘if we hold fast our grace, and our rejoicing, and our hope.’

*Βεβαιαν κατασχωμεν*, firmam retinuerimus. *Βεβαιαν* is properly referred to *παρρησιαν*, not agreeing with *καυχῆμα* in gender, nor with *ἐλπίδος* in case; which latter it may have yet respect unto, supposing a trajection in the words. Our translators have fitly rendered these words, by, ‘holding fast our hope firm.’ For ‘firm’ regards the thing held, and not our manner of holding. Beza supposeth it ought to be *βεβαιον*, but unnecessarily, (as such conjectures were the only fault of that great interpreter) for it refers principally to *παρρησιαν*. The Syriac expresseth it not.

The rest of the words are plain and obvious. Only the Vulgar Latin stumbles oft in this verse: it renders *οὗ οἶκος ἐσμεν*, quæ domus sumus nos: as the Rhemists, ‘which house we are,’ for ‘whose house are we.’ The translator seems to have read *ὅς*, not *οὗ*, and so Beza affirms that he found it in one Greek copy.

And again, Christ as a son in domo sua, in his house, that is, *ἐν οἷῳ αὐτοῦ*, for *ἐπὶ τον οἶκον*, ‘over his own house.’ The Rhemists retain ‘in his house,’ corrupting the sense.

*Αὐτοῦ*, not *αὐτοῦ*, his ‘own house,’ not ‘his house;’ or if the relative be retained, it refers unto Christ; ‘I will,’ saith he, ‘build my church;’ and not to God the Father.

VER. 3—6.—*For this (man) was counted worthy of more glory (was more honourable) than Moses; inasmuch as he who hath builded the house, (a house) hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily (was) faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were (after) to be spoken. But Christ (was faithful) as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of (or glorying in) the hope firm unto the end.*

The apostle proceeds in these words with his design of evidencing the excellency and prelation of Christ above Moses, as he had done before in reference unto angels, and all other revealers of the will of God unto the church, reserving an especial consideration for him who was of especial esteem with the Hebrews. Herewithal he expresseth the reason of his desire, that they would seriously consider him, namely, in his person and offices.

Two things in general are to be borne in mind, for the right understanding of these words, and the meaning of the apostle in them.

First. That he is now dealing with the Hebrews, in the last and greatest instance of the excellency of the gospel, taken from the consideration of his person by whom it was revealed. For here he prefers him above Moses, whose dignity was the last plea and pretence of the Hebrews, for retaining their old church state and customs. But no plea or pretence will prescribe unto the authority and honour of Jesus Christ.

Secondly. That the subject he here treats of, is not his utmost intention, but he useth it as an argument or medium, to prevail with them unto constancy and perseverance, as the verses immediately ensuing do manifest.

The connexion of the discourse is denoted in the first word, *γὰρ*, 'for,' a casual conjunction, which sometimes renders a reason of what hath been before spoken, sometimes directs unto an inference of what is afterwards to be introduced; as we have seen, ch. ii. 10, 11. In this place, it is evident that the apostle doth not render a reason of what he had last affirmed; namely, that Christ was faithful in all the house of God, as was Moses; seeing he passeth directly unto a new argument for his general end and purpose, namely, the dignity of Christ above Moses, which he manifests by sundry instances. Neither doth this word respect the ensuing proof of the preeminence of Christ asserted; as if he had said, he is worthy of more glory than Moses, 'Because he that buildeth the house,' &c. But there is a retrospect in it unto the first verse, and a reason of it induced, why it was so necessary for the Hebrews diligently to consider the apostle of our profession; namely, because of his glory, honour, and dignity, above that of Moses. Consider him, saith he, for he is worthy of more glory than Moses; which he demonstrates in these four verses, and then returns again unto his exhortation. This is the order of the discourse; and in it there is a proposition, and two arguments for its confirmation, which contain the subject-matter of it.

The proposition laid down by the apostle in these verses, is plain and evident; so also do the arguments, whereby he confirms it, seem to be. But the illustration that he makes of them, and the inferences he takes from them, are involved. Wherefore these things in general we shall endeavour to give some light into.

The proposition is this, that Christ was counted worthy of more glory than Moses. The first proof of this proposition lies in those words of ver. 3, 'Inasmuch as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house.' And this he further confirms, or illustrates, ver. 4. 'For every house is builded of some; but he that built all things is God.' The latter expressly, in ver. 5, 6, of which afterwards.

For the manner of arguing, here used by the apostle, it is educed from the foregoing verses. In the comparison made between Christ and Moses, he allowed Moses to be faithful, proving it by the testimony of God himself, who had said he was faithful in all his house. The church, or people of God, being in that testimony called the house of God, and that by God himself, the apostle takes advantage of the metaphor to express the dignity of Christ in his relation to the church, under that expression of the house of God. For not only the things themselves, but the manner of their expression in the Scripture, is of great importance; and much wisdom, much acquaintance with the mind of God, may be attained by a due consideration thereof. And a double relation unto this house, doth he ascribe unto him, which are the principal relations that attend any house whatever. The first is of a builder, whence he takes his first argument, ver. 3, 4, the other of an owner, inhabiter, and possessor, whence he takes his second, ver. 5, 6. And these are the principal respects of any house; without the first, it is not; and without the latter, it is of no use.

In his first argument, ver. 3, the proposition only is expressed. The assumption is included, and the conclusion left unto an obvious inference; for plainly the apostle reasons syllogistically in this case.

The proposition is this: 'He that buildeth the house, hath more honour than the house.'

The assumption included is: 'But Christ built the house, and Moses was only of the house, or a part of it;' and therefore he had more glory than Moses.

That this assumption is included in the words, is evident, both from the necessity of it, to infer the purpose of the apostle, as also from his management of his second argument to the same end, ver. 5, 6. For therein the proposition is only supposed, as having been before, for the substance of it, expressed. And the assumption is plainly laid down, as containing the new medium which he insists upon.

The proposition of the argument in these verses is, 'A son over his own house, is of more honour than a servant in the house of another.' This is only supposed.

The assumption is expressed, 'But Christ is a son over his own house—Moses was only a servant in another's house;' whence the conclusion is plain and evident.

As then the proposition in the latter argument is supposed, so is the assumption in the former.



In the confirmation of the first argument, the 4th verse is inserted, 'For every house is built of some, but he that buildeth all things is God.'

Some say these words are produced in the confirmation of the proposition of the first argument, 'He that buildeth the house, hath more honour than the house;' and so, that it is God the Father, who is intended in them. For to prove that he who buildeth the house, is more honourable than the house, he instanceth in him who is the great Builder, or Creator of all things, even God himself, who is infinitely more glorious than all things built by him; which holds in proportion to all other builders and their buildings.

Others say, that this is affirmed in confirmation of the minor proposition, namely, that Christ built the house; because it being a house, it must be built by some; and being such a house as it is, it could be built by none, but by him who is God. And these take the Son to be expressed by that name, GOD. And some there are, who would not have any proof to be intended in these words, but a mere illustration of what was before spoken, by a comparison between Christ and his works about his house, and God and his house, in the creation of all: which way the Socinians take. The true intendment of the apostle we hope to evince, in the ensuing exposition.

'For this man was counted worthy of more glory (was more honourable than Moses.)' Here lies the proposition that is proposed unto confirmation; wherein two things occur: First. A supposition that Moses was counted worthy of glory. Secondly. An assertion, that the Lord Christ was much more worthy of glory.

First. The apostle grants and supposeth that Moses was ἀξιωθαίς δοξῆς, 'counted worthy of glory,' or truly glorious and honourable. Glory is excellentis virtutis fama cum laude, 'the illustrious fame of an excellency with praise.' And in this glory there are two things: 1st. An excellency deserving honour; and, 2dly. The fame and reputation of that excellency. Where both these concur, there is a person, ἀξιωθαίς δοξῆς, 'worthy of glory,' and really honourable. So the glory of God himself consisteth in his essential excellencies, and their manifestation.

For the first, with respect unto Moses, it consisteth principally in two things.

1st. In the work wherein he was employed. The work itself was glorious, and rendered him so who was employed about it. So our apostle declares, 2 Cor. iii. 7. 'The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance.' It was glorious, and rendered him so. And one part of this ministration is called 'the glory,' Rom. ix. 4. The giving of the law, the erection of the visible church-state in the posterity of Abraham, attended with all that glorious worship which was instituted therein, was a work of exceeding glory. In this work was Moses employed, and that in so high and honourable a manner, as to be the sole Mediator therein between God and the people, Gal. iii. 19. As himself speaketh, Deut. v. 5, 'I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show you the word of the Lord.' This was his peculiar glory, that

God singled him out from amongst all the posterity of Abraham, to be thus employed.

2dly. In his fidelity in the discharge of his work and office. This is a singular excellency, which, added unto the former dignity, makes it complete. It is no glory for a man to be employed in a glorious work, and to miscarry therein: it will rather end in his dishonour and reproach. As he in the fable, who would needs drive the chariot of the sun, which ended in the breaking of his neck. Better never be employed in the work of God, than deal unfaithfully in it. But a glorious trust, and great faithfulness therein, render the condition of a man really excellent. So was it with Moses, as was declared on the preceding verses. However he might fail personally in his own faith as a believer, he failed not ministerially in his fidelity, as the Inter-nunciator between God and his people. And every personal failing in faith doth not impeach a man's ministerial fidelity, or faithfulness in his office. In these things was he excellent. It is a thing very glorious to be faithful in an office committed to us of God.

Secondly. He had the fame and reputation of these excellencies, on a double account.

1st. In the testimony that was given him by God himself, as to his fidelity in the discharge of his trust. This God gave him during his life, as was shown, and sundry times after his death. This is the great foundation of all his renown. And what greater honour could be done unto any creature, than to be adorned with such an illustrious testimony by God himself? Greater honour never had any, but he alone with whom he is compared. And thus God gives grace and glory. Grace to be faithful, and glory upon men's being so.

2dly. He had glory in that honour and esteem which was continued unto him in the church, until the Son himself came; until that time, the whole church of God was precisely bound unto the observance of the laws and ordinances appointed by him, and thereon did all their happiness in this world, and that to come, depend. That was the condition of their temporal and eternal welfare. The neglect hereof exposed them unto all misery from God and man. This was the charge that God left on them throughout all their generations, 'Remember the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb, for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments,' Mal. iv. 4. This made his name and remembrance honourable unto the church, and the sinful abuse of this turned afterwards to the snare, temptation, and disadvantage of the incredulous Jews. According to the prophetic imprecation of the Psalmist, 'Let their table become a snare before them, and that which should have been for their welfare become a trap,' Ps. lxxix. 22, which our apostle declares to have befallen them on their rejection of the gospel, through an obstinate adherence to the letter of the law of Moses, Rom. xi. 8—10. Yet we may observe, that in all the honour which God gave Moses in the church, he never commanded, he never allowed that any should worship him, or adore him, pray to him, or make images of him. To give this honour unto saints, apostles, or others, is men's invention, not God's institution. God knows how to give glory unto his servants, without imparting unto

them his own, the royalty of his crown. 'His glory will he not give unto another.'

This then was the glory of Moses; and if we shall add hereunto other concernments of him, they will make it the more conspicuous. Such were the care of God over him in his infancy, his miraculous call to his office, the honour he had in the world, the miracles which he wrought, and the signal testimony given him from God, in all the contests about his ministry, and many things of the like nature might be added. But it is the things which appertain to his office, and the discharge of it which are principally intended.

This therefore the apostle grants, that he might not give the least suspicion unto the Hebrews, that he would detract from the due praises and honour of Moses, as he was commonly traduced amongst them to do; see Acts xx. 21, 28, xxv. 8. The unbelieving part of them indeed boasted of Moses, unto the contempt of the Lord Christ, John ix. 29, 'We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not whence he is.' And they generally thought the prevalency of the gospel was derogatory unto his honour and law, Acts xiii. 45, 50. But these things moved not him to deal partially in the truth. He allows unto Moses his due honour and glory, and yet asserts the excellency of Christ above him, showing evidently the consistency of these things as there neither is, nor can be, any opposition or contrariety between any ordinances or institutions of God. And we may hence observe,

1. Every one who is employed in the service of God in his house, and is faithful in the discharge of his work and trust therein, is worthy of honour.—So was Moses. It becometh neither the greatness nor goodness of God that it should be otherwise. And he hath established it by an everlasting law. 'Them that honour me,' saith he, 'I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed,' 1 Sam. ii. 30. The honouring of God in the service of his house, is that which by this unalterable edict for its being honoured, is ratified and confirmed. They who therein honour God, shall be honoured; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. They are honourable; for,

1st. Their work is so. Reputation, glory, and honour, attend honourable works. This work is God's. The church is God's husbandry, God's building, 1 Cor. iii. 9. They have a great work in hand, God's work, and have a glorious *συνεργος*, or associate, even God himself. God so works by them, as that also he works with them, and they are *συνεργοι Θεου*, 'labourers together with God.' They work also in the name and on the behalf of God, 2 Cor. v. 20. Whatever glory and honour then can possibly redound to any, from the nature of the work wherein they are employed, it all belongs to them. Hence the apostle commands, that we should esteem such very highly in love for their work's sake, 1 Thess. v. 13. Their work makes them worthy of estimation, yea of double honour, 1 Tim. v. 17. What that is in particular, it may be, is uncertain; but it is certain, that not an ordinary honour, not a common respect or esteem, but that which is double, or abounding, is intended.

2dly. Honour is reflected upon them from him who goes before

them in their work, and their especial relation unto him. This is Jesus Christ, the great Builder of the church. Are they pastors or shepherds: he is the *ἐπισκοπος των ψυχων*, 'the Bishop of souls,' 1 Pet. ii. 25, and the *αρχιποιμην*, 'the chief, or prince of those shepherds,' ch. v. 4. And to be associated with Christ in his work, to share in office under him, will appear at length to have been honourable. The queen of Sheba counted them happy and blessed who were servants unto Solomon, and stood before him, 2 Chron. ix. 7. And what are they who stand before him, who is infinitely greater and wiser than Solomon! The Lord help poor ministers to believe their relation unto the Lord Christ, and his engagement with them in their work, that they may be supported against those innumerable discouragements that they meet withal.

3dly. The especial nature of their work and employment, is another spring of honour unto them. It lies about things holy, spiritual, mysterious, and more excellent than all the things of this world. It is their work to discover and to bring forth to light unsearchable riches, Eph. iii. 8, to reveal and to declare the whole counsel of God, Acts xx. 27, to prepare and make ready the bride for the lamb, to gather in God's revenue of glory, &c.

4thly. The effects of their work do also communicate honour unto them. They are such, they are all those things whereon depends all the glory of God in the concernments of the souls of men, unto eternity. The ministry of the word is that alone whereby God ordinarily will treat with the souls of men, the means that he will make use of, for their conviction, conversion, sanctification, and salvation. These things depend, therefore, on this work of theirs, and are effects of it. And in them will the glory of God be principally concerned unto eternity. In them will his goodness, righteousness, grace, mercy, patience, and all the other excellencies of his nature, shine forth in glory; all of them appear in his dealings with the souls of men by his word.

5thly. Their especial honour will one day appear in their especial reward, Dan. xii. 3, *המשכילים*, 'instructors, teachers,' they that make men wise, that give them understanding, 'shall shine as the brightness of the firmament,' *ומצדיקי הרבים*; 'and the justifiers of many,' those that make them righteous ministerially, by revealing unto them the knowledge and righteousness of Christ, whereby they are justified, Isa. liii. 11, 'as the stars for ever and ever.' If they have not more glory than others, yet they shall have a distinct glory of their own. For when the Prince of shepherds shall be manifested, he will give unto these his shepherds *αμαραντινον της δοξης στεφανον*, 1 Pet. v. 4, such a peculiar crown, as great triumphant conquerors were wont to be crowned withal.

Only it must be observed, that there is nothing of all this spoken merely with respect unto being employed one way or other, really, or in pretence, in this house of God, but only to a *faithfulness* in the discharge of the trust committed unto them who are so employed. Moses was worthy of honour, not because he was employed, but because he was faithful in his trust and employment. The twelve spies that were sent into Canaan to search the land, were all equally com-



missioned and employed. Two of them only were esteemed worthy of honour, the rest died in their sin, as not faithfully discharging their trust, but bringing up an evil report on the land of promise, as many do on the house of God, by one means or other, who are employed in the service of it. And these are so far from being worthy of honour, that they deserve nothing but reproach, contempt, and shame; for, as God says in this matter, ‘He that honoureth him, he will honour;’ so he adds, ‘and he that despiseth me, shall be lightly regarded.’ Such persons are rejected of God, from any acceptance in their office, Hos. iv. 6, and as unsavoury salt unto the house itself, are to be cast out on the dunghill, Matt. v. 13. They are servants, whom their Lord, when he comes, will tear in pieces, and give them their portion with hypocrites, Matt. xxiv. 50, 51. Persons therefore who undertake to be builders in the house of God, who have received no skill or ability from the Master-builder, or are negligent in their work, or corrupt it, or daub with untempered mortar, or any way unfaithful, whatever double or treble advantage they may obtain from men in this world, they shall have nothing but shame and confusion of face from God in that which is to come.

Let then those who are indeed faithful in this work, be satisfied with the work itself. It will prove in the end to have been a good revenue, a blessed inheritance. Add but that reward which the Lord Christ brings with him, unto the reward of honour that is in the work itself, and it will be abundantly satisfactory. We dishonour our Master, and manifest that we understand not much of our work, when we are solicitous about any other recompense.

And this also will serve to strengthen such persons in all the oppositions they meet withal, and all the discouragements they are encompassed with in the discharge of their duty. It is enough to give them a holy contempt and scorn of the worst that can befall them. And this also may teach others their duty towards them, which for the most part they are unwilling to hear, and more unwilling to practise.

Let us now return to consider what is positively affirmed in this assertion, with the proof of it.

‘This man,’ *οὗτος*, a demonstrative pronoun, denoting the person treated of. It is rendered this man; but it respects him not merely as man, but directs to his person, God and man, as he is expressly called God in the next verse, as we shall show.

‘Was counted worthy of more glory;’ much more glory. *Δοξης πλεονος παρα Μωσην*; see the explication of the words. Speaking of the ministry of Christ and of Moses, 2 Cor. iii. 10, he saith, ‘For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.’ So doth the manner of the expression here used, intimate the glory of Christ to be so far above the glory of Moses, that in comparison thereof, it might even seem to be no glory.

‘Accounted worthy,’ *ηξιωται*; more honoured, had more glory from God, and in the church, was more glorious.

And this glory, although it did attend the person of Christ, yet it is not that which is due unto him upon the account of his person, as

afterwards shall be more fully declared, but that which belongs to him in his office, the office which he discharged towards the church, (wherein alone he is to be compared with Moses, for in his person he was before exalted above all,) which yet is such as none could discharge, but he whose person was so excellent, as he declares ver. 4. This the apostle positively asserts, and then proceeds to the proof of it in the next words. His way of proof is, as I observed syllogistical; wherein the proposition is expressed—that he who builds a house, is of more honour than the house built. The assumption is supposed and included, ‘but Christ built the house, Moses was only a part of it.’ The force of which argument will appear in our opening of the words.

The glory of Christ intended, the apostle sets forth under the metaphorical terms of a house, its building and builder. The occasion of this metaphor, he takes, as was said, from the foregoing testimony, wherein it is affirmed, that Moses was faithful in the house of God. A house is either natural or artificial. In the first sense, it means a family or a household, the children of one parent, that is built by them; as בן, ‘a son,’ ‘is from בנה, ‘to build;’ so Ruth iv. 11, ‘The Lord make the woman that is come into thy house like Rachel, and like Leah, אשר בנו שתייהם את בית ישראל, which two built (childed) the house of Israel.’ An artificial house, is a building by men for a habitation: as every such house is built by some. And in an allusion thereunto, there is a house that is moral and spiritual, or a mystical habitation, namely for God himself; such is the church of God said to be, Eph. ii. 20—22; 1 Tim. iii. 15; 2. Tim. ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 5, partly by a general allusion any house for habitation, partly with particular respect to the temple that was called the house of God, under the Old Testament. The metaphor used by the apostle in this place, respects an artificial house, and the things spoken do primarily belong thereunto. The application that he makes is unto a spiritual house, the house of God wherein he will dwell, and thereunto also do the things that are spoken properly appertain. Herein then lies the design and force of the apostle’s discourse. The church of God, with all the ordinances of worship in it, are a house, the house of God, as appears in the foregoing testimony. Now, as to honour and glory, this is the condition of a house, that he who builds it is much more honourable than the house itself. But this house of God was built by Jesus Christ, whereas Moses was only a part of the house itself, and so no way to be compared in honour and glory with him that built it.

Both parts of this discourse are obnoxious to some difficulty. The removal whereof will further clear up the sense of the words, and meaning of the Holy Ghost.

First, then, It doth not appear that the proposition laid down by the apostle is universally true in all cases; namely, that he who builds the house, is always more honourable than the house, which yet is the foundation of the apostle’s inference in this verse. For Solomon built the temple, yet the temple was far more glorious than Solomon. I do not speak in respect of their essence and being, for so an intel-

lectual rational creature is to be preferred above any artificial building whatever; but in respect of their use in the church of God, and so the temple far excelled Solomon, its builder.

I answer, This may so fall out, where one builds a house by the authority of another, and for his use, so that it is not his own house when it is built. But when one builds a house by his own authority, for his own use, whereby it becomes his own house, and wholly at his own disposal, there he is always more honourable than the house itself. And so is it in this matter. Solomon indeed built the temple, but upon the command and authority of God: he built it as a servant, it was never his in possession, or for his use to dwell in or dispose of. On all accounts it was another's: it was the house of God built by his command, for himself to dwell in. It is no wonder, then, if it were more honourable than Solomon. But things are quite otherwise in the building intended. Christ built his house by his own authority, for his own use, for himself to dwell in. And in such cases, the proposition is universally true. And this appears so clearly from the nature of the thing itself, that it needs no farther confirmation.

Secondly. For the proof of the apostle's intention, it is supposed in the assumption, that Moses was not the builder of the house of God, but only a part of it; for without that supposition, the assertion of Christ's being preferred above him as the builder, is not confirmed. But the contrary hereunto seems to be true; namely, that Moses was a principal builder of the house of God, at least of the house under the Old Testament. Paul, upon the account of his preaching the gospel, fears not to term himself a wise master-builder, 1 Cor. iii. 10. And shall not at least the same honour be allowed unto Moses? For what was wanting to render him a builder? There were two principal parts of that house of God, wherein his ministry was used. 1st. The place and seat of the worship of God, or the tabernacle, with all its glorious utensils and appurtenances. 2dly. The ordinances and institutions of worship to be celebrated therein. Of these two, that house of God seemed to consist; and they are often so called. And was not Moses the principal builder of both? For the tabernacle and the furniture of it, he received its pattern from God, and gave direction for its building unto the utmost pins, like a wise master-builder. And, 2dly. For the ordinances and institutions of worship, they were wholly of his appointment. He received them indeed by revelation from God, and so God spake in him, as he did afterwards in the Son, ch. i. 1; but he prescribed them unto the church, on which account they are called the law of Moses. So that he seems not to have been a part of the house, but plainly the builder of it.

Ans. To remove this difficulty, we must consider both what house it is that the apostle intends, and also what manner of building of it, in the application of his metaphor.

First. For the house of God in this place, the apostle doth not intend by it the house of this or that particular age, under this or that form or administration of worship; but the house of God, in all ages and places, from the foundation of the world, unto the end thereof. For as this is evident from what he insists on in the next verse in

confirmation hereof, namely, ‘that he that builds all things is God;’ so it was not sufficient unto the purpose of the apostle, to declare that Christ was a builder, and Moses the part of a house, unless he manifested he was so, that is, a part of the house that Christ built. Now, of this house Moses unquestionably was not the builder, but only a part of it, and employed in the ministry of it in one age or season alone.

Secondly. The building of the house, as to the manner of it, is either ministerial, or autocratorical. In the first way, every one who labours by God’s appointment in the dispensation of the word, or otherwise for the edification of the church, is a builder, a ministerial builder; and those who are employed in that work in an especial and eminent manner, as the apostles were, may be said to be master-builders. And so was Moses in the house of God. But it is a building in the other way and manner that is intended by the apostle, a building with supreme power, and for the builder’s own use.

Having cleared and vindicated the argument of the apostle in this third verse, our next work is to explain and confirm the severals of his assertion, partly expressed, and partly included therein. And they are these, 1. That Christ built the church, or the house of God. 2. That he was worthy of glory and honour on that account, and had them accordingly. 3. That this his glory and honour was incomparably greater than that of Moses.

First. Unto the building of the house of God, three things are required: 1st. The giving out the design, platform, and pattern of it, in its laws, ordinances, and institutions, that it may answer the end whereunto it is designed. This is the *תבנית*, the *τυπος* or *εκτυπωμα*, ‘the effigiation, or delineation of the house.’

2dly. The preparing and fitting of the materials of it, and the compacting of them together, that they may grow up unto a house, a holy temple, a habitation for God; and this is properly *הבנין*, or *οικοδομη*, the building of the house.’

3dly. The solemn entrance of the presence of God into it, for its appropriation, dedication, and sanctification unto God, *הקדשה*. These three things concurred in both the old typical houses, the tabernacle of Moses, and the temple of Solomon.

The first thing was, that the pattern was prepared and shown unto Moses in the mount, Exod. xxv. 8. ‘Make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them, according to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and all the instruments thereof, even so shalt thou make it;’ and ver. 40. ‘Look that thou make them after the pattern which thou wast caused to see in the mount.’ God hath caused Moses to see *תבנית*, a similitude, a representation of the house which he would have built, and also the things that belonged thereunto. This our apostle calls *τυπος*, Heb. viii. 5, ‘an express image of it,’ which contained not only the material fabric, but also the laws, ordinances, and institutions of the worship of God belonging thereunto, for all these did God show and declare unto Moses in the mount, as is expressed in the story.

Secondly. Upon this, Moses prepared all the materials fit for that



fabric, by the free will offering of the people, and by the skill of Bezaleel and Aholiab, compacted, fitted, and reared up a house, a tabernacle or a sanctuary; see Exod. ch. xxxv.—xl.

Thirdly. The glorious presence of the Lord entered into the tabernacle so erected, and God dwelt there, Exod. xl. 34. 'Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.' God came, and in a wonderful manner took possession of this his house.

So it was also in the preparation and building of the temple. 1. The pattern of it, of the whole fabric, and all the orders, ordinances, and worship of it, was given and shown unto David, who delivered it unto Solomon his son. So he concludes the account that he gave of all the particular concernments of these things, 1 Chron. xxviii. 19. 'All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the work of this pattern.' 2dly. Solomon prepares materials in abundance, and by the skill of Hiram framed them into a house, and all the holy utensils of it, as is at large expressed in the story. 3dly. The temple being erected, the glorious presence of God entered thereinto, to appropriate, dedicate, and sanctify it unto God, 1 Kings viii. 10, 11. 'And it came to pass, that when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.'

It is evident then that these three things are required to the building of the house of God, whereof these material fabrics were a type and representation. And all these were perfectly effected by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I have said before, that it is not the house or church of this or that age, place, or generation that is intended in this expression, but the church of God in all ages, and places, from first to last. I confess the principal instance of this work is in the church of the New Testament, whose foundation in himself, and erection on himself, he did so expressly and particularly undertake. 'On this rock,' saith he, 'I will build my church,' Matt. xvi. 18. The stable rock of faith in himself as the eternal Son of God, as designed to the great work of God, in glorifying himself among sinners. This work of building the house of God, was always from the beginning performed by himself. The first thing required unto it, may be considered two ways. First. As to the delineation or forming of this house in his own eternal mind, as the Son, and Wisdom of the Father. He was in the eternal counsels of the Father, about the providing and framing of this habitation for himself. God from all eternity had laid the plot and design of this great fabric, and all the concernments of it, in the idea of his own mind. And there it was hid, even from all the angels in heaven, until its actual rearing, until the event, Eph. iii. 9—11. This design and purpose of his, he purposed in Jesus Christ; that is, this counsel of God, even of Father and Son, Prov. viii. 31, 32, was to be accomplished in and by him. And this glorious pattern he had in his mind in all ages, and brought with him into the world, when he came to put the last hand unto it. This answered the רבנית, or idea represented unto Moses in the mount.

He expressed this conception of his mind, when he gave out laws, rules, orders, ordinances, institutions of worship, the whole pattern of the house, as it was in divers manners, and at sundry seasons, to be erected. I have in the Prolegomena unto the first part of these discourses, abundantly manifested, that it was the Son who from the foundation of the world, immediately in his own person transacted the affairs of God with men. Thither I refer the reader. He it was that walked in the garden when Adam had sinned, and gave the first promise unto him, which proved the foundation of the house of God in after ages. He it was that was with the people in the wilderness, which gave them their laws and statutes in Horeb, and so built autocratically the house of God. And for the church of the New Testament, when he immediately and visibly transacted all the affairs of the kingdom of God, it is most apparent, he spake with, and instructed his disciples in all things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts i. 3, that is, of the house. And as God commanded Moses, that he should make all things according to the pattern shown him in the mount, so Christ requires of his disciples, that they should ‘teach men to do and observe all things whatever he commanded,’ Matt. xxviii. 20, which is therefore all that belongs unto the house of God.

Secondly. The second thing required unto the building of this house, is the providing of materials, and the framing and compacting of them into an house for God. Now this was a great work indeed, especially considering the condition of all those persons whereof this house was to be constituted. ‘They were dead in trespasses and sins,’ and the house was to be a ‘living house,’ 1 Pet. ii. 5. They were all enemies to God, strangers from him and under his curse. The house was to be made up of the friends of God, and such as he might delight to dwell with and among. They were dead stones, and the house was to be built of the children of Abraham. This then was a great and glorious work, and which none could perform but he that was unspeakably more honourable than Moses, or all the sons of men. The particulars of this work are many and great. I shall briefly reduce them unto four heads, such as were resembled and represented in the building of the tabernacle by Moses.

First then. Moses gathered the materials of the tabernacle by a ‘free will offering from among the people,’ Exod. xxxv. 4, 5. ‘And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take you from amongst you an offering unto the Lord, whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord.’ By this means without force or compulsion or imposition were the materials of the tabernacle brought in. And so also doth the Lord Christ provide for the building of the church. He doth not gather men by force or violence, or drive them together unto the profession of the truth with the sword, as Mahomet and the Pope do to their idols. But he invites none, receives none, admits of none, but those that willingly offer themselves. Such as come unto him, and give up themselves to the Lord, and to the officers of his house, by the will of God he admits, and no other, 2 Cor. viii. 1; Rom. xii. 1. And herein he puts forth the greatness of

his power, in giving them this will of coming ; for they have it not in, nor of themselves, but he makes them ‘willing in the day of his power,’ Ps. cx. 3. And this work we could manifest to be great and glorious, might we insist on the particulars of it.

Secondly. The materials of the tabernacle being freely offered were wisely framed, and compacted together, and fashioned into a sanctuary for an habitation of the Lord. This was the work of Bezaleel and Aholiab, by art, wisdom, and skill. But the fashioning of the real spiritual house of God by Christ in all ages, is a thing full of mysterious wisdom, and holiness. The apostle expresseth it in sundry places ; we may touch on some of them. Eph. ii. 20—22. ‘Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner stone ; in whom all the building framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord : in whom you also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.’ The living stones being brought together by their own willing offering of themselves to the Lord, they are by him, as the tabernacle of old, fitly framed together into a holy temple or habitation for God. How this is done, as he says in general that it is by the Spirit, so he particularly declares, Eph. iv. 15, 16, ‘growing up into him in all things which is the head even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.’ And he expresseth it again to the same purpose ; Col. ii. 19. There are various allusions in the words, both unto an artificial house, and unto the natural body of a man. The sum is, that in Christ the head of this body, the Lord and builder of this house, there is resident a spirit of life, which by him is communicated to every stone of the house, which gives it life, usefulness, union unto the head or Lord of the body or house ; as also order and beauty in reference unto the whole : That is, being all alike united unto Christ, and acted in their places and order by one Spirit, they become one house unto God. In brief ; the compacting and uniting of the materials of this house is twofold : First, physical and living : Secondly, legal or moral. The former is, as was said, by the communication of the same spirit of life unto them all, which is in Christ their head ; so that they are all animated and acted by the same Spirit. The second is, their regular disposition into beautifully ordered societies, according to the rules and laws of the gospel.

Thirdly. That the house so built and compacted, might be a habitation unto God, it was necessary, that an atonement should be made for it by sacrifice, and that it should be purified and sanctified with the blood thereof. This our apostle declares, Heb. ix. 19—21, ‘For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves, and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament, which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled likewise with blood, both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.’ This also was Christ to do in the building of his church, as the apostle in the same place declares. He

was to make atonement for it by the sacrifice of himself; and to sprinkle it wholly with his own blood, that both an atonement might be made for it, and likewise that it might be cleansed, sanctified, and dedicated unto God; which part of his work in building his house, the Scripture most largely insists upon.

Fourthly. The tabernacle being erected, and sprinkled with blood, it was also with all its utensils to be anointed with the holy oil; and it was so accordingly, *Exod. xl. 9—11*, ‘Thou shalt, saith God, take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is therein, and all the vessels thereof, and it shall be holy. And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar, and it shall be an altar most holy.’ That this unction was a type of the Holy Ghost is known; he is the oil of gladness where-with Christ himself, and all his, were to be anointed. This, therefore, the Lord Christ in an especial manner takes care for in the building of his house; namely, to have it anointed by the Holy Ghost: this he promised unto them, *John xvi. 7*, and this he performeth accordingly, *1 John ii. 27*. This unction, with all the blessed and glorious effects of it, doth the Lord Christ grant unto this whole house of his. And these are the heads of some of the principal actings of Christ in the building of the house of God: all which are done by him effectually, and by him alone.

Lastly. Unto the completing of this house for an habitation to the Lord, the glorious entrance of his presence into it was required. And this also is accomplished by him according to his promise that he will be with us, among us, and dwell in us by his Spirit unto the end of the world, *Matt. xxviii. 20*; *1 Cor. iii. 16*; *2 Cor. vi. 16*; *Eph. ii. 19—22*.

And so we have briefly demonstrated the first thing expressed in the words, namely, that Christ was the builder of the house, whereof Moses was a part and a member only.

II. The second thing asserted is, That the Lord Christ, is worthy of all glory and honour upon the account of his thus building his church, the house of God.—This also is directly taught by the apostle, and included in the comparison that he makes of him with Moses, and his preference above him. He is worthy of much more glory and honour than Moses. What glory it is that the apostle intends, we must first inquire; and then show, both that he is worthy of it, and also hath it; which things comprise what remains of the apostle’s intention in this first argument.

First. The Lord Christ hath an essential glory, the same with that of the Father. This he had from eternity, antecedently unto his whole undertaking of building the house of God, ‘He and his Father are ONE,’ *John x. 30*. Before his humiliation he was in the form of God and counted it no robbery to be equal to God, *Phil. ii. 6*. Equal in dignity and glory because of the same nature with him, which is the fountain of all divine glory and honour. This is the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, which being clouded for a season, in his taking on him the form of a servant, *Phil. ii. 8*, he desires the manifestation of again, upon the accomplishment of his work in this world, *John xvii. 5*; *Rom. i. 4*. But this is not the glory



intended. For the reason and cause of it, is not his building the house of God, but his divine nature from which it is absolutely inseparable. Had this house never been built, yet he would have been thus glorious to eternity.

Secondly. There is in Christ the glory and honour of the human nature, as glorified after its obedience and suffering. This nature was rendered glorious by virtue of its union with the Son of God from his incarnation, as it is expressed by the angel, Luke i. 35. 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also shall that holy thing which shall be born of thee be called the Son of God.' But it received an inconceivable addition of glory, when being made spiritual and heavenly, and every way glorified beyond what the understanding of man can reach unto, (for whereas our vile bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body, or we shall be made like unto him, it doth not appear, is not conceivable, what we shall be, 1 John iii. 2,) it was received triumphantly into heaven, Acts i. 9, there to continue until the times of the restitution of all things, Acts iii. 21. Neither is this as absolutely considered, the glory and honour here intended. For this glory is not merely that which he hath in himself, but that which is due to him from, and given to him by the church.

Thirdly. There is the honour and glory which he hath received in his exaltation, as the head of the church. What this glory is, and wherein it doth consist, or what are the effects of his exaltation, have been at large declared on ch. i. 2, 3, &c, Matt. xxviii. 18; Eph. i. 20—22; Col. i. 15—18. In this last place both the nature and reason and consequents of it are expressed. The nature of it is in this, that he is the first-born of every creature, ver. 15, or Lord, and heir of the whole creation of God; the head of the body, with an absolute pre-eminence in all things, ver. 18. And the reason which makes this exaltation reasonable, is taken from the dignity of his person absolutely considered, and the infiniteness of his power. For, in his person, 'he is the image of the invisible God,' ver. 15. Or, 'the express image of the Father,' as Heb. i. 3. And as to his power, 'by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth,' ver. 16, as is at large declared, John i. 1—3. This made it equal, that having fulfilled the work assigned unto him, mentioned ver. 20—22, he should enjoy all the glory and honour insisted on; that is, that after he had built the house of God, he was thus exalted.

What this glory or honour of Christ is, with respect unto the church or the house built by him, shall be briefly declared; supposing, as was said before, what hath been already taught concerning it on the first chapter. And it may be considered,

First. In respect of the collation of it upon him. His glory as the eternal Son of God, was and is personal and natural unto him, even as it is unto the Father. For each person being possessed *in solidum* of the same nature, each of them being God by nature, and the same God, they have the same glory. But this glory of Christ, as the builder of the church, as mediator, is consequent unto, and bestowed on him by the will and actual donation of the Father. By him was he de-

signed unto his work, and from him doth he receive his glory. "He raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, 1 Pet. i. 21. That is, not only rendered him glorious by his resurrection, as he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead; as Rom. i. 4, that is, made known by that miraculous divine operation to be the true real Son of God, and his divine nature thereby manifested; nor only because he was afterwards received up into glory, 1 Tim. iii. 16; that is, gloriously and triumphantly in his human nature received into heaven; but because it was his will that glory and honour should be yielded, ascribed, and paid unto him. For so he speaks concerning the whole intellectual creation. As first, for angels; he saith, 'let all the angels of God worship him,' ch. i. 6. And for man, 'the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father,' John v. 22, 23. So that this glory and honour is conferred upon the Lord Christ, as the builder of the church, by the grant, donation, and will of the Father.

Secondly. As to the nature of this glory, it consists in this; that he is the object of all divine religious worship; and the principal author of all the laws thereof, whereby it is outwardly and solemnly celebrated or performed. Hence there is a twofold duty incumbent on the church in reference to him who is the builder of it, our Mediator Jesus Christ. 1. That they serve him, trust him, believe in him, obey him with all religious subjection of soul and conscience. Hence, saith he, ye believe in God, believe also in me, John xiv. 1;—ye believe in God the Father who sent me, believe also in me who am sent, with the same divine faith and confidence. Commands and examples unto the same purpose are multiplied in the Scripture, as I have elsewhere shown at large. Jesus Christ our Mediator, God and man, the builder of the church, is the proper object of our religious faith, love, and fear, even as the Father is. In him do we believe, on his name do we call, to him do we subject and commit our souls unto eternity. This glory is due to him because he built the church. 2. The observance of all his commandments, laws, and institutions, as the great sovereign Lord over our souls and consciences in all things. 'For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living,' Rom. xiv. 9. Supreme Lord over us whilst alive, requiring obedience to all his laws as a Son over his own house; and when we are dead to raise us again, and to bring us unto his judgment seat, as ver. 10, 11. And this obedience he gives in command to all his disciples, Matt. xxviii. 20. And in these things consists that peculiar glory which Christ as this builder of the house hath, or is endowed withal.

Thirdly. Two things may be considered concerning this glory. 1. What it is that is the formal reason of it; that which renders him a meet object of the church's worship, and the church's worship to be truly divine or religious. 2. What is the principal motive prevailing with us to give him this glory and honour. For the first, it is no other but the divine nature. The natural and essential excellencies of the Deity, are the formal reason and proper object of all divine worship.

We worship the Lord Christ who is God and man; he is so in one person; and his person who is God and man is the object of that worship. But the formal reason and object of it is the divine nature in that person. Give me leave to say, God himself could not command the Lord Christ to be worshipped with divine religious adoration, were he not God by nature, for the thing itself implieth a contradiction. Religious worship is nothing but an assignation of that honour which is due to divine excellencies; namely, to trust, believe, fear, obey, love, and submit unto infinite holiness, goodness, righteousness, power, in the first cause, last end, and sovereign Lord of all. Now, to assign glory proper to divine excellencies, and which receiveth its nature from its object, where divine excellencies are not, is openly contradictory. Besides, God hath said, 'I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give unto another,' Isa. xlii. 8. He that hath not the name of God, that is, his nature, shall not, nor can have this glory which is to be the object of the worship mentioned. And there are not scarcely more gross idolaters in the world than those who profess to worship Christ, and to believe in him,—in a word,—to give him all the glory that is due to God, and yet deny him so to be.

Now, in our worship of Christ, which is our assignation of glory to him, he is considered two ways. 1. Absolutely, as he is 'over all, God blessed for ever,' Rom. ix. 5. 2. As he is the Mediator between the Father and us. In the first respect he is the proper and ultimate object of our worship. We believe in him, pray unto him; as Stephen offered his dying prayer to him in particular. They stoned Stephen praying or invoking, in these words, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,' Acts vii. 59. So are we baptized in his name, and thereby initiated into his service, as our Lord and our God; as Thomas expresseth his confession of him, John xx. 28. So may we pray unto him directly and distinctly, making his person the ultimate object of our faith, trust, and subjection of soul therein. See Eph. v. 23—25; 2 Cor. v. 15; Titus ii. 14; Rom. xiv. 9—18. 2. Consider him in the latter way, as the Mediator between the Father and us. So he is the immediate, but not the ultimate object of our worship. In this sense, 'through him we do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God,' 1 Pet. i. 21. He is the means of our faith and hope. By him we have an access by one spirit unto the Father, Eph. ii. 18. And according to his command, we ask of God in his name, and for his sake, John xvi. 23, 24, 26. And in this sense, in all our worship internal and external, in our faith, confidence, obedience, and supplications, the Father is considered as the ultimate object of our worship, and the Lord Christ the Son, as he who hath procured acceptance for us, who pleads our cause, manageth our affairs, justifies our persons, and prevails for grace and mercy. And this is the most ordinary and standing way of faith in the worship of God. We address ourselves to the Father by Christ the Son, as Mediator, considering him as vested with his offices in and over the house of God. This the apostle excellently expresseth, Eph. iii. 14—19. However, it is free for us to address our petitions directly unto Christ, as he is God, equal with the Father.

And we may see here the difference that is between our worship of Christ the Mediator, and the worship of saints and angels by the Papists. They go first to their saints, to the blessed Virgin especially; to her they pray—what to do? to give them grace, mercy, pardon of sins, and salvation. This, indeed, many of them have done, and do, and that in a horribly idolatrous blasphemous manner. But this they commonly plead; that they only pray to saints that they would pray and intercede with God for them; granting that they may be mediators of intercession, though not of oblation. Well then! their praying unto saints is one distinct act of worship, whereof the saints are the only object; which, they being mere creatures, is open and express idolatry. But now in our worship of God by Christ, it is the same worship whereby we worship the Father and the Son, the Father in and through the Son; with the same actings of faith and confidence, and by the same invocation, the one as the object ultimately of our intercession, the other as the Mediator of our acceptance. But it will be said, May we not then pray to Christ to pray to the Father for us, which would be a distinct act of religious worship? I answer, 1. We have no precedent in Scripture, nor warrant for any such address. 2. It seems not agreeable to the analogy of faith, that we should pray unto Christ to discharge his own office faithfully. But this we may do; we may pray unto him distinctly for grace, mercy, pardon, because he is God; and we may pray unto the Father by him, as he is our Mediator, which two modes of divine worship are sufficiently revealed in the Scripture.

Secondly. Having considered the formal reason of the glory insisted on, we are next to inquire after the great motive unto our giving him this glory, that makes him worthy of it, and obligeth us in especial duty to give it unto him. Christ our Mediator, God manifested in the flesh, God and man, whole Christ, his divine and human nature in one person, is the object of our religious adoration and worship; and it is just, righteous, equal, that we should constantly and continually worship him, because he hath built the house of God; because of his work of mediation.

As it is in the first command, so it is in this matter, 'I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; thou shalt have no other gods before me,' Exod. xx. 2, 3. Declaring himself to be the Lord God, he proposeth the formal reason of all religious worship, and that which makes it indispensably necessary. But yet to stir the people up to the actual performance of it, he adds that great motive in what he had done for them, 'he had brought them out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.' Had he not done so, all worship and honour divine was due unto him; but having done so, it is a strong obligation to bind them to diligence in its observance. So I say it is in this matter. Christ is to be worshipped because he is God, but the great motive hereunto is what he hath done for us in the work of redemption. And unto all that we have said in this matter, we have the joint testimony of all the saints and angels of God. Rev. v. 8—13. 'And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures, and 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 the saints. And they sang 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 unto God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.' The whole of what we have asserted is here confirmed. For, 1. The Lamb here is Jesus Christ the Mediator, the Lamb of God that took away the sins of the world. 2. The worship and honour ascribed unto him, is holy, sacred, and religious, and that from the whole creation. 3. It is but one and the same worship that is given unto the Lamb, and to him that sits upon the throne, even the Father. 4. The reason hereof, and great motive unto it, whence it is said that he is worthy of it, so that it is our continual duty to perform it unto him, is, because of the great things he hath done for us, in our redemption and salvation; that is, his building of the house of God.

From what hath been spoken, it is evident in what sense we worship the man Jesus Christ, with divine honour and worship; even as his human nature, by virtue of personal union, subsisteth in the person of the Son of God, which person is the proper object of our worship.

To close this matter; here lies a great difference between Christ and Moses. That whereas the work of Moses, brought all the honour and glory he had unto his person, and which yet was but an inferior work, the work of a servant or ministerial builder; the person of Christ brought glory and honour unto his work, although it were very excellent and glorious, for he condescended and humbled himself unto it, Phil. ii. 6—8. But yet the work being done, is a cause of giving new honour and glory unto his person.

It remains only, that I briefly give the reasons why this building of the house doth render the Lord Christ so worthy of glory and honour. It doth so,

First. Because the work itself was great and glorious. Great works make the authors of them famous and honourable. Hence have been the endeavours of men to eternize their names, to make themselves famous and renowned by their works and buildings. This was one end of that stupendous enterprise of the children of men in the building of Babel; they would build a tower make themselves a name, Gen. xi. 4, to get them renown and glory. And they have been imitated by their posterity, who in all ages have praised their saying. So Nebuchadnezzar testifieth concerning himself, Dan. iv. 30. 'Is not this.'

saith he, 'great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?' But, alas! what poor perishing heaps have been the products of their endeavours! they have all long ago been made a spoil unto time and confusion. When Solomon went about to build a material typical house for God, he tells Hiram, the king of Tyre, in his message unto him, that the house which he built was very great; 'for,' saith he, 'great is our God above all gods,' 2 Chron. ii. 5. But he adds moreover, 'but who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; who am I then that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him.' The use of this house is not for God to dwell in, but for us to worship him in. Do not conceive that I am building a temple with such thoughts and apprehensions, as the nations build theirs unto their false deities; namely, to confine them to a place and keep them in. The immensity of the nature of our God will admit of no such thing. It is only a place for his service that I intend. But now this hath Christ done, he hath built a house for God to dwell in for ever. And this on many accounts was a greater work than that of the creation of all things out of nothing. But if from that ancient work of creation was to arise all the glory of God according to the law of nature, how excellent is this honour and glory, which ariseth to Jesus Christ, and to God by him, from this new creation; from his forming and creating new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Secondly. It is glorious on all accounts of glory; glorious in itself; who can set forth, who can express the glory and beauty, the order of this work? The tabernacle with the temple of old, and all their furniture, were exceedingly glorious, but yet they and their worship had no glory in comparison of the more excellent glory of this spiritual house, 2 Cor. iii. 10.

It is glorious in its foundation, which is Christ himself. 'Other foundation can no man lay, save that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ,' 1 Cor. iii. 11. This is the rock on which this house is built, Matt. xvi. 18. 'He is laid in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation,' Isa. xxviii. 16. So glorious, that when he is brought forth, those concerned in the building, shout with crying, 'Grace, grace unto it,' Zech. iv. 7. And it is glorious in its superstruction; it is built up of living stones, 1 Pet. ii. 4, which also are precious and elect; cemented among themselves, and wrought into beauty and order by the Spirit of God; it is also glorious in respect of its end,—it is built unto the glory of God. This house is the foundation of eternal glory, as being that upon the account whereof God will for ever be glorified. It comes into the place of the whole creation at first, and doubles the revenue of glory unto God. But as unto these things, more must be spoken afterwards.

Our duty is to bear in mind this honour and glory of Christ; as that whereunto he is exalted, and that whereof he is every way worthy. And herein our concernment and honour doth lie. For if any one member of the mystical body being honoured, all the members rejoice with it, 1 Cor. xii. 26, how much more have all the members

cause to rejoice in this unspeakable honour and glory of their Head, whence all their honour in particular doth flow.

III. The honour and glory of all that ever were, or ever shall be employed in the work and service of the house of God, jointly and severally considered, is inferior, subordinate, and subservient to the glory and honour of Jesus Christ, the chief Builder of the house. He is worthy of more honour than they all. He is the Son, they are servants. He is over the house, they are in it, and parts of it. They are shepherds, but the sheep, the lambs, are his. He is the *αρχιποιμην*, 'the Chief or Prince of shepherds;' all their honour is from him, and if it be not returned unto him, it is utterly lost.

VER. 4.—*For every house is built by some, but he that built all things is God.*

In this verse the apostle confirms and illustrates what he had before asserted and proved. Hereunto two things were necessary. For first, whereas his whole discourse had reference to the analogy that is between a house and its builder on the one hand, and Christ with his church on the other; seeing it lies in this, that as the builder is worthy of more honour than the house built by him, so is Christ of more than the whole church or house of God which was built by him; it was therefore necessary to show, that his argument had a real foundation in the things, from which the parity of reason insisted on by him did arise. This he doth in the first words, 'Every house is builded by some.' Every house whatever hath its builder, between whom and the house there is that respect, that he is more honourable than it. This therefore holds equally in an artificial house, and in an analogical. The respect mentioned is alike in both.

Secondly. If that building of the house, which alone would make good the apostle's inference and intention, (namely, that Christ was more honourable than Moses, because he built the house, Moses was only a part of it,) were such as we have described, the building of the church in all ages, who could perform it? to whom must this work belong? Why, saith he, 'He who built all things is God.'

Two things are here to be inquired into, First. What is intended by the 'all things' here mentioned. Secondly. Who is intended by God, who is said to build them all.

For the first, *τα παντα*, 'all things,' is put for *παντα παντα*, 'all these things,' all the things treated about, which kind of expression is frequent in the Scripture. And therefore Beza well renders the words, 'hæc omnia,' 'all these things.' The whole house, and all the persons that belong to it, or the parts of it, in all ages. And thus is *τα παντα* constantly restrained to the subject-matter treated of. Besides, the word *κατασκευασας*, here used by the apostle, whereby he expressed before the building of the house, plainly declares that it is the same kind of building that he yet treats of, and not the absolute creation of all things, which is nowhere expressed by that word. And this is sufficient to evince what we plead for. This word is nowhere used in the Scripture to express the creation of all things, neither doth it sig-

nify to create, but to prepare, and to build. And it is often used in this business of preparing the church or the ways of the worship of God. See Matt. xi. 10; Luke i. 17, vii. 27; Heb. ix. 2, 6. So that there can be no pretence of applying it to the creation of the world in this place. Again, the making of all things, or the first creation, doth not belong to his purpose; but the mention of it would disturb the series of his discourse, and render it equivocal. There is neither reason for it in his design, nor place for it in his discourse, nor any thing in it to his purpose.

Secondly. Who is here intended by the name God. The words may be so understood, as to signify either, that God made or built all these things, or, that he who made and built all these things, is God. The first sense making God the subject, the latter the predicate of the proposition. But as to our purpose they amount to the same. For if he who made them is God, his making of them declares him so to be. And it is the Lord Christ who is intended in this expression. For,

First. If God absolutely or God the Father be intended, then by the 'building of all things,' the creation of the world is designed, so they all grant who are of that opinion; but that this is not so, we have already demonstrated from the words themselves.

Secondly. The introduction of God absolutely, and his building of all things in this place, is no way subservient to the purpose of the apostle. For what light or evidence doth this contribute to his principal assertion, namely, that the Lord Christ was more honourable than Moses, and that upon the account of his building the house of God, the confirmation whereof he doth in these words expressly design.

Thirdly. It is contrary to his purpose. For whereas, he doth not prove the Lord Christ to be deservedly preferred above Moses, unless he manifest that by his own power he built the house of God in such a manner as Moses was not employed in, according to this interpretation of the words he here assigns the principal building of the house to another, even the Father, and so overthrows what he had before asserted.

This then, is that which by these words the apostle intends to declare, namely, the ground and reason whence it is that the house was or could be in that glorious manner built by Christ, even because he is God and so able to effect it; and by this effect of his power he is manifested so to be.

VER. 5.—*And Moses verily (was) faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were after to be spoken. But Christ (was faithful) as a Son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*

The apostle in these words proceedeth to another argument to the same purpose with the former, consisting in a comparison between Christ and Moses, in reference to their relation to the house of God when built. In the building they were both faithful, Christ as the chief builder, Moses as a principal part of the house, ministerially also employed in the building of it. The house being built, they are both



faithful towards it in their several relations to it; Moses as a servant in the house of God, Christ as a Son over his own house; his own because he built it.

The Vulgar Latin reads also in the latter place, 'in the house;' *εν τῷ οἴκῳ*, for *ἐπὶ τοῦ οἴκου*, 'over the house,' but corruptly as was observed. The agreement of the original copies, and series of the apostle's discourse, require 'over the house.' A Son over the house.'

Some by *αὐτον*, would have God the Father to be intended, 'over his house,' the house of God. But the other sense, 'his own house,' is evidently intended. Having built the house, and being the Son or Lord of it, it becomes 'his own house.'

As to Moses, there are in the words, 1. His relation to the house of God, which was that of a servant. 2. The end of his ministry, 'for a testimony of the things that were to be spoken afterwards.'

In reference to the Lord Christ, 1. His relation to the house is asserted to be that of a Son, or Lord over the house. 2. An application of his faithfulness in that relation; but Christ as a Son, that is, was faithful as a Son. 3. A declaration of the state and condition of that house over which as a Son he presides, with an application of the things spoken, to the faith and obedience of the Hebrews, 'whose house are we, if we hold fast.'

The argument of the apostle in these words is obvious. The Son faithful over his own house, is more glorious and honourable than a servant that is faithful in the house of his lord and master. But Christ was thus a Son over the house, Moses only a servant in it.

There is one difficulty in the terms of this argument, which must be removed before we enter upon the explication of the words in particular. And this lies in the opposition that is here made between a son, and a servant, on which the stress of it doth lie. For Moses was not so a servant, but that he was also a child, a son of God. And the Lord Christ was not so a Son, but that he was also the Servant of the Father in his work, and is in the Scripture often so called: and accordingly he constantly professed that as he was sent by the Father, so he came to do his will and not his own.

Ans. The comparison here made is not between the persons of Christ and Moses absolutely, but with respect to their relation to the church or house of God in their offices. Moses was indeed a son of God by adoption, (for adoption belonged to believers under the Old Testament, Rom. ix. 4.) He was so in his own person, but he was not a son in reference to the house, but a servant by his office and no more. And the Lord Christ, who was the Son of God on a more glorious account, even that of his eternal generation, is not here thence said to be a Son, he is not as such here spoken of, but as one that had the rule as a Son over the house.

Secondly. It is true Christ was the Servant of the Father in his work, but he was also more than a servant. Moses was in the house a servant and no more. The Lord Christ was so a Servant, as that he was also the Son, Lord, and Heir of all. And this as to the equity of it,

is founded originally in the dignity of his person, for he is 'God over all, blessed for ever,' Rom. ix. 5. He was God and Lord by nature, a Servant by condescension, and therefore made a Son or Lord, by the Father's constitution, as our apostle declares at large, Phil. ii. 6—9. This then is the economy of this matter. Being in himself God over all, he became, by voluntary condescension, in the susception of human nature, the Servant of the Father, and on the doing of his will, he had the honour given him of being the Son, Head, and Lord over the whole house. So that no scruple can hence arise against the force of the apostle's argument. Two things are in general contained in the words, as they report the relation of Moses to the house of God. 1. His ministry. 2. The end of that ministry, as was observed. 1. Moses verily was faithful as a servant in his whole house. The office ascribed to him, is that of a servant. A servant of God and of the people. *Θεραπων*, 'a servant,' minister or officer *in sacris*, 'in things belonging to religious worship.' This was his place, office, dignity, and honour. And this is accompanied with a threefold amplification, 1. In that he was faithful in his service, which, wherein it consisted, hath been declared. 2. In that he was a servant in the house of God; not in the world only, and in compliance with the works of his providence, as all things serve the will of God, and wicked men, as Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar, are called his servants; but in his house, in that service which is of nearest relation and of greatest concernment to him. It is an honour to serve the will of God in any duty, but in those especially which concern his house, and his worship therein. 3. In that he was not thus employed, and thus faithful, only in this or that part of the house of God, in this or that service of it, but in his whole house, and all the concernments of it. Herein was he differenced from all others whom God used in the service of his house under the Old Testament. One was employed in one part of it, another in another; one to teach or instruct it, another to reform or restore it; one to renew a neglected ordinance, another to give a new instruction, none but he was used in the service of the whole house. All things for the use of all ages, until the time of reformation should come, were ordered and appointed by him. And these things greatly speak his honour and glory, although, as we shall see, they leave him incomparably inferior to the Lord Christ.

'For a testimony of those things which should be spoken after.' The end of the service and ministry of Moses is expressed in these words. It was to be *εἰς μαρτυρίαν*, 'for a testimony.' The word and ordinances of God are often called his testimony. That whereby he testifieth and witnesseth his will and pleasure to the sons of men. *עדות*, 'that which God testifieth.' Some therefore think the meaning of the words to be, that Moses in his ministry revealed the testimony of God, and those words, 'of the things that should be spoken,' are as much as in and by the things that he spake, that God would have spoken by him, wherein his testimony did consist. But this exposition of the words is perplexed, and makes a direct coincidence between the testimony and the things spoken, whereas they are distinct in the text, the one being subservient to the other, the testimony to

the things spoken. Others take testimony to be put for a witness, he that was to bear testimony; which it was the duty of Moses to be and to do. He was to be a witness to the word of God which was given and revealed by him. And both these expositions suppose the things spoken, to be the things spoken by Moses himself. But neither doth this seem to answer the mind of the Holy Ghost. For,

First. This being a testimony refers to the whole faithfulness of Moses, which was not confined or restrained to the things that were spoken, but extended itself to the whole service of the house wherein he was employed, as well in the building of the tabernacle and institution of ordinances, as revealing the will of God in his law.

Secondly. *Δαληθησομενων* respects things future unto what he did in his whole ministry. This our translation rightly observes, rendering it 'the things that should be spoken after.' And this, as well as the order of the words, as the import of them doth require. In his ministry he was a testimony, or by what he did in the service of the house he gave testimony; whereunto? to the things that were afterwards to be spoken, namely, in the fulness of time, the appointed season, by the Messiah, that is, the things of the gospel. And this indeed was the proper end of all that Moses did or ordered in the house of God.

This is the importance of the words, and this was the true and proper end of the whole ministry of Moses, wherein his faithfulness was tried and manifested. He ordered all things by God's direction in the typical worship of the house, so as that it might be a pledge and testimony, of what God would afterwards reveal and exhibit in the gospel. 'For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness unto them that do believe,' Rom. x. 4. And it was revealed unto him, as 'unto the other prophets, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister in the revelations they made of the things testified unto them, by the Spirit of Christ which was in them,' 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. And whereas it is frequently said that 'Moses bare witness unto the Lord Christ and the gospel,' he did it not so much by direct prophecies and promises of him, as by the whole constitution and ordering of the house of God and all its institutions, especially in the erection of the tabernacle, and the appointment of the sacrifices annexed to it. For the first witnessed and represented the assumption of our human nature by Christ, whereby *εσκηνωσεν*, 'he tabernacled amongst us,' John i. 14. And therefore after the tabernacle was built, God spake only from thence, Lev. i. 1. And the latter represented that great sacrifice whereby the Lamb of God took away the sins of the world. Herein was Moses faithful.

And here the apostle takes his leave of Moses, he treats not about him any more, and therefore gives him as it were an honourable burial. He puts this glorious epitaph on his grave, 'Moses a faithful servant of the Lord in his whole house.'

VER. 6.—'But Christ as a Son over his own house.' The term

*faithful* is here to be repeated; 'was faithful as a Son over his own house.' Every word almost proves the preeminence asserted. He is a Son, Moses a servant. He over the house, Moses in the house. He over his own house, Moses in the house of another.

In what sense the Lord Christ is said to be the Son over his house, hath been so fully declared in our exposition of the first chapter, that it need not here to be insisted on. Absolute and supreme authority over all persons and things, are intended in this expression. All persons belonging unto the house of God are at his disposal, and the institution of the whole worship of it is in the power of him alone. Which things, (as was said) have been already spoken unto.

'Whose house are we.' Οὗ οἶκος ἐσμεν. Having confirmed his argument, the apostle returns, after his manner, to make application of it unto the Hebrews, and to improve it for the enforcement of his exhortation unto constancy and perseverance. And herein, first, he makes an explanation of the metaphor which he had insisted on. I have, said he, spoken these things of a house and its building, but it is the church, it is ourselves that I intend; 'Whose house are we.' Secondly, that they might know also in particular, who it is that he intends, he adds a farther description of them; 'if we hold fast our confidence, and the glorying of hope unto the end.'

'Whose house are we.' That is, believers who worship him according unto the gospel are so. And the apostle frequently both in exhortations and applications of arguments and threatenings, joineth himself with the professing Hebrews for their direction and encouragement. Now believers are the house of Christ upon a triple account.

1. Of their persons. In them he dwells really by his Spirit. Hence are they said to be living stones, and on him to be built into a holy temple, 1 Pet. ii. 5. And as such doth he dwell in them, Eph. ii. 20—22; 2 Cor. iii. 16, vi. 19; John xiv. 17.

2. Of their being compact together in church-order according to his institution, whereby they are built up, cemented, united, and become a house, like the tabernacle or temple of old, Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19.

3. Of their joint-worship performed in that order; wherein and whereby he also dwells among them, or is present with them, unto the consummation of all things, Rev. xxi. 3; Matt. xxviii. 20.

'If we hold fast our confidence, and the glorying of hope firm unto the end.'

Εἰς τὸ τέλος. These words may have a double sense: First. To express the condition on which the truth of the former assertion doth depend. We are his house: but on this condition, that we hold fast, &c. Secondly. To express a description of the persons who are so the house of Christ, by a limitation and distinction amongst professors; showing that in the former assertion, he intends only those who hold fast their confidence firm to the end.

According unto these several interpretations, the words are severally employed. Those who embrace the first sense, make use of them to prove a possibility of the falling away of true believers, and that totally



and finally from Christ. For, say they, without the supposition thereof, the words are superfluous and useless. Those who cleave to the latter sense, suppose the words irrefragably to confirm the certain permanency in the faith of those who are truly the house of Christ; they being such alone, as whose faith hath the adjuncts of permanency and stability annexed unto it. For others, whatever they may profess, they are never truly or really the house of Christ; whence it undeniably follows, that all true believers do certainly persevere unto the end.

I shall not here engage into this controversy, having handled it at large elsewhere. Only as to the first sense contended for, I shall briefly observe. First. That the supposition urged proves not the inference intended, and, Secondly. That the argument from this place is not suited to the hypothesis of them that make use of it. For as Paul puts himself among the number of those who are spoken of, whose faith yet none will thence contend to have been liable to a total failure; so such conditional expressions of gospel comminations, although they have a peculiar use and efficacy towards believers in the course of their obedience, as manifesting God's detestation of sin, and the certain connexion that there is by God's eternal law, between unbelief and punishment; yet they do not include any assertion that the persons of believers may at any time, all things considered on the part of God as well as of themselves, actually fall under those penalties, as hath been at large elsewhere evinced. Again, this argument suits not the hypothesis that it is produced in the confirmation of. For if it be the condition of the foregoing assertion, whereon the truth of it doth depend, then are none at present the house of God, but on a supposition of their perseverance to the end. But their opinion requires that persons may be really this house by virtue of their present faith and obedience, although they afterwards utterly fall from both and perish for evermore. This then cannot be the sense of the words according to their principles who make use of them for their ends. For they say that men may be the house of Christ although they hold not fast their confidence to the end, which is directly to contradict the apostle, and to render his exhortation vain and useless.

The words therefore are a description of the persons who are the house of Christ, from a certain effect, or adjunct of that faith whereby they became so to be. They are such and only such, 'as hold fast their confidence, and glorying of hope firm unto the end,' whereby they are distinguished from temporary professors who may fall away.

Two things are observable in the words. First. What it is that the apostle requires in them who are the house of Christ, namely, confidence and glorying in hope. Secondly. The manner of our retaining them; we must hold them fast and firm, whereunto is subjoined the continuance of this duty, it must be to the end. First. For our confidence; most understand by it either faith itself, or a fiduciary trust in God, which is an inseparable effect of it. This grace is much commended in the Scripture, and they say, here intended by our apostle. A reliance they mean, resting and reposing our hearts on God in Christ, for mercy, grace, and glory; this is our Christian con-

fidence. And the ‘rejoicing of hope;’ that is the hope wherein we rejoice. Hope of eternal life, promised by God, purchased by Jesus Christ, and expected by believers, fills them with joy and rejoicing, as Rom. v. 5; 1 Pet. i. 8.

These things are true, but whether peculiarly intended in this place by the apostle is questionable; yea that the words are of another import, and require another interpretation, is manifest from them and the context.

For, First. The word *παρρησία*, translated ‘confidence,’ although it frequently occurs in the New Testament, yet it is never used to signify that fiduciary trust in God which is an effect of faith, and wherein some have thought the nature of it to consist. For unless where it is used adverbially to signify openly, plainly, notoriously, as it doth always in the gospel of John; (see chap. xviii. 20;) it constantly denotes a freedom, liberty, and constancy of spirit, in speaking or doing any thing towards God or men. See Acts ii. 29, iv. 13, 29; 2 Cor. iii. 12; Phil. i. 20; 1 Tim. ii. 13. And we have before manifested that this is the genuine and native signification of the word.

Secondly. The confidence here intended doth refer to our hope, no less than the *καυχημα*, or ‘rejoicing’ that followeth. The words are not rightly distinguished, when confidence is placed distinctly as one thing by itself, and rejoicing only is joined with hope. And this is evident from the construction of the words. For *βεβαιαν*, ‘firm,’ agrees not immediately with *ελπιδος*, ‘of hope,’ which is of another case; nor with *καυχημα*, ‘rejoicing,’ which is of another gender; but with *παρρησιαν* it agrees in both, and is regulated thereby, which it could not be unless confidence were joined with hope also; confidence of hope.

Thirdly. Not our hope itself, but the *καυχημα*, ‘glorying,’ or rejoicing in it, and of it, is intended by the apostle; and therefore no more is our faith in the former expression.

The genuine sense then of these words, will best appear from the consideration of the state and condition of the Hebrews, and what it is that the apostle invites and encourageth them to. This condition, as hath been frequently declared, was a condition of persecution, and danger of backsliding thereon. How then are men at such a season usually prevailed on, sinfully to fail, and miscarry in their profession? It is not at first by parting directly and openly with faith and hope, but by failing in the fruits of them, and the duties which they require. Now of that hope which we have concerning a blessed immortality and glory by Jesus Christ, there are two proper effects or duties, or it requires two things of us. First. A free, bold, and open profession of that truth which our hope is built on, and that against all dangers and oppositions, for we know that this hope will never make us ashamed, Rom. v. 5. This is the *παρρησία της ελπιδος* here mentioned. ‘A confident, open profession of our hope.’ This we are exhorted to, 1 Pet. iii. 15, ‘Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you’ This *ετοιμασία προς απολογίαν*, this promptitude and alacrity in apologizing, avowing, defending, pleading for the grounds of our hope, is the

παρρησία, the confidence, or rather liberty and boldness of profession here intended. Secondly. An open opposing of our hope, or that which is hoped for, to all difficulties, dangers, and persecutions, with a holy boasting, glorying, or rejoicing in our lot and portion, because the foundation of our hope is sure, and the things we hope for are precious and excellent, and that to the contempt of every thing that riseth against them, is also required of us. This is the *καυχῆμα τῆς ἐλπίδος* intended. In these things men are apt to fail in temptations and persecutions, and when any do so faint, as that they take off from the confidence of their profession; and when they cannot with joy and satisfaction, oppose the foundation and end of their hope to these dangers, they are near to backsliding. And these things also are inseparable from that faith whereby we are made the house of Christ. For although they may be intercepted in their acts for a season, by the power of some vigorous temptation, as they were in Peter, yet radically and habitually they are inseparable from faith itself, Rom. x. 10.

These therefore are the things which the apostle intends in these words, and by showing them to be indispensable qualifications in them who are the house of Christ, he tacitly persuades the Hebrews to look after and to secure them in themselves, to the end of his general exhortation before laid down.

In the last place, the apostle declareth the manner how these things are to be secured; 'if we hold fast our confidence firm unto the end.' The duty itself relating to the manner of our retaining these things, is 'to hold them fast.' The state of them wherein they are to be retained, is 'firm,' or steadfast, and their duration in that estate, is 'to the end.'

The first is expressed by the word *κατασχωμεν*, which signifies a careful, powerful holding any thing against opposition. *Κατεχειν το πλῆθος*, is effectually to retain the multitude in obedience when in danger of sedition. And *κατεχειν φρουραις*, to hold, retain, or keep a place with a guard. As in Latin, *Oppidum præsidio tenere*. Two things therefore are represented in this word. First. That great opposition will arise against this duty, against our firmitude and constancy in profession. Secondly. That great care, diligence, and endeavour, is to be used in this matter, or we shall fail and miscarry in it. Because of the opposition that is made against them, because of the violence that will be used to wrest them from us, unless we hold them fast, that is, retain them with care, diligence, and watchfulness, we shall lose them or be deprived of them.

Secondly. They are to be kept firm, *βεβαιαν*. The meaning of this word the apostle explaineth, chap. x. 23, 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering,' *βεβαιαν*, that is *ακλινῃ*, without declining from it, or shaking in it. It is not enough that we keep and retain, yea hold fast our profession, but we must keep it up against that uncertainty and fluctuating of mind, which are apt to invade and possess unstable persons in a time of trial.

Thirdly. Herein must we continue *εἰς το τέλος*, 'unto the end,' that is, while we live in this world, not for the present season only, but in

all future occurrences, till we come to the end of our faith, or the end of our lives, and the salvation of our souls. The observations from these verses ensue.

IV. The building of the church is so great and glorious a work, as that it could not be effected by any but by him who was God. 'He that builds all these things is God.' To him is it ascribed, Acts xx. 28; 1 John iii. 16. And it requires God to be the builder of it.

First. For the wisdom of its contrivance.—When God appointed Bezaleel to the work of building the tabernacle, he says, that he had 'filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding,' Exod. xxxi. 3. And none were to be employed in the work with him, but such as were 'wise hearted, and into whom God had put wisdom,' ver. 6. And yet this was but for the building of an earthly tabernacle, and that not to contrive it, but only to make and erect it according to a pattern which God himself did frame; this they could not do, till they were 'filled with the Spirit of God in wisdom.' What then must needs be required to the contrivance of this glorious, mysterious, spiritual, heavenly house of God? Nothing could effect it but infinite wisdom. Yea, 'the manifold wisdom of God' was in it, Eph. iii. 10. 'All the treasures of his wisdom and knowledge,' Col. ii. 3. In this eternal wisdom of God was the mysterious contrivance of this building hid from the foundation of the world, Eph. iii. 9, and its breaking forth from thence in the revelation of it made in the gospel, was accompanied with so much glory, that the angels of heaven did earnestly desire to bow down, and 'look into it,' 1 Pet. i. 12. We have a very dark view of the glories of this building, and where it is mystically represented to us, as Isa. lx; Ezek. xliii, xliv, xlv; Rev. xxi, xxii; we may rather admire at it than comprehend its excellency. But when we shall come to see how the foundation of it was laid, at which 'all the sons of God shouted for joy,' how by the strange and wonderful working of the Spirit of grace, all the stones designed from eternity for the building of this house, were quickened and made living in all ages and generations, and how they are from the beginning of the world to the end of it, 'fitly framed together to be a temple to the Lord,' and what is the glory of God's inhabitation therein, we shall be satisfied that divine wisdom was required thereunto.

Secondly. For the power of its erection.—It is the effect of divine power; and that whether we respect the opposition that is made to it, or the preparing and fitting of the work itself. Those angels who left their first habitation, had drawn the whole creation into a conspiracy against the building of the house of God. Not a person was to be used therein, but was engaged in an enmity against this work. And who shall prevail against this opposition? Nothing but divine power could scatter this combination of principalities and powers, and defeat the engagement of the world, and of the gates of hell against this design. Again, for the work itself; the sins of men were to be expiated, atonement for them was to be made, a price of redemption to be paid, dead sinners were to be quickened, blind eyes to be opened, persons of all sorts to be regenerated, ordinances and institutions of worship for beauty and glory to be erected, supplies of the Spirit at all



times, and all ages and places, for its increase in grace and holiness, were to be granted, with other things innumerable which nothing but divine power could effect. Consider but this one thing; whereas all the parts of this house are subject to dissolution, the persons whereof it consists do, and must all die, he that builds this house must be able to raise them all from the dead, or else his whole work about the house itself is lost. Now who can do this but he that is God? They who think this is the work of a mere man, know nothing of it; indeed nothing of God, of themselves, of the Spirit of God, of faith, grace, redemption, or of the reality of the gospel, as they ought. It is but a little dark view I can take of the wisdom and power that is laid out in this work, and yet I am not more satisfied that there is a God in heaven, than I am that he that built this thing is God. And herein also may we see, whence it is that this building goes on, notwithstanding all the opposition that is made to it. Take any one single believer from the foundation of the world, and consider the opposition that is made by sin, Satan and the world, in temptations and persecutions, to his interest in this house of God, and doth it not appear marvellous that he is preserved, that he is delivered? How hath it been in this matter with our own souls, if we belong to this house? That we should be called out of darkness into marvellous light, that we should be preserved hitherto notwithstanding our weakness, faintings, infirmities, falls, sins, &c. Is there not some secret hidden power, that effectually, in ways unknown to us, unperceived by us, puts forth itself on our behalf? Take any particular church in any age, and consider the persons of whom it is composed; commonly the poor, the weak, the foolish in, and of the world, are the matter of it. The entanglements and perplexities that it meets withal from the remainders of its own darkness and unbelief, with the reproach and persecution which for the most part it meets withal in the world, seem enough to root it up, or to overwhelm it every moment, yet it abides firm and stable. Or consider the whole church, with all the individual persons belonging thereunto, and that in all ages, throughout all generations; and think what it requires for its preservation in its inward and outward condition, divine power shineth forth in all these things. Not one stone of this building is lost or cast to the ground, much less shall ever the whole fabric of it be prevailed against.

V. The greatest and most honourable of the sons of men that are employed in the work of God in his house, are but servants, and parts of the house itself.—Ver. 5, ‘Moses verily as a servant.’ Moses himself, the great lawgiver, was but a servant. And if he were no more, certainly none that followed him under the Old Testament, being all inferior to him, (seeing ‘there arose not a prophet in Israel like unto him,’ Deut. xxxiv. 10,) were in any other condition. So did the principal builders of the church under the New Testament declare concerning themselves. Servants of JESUS CHRIST, was their only title of honour. And they professed themselves to be servants of the church for Christ’s sake, 2 Cor. iv. 5. And on that ground did they disclaim all dominion over the faith or worship of the church, as being only helpers of their joy, 2 Cor. i. 24. ‘Not as lords over the

Lord's heritage, but as ensamples of the flock,' 1 Pet. v. 3, all according to the charge laid on them by their Lord and Master, Mat. xx. 25—27. And this appears,

First. Because no man hath any thing to do in this house but by virtue of commission from him who is the only Lord and Ruler of it; this bespeaks them servants. They are all taken up in the marketplace, from amongst the number of common men by the Lord of the vineyard, and sent into it by him. Neither are they sent to rest or sleep there, nor to eat the grapes and fill themselves, much less to tread down and spoil the vines; but to work and labour till the evening when they shall receive their wages. All things plainly prove them servants, and their commission is recorded, Mat. xxviii. 18—20. which ought carefully to be attended to.

Secondly. It is required of them, as servants, to observe and obey the commands of their Lord, and nothing else are they to do, have they to do, in his house. It is required of them that they be faithful; and their faithfulness consists in their dispensation of the mysteries of Christ, 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. Moses himself, who received such a testimony unto his faithfulness from God, did nothing but what he commanded him, made nothing but according to the pattern shown him in the mount. Nor were the builders under the New Testament, to teach the church to do or observe any thing in the house of God, but what the Lord Christ commanded them, Matt. xxviii. 20. This is the duty of a faithful servant, and not to pretend by his own power and authority, to ordain things in the house for its worship and sacred use, not appointed by his Lord and Master. There is a strange spiritual fascination in this matter, or men could not at the same time profess themselves to be servants, and yet not think that their whole duty consists in doing the will of their Lord, but also in giving out commands of their own to be observed. This is the work of lords, and not of servants. And if it be not forbidden them by Christ, I know not what is.

Thirdly. As servants, they are accountable. They must give an account of all that they do in the house of their Lord. This their master often and solemnly warns them of; see Matt. xxiv. 45—48; Luke xii. 42. An account he will have of the talents committed to them, of their own gifts, and of the persons or souls committed to their charge; of his sheep; an account of their labour, pains, diligence, and readiness to do or suffer according to his mind and will. An account they must give, Heb. xiii. 17, and that unto the chief Shepherd when he comes, 1 Pet. v. 4. It is to be feared, that this is not much in some men's thoughts, who are yet greatly concerned in it. They count their profits, advantages, preferments, wealth; but of the account they are to make at the last day, they seem to make no great reckoning. But what do such men think? Are they lords or servants? Have they a Master, or have they not? Are they to do their own wills, or the will of another? Do they fight uncertainly, and beat the air, or have they some certain scope and aim before them? If they have, what can it be, but how they may give up their account with joy? joy; if not in the safety of all their flocks, through

the sinful neglect and miscarriages of any of them, yet in their own faithfulness, and the testimony of their consciences thereunto.

Fourthly. As servants, they shall have their reward: every one his penny, that for which he hath laboured. For although they are but servants, yet they serve a good, just, great, and gracious Lord, who will not forget their labour, but give unto them a crown at his appearance, 1 Pet. v. 4.

See hence the boldness of the man of sin, and his accomplices, whose description we have exactly, Matt. xxiv. 48, 49, 'An evil servant who says in his heart, that his Lord delayeth his coming, and so smites his fellow-servants, and eats and drinks with the drunken.' He pretends, indeed, to be a SERVANT of SERVANTS, but under that specious title, and show of voluntary humility, takes upon him to be an absolute lord over the house of God. There are but two sorts of dominion: First. That which is internal and spiritual over the faith, souls, and consciences of men; and then that which is external over their bodies and estates. And both of these doth he, this SERVANT of SERVANTS, usurp in the house of God, and thereby sits in it, making ostentation of himself to be God. And two ways there are, whereby supreme dominion in and about things sacred may be exercised; one by making laws, ordinances, and institutions, religious or divine; the other by corporeal punishments and corrections of them who observe them not. And both these doth he exercise; what the Lord Christ commandeth to be observed in his church, he observeth not, nor suffereth those to do so who would. And what he hath not appointed nor commanded, in instances innumerable he enjoineth to be observed. Wicked and evil servant! whose Lord in due time will call him to an account. Is this to be a servant or a tyrant?

Others also would do well to ponder the account they are to make; and well is it with them, happy is their condition, whose greatest joy in this world on solid grounds is, that they are in this work accountable servants.

VI. The great end of all Mosaic institutions, was to represent or prefigure and give testimony unto the grace of the gospel by Jesus Christ.—To this end was Moses faithful in the house of God; namely, to give testimony unto the things that were afterwards to be spoken. The demonstration of this principle, is the main scope of this Epistle, so far as it is doctrinal; and the consideration of it will occur unto us in so many instances, as that we shall not need here to insist on the general assertion.

VII. It is an eminent privilege to be the house of Christ, or a part of that house.—'Whose house are we.' Of this the apostle reminds the Hebrews, that a sense of their privilege therein, and advantage thereby, might prevail with them unto the duties which he presseth them unto. And it is thus an advantage:

First. Because this house is God's building, 1 Cor. iii. 9, 'Ye are God's building;' a house that he built, and that in an admirable manner. The tabernacle of old was thus far of God's building, that it was built by his appointment, and that according to the pattern that he gave of it unto Moses. But this building is far more glorious,

Heb. ix. 11, 'a great and perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.'

Again, It is so of God's building, that none is employed in a way of authority for the carrying of it on, but the Lord Christ alone; the Son and Lord over his own house. And he takes it upon himself, Matt. xvi. 18, 'I will build my church.' But it may be objected, that it is thus also with the whole world. It is the building of God, and was built by the Son, the eternal Word, by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing is made that was made, John i. 2, 3; yea, it was built to be *Θεου οικητηριον*, 'an habitation for the divine glory,' in the providential manifestations of it. I answer, All this is true: It is so, and is therefore excellent, and wonderfully sets out the glory of God, as hath been declared on the foregoing chapter. But yet this house whereof we speak, on many accounts excelleth the whole fabric of heaven and earth. For, first, it is not barely a house, but it is a sacred house, a temple; not an ordinary, but a holy, a dedicated dwelling-place. 'Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord,' Eph. ii. 20, 21. This is God's mansion, when all other things of the world are let out to farm unto the sons of men. They are cottages for flesh and blood to dwell in; this is God's place of constant and special residence.

Secondly. It is a special kind of temple, not like that built of old by Solomon, of stones, cedar-wood, silver and gold, but it is a spiritual house, 1 Pet. ii. 5, made up of living stones in a strange and wonderful manner. A temple not subject to decay, but such as grows continually in every stone that is laid in it, and in the daily new addition of living stones unto it. And although these stones are continually removed, some from the lower rooms in this house in grace, to the higher stories in glory, yet not one stone of it is, or shall be, lost for ever.

Thirdly. The manner of God's habitation in this house is peculiar also. He dwelt indeed in the tabernacle and temple of old; but how? By sacrifices, carnal ordinances, and some outward appearances of glory. In this house he dwells by his Spirit: 'Ye are builded together an habitation of God through the Spirit,' Eph. ii. 22. And 'know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you,' 1 Cor. iii. 16. Unspeakable therefore is this privilege, and so are the advantages which depend thereon.

VIII. The greatness of this privilege requires an answerableness of duty. Because we are this house of God, it becometh us to hold fast our confidence unto the end. This is particularly expressed; but the reason is the same unto many other duties, which, on the account of our being the house of God, are incumbent on us. As, 1. Universal holiness, Psal. xciii. 5. 2. Especial purity of soul and body, becoming an habitation of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, vi. 19, 20. 3. Endeavours to fill up the place, state, condition, and relation, that we hold unto the house for the good of the whole, Col. ii. 19; Eph. ii. 15, 16. For besides the general interest which all believers



have in this house, which is equal in and unto them all, every one hath his especial place and order in this building. 1. In the peculiar season, age, or generation, wherein our service in this house is expected. And these require several duties suited unto the light, enjoyments, and trials of the whole in them. 2. In the especial places or offices that any hold in this house. 3. In the respect that is to be had unto the particular or especial assemblies of this house, whereunto any living stone doth belong. 4. With respect unto advantages that any are entrusted withal, for the increase or edification of the house in faith and love; all which call for the discharge of many especial duties.

IX. In times of trial and persecution, freedom, boldness, and constancy in profession are a good evidence unto ourselves, that we are living stones in the house of God, and duties acceptable unto him.—Hold fast, saith the apostle, your *παρρήσιαν*, your free, bold profession of the gospel, and your exultation in the hope of the great promises, which are given unto you in it. This duty God hath set a singular remark upon, as that which he indispensably requireth, and that whereby he is peculiarly glorified. A blessed instance we have hereof in the three companions of Daniel. They beheld on the one side, *vultum instantis tyranni*, ‘the form of whose visage was changed with fury,’ *furiis accensus, et ira terribilis*; on the other, a flaming consuming furnace of fire that they were instantly to be cast into, if they let not go their profession. But behold their *παρρήσιαν*, their boldness and confidence in their profession, Dan. iii. 16—18. ‘They answered and said unto the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter: if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.’ They do not ask a moment’s space to deliberate in this matter, and a blessed end they had of their confidence. So Basil answered Julian, when he would have given him space to consult: ‘Do,’ said he, ‘what you intend; for I will be the same tomorrow that I am this day.’ This is readiness and alacrity to witness a good confession with boldness. So it is observed of Peter and John, Acts iv. 13. The Jews were astonished, observing their *παρρήσιαν*, (the word in the text, which we there translate boldness,) that is, their readiness and promptitude of mind and speech, in their confession of the name of Christ when they were in prison, and under the power of their adversaries. Hence also they that fail in this duty are termed *δειλοι*, ‘fearful ones,’ and are in the first rank of them who are excluded out of the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 8. Peter indeed instructs us to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, *μετα φοβου*, ‘with fear,’ 1 Pet. iii. 15, that is, of reverence unto God, and the sacredness of those things wherein his name is concerned. But we must not do it, *μετα δειλιας*, with ‘a pusillanimous fear,’ a fear of men, or respect unto what from them may befall us for our profession. These *δειλοι*, ‘fearful ones,’ are those *meticulosi* which shake and tremble at the

report of danger ; so that when persecution ariseth, straightway they are offended, and give over their profession.

And in our discharge of this duty is the glory of God greatly concerned. The revenue of glory which God hath from any in this world, ariseth principally, if not solely, from that profession which they make of the gospel, and of their faith in the promises thereof. Hereby do they testify unto his authority, goodness, wisdom, grace, and faithfulness. Other way of giving glory unto God we have not, but by bearing witness unto his excellencies ; that is, glorifying him as God. Now, when persecution and trouble arise about these things, a trial is made whether we indeed believe and put our trust in what we profess of God ; and whether we value his promises above all present things, whatever. And hereby is our heavenly Father glorified. This therefore is a singular privilege, when it is given to believers, Phil. i. 29.

Again. By this means, the souls of the saints have a trial and experiment of their own grace, of what sort it is ; as Abraham had of his own faith and obedience, in the great experiment which God gave him of it by his command for the sacrificing of Isaac. Tried graces are exceeding precious, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7 ; and evidences that those in whom they are, do belong to the house of God.

There are other observations, which the words tender unto us, that shall only be named.

X. Interest in the gospel gives sufficient cause of confidence and rejoicing in every condition.—‘ Hold fast the rejoicing of your hope.’ The riches of it are invaluable, eternal, peculiar, such as out-balance all earthly things, satisfactory to the soul, ending in endless glory ; and he that is duly interested in them, cannot but have abundant cause of joy unspeakable at all times.

XI. So many and great are the interveniences and temptations that lie in the way of profession, so great is the number of them that decay in it, or apostatize from it, that as unto the glory of God, and the principal discovery of its truth and sincerity, it is to be taken from its permanency unto the end.—‘ Whose house are we, if we hold fast our confidence, and profession, and rejoicing of hope, firm unto the end.

Having demonstrated the preeminence of the Lord Christ above Moses, in their respective ministries about the house of God, the apostle, according unto his design and method, proceeds unto the application of the truth he had evinced, in an exhortation unto stability and constancy in faith and obedience. And this he doth in a way that adds a double force to his inference and exhortation. First, in that he pressed them with the words, testimonies, and examples recorded in the Old Testament, unto which they owned an especial reverence and subjection ; and then the nature of the examples which he insists upon is such as supplies him with a new argument unto his purpose. Now this is taken from the dealing of God with them who were disobedient under the ministry and rule of Moses, which he further explains, ver. 15—19. For if God dealt in severity with them, who were unbelieving and disobedient, with respect unto him and his

work who was but a servant in the house ; they might easily understand what his dispensation towards them would be, who should be so, with respect unto the Son and his work, who is ‘ Lord over the whole house, and whose house are we.’

VER. 7—11.—*Διο, καθως λεγει το Πνευμα το ἅγιον· Σήμερον εαν της φωνης αυτου ακουσητε, Μη σκληρυνητε τας καρδιας υμων, ὡς εν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ, κατα την ἡμεραν του πειρασμου εν τη ερημῳ· Οὐ ἐπειρασαν με οἱ πατερες υμων, εδοκιμασαν με, και ειδον τα εργα μου τεσσαρακοντα ετη. Διο προσωχθισα τη γενει εκεινη και ειπον· Αει πλανωνται τη καρδιᾳ· αυτοι δε ουκ εγνωσαν τας ὁδους μου· Ὡς ὠμοσα εν τη ὀργῃ μου· Εἰ εισελευσονται εις την καταπανσιν μου.*

There are some little varieties in some words and letters observed in some old manuscripts, but of no importance or use, and for the most part mere mistakes. As *εδοκιμασαν* for *εδοκιμασαν*, *ταυτη* for *εκεινη*, *ειπα* for *ειπον*. As many such differences occur, where some have tampered to make the apostle's words and the translation of the LXX. in all things to agree.

*Καθως*, sicut; the Syriac and Arabic translations omit this word; ‘Wherefore the Holy Ghost saith,’ *Ὡς εν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ* so the LXX. in the Psalm. Sicut in exacerbatione; in irritatione, ‘in the provocation.’ Syr. ut ad iram eum provocetis tanquam exacerbatores, both in the Psalm and here also; departing both from the Hebrew text, and the apostolical version; ‘that you stir him not up to anger as provokers.’ *Κατα την ἡμεραν του πειρασμου* so the LXX. in the Psalm. Vulg. Secundum diem tentationis, ‘According to the day of temptation,’ that is, as those others, the fathers of the people did, in the day of temptation. So also in this place following the LXX. in the Psalm, though not only the original, but that version also, might more properly be rendered, Sicut in die tentationis, ‘As in the day of temptation.’ *Οὐ ἐπειρασαν*—the translation of the Syriac version in the Psalm, qua tentarunt; that is, qua die, referring it unto the time of the temptation, ‘the day wherein.’ Here quum, ‘when,’ to the same purpose; neither was there any need of the variety of expression, the word used by that translator in both places being the same, referring unto time, not place, the day of temptation, not the wilderness wherein it was. Vulg. Ubi, properly ‘where,’ as the Arabic, in quo, ‘in which,’ desert, the next antecedent. Ethiop. Eo quod tentarunt eum patres vestri, tentarunt me, ‘Whereas your fathers tempted him, they tempted me.’ For it was Christ who was tempted in the wilderness, 1 Cor. x. 9.

‘Saw my works,’ *τεσσαρακοντα ετη*, ‘forty years.’ Here the apostle completes the sense. For although sundry editions of the New Testament, as one by Stephen, and one by Plantin, out of one especial copy, place the period at *εργα μου*, ‘my works,’ yet the insertion of *διο* after *τεσσαρακοντα ετη* by the apostle, proves the sense by him there to be concluded. So is it likewise by the Syriac in the Psalm, and by all translations in this place. However, the Ethiopic omitting

*διο* seems to intend another sense. The LXX. and the Vulgar Latin in the Psalm, follow the original, though some copies of the LXX. have been tampered withal, to bring them to conformity with the apostle here, as usually it hath fallen out. And there is no doubt but that the order of the words in the Syriac version on the Psalm came from this place.

*Προσώχθισα*, *offensus fui*, *incensus fui*, Arab. *execratus sum*, 'I cursed this generation.

*Αει πλανωνται*, the original in the Psalm, *הם עג*, 'this people,' which on the Psalm is followed by the Syriac, and contrary to the apostle, the same expression is retained in that version of this place. The LXX. on the Psalm, have taken in these words of the apostle, and left out those of the original, wherein they are (as almost constantly on the Psalms) followed by the Vulgar Latin.

*Διο*, 'wherefore;' it expresseth an inference from what was spoken before, manifesting the ensuing exhortation to be deduced from thence. And it hath respect unto the exhortation itself, which the apostle directly enters upon, ver. 12, 'Take heed brethren;' wherefore, take heed brethren. There is therefore a hyperbaton in the discourse, the words that agree in sense being separated by an interposition of other things. And there is between them a digression to an example or argument for the better enforcement of the exhortation itself.

*Καθως λεγει το Πνευμα το αγιον*, 'as the Holy Ghost saith,' or, that I may use the words of the Holy Ghost. There is an emphasis in the manner of the expression. *Το Πνευμα το αγιον*, 'that Holy Spirit,' so called *κατ' εξοχην*, by way of eminency. The third Person in the Trinity, who in an especial manner spake in the penmen of the Scripture. Those holy Men of God, spake *υπο πνευματος αγιου φερομενοι*, 'moved,' acted, inspired 'by the Holy Ghost,' 2 Pet. i. 21

*Καθως λεγει*, 'as he saith.' This may intend either his first immediate speaking in his inspiration of the Psalmist, as it is expressed chap. iv. 7, *λεγων εν Δαβιδ*, 'saying in David,' where these words are again repeated; or, his continuing still to speak those words to us all in the Scripture. Being given out by inspiration from him, and his authority always accompanying them, he still speaketh them.

The words reported by the apostle are taken from Psalm xcv. 7—11. He mentions not the especial place, as speaking unto them who either were, or whom he would have to be exercised in the word, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Besides, though such particular citations of places may be needful for us, for a present help unto them that hear and read, it it was not so to the holy penmen of the New Testament, whose writings are continually to be searched and meditated upon all our lives, John v. 30. Whereas ours are transient, and for the present occasion. Every thing in their writings which makes us attentive and industrious in our search, is to our advantage. The leaving thereof an uncertainty, whence particular quotations are taken, is useful to make us more sedulous in our inquiries.

This Psalm the apostle makes much use of, both in this chapter, and the next. In this he manifests it to contain an useful and instructive



example, in what happened to the people of God of old. In the next he shows, that not only a moral example may be taken from what so fell out, but also that there was in the things mentioned in it, according to God's appointment, a type of our state and condition; and moreover a prophecy of the gospel state of the church under the Messiah, and the blessed rest therein to be obtained. Here we have the consideration of it, as historical and exemplar; in the next we shall treat of it as prophetical.

The Jews had a tradition that this Psalm belonged unto the Messiah. Hence the Targum renders those words of the first verse, לְצֹר יִשְׁעֵנו, 'to the rock of our salvation;' קִדְּם הִקֵּף בְּיָרְקָנָא, 'before the mighty one of our redemption;' with respect unto the redemption to be wrought by the Messiah, whom they looked for as the Redeemer, Luke ii. 38. So ver. 7, יוֹמָא דִּין, 'in that day,' seems to refer unto the same season. And the ancient Jews do frequently apply these words, 'To-day, if you will hear his voice,' unto the Messiah. For from these words they have framed a principle, that if all Israel would repent but one day, the Messiah would come, because it is said, 'To-day, if you will hear his voice.' So in the Talmud, Trac. Taanith distinc. Mamarai Maskirin. And the same words they used in Midrash Shirhashirim, cap. v. ver. 2. And this is no small witness against them as to the person of the Messiah, for he is God undoubtedly concerning whom the Psalmist speaks, as is evident from ver. 2—7. He whose voice they are to hear, whom they acknowledge to be the Messiah, is 'JEHOVAH, the great God,' ver. 3, 'who made the sea, and formed the dry land,' ver. 5. 'The Lord our Maker,' ver. 6. And indeed this Psalm, with those that follow unto the civ., are evidently of those new songs which belong unto the kingdom of the Messiah. And this is among the Jews the שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ, or 'principal new song,' expressing that renovation of all things which under it they expect. The next Psalm expresseth it, 'Sing to the Lord, שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ, a new song,' מוֹמָר זֶה מוֹמָר זֶה saith Rashi, 'This Psalm is for the time to come,' that is, the days of the Messiah, הוֹדִיעַ הוֹדִיעַ הוֹדִיעַ, hodie, 'to-day, this day.' A certain day or space of time is limited or determined, as the apostle speaks in the next chapter. And the Psalm being in part, as was shown, prophetical, it must have a various application. For it both expresseth what was then done and spoken in the type, with regard to what was before as the foundation of all; and intimateth what should afterwards be accomplished in the time prefigured, in what the words have respect unto as past.

The general foundation of all lies in this, that a certain limited present space of time is expressed in the words. This is the moral sense of them; limited, because a day; present, because to-day. And this space may denote in general, the continuance of men's lives in this world. הוֹדִיעַ, that is, saith Rashi הוֹדִיעַ הוֹדִיעַ, 'in this world.' in this life; afterwards there will be neither time nor place for this duty. But yet the measure of such a day is not merely our continuance in a capacity to enjoy it, but the will of God to continue it. It is God's day that is intended, and not ours, which we may out-live, and lose the benefit of, as will afterwards appear.

Again, the general sense of the word is limited to a special season, both then present when the words were spoken, and intimated in prophecy to come afterwards. For the present or David's time, that refers, saith Aben Ezra, to *באו ונשתחוהו*, 'come, let us fall down and worship,' ver. 6, as if he had said, 'If you will hear his voice, come and worship before him this day.' And in this sense it is probable, that some special feast of Moses' institution, when the people assembled themselves to the solemn worship of God, was intended. Many think that this Psalm was peculiarly appointed to be sung at the feast of tabernacles. Neither is it unlikely; that feast being a great type and representation of the Son of God coming to pitch his tabernacle amongst us, John i. 14. Let this then pass for David's typical day. But that a further day is intended herein, the apostle declares in the next chapter. Here the proper time and season of any duty, of the great duty here exhorted unto is first intended, as is evident from the application that the apostle makes of this instance, ver. 13, 'exhort one another daily, whilst it is called *היום, σημερον*, to-day;' that is, whilst the season of the duty is continued unto you. So was it also originally used by the Psalmist, and applied unto the duties of the feast of tabernacles, or some other season of the performance of God's solemn worship.

*Εαν*, si, 'if,' a mere conditional, as commonly used. But it is otherwise applied in the New Testament, as Matt. viii. 19, 'I will follow thee *ὅπου εαν απερχῃ*, whithersoever thou shalt go.' And ch. xii. 36, 'every idle word, *ὃ εαν λαλησωσιν οἱ ανθρωποι*, which men shall speak.' There is no condition or supposition included in these places; but the signification is indefinite; 'whosoever, whatsoever, whensoever.' Such may be the sense of it in this place, which would, as some suppose, remove a difficulty which is cast on the text. For make it to be merely a conditional, and this and the following clause seem to be coincident. If you will hear, that is, obey his voice, harden not your hearts. For to hear the voice of God, and the not hardening of our hearts, are the same. But there is no necessity, as we shall see, to betake ourselves unto this unusual sense of the word.

*Της φωνης αυτου ακουσατε*. 'You will hear his voice.' *בקולו שמעו*. Wherever this construction of the words doth occur in the Hebrew, that *שמע* is joined with *בקול*, whether it be spoken of God in reference unto the voice of man, or of man in reference unto the voice of God; the effectual doing and accomplishment of the thing spoken of is intended. So Num. xiv. 22. 'They have tempted me these ten times, *ולא שמעו בקולי* and have not heard my voice;' that is, have not yielded obedience to my command. So of God, with reference unto men, Josh. x. 14, 'There was no day like unto that, before nor after it, *לשמע יהוה בקול איש*, that the Lord should hearken to the voice of a man;' that is, effectually to do so great a thing, as to cause the sun and moon to stand still in heaven. So between man and man, Deut. xxi. 18—20; see Matt. xviii. 18, 19. It is frequently observed, that to hear, to hearken, in the Scripture signifies to obey, or to yield obedience to the things heard; as to see doth to understand or believe; and to taste denotes spiritual experience. Words of outward sense

being used to express the inward spiritual acts of the mind. *Sometimes* I say it is so, but this phrase is *always* so used. The Holy Ghost, therefore, herein lays down the duty which we owe to the word, to the voice of God when we hear it in the way of his appointment; that is, to yield sincere obedience unto it; and the hinderance thereof is expressed in the next words. Now, as this command is translated over into the gospel, as it is by our apostle in the next chapter, it hath respect unto the great precept of hearing and obeying the voice of Christ as the great prophet of the church, given originally, Deut. xviii. 19. 'Whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name; (for the Father speaketh in the Son, Heb. i. 1.) I will require it of him,' Acts iii. 22, which was solemnly again renewed upon his actual exhibition, Matt. xvii. 5, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him,' see 2 Pet. i. 17. And he is thereon, as we have seen, compared with Moses in his prophetic office, and preferred above him, John i. 17, 18.

קול της φωνης αυτου קול יהוה, 'the voice of the Lord,' is sometimes taken for his power; inasmuch as by his word, as an intimation and signification of the power which he puts forth therein, he created and disposeth of all things. See Ps. xxix. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, where the mighty acts of God's power and providence are assigned unto his voice. Also, see Mic. vi. 9. Sometimes it is used for the revelation of his will in his commands and promises. This is the λογος προφορικος of God, the word of his will and pleasure. But it is withal certain that קול and φωνη are used principally, if not solely, for a sudden transient voice or speaking. For the word of God as delivered in the Scripture, is דבר and λογος, sometimes ρημα, not קול or φωνη. So the lifting up of the voice amongst men, is to make some sudden outcry, as, 'They lifted up their voice and wept.' These words, then, do ordinarily signify a sudden, marvellous speaking of God from heaven, testifying unto any thing. So doth φωνη, Mark i. 11, και φωνη εγενετο εκ των ουρανων, 'and there was a voice from heaven.' So Matt. xvii. 5; Luke iii. 22; John xii. 28. Ηλθεν ουν φωνη εκ του ουρανου, 'there came therefore a voice from heaven;' which when the multitude heard, they said, βροντην γεγονεναι, 'that it thundered;' for thunder was called קול אלהים, 'the voice of God.' So the קולות, 'the voices,' Exod. xix. 16, that accompanied the ברקים, or 'lightenings,' that is, the thunders that were at the giving of the law, are rendered by our apostle, φωνη ρηματων, Heb. xii. 19; that is, the thunders from heaven which accompanied the words that were spoken; so is φωνη used, Acts x. 13, 15; xxvi. 14. Hence came the קול בת Bath kol among the ancient Jews; or, as in the Chaldee ברת קלא Gen. xxxviii. 26. There came filia vocis, the 'daughter of the voice' from heaven. And so the Syriac version in this place, אן ברת קלא תשמעין, 'if you will hear the daughter of the voice.' They called it so, as being an effect or product of the power of God, to cause his mind and will to be heard and understood by it. They thought it was not the voice of God himself immediately, but as it were the echo of it; a secondary voice, the offspring of another. And whereas they acknowledge that after the building of the second temple, the רוח הקדוש or רוח נבואה, 'the spirit of prophecy and of inspira-

tion,' ceased in their church; they contend that revelations were made by the קול, or immediate voice from heaven; though they can instance in none but those which concerned our Saviour, which the apostles declared and made famous, 2 Pet. i. 17. But it may be there is that in this tradition which they understand not. Elias, in his Tishbi, tells us, בעלי הקבלה אומרים שהוא קול של מדה אחת הנקראת קול ואולי כן הוא, 'The Cabalists say, that it is the voice of a property in God, which is called קול, and it may be it is so.' They have no other way to express a person in the divine nature, but by מדה, a special property. And one of these, they say, is called קול; that is, 'the Word,' the eternal Word or Son of God. His especial speaking is intended in this expression, which is true. So his speaking is called, his speaking from heaven, Heb. xii. 26. Although I deny not but that the immediate speaking of the Father, in reference unto the Son, is sometimes so expressed, Matt. xvii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 17. But an especial extraordinary word is usually intended. So our Saviour tells the Pharisees, that they had not heard *την φωνην*, the voice of God at any time, nor seen his *ειδος*, 'his shape,' John v. 37. They had heard the voice of God in the reading and preaching of the word; but that was *ὁ λογος*, 'his word;' his *φωνην* they had not heard. Notwithstanding all their pretences and boastings, they had not at any time extraordinary revelations of God made unto them. For there is an allusion to the revelation of the will of God at Horeb, when his קול or *φωνη* or voice was heard, and his מראה or *ειδος*, his shape appeared, or a miraculous appearance of his presence was made, both now being accomplished in himself in a more eminent manner, as the apostle declares, John i. 16—18. It is true the Lord Christ calls his ordinary preaching, as we say, *viva voce*, *την φωνην*, 'his voice,' John x. 5, 16, 17. But this he doth because it was extraordinary; his person, work, and call being so. Wherefore the Psalmist in these words, as to the historical and typical intendment of them, recalls the people unto the remembrance and consideration of God's speaking unto them in the giving of the law at Horeb, and exhorts them unto obedience unto it, formally upon that consideration, namely, that the will of God was uttered unto them in a marvellous and extraordinary manner. And as to the prophetic intendment of it, he intimates another extraordinary revelation of it, to be made by the Messiah, the Son of God.

Μη σκληρυνητε τας καρδιας υμων. אל תקשי לבבכם: 'Harden not your hearts:' this expression is sacred. It occurs not in other authors. To 'harden the heart,' is a thing peculiarly regarding the obedience that God requireth of us. Σκληροτης, 'hardness,' is indeed sometimes used in heathen writers for stubbornness of mind and manners. So Aristotle says of some, that they are *ονομαστοτατοι επι σκληροτητι*, 'famous for stubbornness.' Such as Homer describes Achilles to have been, who had *περισκελεις φρενας*, 'an hard, stubborn, inflexible mind.' So is *σκληροτραχηλος* sometimes used: *duricervicus*, 'hard-necked or stiff-necked;' *curvicervicum pecus*, 'a crook-necked perverse beast.' But *σκληρυνω*, 'to harden,' is scarcely used unless it be in the New Testament, and in the translation of the Old by the LXX. Three times it occurs in the New Testament, Acts xix. 9; Rom. ix. 18; and



in this chapter,—every where by Paul, so that it is a word peculiar unto him. *Σκληρυνειν την καρδιαν*, therefore, ‘to harden the heart,’ in a moral sense, is peculiar to holy writ; and it is ascribed both to God and man, but in different senses, as we shall see afterwards. By this word the apostle expresseth קשה, out of the original; that is to be hard, heavy, and also difficult. In Hiphil, it is ‘to harden and make obdurate,’ and is used only in a moral sense. The LXX. render it constantly by *σκληρυνω*, induro; or *βαρυνω*, gravo, 1 Kings xii. 4, ‘to harden, or to burden.’ Sometimes it is used absolutely, Job ix. 4, *אלי קשה*, ‘hardened against him,’ that is, himself, ‘hardened himself against him.’ Oft-times it hath ער, ‘the neck,’ added unto it; מקשה ער, Prov. xxix. 1, ‘that stiffeneth or hardeneth his neck.’ As one that goes on resolvedly, as will not so much as turn aside or look back towards any one that calls him. Sometimes it hath רוּחַ, ‘the spirit,’ joined to it, Deut. ii. 32, *קשה את רוחו*, ‘he hardened his spirit.’ But most commonly it hath לבב, ‘the heart,’ as here. And it still in man denotes a voluntary perverseness of mind, in not taking notice of, or not applying the soul unto the will of God, as revealed, to do and observe it.

Ὡς ἐν τῇ παραπικρασμῷ. ‘as in the provocation,’ כמריבה. The LXX. render this word where it is first used, by *λοιδορησις*, convictum, ‘a reproaching,’ Exod. xvii. 7; afterwards constantly by *αντιλογια*, ‘contradiction or contention by words;’ as Num. xx. 13, xxvii. 14; Deut. xxxiii. 8; and no where by *παραπικρασμος*, as in this place of the Psalm. Hence, some suppose, it is evident, that the present Greek translation is not the work or endeavour of the same persons, but a cento of many essays. I rather think, that we have hence a new evidence of the insertion of the apostle’s words into that version. For, as I will not deny, but that the writers of the New Testament might make use of that Greek version of the Old, which was then extant, so that many words and expressions are taken from them, and inserted in that which we now enjoy, is too evident for any man of modesty or sobriety to deny. And this word, as here compounded, is scarce used in any other author. Πικρος is ‘bitter,’ in opposition to *γλυκυσ*, ‘sweet, pleasant;’ that is the proper natural sense of the word. So also of *πικρω* and *πικραινω*, ‘to make bitter to the taste or sense;’ but the metaphorical use of these words in a moral sense, is frequent for exacerbo, provo. The Hebrew בעס, is ‘to stir up to anger, to vex, imbitter, provoke,’ as 1 Sam. i. 6. So *παραπικρασμος* must be exacerbatio, provocatio, ‘an imbittering, a provocation to anger by contention.’ מריבה which here is so rendered, is jurgium, ‘a strife agitated in words;’—we render it ‘chiding.’ The story which this principally refers unto, is recorded Exod. xvii. 2—7. ‘And they pitched in Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink; wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide you with me, wherefore do you tempt the Lord? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children, and our cattle, with thirst? And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What

shall I do unto this people, for they be almost ready to stone me? And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not? Another story to the like purpose we have, of what befel the people in the wilderness of Zin, near forty years afterwards, when in their murmuring for water, another rock was smitten to bring it forth; whereon is added, 'This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord,' Num. xx. 13. It is also said on the same occasion, that they chode with Moses, ver. 3.

Κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ, בְּיוֹם מַסָּה, 'as in the day of Massah, or temptation.' מַסָּה from נָסָה, 'to tempt,' the other name given to the place before mentioned in Exodus; for thence it is that the apostle takes his example, where both the names are mentioned, and where the place is said to be called Meribah and Massah; whereas, in that of Numbers, it is only said, This is the water of Meribah, or strife. And yet it may be not without respect to the latter also. The first instance was at the beginning, the latter at the close of their provocations. As they began, so they ended. This was a remarkable passage between God and that people. For, first, a double name is given to the place where it fell out, 'He called the name of the place Massah and Meribah,' Exod. xvii. 7. Meribah, which the apostle renders ~~παράκλησις~~ ~~μας~~, seems principally or first to respect Moses, as the object of it, ver. 2. יָרִיב הָעָם מִשֶּׁה, 'and the people chode with Moses.' Thence had the place the name of chiding; Meribah, from jareb. And God was the immediate object of their temptation. So in the text there is made a distribution of these things distinctly, whence these several names arose. 'And Moses said unto the people, מַה תִּרְיֹבֵנִי עִמּוֹדִי מִדָּה תִּנְסֹנִי אֵת, יְהוָה, why do you chide with me, (Meribah,) and why do you tempt the Lord, (Massah)?' For in the same things and words wherein they chode with Moses, they tempted the Lord. And thence the same word of chiding, striving, contending, or provoking, is used in this matter towards the Lord also, Num. xx. 13. רָבוּ אֵת יְהוָה, 'they strove or chode with the Lord.'

Secondly. This matter as a thing exceedingly remarkable, is often called over and remembered again in the Scripture. Sometimes on the part of the people; and that, 1. To reproach and burden them with their sins; as Deut. ix. 22, 'And at Massah ye provoked the Lord to wrath;' and sometimes; 2. To warn them of the like miscarriages, ch. vi. 16, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God, as you tempted him at Massa.' So also in the xcvi<sup>th</sup> Psalm, from whence the apostle takes these words. Again, it is remembered as an instance of the faithfulness of Levi, who clave to God in those trials, Deut. xxxiii. 8, 'And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy

holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.'

The mercy likewise that ensued, in giving them waters from the rock, is frequently celebrated, Dent. viii. 15; Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16, cv. 41; Neh. ix. 15. Moreover in this rock of Horeb, lay hid a spiritual rock, as our apostle tells us, 1 Cor. x. 4, even Christ the Son of God, who being smitten with the rod of Moses, or the stroke and curse of the law administered by him, gave out waters of life freely to all that thirst and come unto him. In this matter therefore is comprehended a great instance of providence, and a great mystery of grace. But yet notwithstanding all this, although the special denomination of the sin of the people be taken from that instance of Exodus xvii., yet the expressions are not to be confined or appropriated only thereunto. For the particular provocation, on which God swore against them that they should not enter into his rest, fell out afterwards, Num. xiv., as we shall see in our progress. But this is eminently referred unto, 1. Because it was upon the very entrance of that course of provoking, which they constantly persisted in until they were consumed. 2. Because of the signal and significant miracles and works which God wrought thereon.

Εν ερημῳ, במדבר, 'in the desert or wilderness,' namely of Midian, whereinto that people entered upon their coming through the sea. In their way towards Horeb, their fourth station was at Rephidim, where the things fell out before recounted. So they received refreshment in a type from the spiritual rock, some days before the giving of the fiery law.

Ὅτε ἐπειράσαν με, אשר נסיתי. אשר is referred both to time and place, as well as persons. We render it *ού* here, 'when your fathers tempted me:' and so אשר in the Psalm; referring what is spoken to the time mentioned, or the day of temptation. So the Syriac, 'in which day.' The Vul. Lat. ubi, 'where,' that is, in the desert, at Meribah or Massa. And this is the proper signification of the word. Nor is either *ού* or *που*, the interrogative, ever used in any good authors to denote time, but place only. 'Where;' that is, במדבר, 'in the wilderness,' where they tempted God, and saw his works forty years.

Οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν, אבותיכם, 'your fathers, or forefathers,' προγονοι, 'progenitors,' 2 Tim. i. 3. So is πατέρες often used, and אבות most frequently; although in one place ראשנים be added, אבותם ראשנים, Jer. xi. 10, 'the first springs and heads of any nation or family;' the whole congregation in the wilderness whose posterity they were.

Εδοκιμασαν με, בדהני, 'proved me.' This word is seldom used in an ill sense, as the former is almost continually. בון, is to have experience, upon search, investigation, and trial, Psal. cxxxix. 23. The experience therefore that they had of the power of God upon their temptations, is that which by this word is intended: 'They proved me,' and found by trial that I was in the midst of them.

Και εἶδον τα ἔργα μου, גם ראי פעלי, 'and saw my works.' 'And saw my work,' in the psalm. גם is rendered by *και*: it signifies 'also, moreover,' somewhat above a mere conjunction; and so doth *και*, most frequently quinetiam. Some suppose it may be here taken for *etsi*,



etiamsi, 'although;' 'they tempted me, and proved me, although they saw my works.' And so these words are placed as an aggravation of their sin in tempting of God, distrusting of him after they had had such experience of his power and goodness, in those mighty works of his which they saw. But the order of things also seems to be intended. First. They tempted God—'they tempted me.' Then they had an experience of his power—'they proved me,' and that by the production of his mighty works which they saw. For generally all the works of God in the wilderness, whether of mercy or judgment, were consequents of, or ensued upon the people's tempting of him. Such was his bringing water out of the rock, sending of quails and manna. The people murmured, chode, strove, tempted; then the power of God was manifested, and the works wrought which they saw. So were the judgments that he wrought and executed on Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; on the spies that brought up an evil report on the land, with those that adhered unto them; this order and method of things is here expressed. They tempted God by their complaints, repinings, murmuring, seditions, unbelief, weariness of their condition, with impatient desires and wishings after other things. Hereupon they had frequent trials of the power, care, and faithfulness of God, as also of his holiness, and indignation against their sins. All these were made manifest in the mighty works of providence, in mercies, and in judgments which he wrought amongst them, and which they saw. They had them not by report or tradition, but saw them with their own eyes, which was a great aggravation of their unbelief. Jarchi refers this to the works of God in Egypt only; but this is contrary to our apostle, although they are not to be excluded. Num. xiv. 22, 'They have seen my glory, and my miracles, (my glorious works,) which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness.'

Τεσσαρακοντα ετη, 'forty years.' Here the apostle finisheth the sense of the words, referring them to what goes before. 'They saw my works forty years.' The Psalmist, as was before observed, placeth these words in the beginning of the next verse, and makes them to respect the season of God's indignation against them for their sins; ארבעים שנה, 'forty years was I grieved.' By the apostle, the space of time mentioned is applied unto the people's seeing of the works of God; by the Psalmist, to God's indignation against them. And these things being absolutely commensurate in their duration, it is altogether indifferent to which of them the limitation of time specified, is formally applied. And the apostle shows it to be indifferent, in that in the 17th verse of this chapter, he applies the space of time unto God's being grieved with them; as here, unto the people's sin. With whom was he grieved forty years? Only it may be the apostle made this distinction of the words, to intimate that the wrath of God against the entering of that people into his rest, was not made after the end of forty years, as the order of the words in the Psalm seems to import. 'Forty years was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways; unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.' They seem to intimate, that God thus swore in his wrath, after



he had been grieved with them forty years. But they do but seem so ; really they only declare, that it was the same people with whom he was grieved, concerning whom he sware. For the oath of God here intended, is that mentioned, Num. xiv. 20—23. The people falling into a high sedition, and murmuring upon the report of the spies that were sent to search the land, the Lord sware by himself, that that whole generation should wander forty years in that wilderness, until they were all consumed. Now this was upon the next year after their coming up out of Egypt, and after which the forty years of their provocation and God's indignation ensued. But these things as to time, were of the same duration. The people came out of Egypt, and entered into the wilderness in the first month of the year. At the end of the fortieth year, from their coming out of Egypt, the eleventh month of it, is issued the history of three of the books of Moses, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. In the last month of that year, Moses reviewed and repeated the whole law, the dealing of God, and sins of the people, as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy. About the end of that month, as is probable, he died, and was lamented thirty days, or all the first month of the forty-first year. After which, about three or four days, the people prepared to pass over Jordan, under the conduct of Joshua, Josh. i. 11. This was the space of time mentioned, containing as wonderful issues, and successes of things, as ever befel the church of God in the like space of time. Every year in the whole forty, was full of instances of the people's sins, provocations, temptations, and unbelief ; and every year also was filled with tokens of God's displeasure and indignation, until the close of the whole dispensation came, wherein that generation that came out of Egypt under Moses was consumed, and the indignation of God rested in their consumption. And it is not unlikely but that the apostle reminds the Hebrews of this space of time, granted unto their forefathers in the wilderness, after their coming up out of Egypt, with their abuse of it ; because a like space of time was now in the patience of God allotted unto the whole church and people of the Jews, between the preaching of Christ, and that wasting destruction that was to come upon them, And according to this type it fell out with them. For, as after their forefathers who came up under Moses out of Egypt, were consumed in forty years in the wilderness, a new church, a new generation, under the conduct of Joshua, entered into the rest of God ; so within forty years after the preaching of spiritual deliverance unto them, which was rejected by them, that whole generation was cut off in the wrath of God, and a new church of Jews and Gentiles, under the conduct of the true Joshua, enters into the rest of God.

*Διό προσωχθισα*, 'wherefore I was grieved,' The apostle here alters the tenor of the discourse in the psalmist, by interposing a reference unto the cause of God's being grieved with the people, in the word *διό*, 'wherefore ;' that is, because of their manifold temptations and provocations, not cured, not healed, although for so long a season they beheld his works. They continued in the same kind of sins, on the account whereof God was first provoked, and sware against their en-

tering into the land. For as we have before observed, the oath of God passed against them at the beginning of the forty years. But they abiding obstinately in the same sins, the execution of that oath had respect unto all their provocations during the whole forty years. Προσωχθισα, 'I was grieved.' This word is supposed peculiar to the Hellenistical Jews, nor doth it occur in any other author, but only in the Greek version of the Old Testament. Nor is it used by the LXX. in any place to express ὀργή, the word here used in the original, but they render it by καμνῶ, ἐκτῆω, and κοτεω. In the New Testament, it is used only in this place, and thence transferred into the psalm. It is generally thought to be derived from οχθῆ or οχθός, 'the bank of a river, a rising hill or ridge by the water's side.' Thence is οχθῆω, to be 'offended,' to bear a thing difficultly, with tediousness, and vexation, so as to rise up with indignation against it, like the ground that riseth against the waters: προσοχθίζω is the same, with an addition of sense, 'to be greatly grieved.' And this word, to be 'grieved,' is ambiguous even in our language: for it either is as much as dolore affici, to be affected with sorrow and grief, or a being wearied accompanied with indignation; as we say, such or such a thing is grievous, that is, grave, molestum, or 'troublesome.' And so is the word here used, 'grieved,' that is burdened and provoked, offended. So Hierome, Displcuit mihi generatio ista, 'displeased me;' Pertuli eam, sed non sine tædio, 'I bare them, but not without wearisomeness.' Symmachus and Aquila render the original word by δυσάρεστέω to be displeased.

אקוט קר is a word often used and of an ambiguous signification, 'to cut off, to contend, to abominate, (hence by the Arabic it is rendered 'cursed them,') to be divided with trouble, offence, weariness, and grief.' It is commonly in the feminine gender, and joined with נפשי, 'my soul,' or חיי, 'my life.' This is the intendment of it; the appointed time of God's patience was worn out with their continued provocations, so that he was wearied with them, and weary of them he could bear them no longer.

The Vulgar Latin, in some copies, reads, Proximus fui huic generationi, 'I was near to this generation.' And so are the words still in some of the Roman offices. Some think that countenance is given hereto by the sense of the word προσωχθισα, which may signify, accedere or proximare ad ripam animo hostili, 'to draw near to a shore, a bank, with a hostile mind.'

Now, it doth not denote only that particular provocation, when God in an especial manner entered his caveat against them, that they should not enter into his rest, seeing not only the psalmist in this place, but also our apostle, ver. 17, directly refers it to the frame of his mind towards them, during the whole forty years. He was wearied by them, and grew weary of them.

Τῇ γενεᾷ ἐκείνῃ, 'that generation,' בדר, 'in the generation,' that is, 'with that generation.' דור, is an age of man, or rather the men of one age; Eccl. i. 4, 'One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh;' that is, the men of one age. See Deut. xxxii. 7. So is γενεή; as in Homer's Iliad, γ'.

Οἱ περ γενεῇ τοιῇδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.

And when it is taken for *ætas* or *seculum*, it doth not primarily intend a duration of time, but the persons living at that time. Herodotus in *Euterpe*, reckons thirty years to a *γενεα*, a generation. So doth Plutarch also in *De Defect. Oraculorum*. The generation here denotes no limited season, but compriseth all the persons that came up out of Egypt above twenty years of age, who all died within the space of forty years afterwards.

*Αει πλανιωνται τη καρδια*; 'They always err in heart;' *עַם הָעֵי לִבָּב הֵם*, 'They are a people erring in heart.' The words of the psalmist are somewhat changed by the apostle, but the sense is absolutely the same; for taking the people to be sufficiently signified, he adds a word to denote the constant course of their provocations; always, on all occasions, in every trial, not in any one condition did they give glory to God, neither in their straits nor in their deliverances, neither in their wants nor in their fulness, but continually tempted and provoked him with their murmurings and unbelief. *עַם הָעֵי לִבָּב הֵם*, *Populus errantes corde*, or *errantium corde*, that is, *populus vācōrs*, 'a foolish, unteachable people.' *הָעֵי*, is most usually so to err, as to wander out of the way, *Isa. liii. 6*; *Gen. xxxvii. 15*; *Prov. vii. 25*. And in *Hiphe*, it is to cause to err or wander, to seduce, to draw aside, *Hos. iv. 12*; *Isa. xix. 13*. It is properly rendered by *πλαναω* and *πλαναομαι*, which have both a neuter and an active signification, 'to err, to wander,' and 'to seduce, or draw aside;' whence *πλανος* is *erro*, *vagabundus*, 'a wanderer, a vagabond;' and also *deceptor*, *seductor*, *impostor*, 'a seducer, a deceiver, or impostor.' In both which senses the Jews blasphemously applied it unto our Lord Jesus Christ, *Matt. xxvii. 63*. The words then denote not a speculative error of the mind, a mistake or misapprehension of what was proposed unto them, in which sense the terms of error and erring are most commonly used; but a practical aberration or wandering by choice from the way of obedience made known unto them; and therefore are they said 'to err in their heart,' *τη καρδια*. For though that be commonly taken in the Scripture for the entire principle of moral operations, and so compriseth the mind and understanding, yet when an immediate respect is had unto duties and sins, it hath an especial regard to the affections and desires of the heart; so that to err in heart, is through the seductions and impulsions of corrupt affections, to have the mind and judgment corrupted, and then to depart from the ways of obedience.

*Αυτοι δε ουκ εγνωσαν τας οδους μου*, 'And they have not known my ways;' *וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ דַרְכֵי*. The apostle renders *δε* by *δε*, an adversative, 'but,' which is frequently used for *και*, 'and,' as it is rendered by ours. Yet an opposition may also be intimated, 'They have not known.' It is said before that they saw the works of God, which were parts of his ways; and his laws were made known unto them. Of these two parts do his ways consist. The ways of his providence, and the ways of his commands; or the ways wherein he walketh towards us, and the ways wherein he would have us walk towards him. And yet it is said of this people, that they knew not his ways. As we said therefore before concerning their error, so must we now say concerning their ignorance, that it is not a simple nescience that is intended, but rather

an affected dislike of what they did see and know. It seems to be made up of two parts. First. They did not so spiritually and practically know the mind, will, and intention of God in them, as thereon to believe in him, to trust him, and to honour him. This is the knowledge of God, which is required in the law, and promised in the covenant. Secondly. In that light and knowledge which they had of the ways of God, they liked them not, they approved them not, they delighted not in them. And this is the constant intention of that word 'to know,' where the object of it is God, his ways, or his will.

Ἰσχυροῦς ὡμῶς ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου. 'So I swear in my wrath:' אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי. The use of the word אֲשֶׁר is so various, as that it may denote either the persons spoken unto, or the reason of the things spoken. The Vulgar Latin, in some copies, reads in this place, quibus, 'to whom,' as though it had taken ὡς for οἷς, but commonly sicut; ὡς is often put for ὥστε, quapropter, 'so that.' So Beza, 'whereupon, for which cause or reason;' the consideration of the state, condition, and multiplied miscarriages of that people that came out of Egypt.

'I swear.' Of the oath of God, and his swearing, we must deal afterwards expressly. The declared unalterable purpose of God, about the dying of that people in the wilderness, expressed in the way of an oath, is that which is intended. And God is said to swear in his wrath, because he declared that purpose of his under a particular provocation. The whole matter is recorded, Numb. xiv. 21—23, and ver. 28—35. 'But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, doubtless ye shall not come into the land concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. 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. I the Lord have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.'

We have here the special occasion of this swearing of God. The whole fabric of the ark and tabernacle being finished, the worship of God established, the law and rules of their polity being given unto them, and a blessed frame of government in things sacred and civil



set up amongst them, their military camp, charge, and order in marching, to avoid emulation and confusion, being disposed, all things seemed to be in a great readiness for the entrance of the people into the promised land. Whereas they were but a confused multitude when they came out of Egypt, God had now formed them into a beautiful order both in church and state; this he insists on in his dealings with them, Ezek. xvi. Why should they now stay any longer in that wilderness, which was neither meet to entertain them, nor designed for their habitation? Wherefore, to prepare a way for their entrance into Canaan, spies are sent by God's direction, with excellent instructions, to search out the land, Numb. xiii. 17—20. Upon their return, the peevish, cowardly, unbelieving multitude, terrified with a false report which they made, fall into an outrageous repining against God, and sedition against their ruler.

Hereupon the Lord, wearied as it were with their continued provocations, and especially displeased with their last, whereby they had, as far as lay in them, frustrated his intentions towards them, threatened to consume the people as one man, ver. 12. But Moses pleading with him the interest of his own name and glory, prevailed to divert the execution of that commination. And yet so great was this provocation, and so absolutely had the people of that generation discovered themselves to be every way unfit to follow the Lord in that great work; that to show the greatness of their sin, and the irrevocableness of his purpose, he swore with great indignation concerning them, in manner and form above declared.

Εἰ εἰσελευσονται, 'If they shall enter;' so in the Hebrew אִם יָבֹאוּ: 'If they shall enter.' So frequently in the place of Numbers from whence the story is taken. The expression is imperfect, and relates to the oath of God wherein he swore by himself. As if he had said, 'Let me not live, or not be God, if they enter,' which is the greatest and highest asseveration that they should not enter. And the concealment of the engagement is not, as some suppose, from a παθος causing an abruptness of speech, but from the reverence of the person spoken of. The expression is perfectly and absolutely negative. So Mark viii. 12, with Matt. xvi. 4; 1 Sam. xiv. 44; 1 Kings xx. 10.

Εἰς τὴν καταπαυσιν μου, 'Into my rest.' The pronoun *my* is taken either efficiently or subjectively. If in the first way, the rest that God would give this people is intended; they shall not enter into the land which I promised to give unto Abraham and his seed, as a state of rest, after all their wanderings and peregrinations upon my call and command. Or it may be expounded subjectively, for the rest of God himself, that is, the place wherein he would fix his worship and therein rest. And this seems to be the proper meaning of the word 'my rest;' that is the place where I will rest, by establishing my worship therein. Hence this was the solemn word of blessing at the moving of the Ark of God. 'Arise, O Lord, into thy rest,' so Psalm cxxxii. 8; 2 Chron. vi. 41. 'A place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob,' Ps. cxxxii. 5. So he calls his worship his rest, and the place of his rest, Isa. xi. 10, lxvi. 1.

And the Targumist renders these words, ‘Into the rest of the house of my sanctuary,’ as he speaks elsewhere. ‘This is my rest for ever,’ which place is cited by Rashi on these words.

VER. 7—11.—*Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; where your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their hearts: but my ways they have not known. So I sware in my wrath, If they shall enter into my rest.*

THE exhortation is here pursued which was engaged into at the beginning of the chapter, and which after some diversion is returned to at the close of the sixth verse. The argument whereby it is confirmed and carried on in these words, is taken *ab eventu pernicioso*, ‘from the pernicious event’ of similar disobedience in others, which the Hebrews are dehorted from. And this the apostle shows by an eminent instance, or the induction of an example to that purpose. And this was such, as those to whom he wrote knew to be so as it was by him reported; which they had special reason to attend to and consider; which had formerly been recommended to them; and which was purposely designed to be monitory to them in their present condition: which things render an example cogent and effectual. Known it was to them, as being recorded in the Scripture, wherewith they were acquainted; and it was likewise of near concernment to them, so deserving their consideration, inasmuch as it was their own progenitors or forefathers who so miscarried, as to be therein proposed to them for an example of an evil to be avoided. It had also, after the first recording of it in the history of the times wherein it fell out, Numb. xiv., been resumed and recommended to their most diligent consideration, Ps. xcv. And as he afterwards informs them, there was a prophecy infolded, or a typical representation made of their present state and condition, with directions for their wise and safe deportment under it. All these things render the example proper, and the exhortation from it cogent.

Now whereas the example had been twice recorded, once materially where the fact is first expressed, and then formally as an example, where it is resumed and improved by the Psalmist; our apostle takes it together with its improvement, out of the latter place. It lies, therefore, before us under both considerations, as a fact recorded by Moses, as an example pressed by the Psalmist.

We may consider in the words,

First. The note of inference, wherein the apostle engageth the whole to his purpose, ‘wherefore.’

Secondly. The manner in which he introduces this persuasive example, both as to the fact and as to its former improvement, ‘as the Holy Ghost saith.’

Thirdly. The manner of its proposition in way of exhortation; wherein we have,

First. The general matter of it, which is obedience to God; expressed,

1st. By a supposition, including a positive assertion of the duty especially intended, 'If you will hear his voice.'

2dly. By a prohibition or removal of the contrary, 'Harden not your hearts.'

3dly. The time or season of its due performance, 'to-day.'

Secondly. There is in the words, the example itself on which the exhortation is built or founded, and this consists of these two parts or branches,

First. The sin, and Secondly. The punishment of the persons spoken of.

First. The sin, on the account whereof there are mentioned,

1. The persons sinning: they were the fathers. The fathers or progenitors of them to whom he wrote, 'your fathers,' illustrated by their multitude; they were a whole generation.

2. The quality or nature of their sin, which consisted in two things,

(1.) Provocation, 'as in the provocation.'

(2.) Temptation of God, 'And in the day of temptation they tempted me and proved me.'

3. The aggravation of their sin.

(1.) From the place where it was committed, it was 'in the wilderness.'

(2.) From the means of the contrary which they had to have preserved them from it. They saw the works of God, 'and saw my works.'

(3.) From the duration and continuance of their sinning, and the means of the contrary, 'forty years.'

Secondly. The punishment of this sin is expressed in the pernicious event that ensued; whence the exhortation is taken, and therein expressed.

I. The *causa procatarectica*, or 'procuring cause,' in the sense that God had of their sin; it grieved him, 'wherefore I was grieved with that generation.'

II. In the expression that he made of it, containing a double aggravation of their sin.

1. In its principle, 'they did err in their hearts.'

2. In their continuance in it; they did so always, 'And said, They do always err in their hearts.'

3. In its effects, 'they did not know his ways.'

III. There is the *causa proegoumena*, or 'producing cause,' of the punishment mentioned, in the resolution that God took and expressed concerning the persons sinning, which also hath a double aggravation,

1. From the manner of his declaring this resolution, he did it by an oath, 'unto whom I swear.'

2. From the frame of his spirit, it was in his wrath, 'Unto whom I swear in my wrath.'

The punishment of the sin itself is expressed negatively, 'If they shall enter into my rest,' that is, they shall not do so.

And this also hath a double aggravation,

1. From the act denied, 'they should not *enter*,' not so much as enter.

2. From the object, that was the rest of God, 'they shall not enter into my rest.'

We have so particularly insisted on the opening of the words of this paragraph, that we may be the more brief in the ensuing exposition of the design and sense of them, wherein also we shall interpose the observations that are to be improved in our own practice.

First. The illative *wherefore*, as was observed, denotes both the deduction of the ensuing exhortation from the preceding discourse, and the application of it unto the particular duty which he enters upon ver. 12. Wherefore, that is, seeing the Lord Christ who is the author of the gospel is in his legatine or prophetic office, preferred far above Moses in the work of the house of God, as being the Son and Lord over that house as his own, wherein Moses was a servant only; let us consider what duty is incumbent on us, especially how careful and watchful we ought to be, that we be not by any means diverted or turned aside from that obedience which he requires, and which on all accounts is due unto him. This he pursues ver. 11, where the hyperbaton that is in these words is issued.—Hence observe, that

Obs. I. No divine truth, when it is delivered, ought to be passed by, without manifesting its use, and endeavouring its improvement unto holiness and obedience.

So soon as the apostle had evinced his proposition concerning the excellency of Christ in his prophetic office, he turns himself unto the application of it unto them that are concerned in it. Divine knowledge is like a practical science; the end of all whose principles and theorems is in their practice; take that away and it is of no use. It is our wisdom and understanding how to live unto God. To that purpose are all the principles, truths, and doctrines of it to be improved. If this be not done in the teaching and learning of it, we fight uncertainly as men beating the air.

Obs. II. Secondly, in times of temptations and trials, arguments, and exhortations unto watchfulness against sin, and constancy in obedience, are to be multiplied in number, and pressed with wisdom, earnestness, and diligence.—Such was the season now with these Hebrews. They were exposed to great trials and temptations. Seduction on the one hand by false teachers, and persecution on the other hand by wrathful adversaries, closely beset them. The apostle, therefore, in his dealing with them adds one argument unto another, and pursues them all with pathetic exhortations. Men are often almost unwilling to be under this advantage, or they quickly grow weary of it. Hence our apostle closeth this hortatory epistle with that entreaty, chap. xiii. 22, 'Suffer the word of exhortation.' He was afraid they might have bethought themselves over-burdened with exhortations. And this befalls men on three accounts.

1. When they are grieved by their multiplication, as if they proceeded from a jealousy concerning their sincerity and integrity; so was it it with Peter, John xxii. 17.



2. On a confidence of their own strength which they would not have suspected; as with the same Peter, Matt. xxvi. 33.

3. From a secret inclination lying against the thing exhorted unto, or to the thing exhorted from.

But these are the ordinances of God for our preservation in such a condition. And these our necessities in it do call for. And pregnant instances hereof are given by our apostle, especially in this epistle and in that unto the Galatians, whose condition was the same with that of these Hebrews. Both of them were in danger of being seduced from the simplicity of the gospel, by inveterate prejudices, and the subtilty of false teachers. Both of them were encompassed with dangers, and exposed unto persecutions. He understood their temptations and saw their dangers. And with what wisdom, variety of arguments, expostulations, exhortations, and awakening reproofs, doth he deal with them! what care, tenderness, compassion, and love do appear in them all! In nothing did the excellency of his spirit more evidence itself, than in his jealousy concerning, and tender care for, them that were in such a condition. And herein the Lord Christ set him forth for an example, unto all those to whom the work of the ministry and dispensation of the gospel should afterwards be committed. In this care and watchfulness lies the very life and soul of their ministry. Where this is wanting, whatever else be done, there is but the carcass, the shadow of it.

This then is of excellent use; provided, 1. That the arguments on which it proceeds be solid and firm, (such as in this case are everywhere laid down by our apostle,) that our foundation fail us not in our work. Earnest exhortations on feeble principles, have more of noise than weight. When there is an aim of reaching men's affections, without possessing their minds with the due reasons of the things treated about, it proves mostly evanid, and that justly.

2. That the exhortation itself be grave and weighty. Duty ought to be clothed with words of wisdom, such as may not by their weakness, unfitness, uncomeliness, betray the matter intended, and expose it to contempt or scorn. Hence the apostle requires a singular ability unto the duty of admonition, Rom. xv. 14. 'Filled with all knowledge, and able to admonish one another.'

3. That the love, care and compassion of them who manage such exhortations and admonitions be in them made to appear. Prejudices are the bane and ruin of mutual warnings. And these nothing can remove but a demonstration of love, tenderness, and compassion, acting themselves in them. Morose, peevish, wrathful admonitions, as they bring guilt upon the admonisher, so they seldom free the admonished from any. This course therefore, the condition of them that are tempted, who are never in more danger, than when they find not a necessity of frequent warnings and exhortations, and the duty of those who watch for the good of the souls of men, require to be diligently attended unto.

Secondly. The manner of the introduction of the persuasive example proposed, is to be considered, 'As saith the Goly Ghost.' The words are the words of the Psalmist, but are here ascribed unto the

Holy Ghost. Our apostle, as other divine writers of the New Testament, useth his liberty in this matter; sometimes they ascribe the words they cite out of the Old Testament unto the penmen of them; as to Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the like, Luke xxiv. 27; Matt. ii. 17, iv. 14; John xii. 41; Acts ii. 25. Sometimes to the books wherein they are written, 'As it is written in the book of the Psalms,' Acts i. 20. And sometimes they ascribe them unto the principal author, namely the Holy Ghost, as in this place. Now as they used their liberty herein, so it is not to be supposed that they fixed on any particular expression, without some especial reason for it. And the ascribing of the words of the Psalmist in this place immediately unto the Holy Ghost, by whom he was inspired and acted, seems to have been to remind the Hebrews directly of his authority. His intention from the words was, to press a practical duty upon them. In reference unto such duties the mind ought to be immediately inflamed by the authority of him that requires it. Consider, saith he, that these are the words of the Holy Ghost; that is, of God himself, so that you may submit yourselves to his authority. Besides, the apostle intends to manifest that those words have respect unto the times of the gospel and in an especial manner unto that season of it which was then passing over the Hebrews. He therefore minds them that they were given out by the spirit of prophecy, so that the concernments of the church in all ages must lie in them. The Holy Ghost saith, that is, as he spake to them of old in and by David, as it is expressed ch. iv. 7. So he continues to speak them unto us in the Scripture, which is not only his word, but his voice, his speaking, living, and powerful voice; for so we may comprise both senses before mentioned.

Obs. III. Exhortations unto duty ought to be well-founded, to be built on a stable foundation, and to be resolved into an authority, which may influence the consciences of them to whom they do belong.—Without this, they will be weak and enervous; especially if the duties exhorted unto be difficult, burdensome, or any way grievous. Authority is the formal reason of duty. When God gave out his law of commandments, he prefaced it with a signification of his sovereign authority over the people: 'I am the Lord thy God,' And this is our duty in giving out exhortations and commands from him. The engagement of his authority in them, is to be manifested. 'Teach men, saith our Saviour, 'to do and observe whatsoever I command,' Matt. xxviii. 20. His commands are to be proposed to them, and his authority in them to be applied unto their souls and consciences. To exhort men in the things of God, and to say this or that man saith so, be he the pope or who he will, is of no use or efficacy. That which you are to attend unto, is what the Holy Ghost saith, whose authority the souls of men are every way bound to obey.

Obs. IV. Whatever was given by inspiration from the Holy Ghost and is recorded in the Scripture for the use of the church, he continues therein to speak it to us, unto this day. As he lives for ever, so he continues to speak for ever; that is, whilst his voice or word shall be of use to the church. As the Holy Ghost says, that is, speaks now unto us; and where doth he speak it? in the ninety-fifth Psalm: there

he says it, or speaks it unto us. Many men have invented several ways to lessen the authority of the Scripture ; and few are willing to acknowledge an immediate speaking of God unto them therein. Various pretences are used to subduct the consciences of men from a sense of his authority in it. But whatever authority, efficacy, or power the word of God was accompanied withal, whether to evidence itself so to be, or otherwise to affect the minds of men unto obedience, when it was first spoken by the Holy Ghost, the same it retains now it is recorded in Scripture, seeing the same Holy Ghost yet continues to speak therein.

Thirdly. There is in the word the matter of the exhortation intended ; that which it aims at and intends. This in general is obedience unto God, answerable unto the revelation which he makes of himself and his will unto us. And this is,

First. Expressed in a supposition including a positive assertion of it, 'If you will hear his voice.' It is your duty so to do, and this is that which you are exhorted unto.

The voice of God is ordinarily the word of his command, the voice or signification of his will, which is the rule of all our duty and obedience. 2. In this place, as commonly elsewhere, not the word of command in general is intended, but an especial call or voice of God in reference unto some especial duty, at some especial season. Such was the voice of God to the people in the wilderness at the giving of the law, which the people heard and saw the effects of. Hence is the command translated to the voice of God, in giving out the gospel by the ministry of his Son Jesus Christ. From the former is the occasion of the words taken in the Psalm, and to the latter is the application of it made by the apostle. 3. The Psalmist speaks to the people, as if the voice of God were then sounding in their ears. For that which was once the voice of God unto the church, being recorded in the Scripture, continues still to be so. That is, it is not only materially his revealed will and command, but it is accompanied with that special impression of his authority which it was at first attested withal. And on this ground all the miracles wherewith the word of old was confirmed, are of the same validity and efficacy towards us, as they were towards them that saw them ; namely, because of the sacredness of the means whereby they are communicated to us.

This then is the object of the duty exhorted unto, the voice of God, which, as it is used by the apostle, is extended virtually and consequently to the whole doctrine of the gospel, but with especial respect to the revelation of it by Christ Jesus. As in the Psalm it regards the whole doctrine of the law, but with especial regard unto the delivery of it to Moses on Mount Sinai. The act exercised about it is *hearing*, 'If you will *hear* his voice.' The meaning of this word hath been before explained : it is an act of the whole soul, in understanding, choosing, and resolving to do the will of God declared by his voice, that is intended. And this further appears from the ensuing charge, 'If you will hear, harden not your hearts ;' that is, If you think meet to obey the voice of God, if you will choose so to do, take heed of that which would certainly be an hindrance thereof.

Thus dealeth the apostle with the Hebrews. And herein teacheth us, that

Obs. V. The formal reason of all our obedience consists in its relation to the voice or authority of God. So therefore doth the apostle express it, so is it declared in the whole Scripture. If we do the things that are commanded, but not with respect to the authority of God, by whom they are commanded, what we so do is not obedience, properly so called. It hath the matter of obedience in it, but the formal reason of it, that which should render it properly so, which is the life and soul of it, it hath not. What is so done is but the carcass of duty no way acceptable unto God. God is to be regarded as our sovereign Lord and only Lawgiver in all that we have to do with him. Hereby are our souls to be influenced unto duty in general, and unto every especial duty in particular. This reason are we to render to ourselves and others, of all the acts of our obedience. If it be asked, why we do such or such a thing: we answer, Because we must obey the voice of God. And many advantages we have by a constant attendance unto the authority of God in all that we do in his worship and service. For, 1. This will keep us unto the due rule and compass of duty, whilst we are steered in that we do hereby. We cannot undertake or perform any thing as a duty towards God which is not so, and which therefore is rejected by him, where he saith, 'Who hath required these things at your hands.' This is no small advantage in the course of our obedience. We see many taking a great deal of pains in the performances of such duties, as being not appointed of God, are neither accepted with him, nor will ever turn unto any good account unto their own souls. Had they kept upon their consciences a due sense of the authority of God, so as to do nothing but with respect thereunto, they might have been freed from their labouring in the fire, where all must perish, Mic. vi. 7—9. Such are most of the works wherein the Papists boast. 2. This also will not suffer us to omit any thing that God requires of us. Men are apt to divide and choose in the commands of God, to take and leave as it seems good unto them, or as serves their present occasion and condition. But this also is inconsistent with the nature of obedience, allowing the formal reason of it to consist in a due respect unto the voice of God. For this extends to all that is so, and only to what is so. So James informs us, that all our obedience respects the authority of the Lawgiver, whence an universality of obedience to all his commands doth necessarily ensue. Nor doth the nature of any particular sin consist so much in respect to this or that particular precept of the law, which is transgressed or violated by it, as in a contempt of the Lawgiver himself; whence every sin becomes a transgression of the whole law, James ii. 9—11. 3. This will strengthen and fortify the soul against all dangers, difficulties, and temptations that oppose it in the way of its obedience. The mind that is duly affected with a sense of the authority of God in what it is to do, will not be territa monstria. It will not be frightened or deterred by any thing that lies in its way. It will have a readiness wherewith to answer all objections, and oppose all contradictions. And this sense of the authority of God, re-



quiring our obedience, is no less a gracious effect of the Spirit, than is that freedom, and cheerfulness, and alacrity of mind, which in these things we receive from him.

Obs. VI. Every thing in the commands of God, relating to the manner of giving them out, and communicating them unto us, is to be retained in our minds, and considered as present unto us. The Psalmist, after so long a season as the apostle speaks, calls the people to hear the voice of God, as it sounded on Mount Sinai, at the giving of the law. Not only the law itself, and the authority of God therein, but the manner also of its delivery by the great and terrible voice of God, is to be regarded, as if God did still continue so to speak unto us. So also is it in respect of the gospel. In the first revelation of it, God spake immediately in the Son; and a reverence of that speaking of God in Christ, of his voice in and by him, are we continually to maintain in our hearts. So in the dispensation of the gospel, he continues yet to speak from heaven, Heb. xii. 25. It is his voice and word unto us, no less than it was when in his own person he spake on the earth. And God being thus both in his commands, and in the manner of his giving them out, rendered present unto us by faith, we shall receive a great incitation unto obedience thereby.

Obs. VII. Consideration and choice are a stable and permanent foundation of obedience. The command of God is here proposed unto the people, to their understanding to consider it, to their wills to choose and embrace it: 'If you will hear his voice.' Consider all things, all concerns of this matter, whose command it is, in what manner given, what is the matter of it, and what are its ends, and what is our own concern in all this. Men that are engaged into some course of obedience or profession, as it were by chance, or by their minds being merely pre-occupied by education or custom, will leave it by chance, or a powerful diversion at any time. Those who are only compelled unto it by some pungent galling convictions, so that they yield obedience, not because they like it, or choose it, but because they dare not do otherwise, do assuredly lose all respect unto it, as their convictions do by any means wear off or decay.

A deliberate choice of the ways of God upon a due consideration of all their concerns, is that which unchangeably fixeth the soul unto obedience. For the strongest obligations that are unto it, ought to be in our own wills. And it is the most eminent effect of the grace of Christ, to make his people willing in the day of his power, nor is any other obedience acceptable with God, Rom. xii. 1.

Secondly. The apostle carries on, and enforceth his exhortation unto obedience, in the words of the Psalmist, by a caution against, or prohibition of the contrary, or that which would utterly prevent it, as having done so formerly in others: 'Harden not your hearts.' To clear his intention herein, we must inquire, 1. What is intended by heart; and, 2. What by the hardening of it. The heart in the Scripture, spoken of in reference unto moral obedience, doth not constantly denote any one especial faculty of the soul, but sometimes one, sometimes another, is intended and expressed thereby. What is peculiarly designed, the subject-matter treated of, and the adjuncts of

of the word, will discover. Thus sometimes the heart is said to be wise, understanding, to devise, to be filled with counsel; and on the other side, to be ignorant, dark, foolish, and the like; in all which places, it is evident that the mind, the *το ἡγεμονικόν*, the guiding, conducting, reasoning faculty, is intended. Sometimes it is said to be soft, tender, humble, melting, and on the other side, hard, stubborn, obstinate, and the like; wherein principal regard is had to the will and affections. The word therefore is that whereby the principle of all our moral actions, and the respective influence of all the faculties of our souls into them, are expressed.

Secondly. By the sense of the object, is the meaning of the act prohibited to be regulated, ‘Harden not.’ The expression is metaphorical, and it signifies the unfitness and resistancy of any thing to receive a due impression from that which is applied unto it, as wax, when it is hard, will not receive an impression from the seal that is set unto it, nor mortar from the trowel. The application that is made in the matter of obedience unto the souls of men, is by the Spirit of God in his commands, promises, and threatenings; that is, his voice, the whole revelation of his mind and will. And where a due impression is not made hereby on the soul, to work it to an answerableness in its principles and operations thereunto, men are said to resist the Spirit, Acts vii. 51, that is, to disappoint the end of those means which he makes use of in his applications to them. By what ways or means soever this is done, men are thereby said to harden their hearts. Prejudices, false principles, ignorance, darkness, and deceit in the mind, obstinacy and stubbornness in the will, corruption and cleaving unto earthly and sensual objects in the affections, all concur in this evil. Hence, in the application of this example, ver. 12, the apostle exhorts the Hebrews to take heed that they be not hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Now deceit first and principally respects the mind; and therein consists the beginning and entrance into the sin of hardening the heart. A brief consideration of the condition of the people in the wilderness upon whom this evil is charged, will give much light into the nature of the sin that here comes under prohibition. What the dealings of God with them were, is generally known, and we have elsewhere declared. As he gave them instruction from heaven in the revelation and delivery of the law, and instructed them with the singular benefit of the erection of his worship amongst them; so he afforded them all sorts of mercies, protections, deliverances, provisions, and guidance; so also made them sensible of his severity and holiness in great and terrible judgments. All these, at least the most part of them, were also given out unto them in a marvellous and amazing manner. The end of all these dispensations was to teach them his will; to bring them to hearken to his voice; to obey his commands, that it might be well with them and their’s. In this state and condition sundry things are recorded of them.

As first. That they were dull, stupid, and slow of heart in considering the ways, kindness, and works of God. They set not their hearts to them to weigh and ponder them, Deut. xxxii. 28, 29. 2. What they did observe and were moved at, (as such was the astonishing

greatness of some of the works of God amongst them, such the overpowering obligations of many of his dealings with them, that they could not but let in some present transient sense of them upon their minds,) yet they soon forgot them and regarded them not, Ps. lxxviii. 11, 12. 3. That their affections were so violently set upon earthly, sensual, perishing things, that in comparison of them they despised all the promises and threatenings of God, resolving to pursue their own hearts' lusts, whatever might become of them in this world and to eternity, Ps. lxxviii. 18, 19. All which are manifest in the whole story of their ways and doings. By this means their minds and spirits were brought into such a frame and condition, that as they did not, so they could not hearken to the voice of God, or yield obedience unto him. 'They became a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that set not their hearts aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God,' Ps. lxxviii. 8. For by these ways and degrees of sin, they contracted a habit of obstinacy, perverseness, and uncircumcision of heart; neither did the Lord in his sovereign pleasure see good by his effectual grace to circumcise the hearts of the persons of that generation that they might fear and serve him, whereby they came to be hardened unto final unbelief and impenitency. It appears then, that unto this sinful hardening of the heart which the people in the wilderness were guilty of, and which the apostle here warns the Hebrews to avoid, there are three things that do concur. First. The mind's sinful inadvertency and neglect, in not taking due notice of the ways and means whereby God calls any unto faith and obedience. Secondly. A sinful forgetfulness and casting out of the heart and mind such convictions as God by his word and works, his mercies and judgments, deliverances or afflictions, at any time is pleased to cast into them and fasten upon them. Thirdly. An obstinate cleaving in the affections unto carnal and sensual objects, practically preferring them above the motives unto obedience that God proposeth to us. Where these things are, the hearts of men are so hardened, that in an ordinary way they cannot hearken unto the voice of God. We may hence also take some observations for our instruction.

Obs. VIII. Such is the nature, efficacy, and power of the voice or word of God, that men cannot withstand or resist it, without a sinful hardening of themselves against it.—There is a natural hardness in all men before they are dealt withal by the word: or, this spiritual hardness is in them by nature. Hardness is an adjunct of that condition, or the corruption of nature, as is darkness, blindness, deadness, and the like; or it is a result or consequent of them. Men being dark and blind and dead in trespasses and sins, have thence a natural hardness, an unfitness to receive impressions of a contrary kind, and a resistency thereunto. And this frame may be increased and corroborated in men by various vicious and prejudicate habits of mind, contracted by custom, example, education, and the practice of sin. All this may be in men antecedent unto the dispensation or preaching of the word unto them. Now unto the removal or taking away of this hardness, is the voice or the word of God in the dispensation of it designed. It is the instrument and means, which God useth unto that



end. It is not (I confess) of itself absolutely considered, without the influencing operation of the Spirit of grace, able to produce this effect. But it is able to do it in its own kind and place; and is thence said to be 'able to save our souls,' Jam. i. 21, 'able to build us up, and give us an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified,' Acts xx. 32, 'being also that immortal seed whereby we are begotten unto God,' 1 Pet. i. 23. By this means doth God take away that natural darkness or blindness of men; 'opening the eyes of the blind,' Acts xxvi. 18, 'turning them from darkness to light; shining into their hearts, to give them the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ,' 2 Cor. iv. 6, as also 'quickenings them who were dead in trespasses and sins;' and thereby he removes that hardness which is a consequent of these things: and God doth not apply a means to any end, which is unsuited to it or insufficient for it. There is therefore usually such a concomitancy of the Spirit, with every dispensation of the word of God, that is according to his mind and will, as is able and sufficient to remove that hardness which is naturally upon the hearts of men.

Every one therefore to whom the word is duly revealed, who is not converted unto God, doth voluntarily oppose his own obstinacy unto its efficacy and operation. Here lies the stop to the progress of the word in its work upon the souls of men. It stays not unless it meet with an actual obstinacy in their wills, refusing, rejecting, and resisting of it. And God in sending of it, doth accompany his word with that power, which is meet to help and save them in the state and condition wherein it finds them. If they will add new obstinacy and hardness to their minds and hearts; if they will fortify themselves against the word with prejudices and dislike; if they will resist its work through a love to their lusts and corrupt affections, God may justly leave them to perish and to be filled with the fruit of their own ways. And this state of things is variously expressed in the Scripture. As 1. By God's willingness for the salvation of those unto whom he grants his word as the means of their conversion, Ezek. xviii. 23, 32; Jer. xiii. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 4. 2. By his expostulations with them that reject his word, casting all the cause of their destruction upon themselves, Matt. xxiii. 37. Now as these things cannot denote an intention in God for their conversion, which should be frustrate, for this were to ascribe weakness and changeableness unto him; nor can they signify an exercise towards them of that effectual grace whereby the elect are really converted unto God, which would evert the whole nature of effectual grace, and subject it to the corrupt wills of men: so they express more than a mere proposal of the outward means, which men are not able savingly to receive and improve. There is this also in them, that God gives such an efficacy unto these means, as that their operation doth proceed on the minds and souls of men in their natural condition, until by some new acts of their wills, they harden themselves against them. And 3. So the gospel is proposed to the wills of men, Isa. lv. 1; Rev. xxii. 14.

Hence it is that the miscarriage of men under the dispensation of the word, is still charged upon some positive actings of their wills in opposition unto it, Isa. xxx. 15; Matt. xxiii. 37; John iii. 19, v. 40.



They perish not, they defeat not the end of the word towards themselves, by a mere abode and continuance in the state wherein the word finds them, but by rejecting the counsel of God made known to them for their healing and recovery, Luke vii. 30.

Obs. IX. Many previous sins make way for the great sin of finally rejecting the voice or word of God. The not hearing the voice of God which is here reproved, is that which is final, which absolutely cuts men off from entering into the rest of God. Unto this men come not without having their hearts hardened by depraved lusts and affections, and that it is their nature so to do, shall be afterwards declared. Here we only respect the connexion of the things spoken of. Hardening of the heart goes before final impenitence and infidelity, as the means and cause of it. Things do not ordinarily come to an immediate issue between God and them to whom the word is preached. I say ordinarily, because God may immediately cut off any person, upon the first refused tender of the gospel. And it may be he deals so with many, but ordinarily he exerciseth much patience towards men in this condition. He finds them in a state of nature, that is, of enmity against him. In this state he offers them terms of peace, and waits thereon during the season of his good pleasure to see what the event will be. Many in the meantime attend to their lusts and temptations, and so contract an obdurate senselessness upon their hearts and minds, which fortifying them against the calls of God, prepares them for final impenitency. And this is the first thing that is considerable, in the general matter of the exhortation in hand.

Thirdly. The time and season for the performance of the duty exhorted unto is expressed: 'To-day.'—'To-day if you will hear his voice.' The various respects of the limitation of the season of this duty, have been spoken to in the opening of the words. The moral sense of it is no more, but the present and proper season of any duty, which what is required unto, in this case of yielding obedience to the voice of God, shall be afterwards declared. And in this sense the word is generally used in all authors and languages. So is *היום* frequently in the Hebrew in other places, as in this. And a proper season they called *יום טוב* a good day, a meet season, 1 Sam. xxv. 8. It may be only a day of feast is there intended, which they called *יום טוב* a good day; a day of mirth and refreshment, Lev. xxiii. And so it is commonly used by the Rabbins; especially for the feast which the high priest made for his brethren after the day of expiation. For on that day they were obliged to many observances under the penalty of excision. This begat fear and terror in them, and was part of their yoke and bondage. Wherefore when that service was over, and they found themselves safe, not smitten by the hand of God, they kept *יום טוב* a good day, wherein they invited all the priests that ministered, unto a feast. But most frequently they so express a present opportunity or season. So the Greeks use *σημερον*, as in Anacreon,

*Σημερον μελει μοι, το δε αυριον τις οιδε.*

'My care is for to-day, (the present season,) who knows to morrow,' or the time to come. To the same purpose are *ημερα* and *αυριον* used

in the gospel, Matt. vi. 34. *Μη ουν μεριμνησητε εις την αυριον, η γαρ αυριον μεριμνησει τα εαυτης, αρκετον τη ημερα η κακια αυτης.* 'Take no care for the morrow' (things future and unknown) 'the morrow shall take care for the things of itself,' (provision shall be made for things future according as they fall out) 'sufficient unto the day' (the present time and season) 'is the evil thereof.' To the same purpose do they use 'hodie,' in the Latin tongue, as in those common sayings.

*Sera nimis vita est crastina, viv' hodie:—and  
Qui non est hodie, cras minus aptus erit.*

With many other sayings of the like import. This, then, is the sense and meaning of the word absolutely considered. The apostle exhorts the Hebrews in the words of the Psalmist, to make use of the present season by the use of means for the furtherance of their faith and obedience, that they may be preserved from hardness of heart and final unbelief. And what arguments unto duty are suggested from a present season shall afterwards be considered. To enforce this exhortation the apostle reminds them, that there is in the words of the Psalmist, 1. A retrospect unto a monitory example. For others there were who had their day also,—their season. This they improved not, they answered it not, nor filled it up with the duty that it was designed unto, and therefore the sad event befel them mentioned in the text. Hence doth he enforce his exhortation. It is now to-day with you, it was to-day with them of old. But you see what a dark sad evening befel them in the close of their day. Take heed lest it be so with you also. 2. A respect unto the day enjoyed in the time of the Psalmist, which completed the type,—of which before. And yet further; there was, 3. more than a mere example intended by the Psalmist. A prophecy also of the times of the gospel was included in the words, as our apostle declares in the next chapter. Such a season as befel the Jews at the giving of the law, is prefigured to happen to them at the giving of the gospel. The law being given on mount Sinai, the church of the Hebrews who came out of Egypt had their day, their time, and season for the expressing of their obedience thereunto, whereon their entrance into Canaan did depend. This was their day, wherein they were tried whether they would hearken to the voice of God or not; namely, the space of thirty-eight or forty years in the wilderness. The gospel was now delivered from Mount Sion. And the church of the Hebrews to whom the word of it first came, had their peculiar day, prefigured in the day after the giving of the law, enjoyed by their forefathers. And it was to be but a day, but one especial season, as their's was. And a trying season it was to be; whether in the limited space of it they would obey the voice of God or not. And this especial day continued for the space of thirty-eight or forty years, from the preaching of the gospel by our Lord Jesus Christ and his death, to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; wherein the greatest part of the people fell after the same example of unbelief with their forefathers, and entered not into the rest of God. This was the day and the season that was on the Hebrews at this time, which the apostle exhorts them to the use and improvement of. *Σημερον*, then, or 'to-day,' signifies in general,

a present season, which men are not long to be intrusted with; and it hath a triple respect, limitation, or application. 1. To the season enjoyed by the people in the wilderness, who neglected it. 2. To the persons spoken to in the Psalmist typically, who were exhorted to use it. 3. To the present Hebrews, whose gospel day was therein foretold and prefigured. In all which we are instructed unto the due use of a present season.

Obs. X. Old Testament examples are New Testament instructions. —Our apostle elsewhere, reckoning sundry instances of things that fell out amongst the people of old, affirms of them *ταυτα παντα τυποι συν-εβαλινον εκεινοις*, 1 Cor. x. 11. ‘All these things befel them as types.’ The Jews have a saying, כל מה שאידע אבות סימן לבנים, ‘That which happeneth to the father, is a sign or example unto the children.’ In general, and in the order of all things, *discipulus est prioris posterior dies*: ‘the following day is to learn of the former.’ Experience is of the greatest advantage for wisdom. But there is more in this matter. The will and appointment of God is in it. From thence, that all the times of the Old Testament, and what fell out in them, are instructive of the times and days of the New; not only the words, doctrines, and prophecies that were then given out, but the actions, doings, and sufferings of the people which then fell out, are to the same purpose. There is more in it than the general use of old records and histories of times past, which yet are of excellent use unto a wise consideration in things moral and political. This many have made it their work to manifest and demonstrate. The sum of all is comprised in those excellent words of the great Roman historian concerning his own work. *Ad illa mihi acriter pro se quisque intendat animum, quæ vita, qui mores fuerint; per quos viros, quibusque artibus domi militiæque, et partum et auctum imperium sit. Labente deinde paulatim disciplina, velut dissidentes primo mores sequatur animo, deinde ut magis magisque lapsi sint, tum ire cæperint præcipites, donec ad hæc tempora quibus nec vitia nostra, nec remedia pati possumus, perventum est. Hoc illud est præcipue in cognitione rerum salubre et frugiferum; omnis te exempli documenta in illustri posita monumento intueri. Inde tibi quod imitere capias; inde sædum inceptu, sædum exitu, quod vites.* ‘Hereunto,’ in reading this history, ‘let every one diligently attend, to consider who were the men, what was their life and manners, by what means and arts this empire was both erected and increased. And then moreover how good discipline insensibly decaying, was attended with manners also differing from the former; which in process of time increasing, hurried all things at length headlong into these times of ours, wherein we can endure neither our voices nor their remedies. This is that which in the knowledge of past affairs is both wholesome and fruitful; that we have an illustrious monument of all sorts of examples, from whence you may take what you ought to imitate, and know also by the consideration of actions dishonest in their undertaking, and miserable in the event, what you ought to avoid.’ And if this use may be made of human stories, written by men wise and prudent, though in many things ignorant, partial, factious, as most historians have been, unable in many things to judge of actions whether they are



really good or evil, praiseworthy or to be condemned, and in all things unable to judge of the intentions with which, and the ends for which they were done; how much more benefit may be obtained from the consideration of those records of times past, which as they are delivered to us by persons divinely preserved from all error and mistake in their writings, so they deliver the judgment of God himself, to whom all intentions and ends are open and naked, concerning the actions which they do report. Besides, the design of human story, is but to direct the minds of men in things just and honest with reference unto political society, and the good of community in this world; with respect whereunto alone it judgeth of the actions of men and their events. But all things in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, are directed unto a higher end, even the pleasing of God, and the eternal fruition of him. They are therefore, with the examples recorded in them, of singular and peculiar use as materially considered. But this is not all. The things contained in them were all of them designed of God for our instruction, and yet do continue as an especial way of teaching. The things done of old, were, as Justin Martyr speaks, *προκηρυγματα των κατα Χριστου*, ‘fore-declarations of the things of Christ.’ And Tertullian, to the same purpose, *Scimus ut vocibus, ita rebus prophetatum*, ‘prophecy or prediction consisted in things as well as words.’ And Chrysostome, *serm. II. de Jejun.*, distinguisheth between prophecy by speech or words, and prophecy by examples or actions.

Our apostle expressly treateth of this subject, *1 Cor. x.* Considering the state of the people in their deliverance from Egypt, and abode in the wilderness, he refers the things relating unto them to two heads. First. God’s miraculous works towards them, and marvellous dealings with them. Secondly. Their sins and miscarriages, with the punishments that befel them. Having mentioned those of the first sort, he adds, *ταυτα δε τυποι ημων εγενηθησαν*, ‘now these were all our examples,’ *ver. 6*, types representing God’s spiritual dealings with us. And having reckoned up the other, he closeth his report of them with, *ταυτα δε παντα τυποι συνεβαινον εκεινοις*, they befel them, that God in them might represent unto us, what we are to expect if we sin and transgress in like manner. They and their actions were our types. *Τυπος*, a type, hath many significations; in this use of it, it signifies a rude and imperfect expression of any thing in order to a full, clear, and exact declaration of it. So Aristotle useth *παχυλως και ως εν τυπω*, in opposition to *ακριβως διοριζειν*, a general and imperfect description, to an exact distinction. Thus they were our types, in that the matter of our faith, obedience, rewards, and punishments, were delineated aforehand in them.

Now these types or examples were of three sorts.

First. Such as were directly instituted and appointed for this end, that they should signify and represent something in particular in the Lord Christ and his kingdom. It is true, that God did not institute any thing among the people of old, but what had its present use and service amongst them. But their present use did not comprehend their principal end. And herein do types and sacraments differ. Our sacraments have no use but that with respect unto their spiritual end



and signification. We do not baptize any to wash the body, nor give them the supper of the Lord to nourish it. But types had their use in temporal things, as well as their signification of things spiritual. So the sacrifices served for the freeing of the people from the sentence of the law, as it was the rule of their polity or civil government, as well as to prefigure the sacrifice of the body of Christ.

Now, these types, which had a solemn, direct, stated institution, were materially either persons as vested with some certain offices in the church, or things.

1. Persons.—So the Lord raised up, designed, and appointed Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, Solomon, and others, to typify and represent the Lord Christ unto the church. And they are to be considered in a threefold capacity. 1st. Merely personal, as those individual men, unto which concernment all their moral good and evil did belong. In this sense, what they did or acted had no respect unto Christ, nor is otherwise to be considered, but as the examples of all other men recorded in the Scriptures. 2dly. As to the offices they bare in the church and among the people, as they were prophets, captains, kings, or priests. In this respect, they had their present use in the worship of God, and government of that people according to the law. But herein, 3dly. In the discharge of their offices and present duties, they were designed of God to represent, in a way of prefiguration, the Lord Christ and his offices, who was to come. They were a transcript out of the divine idea in the mind and will of God, concerning the all-fulness of power and grace that was to be in Christ, expressed by parcels, and obscurely in them, so as by reason of their imperfection they were capable.

2. These types consisted in things, such as were the sacrifices, and other institutions of worship among the people. That this was the design and end of the whole Mosaic divine service, we shall manifest in our progress. This, therefore, is not the place to insist particularly upon them.

Secondly. There were such things and actions as had only a providential ordination to that purpose. Things that occasionally fell out, and so were not capable of a solemn institution, but were, as to their events, so guided by the providence of God, as that they might prefigure and represent somewhat that was afterwards to come to pass.—For instance, Jeremiah ch. xxxi. 15, sets out the lamentation of Rachel, that is, the women of the tribe of Benjamin, upon the captivity of the land. ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.’ It is evident from ch. xl. 1, that after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, Nebuzaradan gathered the people together that were to go into captivity at Ramah. There the women considering how many of their children were slain, and the rest now to be carried away, brake out into woeful and unspeakable lamentation. And this was ordered in the providence of God, to prefigure the sorrow of the women of Bethlehem upon the destruction of their children by Herod, when he sought the life of our Saviour, as the words are applied, Matt. ii. 8. And we may distinguish things of this kind into two sorts.

1. Such as have received a particular application unto the things of the New Testament, or unto spiritual things belonging to the grace and kingdom of Christ, by the Holy Ghost himself in the writings of the gospel. Thus the whole business of Rebekah's conceiving Jacob and Esau, their birth, the oracle of God concerning them, the preference of one above the other, is declared by our apostle to have been ordained in the providence of God to teach his sovereignty in choosing and rejecting whom he pleaseth, Rom. ix. So he treateth at large concerning what befel that people in the wilderness, making application of it to the churches of the gospel, 1 Cor. x.; and other instances of the like kind may be insisted on, almost innumerable.

2. This infallible application of one thing and season unto another, extends not (but) unto the least part of those teaching examples, which are recorded in the Old Testament. Many other things were ordained in the providence of God to be instructive unto us, and may by the example of the apostles be in like manner applied. For concerning them all, we have this general rule, that they were ordained and ordered in the providence of God for this end, that they might be examples, documents, and means of instruction unto us. Again, we have succeeded into the same place in the covenant, unto them who were originally concerned in them, and so may expect answerable dispensations of God towards ourselves. And they are all written for our sakes.

3. There are things that fell out of old, which are meet to illustrate present things, from a proportion of similitude between them. And thus where a place of Scripture directly treats of one thing, it may, in the interpretation of it, be applied to illustrate another, which hath some likeness to it. These expositions the Jews call מדרשים; and say, they are made בדרך משל, 'parabolical or mystical,' wherein their masters abound. We call them allegories: so doth our apostle expressly, Gal. iv. 21—26. Having declared how the two covenants, the legal and evangelical, were represented by the two wives of Abraham, Hagar and Sarah; and the two sorts of people, even those that sought for righteousness by the law, and believers, by their children, Ishmael and Isaac; he adds, that these things are an allegory. Chrysostome supposeth that Paul useth that expression of an allegory in a large sense, for any type or figure, seeing the things he mentioneth were express types, the one of the other. But the truth is, he doth not call the things themselves an allegory, for they had a reality; the story of them was true, but the exposition and application which he makes of the Scripture in that place is allegorical; that is, what was spoken of one thing he expounds of another, because of their proportion one to another, or the similitude between them. Now this doth not arise hence, that the same place of Scripture, or the same words in any place, have a diverse sense, a literal sense, and that which is mystical or allegorical; for the words which have not one determinate sense, have no sense at all. But the things mentioned in any place, holding a proportion unto other things, there being a likeness between them, the words whereby the one are expressed, are applied unto the other.

Now, in the using of these allegorical expositions or applications of things in one place unto another, sundry things are wisely and diligently to be considered. As,

First. That there be a due proportion in general between the things that are one of them, as it were, substituted in the room of another. Forced, strained allegories from the Scripture, are a great abuse of the word. We have had some who have wrested the Scripture unto monstrous allegories, corrupting the whole truth of the literal sense. This was the way of Origen of old, in many of his expositions, and some of late have taken much liberty in the like proceeding. Take an instance in that of the prophet Hosea, xi. 1, 'Out of Egypt have I called my son.' The words are directly spoken of the people of Israel, as the passage foregoing evinceth: 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.' But these words are applied by the evangelist unto the Lord Christ, Matt. ii. 15, and that because of the just proportion that was between God's dealing with that people and with him, after he was carried into Egypt.

Secondly. That there be a designed signification in them; that is, although the words are first and principally spoken of one thing, yet the Holy Ghost intended to signify and teach that whereunto they are applied. An intention of the application is included in them. Thus, those words of the prophet, 'Out of Egypt have I called my son,' did first and properly express God's dealing with the people of Israel; but there was also an intention included in them of shadowing out his future dealing with his only Son, Christ Jesus. The discovery hereof, is a matter of great skill and wisdom; and great sobriety is to be used in such applications and allusions.

Thirdly. That the first original sense of the words be sacredly observed. Some will not allow the words of Scripture their first natural sense, but pretend that their allegories are directly intended in them, which is to make their expositions poisonous and wicked.

I have added these things, because I find many very ready to allegorize upon the Scripture, without any due consideration of the analogy of faith, or the proportion of things compared one to another, or any regard to the first genuine sense of the words which they make use of. This is plainly to corrupt the word of God; and however they who make use of such perverted allusions of things may please the fancies of some persons, they render themselves contemptible to the judicious.

But in general these things are so. All things in the Old Testament, both what was spoken and what was done, have an especial intention towards the Lord Christ and the gospel; and therefore in several ways we may receive instruction from them. As their institutions are our instructions more than theirs, we see more of the mind of God in them than they did; so their mercies are our encouragements, and their punishments our examples.

And this proceedeth,

First. From the way that God, in infinite wisdom, had allotted unto the opening and unfolding of the mystery of his love, and the dispensation of the covenant of grace. The way we know whereby



God was pleased to manifest the counsels of his will in this matter, was gradual. The principal degrees and steps of his procedure herein, we have declared on the first verse of this Epistle. The light of it still increased from its dawning in the first promise, through all new revelations, prophecies, promises, institutions of worship, until the fulness of time came, and all things were completed in Christ. For God had, from of old, designed the perfection of all his works towards his church to be in him. In him, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were to be laid up, Col. ii. 3, and all things were to be gathered into an head in him, Eph. i. 10. In him God designed to give out the express image of his wisdom, love, and grace, yea of all the glorious properties of his nature. For as he is in himself, or his divine person, the image of the invisible God, Col. i. 15, the brightness of glory, and express image of his Person, Heb. i. 2; so he was to represent him unto the church; for we have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6. In him, that is his person, his office, his work, his church, God perfectly expressed the eternal idea of his mind, concerning the whole effect of his love and grace. From hence he copied out, in various parcels, by prophecies, promises, institutions of worship, actions, miracles, judgments, some partial and obscure representations of what should afterwards be accomplished in the person and kingdom of Christ. Hence these things became types; that is, transcripts from the great idea in the mind of God about Christ and his church, to be at several seasons, in divers instances, accomplished among the people of old, to represent what was afterwards to be completed in him. This the apostle Peter declares fully, 1 Pet. i. 9—12, ‘Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation, the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel.’ The prophets were those who revealed the mind and will of God to the church of old; but the things which they declared, although they had a present use in the church, yet principally they respected the Lord Christ, and the things that afterwards were to come to pass. And herein were they instructed by that Spirit of Christ wherewith they were inspired, namely, that the things they declared, and so the whole work of their prophecy wherein they ministered, did principally belong to the times of the gospel. And therefore are they all for our instruction.

Secondly. This is part of that privilege which God had reserved for that church, which was to be planted and erected immediately by his Son. Having reckoned up the faith of the saints under the Old Testament, what it effected, and what they obtained thereby, the apostle adds, that yet ‘God had provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect,’ Heb. xi. 40. Neither themselves, nor any thing that befel them, was perfect without us. It had



not in them its full end, nor its full use, being ordained in the counsel of God for our benefit. This privilege did God reserve for the church of the New Testament, that as it should enjoy that perfect revelation of his will in Christ, which the church of the Old Testament received not, so what was then revealed had not its perfect end and use, until it was brought over to this also.

See hence what use we are to make of the Scriptures of the Old Testament. They are all ours, with all things contained in them. The sins of the people are recorded in them for our warning, their obedience for our example, and God's dealing with them on the account of the one and the other, for our direction and encouragement in believing. We are not to look on any parts of them barely as stories of things that are past; but as things directly and peculiarly ordered in the wise and holy counsel of God, for our use and advantage. Especial instances we shall meet with, many toward the end of the Epistle.

Consider also what is expected from us above them that lived under the Old Testament. Where much is given, much is required. Now we have not only the superadded helps of gospel light, which they were not intrusted with, but also whatever means or advantages they had, they are made over unto us, yea their very sins and punishments are our instructions. As God in his grace and wisdom hath granted unto us more light and advantage than unto them, so in his righteousness he expects from us more fruits of holiness, unto his praise and glory.

There is yet another observation which the words opened will afford unto us, arising from the season which the apostle presseth upon their consideration in that word *to-day*. And it is, that,

Obs. XI. Especial seasons of grace and obedience are in an especial manner to be observed and improved.—For this end are they given, and are made special, that they may be peculiarly improved. God doth nothing in vain; least of all in the things of grace, of the gospel of the kingdom of his Son. When he gives an especial day to the husbandman and vineyard, it is for especial work. 'To-day, if you will hear his voice.' We may therefore inquire, first, what is necessary unto such an especial season; and then, what is required unto a due observance and improvement of it. And I shall refer all by a due analogy unto those especial days respected in the text.

For the first, such a day or season consists in a concurrence of sundry things.

I. In a peculiar dispensation of the means of grace; and hereunto two things are required.

First. Some especial efforts of providence, of divine wisdom and power making way for it, bringing of it in, or preserving of it in the world. There is, there ever was, a strong opposition at all times against the preaching and dispensation of the gospel. It is that which the gates of hell engage themselves in, although in a work wherein they shall never absolutely prevail, Matt. xvi. 18. As it was with Christ, so it is with his word. The world combined to keep him from it, or to expel him out of it, Acts iv. 25—27. So it dealeth with his

gospel, and all the concernments of it. By what ways and means, on what various pretences this is done, I need not here declare, and it is generally known. Now when God, by some especial and remarkable acts of his providence, shall powerfully remove, overcome, or any way divert that opposition, and thereby make way for the preaching or dispensation of it, he puts a speciality upon that season. And without this, the gospel had never made an entrance upon the kingdom of Satan, nor been entertained in any nation of the world. The case before us gives us an instance. The day mentioned in the text, was that which the people enjoyed in the wilderness; when the worship of God was first revealed unto them, and established amongst them. By what means this was brought about, is summed up in the prophet Isaiah, ch. li. 15, 16. 'I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: the Lord of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.' The work which God wrought when he brought the people out of Egypt was so great, that it seemed to be the creation of a new world, wherein the heavens were planted, and the foundation of the earth was laid. And what was the end of it, what was the design of God in it? It was all to put his word into the mouths of his people, to erect Zion, or a church state, amongst them, to take them into a covenant relation with himself for his worship. This made that time their special day and season. The like works, for the like purpose, at any time will constitute the like season. When God is pleased to make his arm bare in behalf of the gospel, when his power and wisdom are made conspicuous in various instances for the bringing it in unto any place, or the continuance of its preaching against oppositions, contrivances, and attempts for its expulsion, or oppression, then doth he give a special day, a season unto them who do enjoy it.

Secondly. It consists in an eminent communication of the gifts of the Holy Ghost unto those by whom the mysteries of the gospel are to be dispensed; and that either as to the increase of their number, or of their abilities, with readiness unto, and diligence in their work. When God thus gives the word, great is the army of them that publish it; *המבשרות צבא רב*, Psal. xlviii. 11. The word is of the feminine gender, and denotes the churches; which, ver. 26, of that Psalm, are called *מקהלות*, which we render 'congregations,' that is churches, in the same gender: 'Bless their God in the congregations;' *במקהלות*, 'the churches or congregations publishing the word, or glad tidings,' as the word signifies. And hereof there is *צבא רב*, 'a great army.' For the church in its work and order is, *כנגלות*, 'as bannered ones,' that is, *כנגלות צבאות*, 'as bannered armies;' 'armies with banners,' Cant. vi. 10. When God gave the word, (it is a prophecy of the times of the gospel,) great was the number of *מקהלות המבשרות*: that like armies with banners, not for weapons, but for order and terror to the world, preached and published it. Such was the day that our apostle called the Hebrews to the consideration of. It was not long after the ascension of Christ, when the gifts of the Spirit were poured

out on multitudes of all sorts, as was foretold, Acts ii. 16, 17, 18, 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet, And it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaids I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophecy.' The extent of the communication of the Spirit at that season, is emphatically expressed in those words, 'I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.' As the act of pouring denotes abundance, freedom, largeness, plenty, so the object of all flesh, signifies the extent of it to all sorts of persons. And you know how great and eminent were the gifts that were communicated unto many in those days, so that this work was every way complete. By this means the churches were many, whose work and duty it is to be *στυλοι και ιδρυματα της αληθειας*, 1 Tim. iii. 15, the pillars of the truth, that is, to hold it up, and to hold it forth, Phil. ii. 16. When there is any such season when in any proportion or similitude unto this dispensation, or in a way or manner any thing extraordinary, God is pleased to give or pour out of the gifts of his Spirit upon many, for the declaration and preaching of the word of truth, then doth he constitute such an especial day or season as that we are inquiring after.

Secondly. When God is pleased to give signal providential warnings, to awaken and stir up men unto the consideration of, and attendance unto his word and ordinances, this makes such a season to become a special day. For the end of extraordinary providences is to prepare men for the receiving of the word, or to warn them of impending judgments for the contempt of it. This remark did God put upon the season respected here by the apostle. For unto the mention of the pouring of the Spirit, that of signs and judgments is adjoined, Acts ii. 19, 20, 'And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come.' The things here spoken of, were those signs, prodigies, and judgments which God showed unto, and exercised the people of the Jews withal, before the destruction of Jerusalem; even those foretold by our Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. xxiv. And they were all wrought during the time that they enjoyed the dispensation of the gospel before described. And what was the end of them? It was evidently to put a signal mark and note upon that day and season of grace which was then granted unto that people. For so it is added, ver. 21, 'And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' That is, that whosoever shall make use of these warnings, by signs and wonders, and dreadful representations of approaching indignation and wrath, so as to attend unto the word dispensed, by virtue of the plentiful effusion of the Spirit before mentioned, and yield obedience thereunto, (that is, make use of the day granted to them,) he shall be saved, when others that are negligent, rebellious, and disobedient, shall utterly perish.

Thirdly. When it is a season of the accomplishment of prophecies and promises for the effecting of some great work of God, in and on the outward state of the church as to its worship. The day the people had in the wilderness, was the time when the great promise given to Abraham 430 years before, was to have its typical accomplishment. Hereupon the outward state of the church was wholly to be altered; it was to be gathered from its dispersion in single families, into a national union, and to have new ordinances of worship erected in it. This made it a great day to the church. The day whereunto the application of these things is made by the apostle, was the season wherein God would make that great alteration in the whole worship of his church, by the last revelation of his mind and will in the Son. This was a day great and signal. So also when the time comes of the fulfilling of any especial prophecy or prediction for the reformation of the church, it constitutes such a season. Something of this nature seems to be expressed Rev. xiv. 6—8, ‘And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people; saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come: and there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of her fornication.’ The time approaching wherein Babylon is to be destroyed, and the church to be redeemed from under her tyranny, as also to be freed from her pollution, and from drinking any more ‘of the cup of her fornication,’ which is the greatest change or alteration that the outward state of it is left obnoxious to in the world; the everlasting gospel is to be preached with such glory, beauty, and efficacy, as if it were delivered from the midst of heaven; and men have an especial day of repentance and turning to God given to them hereby. And thus it is also at sundry seasons, when the Lord Christ deals with his churches in one place or another, in a way of præludium or preparation to what shall ensue in his appointed time amongst them all.

These, and the like things, do constitute such a special season and day as that we inquire after; and whether such a day be not now on many places, need no great travel of mind or eminency of understanding to determine.

Secondly. It is declared in the proposition laid down, that such a day, such a season is diligently to be attended to and improved. And the reasons and grounds hereof are,

First. Because God expects it. He expects that our applications unto him in a way of obedience, should answer his unto us in a way of care and tenderness. That when he is earnest in his dealings with us, we should be diligent in our observance of him. Every circumstance that he adds unto his ordinary dispensations is to have its weight with us, and in such a day they are many. See Isa. v. 1, ‘My well beloved hath a vineyard בקרן בן שמן in a horn of a son of oil,’ planted in a fat and fruitful soil, (that is, furnished with all possible means to render it fruitful.) And ‘he fenced it, (protected it by his providence from the incursion of enemies,) and gathered out the stones



thereof, (removed out of it whatever was noxious and hurtful ; it may be the gods of wood and stone in an especial manner out of the land) and planted it with the choicest vine, (in its order, ordinances, and institutions of worship,) and built a tower in the midst of it,' that is, for its defence ; namely, the strong city of Jerusalem in the midst of the land, which was built as a city that is compact together, all as one great tower, 'whither the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel,' Ps. cxxii. 3, 4, 'And also made a winepress therein — (the temple and altar continually running with the blood and sacrifices.) And he looked that it should bring forth grapes.' His expectations answer his care and dispensations towards his church. That is the meaning of the word *וַיִּבֶן*, he looked, he expected. Expectation properly is a thing future and uncertain. So is nothing unto God. Being therefore ascribed unto him, it only signifies what is just and equal, and what in such cases ought to be, such a vineyard ought to bring forth grapes answerable to all the acts of God's care and grace towards it. And we may see in that place what is the end of frustrating such an expectation. Such are the dealings of God with churches and persons in the day we have described, and an expectation of such fruit is it accompanied withal.

Secondly. Such a day is the season that is allotted unto us for especial work, for especial duty. Some singular work is the end and design of such a singular season. So the apostle informs us, 2 Pet. iii. 11, 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness.' The supposition in these words, concerning the dissolution of all these things, is an intimation of such a day as we have described from one circumstance of it, namely, the impending judgments of God, then threatened to the church and state of the Jews, which was now expiring. And the inference that he makes from that supposition, is unto a peculiar holiness and godliness. That this at such a time is intended, is a thing so evident, that he refers it to the judgment of those to whom he wrote. 'What manner of persons ought we to be?' Judge in yourselves, and act accordingly. Great light, great holiness, great reformation in hearts, houses, churches, are expected and required in such a day. All the advantages of this season are to have their use and improvement, or we lose the end of it. Every thing that concurs to the constitution of such a day, hath advantages in it to promote special work in us, and if we answer them not, our time for it is irrecoverably lost, which will be bitterness in the end.

Thirdly. Every such day is a day of great trials. The Lord Christ comes in it with his fan in his hand, to sift and try the corn ; to what end is declared Matt. iii. 12, 'His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' The fan of Christ is his word, in and by the preaching whereof, he separates the precious from the vile, the wheat from the chaff. He comes into his floor, the church, where there is a mixture of corn and chaff, he sifts and winnows them by his word and Spirit, so discarding and casting off light, empty, and fruitless professors. Such a day is described by Daniel, chap. xii. 10,

‘Many shall be purified, and made white and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.’ Many, that is, of the saints, shall be purified, יִהַבְּרוּ, purged, made clean from such spots, stains, or defilements, as in their affection or conversation they had contracted: and ‘made white,’ יִלְבְּבוּ, shall be whitened in their profession; it shall be rendered more eminent, conspicuous and glorious: and ‘tried,’ יִצְרֶה, as in a furnace, that it may appear what metal they are of. Thus shall it be with believers; so shall they be exercised in their spirits, and so approved. But wicked and false professors shall be discovered, and so far hardened, that they shall go on, and grow high in their wickedness, unto their utter destruction. So it fell out in the day of his coming in the flesh, and so it was foretold, Mal. iii. 1—3. The whole people jointly desired his coming, but when he came, few of them could abide it or stand before it. He came to try them and purify them, whereon many of them being found mere dross were cast off and rejected: Christ in such a day tries all sorts of persons whereby some are approved, and some have an end put to their profession, their hypocrisy being discovered. And it therefore concerns us heedfully to regard such a season; for,

Fourthly. Unto whom such a day is lost, they also themselves are lost. It is God’s last dealing with them. If this be neglected, if this be despised, he hath done with them. He says unto them in it, ‘This is the acceptable time, this is the day of salvation.’ If this day pass over, night will come, wherein men cannot work. So speaks our Saviour concerning Jerusalem which then enjoyed that day, and was utterly losing it, Luke xix. 41, 42, ‘And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.’ Both the things and words and manner of expression declare the greatness of the matter in hand. So doth the action of our Saviour, ‘he wept,’ which is but once more recorded of him in the gospel, John xi. 35. And the word here used, *εκλαυσε*, denotes a weeping with lamentation. The consideration of what he was speaking to, moved his holy, tender, merciful heart unto the deepest commiseration. He did it also for our example and imitation, that we might know how deplorable and miserable a thing it is for a people, a city, a person, to withstand or lose their day of grace. And the words here used also, are of the like importance, ‘If thou hadst known, even thou:’ the reduplication is very emphatical, ‘thou, even thou.’ Thou ancient city, thou city of David, thou seat of the temple and all the worship of God, thou ancient habitation of the church, ‘if thou hadst known;’ and there is a wish or a desire included in the supposition which is otherwise elliptical; ‘if thou hadst known;’ Oh that thou hadst known; *εἰ*, is sometimes well rendered by *utinam*. And again it is added, ‘at least in this thy day.’ They had enjoyed many lesser days of grace, and many before in the messages and dealings of the prophets, as our Saviour minds them in that great parable, Matt. xxi. 33—36. These they despised, persecuted and rejected, and so lost the season of their preaching, but

these were lesser days, and not decretory of their state and condition. Another day they were to have, which he calls 'this their day;' the day so long foretold and determined by Daniel the prophet; wherein the Son of God was to come, and was now come amongst them; and what did he treat with them about? 'The things which belonged unto their peace;' of repentance and reconciliation unto God; the things which might have given them peace with God, and continued their peace in the world; but they refused these things, neglected their day, and suffered it to pass over them unimproved. What was the issue thereof? God would deal no more with them; the things of their peace shall now be hid from them, and themselves be left unto destruction. For when such a dispensation is lost, when the evening of such a day is come, and the work of it is not accomplished,

1. It may be, God will bring a wasting destruction upon the persons, church, or people that have despised it. So he dealt with Jerusalem, as it was foretold by our Saviour in the place before insisted on. Luke xix. 43, 44. The 'things of thy peace' are now over and hid from thee. What then will follow and ensue? Why, 'the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children with thee, and they shall not leave thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.' Because thou hast not discerned thy day, nor regarded it, hast not answered the mind of God in it, all this shall speedily befall thee, as it did accordingly. The same hath been the issue of many famous Christian churches. The very places where they were planted are utterly consumed. Temporal judgments are oft-times the issue of despised spiritual mercies. This is the language of those providential warnings by signs and prodigies, which oft-times such a season is accompanied withal. They all proclaim the impendent wrath of God upon the neglect of his gracious call. And with examples hereof are all records, civil and ecclesiastical, filled.

God may, and sometimes doth leave such a people, church, or persons as have withstood his dealings in a way of grace in and unto their outward station in the world, and yet hide the things of their peace utterly from them, by a removal of the means of grace. He can leave unto men their kingdoms in this world, and yet take away the kingdom of heaven, and give that unto others. They may dwell still in their houses, but be in the dark, their candlestick and the light of it being consumed. And this hath been the most common issue of such dispensations, which the world groans under to this day. It is that which God threateneth, 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. Because men would not receive the truth in the love thereof; that is, because they will not improve the day of the gospel which they enjoyed, God sent them 'strong delusions, that they should believe a lie;' and how came it to pass? by removing the sound and sincere preaching of the word, he gave advantage to seducers and false teachers to impose their superstition, idolatry, and heresies upon their credulity. So God punished the neglect and disobedience of the churches of Europe, under the

papal apostasy. And let us take heed lest this vial of wrath be not yet wholly emptied. Or,

3. God may leave unto such persons the outward dispensation of the means of grace, and yet withhold that efficacy of his Spirit, which alone can render them useful to the souls of men. Hence the word comes to have a quite contrary effect, unto what it hath under the influences of God's especial grace, God in it then speaks unto a people, as is expressed, Isa. vi. 9, 10, 'Hear you indeed, but understand not; and see you indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.' I have now done with them, saith God; I have no design or purpose any more to deal with them about their conversion and healing; and therefore, although I will have the preaching of the word as yet continued unto them, yet it shall have no effect upon them, but through their own unbelief, to blind them and harden them to their destruction. And for these reasons amongst others, ought such a day as we have described, carefully to be attended unto.

This duty being of so great importance, it may be justly inquired, how may a man, how may a church know that it is such a day, such a season of the gospel with them, so as to be suitably stirred up unto the performance of their duty? I answer, they may do so two ways.

First. From the outward signs of it, as the day is known by the light and heat of the sun, which is the cause thereof. What concurs to such a day was before declared. And in all those things there are signs whereby it may be known. Neglect and ignorance hereof was charged by our Saviour on the Jews, and that frequently; so Matt. xvi. 3, 'O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but ye cannot discern the signs of the times.' How they discerned the face of the sky, he shows in the foregoing verses; namely, they judged by usual known prognostics what the weather would be in the evening or morning, that so they might accordingly apply themselves unto their occasions. But, saith he, as God hath planted such signs in things natural, hath so ordered them that one should be a sign and discovery of another, so he hath appointed signs of this day of grace, of the coming of the Messiah, whereby it also may be known. But these, saith he, you cannot discern. *Οὐ δύνασθε*, 'you cannot;' but withal he lets them know why they could not; that was because they were hypocrites, and either grossly neglected or despised the means and advantages they had to that purpose. The signs we have before mentioned are such, as being brought at any time to the rule of the word, they will reveal the season that they belong unto. And herein consisted the wisdom of those children of Issachar, 'who had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do,' 1 Chron. xii. 32.

Secondly. Such a day or season will manifest itself by its efficacy. When God applies such a concurrence of means, he will make men one way or other sensible of his design and end. The word in such a day will either refine and reform men, or provoke and enrage them. Thus when the witnesses preach, which is a signal season of light and truth, they 'torment them that dwell on the earth,' Rev. xi. 10. I



they are not healed, they will be tormented. So it was at the first preaching of the gospel; some were converted and the rest were hardened. A signal work passed on them all; and those who dispensed the word, became a 'good savour to them that are saved, and in them that perish.' The consciences of men will discover their times. God will one day or other leave his witness within them. An especial day will make an especial approach unto their hearts. If it make not them better, they will be worse: and this they may find by the search of themselves. God in this dispensation, effectually speaks these words unto an evident experience in the minds of men; 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still,' Rev. xxii. 11.

The especial duty incumbent on men in such a day, is in all things to hearken to the voice of God.

We now proceed unto the second part of the words under consideration, comprising the example itself insisted on, and whereon the exhortation itself is founded. And this consists of two general parts. First. The sin; and, Secondly. The punishment of the people of old.

The sin is contained in these words, 'As in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.'

The first thing occurring in the words according to our former distribution of them, relating to the sin mentioned, is the persons of the sinners; they were their fathers, the progenitors of them to whom the apostle wrote. And they are in the next verse further described by their multitude; they were a whole generation; 'I was grieved with that generation.'

Who these were, was declared before in the exposition of the words, and it is plain from the story, who are intended. It was the people that came up out of Egypt with Moses, all of whom that were above twenty years of age, at their coming into the wilderness, because of their manifold sins and provocations, died there, Caleb and Joshua only excepted. So the Lord threatened, Num. xiv. 26—30, 'And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying; how long shall I bear with this evil congregation which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As surely as I live, saith the Lord, as you have spoken in mine ears, so will I do unto you; your carcases shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me; doubtless ye shall not come into the land concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.' And so it came to pass; for when the people were numbered again in the plains of Moab, it is said, 'Among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai; that is, besides those two who were excepted by name,' Num. xxvi. 65. These were the fathers of the present Hebrews; that is, as it is expressed, Jer. xi. 10. אבות ראשנים,

‘their forefathers,’ as we render the words, rather their first fathers; those whom God first took into the express covenant with himself. For the place hath respect unto that very sin which is here reported. ‘They are turned back unto the iniquity of their first fathers, who refused to hear my words;’ who hearkened not unto the voice of God. And this limits the term to those in the wilderness, seeing the former patriarchs did not refuse to hear the word of God. But they are generally called אבות indefinitely, πατερες, the ‘fathers;’ as others also that followed in succeeding generations; once by our apostle they are termed προγονοι, ‘progenitors,’ 2 Tim. i. 3. Now the Psalmist mentioning (and our apostle from him) the sin of the people in the wilderness, and proposing it with its consequences unto the present Hebrews, calls them their fathers.

First. Because that people were exceedingly apt to boast of their fathers, and to raise a confidence in themselves that they must needs receive mercy from God on their account. And they had indeed no small privilege in being the posterity of some of those fathers. Our apostle reckons it as one of their chief advantages, Rom. ix. 4, 5, ‘Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.’ It hath a place in the great series of the privileges of that church. And when the church-state is made over to the Gentiles, it is promised her, that instead of these fathers, she should have her children, Psal. xlv. 16. Those that should succeed unto them in holiness and the favour of God. But this people run into a woeful mistake, which their posterity are hardened in at this day. Their only privilege in this matter, was because God had freely and graciously given his promises unto their fathers, and taken them into covenant with himself. And the due consideration hereof, tended only to the exaltation of the rich and free grace of God. So Moses expressly declares, Deut. vii. 7, 8, and elsewhere. But forgetting or despising this, they rested on the honour and righteousness of their fathers, and expected I know not what as due unto them on that account. This vain confidence our Saviour frequently rebuked in them, and so did the apostle. And for this reason, the Psalmist and the apostle having occasion to mention the sins of the people of old, calls them their fathers, minding them, that many of them in whom they gloried were sinful provokers of God.

Secondly. It is done to mind them of their near concernment in the example proposed unto them. It is not taken from amongst strangers, but it is what fell out among their own progenitors.

Thirdly. To warn them of their danger. There is a propensity in children to follow the sin of their fathers. Hence some sins prove eminently national in some countries, for many generations. The example of parents is apt to infect their children. The Holy Ghost then here intimates unto them their proneness to fall into disobedience, by minding them of the miscarriage of their fathers in the same kind. This intimates unto them both their duty and their danger. Again, these fathers are further described by their number. They were a

whole generation ; that is, all the people of that age, wherein they were in the wilderness. And this contains a secret aggravation of the sin mentioned, because there was in it a joint conspiracy as it were of all the persons of that age. These are they who were guilty of the sin here reported. And we may observe from this expression and remembrance of them,

Obs. XII. That the examples of our forefathers are of use and concernment unto us, and objects of our deepest consideration. God in his dealings with them, lays in instruction for their posterity. And when parents do well, when they walk with God, they beat the path of obedience plain for their children ; and when they miscarry, God sets their sins as buoys to warn them who come after them of the shelves that they split upon. ‘ Be not as your fathers, a stiff-necked generation,’ is a warning that he oft repeats. And it is in the Scripture an eminent part of the commendation or discommendation of any, that they walked in the way of their progenitors. Where any of the good kings of Judah are testified unto for their integrity, this is still one part of the testimony given unto them, that they ‘ walked in the way of David their father,’ in the paths that he had trod before them. And on the other side, it is a brand on many of the wicked kings of Israel, that they walked in the ways of ‘ Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.’ Their examples, therefore, are of concernment unto us.

First. Because oft-times the same kind of temptations are continued unto the children, that the fathers were exercised withal. Thus we find in experience, that some temptations are peculiar to a nation. some to a family for sundry generations, which produce peculiar national sins, and family sins, so that at least they are prevalent in them. Hence the apostle chargeth national sins on the Cretians, from the testimony of Epimenides, who had observed them amongst them ;

*Κρητες αι ψευσαι, κακα θηρια, γαστερες αργαι.*

Tit. i. 12, ‘ The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.’ Lying, dissimulation, cruelty, and sloth, were the sins of that nation from one generation to another ; children learning them from the example of their parents. So many families for a long season have been infamous for cruelty, or deceit, or the like. And these hereditary sins have proceeded in part from hereditary temptations ; some are inlaid in their natural constitutions, and some are inseparably annexed unto some special course of life and conversation, wherein persons of the same family succeed one another. Now it is a great warning unto men, to consider what sad events have befallen them that went before them, by yielding unto those temptations, which they themselves have exercised withal.

Again. There is a blessing or a curse that lies secretly hid in the ways of progenitors. There is a revenge for the children of the disobedient unto the third and fourth generation, and a blessing on the posterity of the obedient for a longer continuance. The very heathen acknowledged this by the light of nature. Plato says expressly, *εις τεταρτην γενεαν διαβιβαζει την τιμωριαν*, ‘ punishment falls on the

fourth generation.' And they had the substance of it from their oracle.

Ἀλλὰ κακῶς ῥέξασι δικὰς τέλος οὐχὶ χρονίστον  
 Ἡδὲ ἀπαραίτατόν· εἰ καὶ διὸς ἐκγονοὶ εἶεν  
 Καὶ αὐτῶν κεφαλῇσι, καὶ ἐν σφέτεροισι τεκῆσσιν  
 Εἰλείται· καὶ πῆμα δομοῖς, ἐπὶ πῆμασι, βαίνει.

So is that saying common in the same case,

Καὶ παῖδες παίδων, καὶ τοὶ μετοπίσθῃ γενῶνται.

The design is, what we have asserted of the traduction of punishment from wicked parents to their posterity. But there are conditions of the avoidance of the curse, and enjoyment of the blessing. When fathers have made themselves obnoxious to the displeasure of God by their sins, let their posterity know, that there is an addition of punishment coming upon them, beyond what in an ordinary course of providence, is due to themselves, if they continue in the same sins. So God tells Moses, in the matter of the golden calf which Aaron had made, when he had prevailed with him not immediately to destroy the whole people. 'Nevertheless,' saith he, 'in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them,' Exod. xxxii. 34. That is, If by their future sins and idolatry, they shall provoke me to visit and punish them, I will add unto their punishment, somewhat from the desert of this sin of their forefathers. Whence is that proverb among the Jews, 'that there is no evil befalls them, but it hath in it some grain of the golden calf.'

וַיִּקְרָא עֲלֵיהֶם מִעַט מִן הָעֵץ הַזֶּה עִם שָׂר הַעֲוֹנוֹת, saith Rashi, 'He will mix a little somewhat of the guilt of this sin, with the rest of their sins.' And therefore the same word of visiting is here used, as in the threatening in the commandment, Exod. xx. 5. And when one generation after another shall persist in the same provoking sins, the weight of God's indignation grows so heavy, that ordinarily in one part or other, it begins to fall within the third or fourth generation. And doth it not concern men to consider what have been the ways of their forefathers, lest there lie a secret consuming curse against them in the guilt of their sins? Repentance, and forsaking their ways, wholly intercepts the progress of the curse, and sets a family at liberty from a great and ancient debt to the justice of God. So God stateth this matter at large, Ezek. xviii. Men know not what arrears may by this means be chargeable on their inheritances, much more, it may be, than all they are worth is able to answer. There is no avoidance of the writ for satisfaction that is gone out against them, but by turning out of the way wherein they are pursued. The same is the case of the blessing that is stored for the posterity of the obedient, provided they are found in the way of their forefathers. These things render them and their ways objects of our considerations. For, moreover,

Obs. XIII. It is a dangerous condition for children to boast of the privilege of their fathers, and to imitate their sins.—This was almost



continually the state of the Jews. They were still boasting of their progenitors, and constantly walking in their sins. 'This they are everywhere in the Scripture charged withal; see Num. xxxii. 14. This the Baptist reflected on in his first dealing with them: 'Bring forth,' saith he, 'fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father,' Matt. iii. 8, 9. On every occasion they still cried out, 'We have Abraham to our father;' he who was so highly favoured of God, and first received the promises. For his sake, and by his means, they expected to be saved temporally and eternally. Hence they have a saying in their Talmud, שאברהם יושב על פתח של גיהנם ולא להניח לירד פושעי ישראל ביהנם; 'Abraham sits at the gates of hell, and will not permit that any transgressors of Israel shall go in thither.' A great reserve against all their sins, but that it will deceive them when they are past relief. It is true, they had on this account many privileges, as our apostle testifies in sundry places, Rom. iii. 1, 2, ix. 4; and so he esteemed them to be as to his own personal interest in them, Phil. iii. 4, 5. But whilst they trusted unto him, and continued in the sins of them who had abused them, it turned to their farther ruin; see Matt. xxiii. 29—32. And let their example deter others from countenancing themselves in privileges of any kind, whilst they come short of personal faith and obedience. Again,

Obs. XIV. A multitude joining in any sin, gives it thereby a great aggravation. Those here that sinned were all the persons of one entire generation. This made it a formal open rebellion, a conspiracy against God, a design as it were to destroy his kingdom, and to leave him no subjects in the world. When many conspire in the same sin, it is a great inducement unto others to follow. Hence is that caution in the law, Exod. xxiii. 2, 'Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.' The law indeed hath an especial respect unto judgment and causes of differences among men. But there is a general direction in the law for our whole course. לא תהיה אחרי רבים לרעה, 'Thou shalt not be after many (or great men) unto evils.' Take heed of the inclination of a multitude unto evil, lest thou art also carried away with their errors and sin; and this aggravates the sin of many. It doth so also, that the opposition unto God therein is open and notorious, which tends greatly to his dishonour in the world. And what resentment God hath of the provocation that lies herein, is fully expressed in Numbers, chap. xiv. 20—36, speaking of the sin of the congregation, in their unbelief and murmuring against him. In the first place, he engageth himself by his oath to vindicate his glory from the reproach which they had cast upon it, ver. 21, 'As truly as I live,' saith he, 'all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.' Some take these words to be only an asseveration of that which follows; as if God had said that, 'As truly as I live, and as the earth is filled with my glory, all these men shall perish;' but the words rather contain the principal matter of the oath of God. He swears, that as they, by their conjunct sin and rebellion, had dishonoured him in the world, so he, by his works of power and vengeance on them, would fill the earth again with his glory. And there is in the following words a representation

of a great *παθος*, or commotion with great indignation. ‘They have,’ saith he, ‘seen my miracles, and have tempted me now these ten times,’ ver. 22. The Hebrew doctors do scrupulously reckon up these ten temptations. The first, they say, is in Exod. iv. 11, when they said, ‘Because there were no graves in Egypt.’ The second in Marah, Exod. xv. 24, ‘The people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?’ The third in the desert of Sin, Exod. xvi. 2, 3, ‘The whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, Would God we had died by the hand of the Lord in Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots.’ The fourth when they left manna until the morning. Exod. xvi. 19, 20, ‘And Moses said, Let no man leave of it until the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses, but some of them left until morning, and it bred worms and stank.’ The fifth was, when some of them went out to gather manna on the Sabbath day, Exod. xvi. 27, 28, which God called a refusing to keep his commandments and his laws. The sixth was in Rephidim, at the waters of Meribah, Num. xx. 3. The seventh in Horeb, when they made the calf, Exod. xxxii. The eighth at Taberah, Num. xi. 4, 5. The ninth at Kibroth-Hataavah, Num. xi. 32. The tenth upon the return of the spies, Num. xiv. Thus are the ten temptations reckoned up by some of the Jews; and by others of them they are enumerated with some little alteration. But whether the exact number of ten be intended in the expression, is very uncertain; it seems rather to intend multiplied temptations, expressed with much indignation. So Jacob when he strove with Laban, told him. ‘Thou hast changed my wages ten times,’ Gen. xxxi. 41, that is, frequently, which he so expressed in his anger and provocation. So doth God here, ‘You have tempted me these ten times;’ that is, so often, so far, that I neither can nor will bear with you any longer. In the whole discourse, which sinners ought to read and tremble at, there is represented, as it were, such a rising of anger and indignation in the face of God, such a commotion of soul in displeasure, both made use of to declare an unchangeable will of punishing, as scarce appears again in the Scripture. Thus it is for a multitude to transgress against God, as it were, by a joint conspiracy. Such issues will all national apostasies and provocations receive. And this is the first general part of the example proposed to consideration, namely, the persons sinning, with the observations that arise from thence.

The second is, the matter or quality of their sin, which is referred unto two heads:

First. Their provocation.—In the provocation, in the day of temptation.

Secondly. Their tempting of him.—They tempted me and proved me.

First. Their sin consisted in their provoking. It seems not to be any one particular sin, but the whole carriage of the people in the action reflected on, that is intended; and that not at any one time, but in their own course. The word in the original, as was declared, signifies to chide, to strive, to contend, and that in words, Isa. xlv. 9, *הוי רב את יצורו*, ‘Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker,’ and how doth, or may he do it? Shall ‘the clay say to him that made it?’ It

is by saying, by speaking against him, that he may so strive with him. But the apostle hath expressed it by a word denoting the effect of that chiding, that is, exacerbation or provocation. The expression of the actions here intended, in the places before mentioned, Exod. xvii. ; Num. xx. 13, the chiding of the people, as we observed before, is directly said to be with Moses, as their tempting afterwards is of the Lord. Thus Moses saith unto them, 'Why chide you with me, and why tempt you the Lord?' Exod. xvii. 2. But it is also said expressly, 'they strove (the same word) with the Lord,' Num. xx. 13. The meaning is, that striving or chiding (*מריבה* from *רוב*) being properly 'an altercation with, or in words,' Moses, and not God, was the immediate object of their chiding. But because it was about and concerning the works of God, which Moses had no relation unto, but as he was his minister, servant, and employed by him, the principal object of their chiding, as formally a sin, was also God himself. In striving with Moses, they strove with him; and in chiding with Moses, they chode with him. This expression then, in general, compriseth all the sinful actions of that people against God, under the ministry of Moses.

There are two things to be considered in this matter of provocation.

First. The sin that is included in it.

Secondly. The event or consequent of it—God was provoked. The former seems first intended in the Hebrew word, the latter in the Greek.

For the sin intended, it is evident from the story, that it was unbelief acting itself by murmuring and complaints, the same for the substance of it, by which also they tempted God. This the apostle declares to have been the great provoking sin, ver. 19. 'So we see that they could not enter in by reason of unbelief.' That was the sin which so provoked God, as that he sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest. Yet it is not their unbelief, absolutely considered, that is intended; but as it brought forth the effects of chiding with Moses, and murmuring against God, which on all occasions they fell into. Though unbelief itself, especially in such a season, be a provoking sin, yet this murmuring and chiding so added unto its provocation, that it is directly laid on their accounts; but they also, as the apostle says, are to be resolved in their spring or cause, that is unbelief. They are but an especial sign, circumstance or effect of their unbelief.

The effect of this sin was the provocation or exacerbation of God. The Hebrew word which the apostle here expresseth by *παροργισμος*, is *בָּעַס*, which sometimes is taken actively, for provoking, inciting, stimulating, imbittering; sometimes passively, for indignation, perturbation, sorrow, grief, trouble. In the whole, it includes the imbittering of the mind of its object, with an excitation unto anger, displeasure, and wrath. Now these things are ascribed unto God, only by an anthropopathy. Such effects being usually wrought in the minds of the best men, when they are unjustly and ungratefully dealt withal, God to show men the nature of their sins ascribes them unto himself. His mind is not imbittered, moved or changed;

but men have deserved to be dealt withal as if it were so. See Jer. viii. 19 ; 2 Kings xxi. 15 ; Isa. lxxv. 3 ; Jer. xxv. 7 ; xxxii. 29 ; 2 Chron. xxviii. 25.

Now this provocation of God by their unbelief, acting itself in murmuring, chiding, and complaining, is further expressed from the season of it ; it was in the day of temptation, the day of Massah. The denomination is taken from the name of the place, where they first murmured for water, and tempted God by the discovery of their unbelief. As it was called Meribah from the contention, chiding and provoking ; so it was called Massah from the tempting of God there ; the day of temptation. In this expression, not the addition of a new sin to that of provocation is intended ; but only a description of the sin, and of the seasons of that sin. It was in the day of temptation that God was so provoked by them. How also they tempted him, we shall see afterwards. Now as this day signally began upon the temptation at Meribah, yet it continued the whole course of the people's peregrination in the wilderness, their multitude tempting of God made this whole time a day of temptation.

Now let us consider hence some further observations.

Obs. XV. The sinful actings of men against those who deal with them in the name of God, and about the works or will of God, are principally against God himself.—The people chode with Moses ; but when God came to call it to an account, he says, They strove with him and provoked him. So Moses told the people, to take them off from their vain pretences and coverings of their unbelief. Exod. xvi. 2. 'The whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron ; but,' saith he, ver. 8. 'The Lord heareth your murmurings against the Lord ; and what are we that you murmur against us ?' as if he had said, Mistake not yourselves ; it is God, and not us, that you have to do withal in this matter. What you suppose you speak only against us, is indeed *directly*, though not *immediately*, spoken against God. So God himself informs Samuel upon the repining of the people against him ; 'They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them,' because he ruled them immediately in the name of God, 1 Sam. viii. 7. They pretended weariness of the government of Samuel, but they were indeed weary of God, and of his rule. And so what was done against him, God took as done against himself. And under the New Testament, our Saviour in particular applies this rule unto the dispensers of the gospel, Luke x. 16. Saith he, 'He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.' The preachers of the gospel are sent by Christ, and therefore their opposition and contempt doth first reflect dishonour upon him ; and through him upon God himself.

And the reason hereof is, because in their work they are representatives of God himself ; they act in his name, and in his stead, as his ambassadors ; 2 Cor. v. 20. 'Now then,' saith the apostle, 'we are ambassadors for Christ ; as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God.' They treat with men as sent of God, in his name, about the affairs of Christ.



The violation of an ambassador amongst men is always esteemed to redound unto the dishonour of him by whom he is employed ; for it is he unto whom the injury and affront are principally intended, especially if it be done unto him in discharge of his office. Nor are king or states ever more highly provoked, than when an injury is offered or an affront done unto their ambassadors. The Romans of old utterly destroyed Tarentum in Italy, and Corinth in Greece, on that account. And occasions of the same nature have of late been like to fill the world with blood and tumult. And the reason is, because, according to the light of nature, what is done immediately against a representative as such, is done directly and intentionally against the person represented. So it is in this case. The enmity of men is against God himself, against his way, his works, his will, which his ambassadors do but declare. But these things absolutely are out of their reach. They cannot reach them nor hurt them, nor will they own directly an opposition unto them. Therefore are pretences invented by men against those who are employed by God, that under their covert they may execute their rage against God himself. So Amaziah priest of Bethel complained to Jeroboam the king, saying, ‘Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel, the land is not able to bear all his words.’ It is not because he preached against his idolatry, or denounced the judgments of God against the sins of men, that Amaziah opposeth him ; no, it is merely on the account of his sedition and the danger of the king thereby, Amos vii. 10. And when, as it is likely, he could not prevail with the king for his destruction, he deals with him personally himself, to flee away and so to render himself suspected, ver. 12, 13. He had used an invidious expression concerning him to the king ; קשר עליו, ‘he hath conspired against thee ;’ that is, to take away thy life. The word is used concerning two kings of Judah one after another, and the matter ended in their death, 2 Chron. xxiv. 25, xxv. 27. And it is mostly used for a conspiracy ending in death. And yet all this was for enmity against God, and no affection to the king. Under the shade of such pretences do men act their opposition unto God, upon his messengers. God sees that they are all but coverts for their lusts and obstinacy ; that himself is intended, and he esteems it so, accordingly.

Instruction lies plain herein for them, who by vainly invented pleas and pretences, do endeavour to give countenance to their own consciences, in opposition unto those who speak in the name and treat about the things of God. Let them look to it ; though they may so satisfy themselves in and by their own prejudices, as to think they do God good service when they kill them ; yet they will find things in the issue brought unto another account. This lies so clear from what hath been spoken, that I shall not further insist on it. But let them principally consider this, and thence what is incumbent on them, who are called to deal with others in the name of God. And

First. Let them take heed, that they neither do, nor act, nor speak any thing, but what they have sufficient warrant from him for. It is a dangerous thing, to entitle God or his name unto our own imaginations. God will not set his seal of approbation, he will not own a con-

cernment in our lie, though we should think that it tends to his glory, Rom. iii. 7. Neither will he own what is done against himself, unless we stand in his counsels, and be found in the ways of his will. There is no object of a more sad consideration, than to see some men persecuting others for their errors. They that persecute (suppose them in the right, as to the matter in difference between them and those whom they do oppress, yet) do certainly act against God in what they pretend to act for him. For they usurp his authority, over the souls and consciences of men. And they that are persecuted, do sacrifice their concernments to the darkness of their own minds. God may concern himself in general to own their integrity towards himself, even in their mistakes. But in the particular wherein they suffer, he will not own them. Whether therefore we are to do, or to suffer any thing for God, it is of great concern unto us to look well to our call or warrant. And then, Secondly, when men are secured by the word and Spirit of God, that their message is not their own, but his that sent them, that they seek not their own glory but his, they may have hence all desirable grounds of encouragement, support, and consolation in all the straits and temptations they meet withal in this world. They can be no more utterly prevailed against, that is, their testimony cannot, than can God himself. So he speaks to Jeremiah; 'I will make thee a fenced brazen wall, they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee to save thee, and deliver thee, saith the Lord,' Jer. xv. 20. And in what they suffer, God is so far concerned, as to account all that is done against them, to be done against himself. Christ is hungry with them, and thirsty with them, and in prison with them, Matt. xxv. 35—37. Again,

Obs. XVI. Unbelief manifesting itself in a time of trial, is a most provoking sin. This, as we have shown, was the sin of the people in their provocation of God. And it is a great sin; the great sin, the spring of all sins at all times. But it hath many aggravations, attending it in a time of trial. And this compriseth the first sense of the limitation of time in that word, this day, before intimated; namely, an especial time and season wherein the guilt of this sin may be eminently contracted. For I speak not of unbelief in general with respect unto the covenant and the promises thereof, but of unbelief as working in a distrust of God with respect unto the dispensations of his providence. It is a disbelieving of God as to any concern of our own, when we have a sufficient warrant to believe and put our trust in him, when it is our duty so to do. And two things we may make a brief inquiry into.

First. What is required, that men may be in a condition to contract the guilt of this sin? and hereunto three things do belong;

1. That, in general, they be found in the way of God. God's promises of his presence, and of his protection unto men, are confined unto his own ways; which alone are theirs, or ought so to be. 'He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways,' Ps. xci. 11, that is, the ways that he hath appointed thee to walk in. The benefit of which promise the devil vainly attempted to deprive our Saviour of, by seducing him to ways that were not his; ways that God

hath not appointed. Men in ways of their own, that is, in the crooked paths of sin, are not obliged to trust in God for mercy and protection in them. So to do, or to pretend so to do, is to entitle God to their lusts. For men to say, they trust in God, in the pursuit of their covetousness, injustice, oppression, sensuality, or in ways wherein these things have a prevailing mixture; or to pray for the protecting, the *blessing presence* of God in them, is a high provocation. Every difficulty, every opposition that such men meet withal, is raised by God to turn them out of their way. And to expect their removal by him, or strength and assistance against them, is to desire the greatest evil unto their own souls that in this world they are obnoxious unto. The Israelites here blamed, were in the way of God, and no opposition ought to have discouraged them therein.

2. That in particular, they have a warrantable call to engage in that way wherein they are. A way may be good and lawful in itself, but not lawful to a man that enters upon it without a sufficient call. And this deprives men also of the grounds of expectation of God's presence, so as to that particular way wherein they cannot contract the guilt of this sin; though commonly it is distrust of God, that casts men into such ways. It was the way and work of God, that the Israelites should destroy the Amorites and possess their land. But when they would in an heat without a sufficient warrant go up into the hill and fight with them, Moses says unto them, 'Go not up, for the Lord is not among you, and they were discomfited to Hormah,' Num. xiv. 42—45. Unto a lawful way then in general, a lawful call in particular must be added, or we have not a sufficient foundation for the discharge of that duty, whose defect is now charged by us.

3. They must have a sufficient warrant of the presence and protection of God. This is that which makes faith and trust a duty. And God gives it two ways. 1. In general, in the promise of the covenant, wherein he hath undertaken to be with us, to bless us, and to carry us through the course of our duty, Heb. xiii. 5. 'He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' This alone is a sufficient ground and foundation for faith and trust in every condition. And this the Israelites had in the promise made unto Abraham and others of their forefathers. 2. By giving some signal instances of his power, wisdom and care in his presence with us, by protection, direction, preservation, or deliverance in those ways of his wherein we are engaged. When by this means he hath given us experience of his goodness, faithfulness, and approbation of the ways wherein we are, this adds a speciality unto the general warrant for faith in the word of promise. And this they also had in all those works of God which they saw for forty years.

Secondly. It must be inquired, what it is that makes any time or season to be a day of trial; seeing the miscarriage of men in such a season is expressed as a great aggravation of their sin. And they are the things that follow.

1. That there be a concernment of the glory of God in the performance of that duty wherein we are to act faith, or to trust in God. So God tried the faith of Abraham in a duty wherein his glory was

greatly concerned. For by his obedience in faith, it appeared to all the world that Abraham respected God, and valued a compliance with his will above all things in this world whatever. So God himself expresseth it, Gen. xxii. 12. ‘Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.’ This was the tenth and last trial that befel Abraham. Nine times he had been tried before: 1. In his departure out of his country. 2. By the famine which drove him into Egypt. 3. In the taking away of his wife there by Pharaoh. 4. In his war with the four kings. 5. In his hopelessness of issue by Sarah, whence he took Hagar. 6. In the law of circumcision. 7. His wife being taken from him again by Abimelech. 8. His casting out of Hagar after she had conceived. 9. His expulsion of Ishmael. In some of these it is known how he failed, though in most of them he acquitted himself as became the father of the faithful. But now the fluctus decumanus came upon him; his last and utmost trial, wherein he was made a spectacle to men, angels, and devils. The Jews tell us great stories, of the opposition made by Satan, in his arguing with Abraham and Isaac, about and against their obedience in this thing. And no doubt but he employed himself unto that purpose. And it is endless to show how many eyes were upon him, all which gave a concernment of glory unto God. Here therefore Abraham in a most especial manner acquits himself, whence God gives him that testimony; ‘Now I know that thou fearest God,’ that is, now thou hast made it known beyond all exception; and this puts a blessed close unto all his signal trials. When therefore God calls men forth unto the performance and discharge of any duty, wherein his glory and honour in the world is concerned, then he makes it unto them a time of trial.

2. Difficulties and opposition lying in the way of duty makes the season of it a time of trial. When men have wind and tide with them in their sailing, neither their strength nor their skill is tried at all. But when all is against them, then it is known what they are. When the sun shines and fair weather continues, the houses that are built on the sand, continue as well as those that are built on the rock. But when the rain, and the floods, and the wind come, they make the trial. While men have outward advantages to encourage them in the ways of God, it is not known what principles they act from. But when their obedience and profession is attended with persecution, reproach, poverty, famine, nakedness, death; then it is tried what men build upon, and what they trust to; then it is to them a time of trial.

Farther. To give light to our proposition, we may inquire how, or by what means men do, or may act, and manifest their unbelief at such a time or season. And this may be done several ways.

1. By dissatisfaction in, and discontent at that condition of difficulty, whereunto they are brought by the providence of God for their trial. Herein principally did the Israelites offend in the wilderness. Their condition pleased them not. This occasioned all their murmurings and complaints whereby God was provoked. It is true, they were brought into many straits and difficulties; but they were brought into them for their trial by God himself, against whom they had no reason to repine or complain. And this is no small fruit, effect, and evidence



of unbelief in trials; namely, when we like not that condition we are brought into, of poverty, want, danger, persecution. If we like it not, it is from our unbelief. God expects other things from us. Our condition is the effect of his wisdom, his care, and love; and as such, by faith ought it to be acquiesced in.

2. By the omission of any duty that is incumbent on us, because of the difficulties that attend it, and the opposition that is made unto it. To be fearful and unbelieving, go together, Rev. xxi. 9, Where our fear, or any other affection, influenced or moved by earthly things, prevails with us to forego our duty, either absolutely, or in the most special and eminent instances of its practices, there unbelief prevails in the time of our trials. And this way also, in particular, did the Israelites fail. When they heard of fenced cities and sons of Anak, they gave up all endeavours of going into the land of Canaan, and consulted of making a captain to lead them back again into Egypt. And no otherwise is it with them who forego their profession, because of the giant-like opposition which they find against it.

3. When men turn aside, and seek for unwarrantable assistances against their difficulties. So did this people: they made a calf to supply the absence of Moses, and were contriving a return into Egypt to deliver them out of their troubles. When men in any thing make flesh their arm, their hearts depart from the Lord, Jer. xvii. 5.

4. When men disbelieve plain and direct promises, merely on the account of the difficulties that lie against their accomplishment. This reflects unspeakable dishonour on the veracity and power of God; the common sin of this wilderness-people. They limited God, and said, Can he do this or that? Seldom it was that they believed beyond what they enjoyed. Here lay the main cause of their sin and ruin. They had a promise of entering into the land. They believed it not; and, as our apostle says, they could not enter in because of unbelief. The promise was to their nation, the posterity of Abraham; the accomplishment of it in their persons depended on their faith. Here was their trial; they believed not, but provoked God, and so perished. Now, the reasons of the greatness of this sin, and its aggravations, are contained in the previous description of it. Every instance declaring its nature, manifests it also to be heinous. I shall take up, and only mention two of them.

First. There is, as was shown, an especial concernment of the glory of God in this matter. He calls men forth in such a season, to make a trial of their obedience. He makes them therein, as the apostle speaks, a spectacle unto men and angels. And the hinge that the whole case turns upon, is their faith. This all other actings hold a conformity unto. If here they discharge themselves aright, the glory of God, the manifestation whereof is committed unto them, is preserved entire. If herein they fail, they have done what lies in them to expose it to contempt; see Num. xiv. 21. So was the case in the trial of Job. God permitted Satan to try to the uttermost whether he believed in him, and loved him sincerely or not. Had Job failed herein, how would Satan have vaunted and boasted, and that against God himself? And the same advantage do others put into his hands, when at any time they miscarry in point of faith in a time of trial.

Secondly. The good and welfare, the peace and prosperity of the church in this world, depend on the deportment of men belonging to it in their trials. They may, at least as unto God's outward dispensations towards them, sin at a cheaper rate at other times. A time of trial is the turn of a church's peace or ruin. We see what their unbelief cost this whole generation in the wilderness; and these Hebrews, their posterity, were now upon the like trial. And the apostle, by this instance, plainly insinuates unto them what would be the issue if they continued therein, which accordingly proved to be their utter rejection.

Thirdly. Add hereunto, that it is the design of God in such particular instances, to try our faith in general as to the promises of the covenant, and our interest therein. The promise that this people had principally to deal with God about, was that of the covenant made with Abraham, the which all pretended to believe. But God tried them by the particular instances mentioned; and failing therein, they failed as unto the whole covenant. And it is so still. Many pretend that they believe the promises of the covenant, as to life and salvation by it, firmly and immoveably. God tries them by particular instances of persecution, difficulty, straits, public or private. Here they abide not, but either complain and murmur, or desert their duty, or fall to sinful compliances, or are weary of God's dispensations. And this manifests their unsoundness in the general; nor can it be otherwise tried.

Again observe, that,

Obs. XVII. There is commonly a day, a time, wherein unbelief riseth to its height in provocation.—We showed before that there is a day, an especial season of God's dealing with the sons of men, by his word and other means of grace. The due observance and improvement hereof, is of the greatest importance unto them. 'To-day, if you will hear his voice;' that is, the day wherein God's dispensations of grace and patience come to their *ακμῇ*, status rerum inter incrementum et decrementum, 'their height.' After this, if not closed with, if not mixed with faith and obeyed, they either insensibly decline, in respect of their tender or efficacy, or are utterly removed and taken away. In like manner, there is a day, a season, wherein the unbelief of men in its provocation comes to its height, and uttermost issue, beyond which God will bear with them no longer, but will break off all gracious intercourse between himself and such provokers. This was the direct case with these Israelites. They had by their unbelief and murmuring provoked God ten times, as was declared before. But the day of their provocation, the season wherein it arrived to its height, came not until this trial, mentioned Num. xiv. upon the return of the spies that went to search the land. Before that time, God often reproved them, was angry with them, and variously punished them; but he still returned unto them in a way of mercy and compassion, and still proposed unto them an entrance into his rest according to the promise. But when that day once came, when the provocation of their unbelief was come to its height, then he would bear with them no longer, but swears in his wrath that they should not enter into his est. From that day, he took hold of all occasions to exercise severity

against them, flooding them away, Ps. xc. 5, until that whole evil generation was consumed. And so it was with their posterity, as to their church and national state. God sent unto them, and dealt variously with them, by his prophets, in several generations. Some of them they persecuted, others they killed, and upon the matter rejected them all, as to the main end of their work and message. But yet all this while God spared them, and continued them a people and a church. Their provocation was not come unto its height, its last day was not yet come. At length, according to his promise, he sent his Son unto them. This gave them their last trial, this put them into the same condition with their forefathers in the wilderness, as our apostle plainly intimates in the use of this example. Again, they despised the promises, as their fathers had done in the type and shadow; so did they when the substance of all promises was tendered and exhibited unto them. This was the day of their last provocation, after which, God would bear with them no more in a way of patience, but enduring them for the space of near forty years, he utterly rejected them; sending forth his servants, he slew those murderers, and burnt their city. This is that which our Saviour at large declares, in his parable of the householder and his husbandmen, Matt. xxi. 33—41.

And thus in God's dealing with the antichristian state, there is a season wherein the angel swears, that 'there shall be time no longer,' Rev. x. 6. That God would no longer bear with men, or forbear them in their provocations and idolatries, but would thenceforth give them up unto all sorts of judgments, spiritual and temporal, unto their utter confusion; 'Yea, send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness,' 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. And concerning this day two things may be observed. 1. That it is uncertain. 2. That it is unalterable.

First. It is uncertain: men know not when their provocations do come, or will come unto this height. Jerusalem knew not in the entrance of her day, that her sin and unbelief were coming to their issue, and so was not awakened to their prevention; no more than the men of Sodom knew when the sun arose, that there was a cloud of fire and brimstone hanging over their heads. Men in their sins think they will do as at other times, as Sampson did when his locks were cut; and that things will be made up between God and them as formerly; that they shall yet have space and time for their work and duty. But ere they are aware, they have finished their course, and filled up the measure of their sins. 'For man also knoweth not his time, as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them,' Eccles. ix. 12. For the day of the Lord's indignation comes 'as a snare on them that dwell on the face of the earth,' Luke xxi. 35. And men are often crying 'Peace, peace,' when sudden destruction comes upon them, 1 Thess. v. 3. When Babylon shall say, she sits as a queen, and is no widow (her sons being again restored unto her) and shall see no sorrow; then shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be

utterly burnt with fire, Rev. xviii. 7, 8. Hence is Christ so often said to come as a thief, to manifest how men will be surprised by him in their sins and impenitency. And if the outward peace and the lives of men in this condition be respited for a while, as oft-times they are, yet they are no longer under a dispensation of patience. There is nothing between God and them but anger and wrath. If men knew when would be their last trial, and which were it, we think they would rouse up themselves to a deep consideration of it, and a serious compliance with the call of God. But this in the holy will and wisdom of God, is always hid from them, until it be too late to make use of it, until it can produce no effects but a few despairing wishes. God will have none of his warnings, none of his merciful dispensations put off or slighted with the hopes and expectation of another season, by a foolish promising whereof unto themselves, men ruin their souls every day.

Secondly. It is unalterable and irrecoverable. When the provocation of unbelief comes to this height, there is no space or room left for repentance, either on the part of God or the sinner. For men, for the most part after this, they have no thought of repenting. Either they see themselves irrecoverable, and so grow desperate, or become stupidly senseless, and lie down in security. So those false worshippers in the Revelation, after time was granted unto them no longer, but the plagues of God began to come upon them, it is said, 'They repented not, but bit their tongues for anger, and blasphemed God.' Instead of repenting of their sins, they rage against their punishment. And if they do change their mind in any thing, as Esau did when he saw the blessing was gone, it is not by true repentance, nor shall it be unto any effect or purpose. So the Israelites finished their sin by murmuring against the Lord upon the return of the spies, and said, they would not go up into the land, but would rather return into Egypt, Num. xiv. But after a while they changed their minds, 'and they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo we be here, and we will go up into the place which the Lord hath promised,' ver. 40. But what was the issue? Their time was past, the Lord was not amongst them, 'and the Amalekites and the Canaanites that dwelt in that hill, smote them and discomfited them unto Hormah,' ver. 45. Their change of mind was not repentance, but a new aggravation of their sin. Repentance also in this matter is hid from the eyes of God. When Saul had finished his provocation, Samuel denouncing the judgment of God against him, adds, 'And also the strength of Israel will not lie nor repent,' 1 Sam. xv. 29. God firms his sentence, and makes it irrevocable, by the engagement of his own immutability. There is no change, no alteration, no reprieve, no place for mercy, when this day is come and gone, Ezek. xxi. 25.

Let persons,—let churches,—let nations take heed lest they fall unawares into this evil day. I say, unawares to themselves, because they know not when they may be overtaken by it. It is true, all the danger of it ariseth from their own negligence, security, and stubbornness. If they will give ear to previous warnings, this day will never



come upon them. It may not therefore be unworthy our inquiry, to search what prognostics men may have of the approach of such a day. And,

First. When persons, churches, or nations have already contracted the guilt of various provocations, they may justly fear that their next shall be their last. 'You have,' saith God to the Israelites, 'provoked me these ten times,' that is, frequently, as hath been declared; and now your day is come. You might have considered before, that I would not always thus bear with you. Hath God, then, borne with you in one and another provocation, temptation, backsliding, take heed lest the great sin lie at the door, and be ready to enter upon the next occasion. As God told Cain, Gen. iv. 7, if thou dost not do well, *לפחח רבך*, peccatum ad ostium cubat, 'sin lies down at the door,' as a beast ready to enter on the next occasion, the next opening of it. After former provocations, so lieth that which shall fill the ephah, and have the talent of lead laid upon it. Take heed, grey hairs are sprinkled upon you, though you perceive it not. Death is at the door. Beware lest your next provocation be your last. When your transgressions come to three and four, the punishment of your iniquities will not be turned away. When that is come, you may sin whilst you will or while you can, God will have no more to do with you, but in a way of judgment.

Secondly. When repentance upon convictions of provocations lessens or decays, it is a sad symptom of an approaching day, wherein iniquity will be completed. Useful repentance, that is, that which is of any use in this world for the deferring or retarding of judgment, is commensurate unto God's dispensations of patience. When the fixed bounds of it (as it hath fixed bounds) are arrived at, all springs of repentance are dried up. When, therefore, persons fall into the guilt of many provocations, and God giving in a conviction of them by his word or providence, they are humbled for them according to their light and principles; if they find their humiliations upon their renewed convictions, to grow weak, decay, and lessen in their effects, they do not so reflect upon themselves with self-displicity as formerly, nor so stir up themselves unto amendment, as they have done upon former warnings or convictions, nor have in such cases their accustomed sense of the displeasure and terror of the Lord; let them beware, evil is before them, and the fatal season of their utmost provoking is at hand, if not prevented.

Thirdly. When various dispensations of God towards men have been useless and fruitless; when mercies, judgments, dangers, deliverances, signally stamped with a respect unto the sins of men, but especially the warnings of the word, have been multiplied towards any persons, churches, or nations, and have passed over them without their reformation or recovery; no doubt but judgment is ready to enter, yea if it be into the house of God itself.

Is it thus with any, is this their estate and condition? let them please themselves while they please, they are like Jonah asleep in the ship, whilst it is ready to be cast away on their account. Awake and tremble; you know not how soon a great, vigorous, prevalent tempta-

tion may hurry you into your last provocation. And this is the first head of sin instanced in.

Secondly. They are said also to have tempted God. 'In the temptation, when your fathers tempted me.' Wherein their provocation did consist, and what was the sin which is so expressed, we have declared. We must now inquire what was their tempting of God, of what nature was their sin therein, and wherein it did consist. To tempt God is a thing frequently mentioned in the Scripture, and condemned as a provoking sin. And it is generally esteemed to consist in a venturing on or an engaging into any way, work, or duty, without sufficient call, warrant, or rule, upon the account of trusting God therein; or in the neglect of the use of ordinary means in any condition, desiring, expecting, or trusting unto any extraordinary assistances or supplies from God. So when men seem rashly to cast themselves into danger, out of a confidence in the presence and protection of God, it is said that they tempt God. And sundry texts of Scripture seem to give countenance to this description of the sin of tempting God. So, Isaiah vii. 11, 12, when the prophet bid Ahaz ask a sign of the Lord in the depths or in the heights above, he replied, 'I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord.' That is, I will rest in what thou hast said, and not tempt God by seeking any thing extraordinary. And so when Satan tempted our Saviour to show his power by casting himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, which was none of his ways, Matt. iv. 7, he answers him by that saying of Deut. vi. 16, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' To venture therefore on any thing unwarrantable, trusting unto God for protection, is to tempt him. And this is usually and generally allowed as the nature of this sin, and sense of this expression.

But yet I must needs say, that upon the consideration of all the places where mention is made of tempting the Lord, I am forced to embrace another sense of the meaning of this expression, which if it be not utterly exclusive of that already mentioned, yet it is doubtless more frequently intended, and doth more directly express the sin here condemned. Now this is, a distrust of God whilst we are in any of his ways, after we have received sufficient experiments and instances of his power and goodness, to confirm us in the stability and certainty of his promises. Thus to do is to tempt God. And where this frame is found in any, they are said to tempt him; that is to provoke him by their unbelief. It is not barely and nakedly to disbelieve the promises, it is not unbelief in general, but it is to disbelieve them under some peculiar attestation and experience obtained of the power and goodness of God in their pursuit, and towards their accomplishment. When therefore men are engaged in any way of God according to their duty, and meeting with opposition and difficulty therein, if they give way to despondencies and unbelief, after they have received any signal pledges of his faithfulness in former effects of his wisdom, care, power, and goodness, they tempt God, and are guilty of the sin here branded and condemned. The most eminent instances of tempting God in the Scripture, and which are most frequently mentioned, are these of the Israelites in the wilderness. As they are here represented

in the story, so they are called over again, both in the Old Testament and the New. Ps. lxxviii. 41, 'Yea they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.' And 1 Cor. x. 9, 'they tempted Christ.' And wherein did this temptation consist? It was in this and no other. They would not believe nor trust God when they were in his way, after they had received many experiences of his power and presence amongst them. And this is directly expressed, Exod. xvii. 7, "They tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?" They doubted of and questioned his presence, after all the pledges and tokens which he had given them of it. And this sin of theirs the Psalmist at large pursues, showing wherein it did consist, Ps. lxxviii. 22, 23, 'They believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation; though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven; ver. 32, for all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works: ver. 41, 42, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel; they remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from their enemies.' Thus plain doth he make the nature of their sin in tempting of God. It was their distrust and disobeying of him, after they had received so many encouraging evidences of his power, goodness, and wisdom amongst them. This and this alone is in the Scripture called tempting of God. For that of our Saviour, Matt. iv. 7, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,' it is taken, as was observed, from Deut. vi. 16, where the following words are, 'as thou didst tempt him in Massah.' Now this tempting of God at Massah, was that which we have declared; namely, the disbelieving of him after many evidences of his power and faithfulness. And this directly answers the end for which our Saviour made use of these words, which is to show, that he was so far satisfied of God's presence with him, of his being the Son of God, that he would not tempt him, by desiring other experiments of it; as though what he had already were not sufficient. And the reason why Ahaz said he would not tempt the Lord in asking a sign, was no other but because he believed not, either that he would give him a sign, or that he would deliver; and therefore he resolved to trust to himself, and with his money to hire the Assyrians to help him, which he did accordingly, 2 Kings xvi. 7—9.

And this sin is called tempting of God, from its effect, and not from its formal nature. They tempted God, that is, by their unbelief they provoked him and stirred him up to anger and indignation. And from the discovery of the nature of this sin, we may observe, that

Obs. XVIII. To distrust God, to disbelieve his promises, whilst a way of duty lies before us, after we have had experiences of his goodness, power, and wisdom in his dealing with us, is a tempting of God, and a greatly provoking sin.—And a truth this is, that hath ציד בפיו, 'meat in its mouth,' or instruction ready for us, that we may know how to charge this aggravation of our unbelief upon our souls and consciences. Distrust of God, is a sin that we are apt upon sundry perverse reasonings to indulge ourselves in, and yet is there nothing wherewith God is more provoked. Now, it appears in the proposition

laid down, that sundry things are required that a person, a church, a people, may render themselves formally guilty of this sin: as,

1. That they be called unto, or engaged in some special way of God. And this is no extraordinary thing. All believers who attend unto their duty, will find it to be their state and condition. So were the Israelites in the wilderness. If we are out of the ways of God, our sin may be great, but it is a sin of another nature. It is in his ways that we have his promises; and therefore it is in them, and with reference unto them, that we are bound to believe and trust in him; and on the same account in them alone can we tempt God by our unbelief.

2. That in this way they meet with oppositions, difficulties, hardships, temptations; and this, while Satan and the world continue in their power, they shall be sure to do. Yea, God himself is pleased oft-times to exercise them with sundry things of that nature. Thus it befel the people in the wilderness. Sometimes they had no bread, and sometimes they had no water; sometimes enemies assaulted them, and sometimes serpents bit them. Those things which in God's design are trials of faith, and means to stir it up unto a diligent exercise, in their own natures are grievous and troublesome, and in the management of Satan, tend to the producing of this sin, or tempting of God.

3. That they have received former experiences of the goodness, power, and wisdom of God, in his dealings with them. So had this people done; and this God chargeth them withal, when he reproacheth them with this sin of tempting him; and this also all believers are or may be made partakers of. He who hath no experience of the special goodness and power of God towards him, it hath been through his own negligence and want of observation, and not from any defect in God's dispensations. As he leaveth not himself without witness towards the world, in that he doth them good, sending them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness; no more is he wanting towards all believers, in giving them especial tokens of his love, care, and kindness, towards them; for he is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that do believe, 1 Tim. iv. 10. But as the most in the world take no notice of the effects of his care and goodness towards them, so many believers are negligent in treasuring up experiences of his special care and love towards them. Yet this hinders not, but that the ways and dealings of God are indeed such as have been declared.

Now, where these things concur, the distrust of God is a high provocation of him. It is unbelief, the worst of sins, expressing itself to the greatest disadvantage of God's glory, the height of aggravations. For what can God do more for us? and what can we do more against him? Surely when he hath revealed his ways unto us, and made known unto us our duty, when he hath given us pledges of his presence with us, and of his owning of us, so as to seal and ascertain his promises unto us; then for us, upon the opposition of creatures, or worldly difficulties, about outward temporary perishing things, for their power and efficacy extends no farther, to disbelieve and distrust him, it must needs be a high provocation of the eyes of his glory.



But, alas ! how frequently do we contract the guilt of this sin, both in our personal, family, and more public concerns ! A due consideration hereof, lays without doubt matter of deep humiliation before us.

And this is the second general head insisted on by the apostle in the example proposed, namely, the nature of the sin or sins which the people fell into, and which he intends to dehort his Hebrews from.

3. The third general head of this discourse, contains a triple aggravation of the sin of the people, in their provoking and tempting of God. 1. From the place wherein they so sinned—it was in the wilderness. 2. From the means they had to the contrary—They saw the works of God. 3. From the continuance of the use of those means, and the duration of their sin under them : it was thus for forty years—they saw my works forty years. For these, as they are circumstances of the story, so they are aggravations of the sin mentioned in it.

First. They thus dealt with God in the wilderness : what wilderness is intended, we showed before in the exposition of the words. And although there may be a peculiar respect to that part of the wilderness, wherein the definitive sentence of their exclusion from the land of Canaan was given out against them, which was in the wilderness of Paran, Num. xii. 16, at the very borders of the land that they were to possess, as appears, ch. xiv. 40, yet because the time of forty years is mentioned, which was the whole time of the people's peregrination in the deserts of Arabia, I take the word to comprehend the whole. Here, in this wilderness, they provoked and tempted God ; and this contains a great aggravation of their sin. For,

1. This was the place wherein they were brought into liberty, after they and their forefathers had been in sore bondage to the Egyptians for sundry ages. This was a mercy promised to them, and which they cried out for in the day of their oppression. ' They cried, and their cry came up unto God, by reason of their bondage,' Exod. ii. 23. Now, to handsel their liberty, to make an entrance into it, by this rebellion against God, was a provoking circumstance.

2. It was a place wherein they lived solely and visibly upon God's daily extraordinary provision for them. Should he have withheld a continual working of miracles in their behalf, both they and theirs must have utterly perished. This could not but have affected them with love and fear, great preservatives of obedience, had they not been extremely stupid and obdurate.

3. They were in a place where they had none to tempt them, to provoke them, to entice them unto sin, unless they wilfully sought them out, unto that very end and purpose, as they did in the case of Midian. The people now dwelt alone, and were not reckoned among the nations. Afterwards indeed, when they dwelt among other nations, they learned their manners ; but as that was no excuse for their sin, so this was a great aggravation of it, that here it sprung merely from themselves, and their own evil heart of unbelief, continually prone to depart from the living God.

Secondly. It was a place wherein they continually saw the works of God, which is the second general head mentioned in the aggravation

of their sin—They saw my works. And this did aggravate their sin on many accounts.

First. From the evidence that they had, that such works were wrought, and that they were wrought of God—They saw them. This Moses laid weight on, Deut. v. 3, 4, 'The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us (אִתּוֹ אֲנַחְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ) who are all of us alive this day: the Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of fire.' Not with our fathers, that is, say some, our forefathers who died in Egypt, and heard not the voice of God in Horeb. Or, not with our fathers, that is *only*; their fathers were alive at the giving of the law: but the covenant was not made with them only, but with us also. So Rashi in the place, לֹא אִתּוֹ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּלִבְדּוֹ, 'not with our fathers only.' And then כִּי אִתּוֹ is as much as כִּי נִסְ אִתּוֹ, as Aben Ezra observes, 'with us also.' And he confirms this kind of speech, from that of God to Jacob, 'Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel;' that is, thou shalt not be called only so; for he was frequently called Jacob afterwards. Others suppose that by the fathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, are intended, who were the especial fathers of the people: now they received the promise, and therein had the covenant of grace confirmed unto them, but had no share in the special covenant which was made in, by, and at the giving of the law. And in this sense, the emphasis is on the word בְּרִית הַזֶּה: הַזֶּה, 'this covenant;' 'this' which is now made in the giving of the law. For my part, I am apt to think that God doth; in these words of Moses, show his indignation against all that provoking generation of their fathers in that wilderness; and affirms his covenant was not made with them because they despised it, and received no benefit by it, for it had a peculiar respect unto the land of Canaan, concerning which God sware that they should not enter into it. It was not with them, saith he, whom God despised and regarded not, but with you who are now ready to enter into the promised land, that this covenant was made; see Heb. viii. 9. The ground why I produced this place, is to show what weight is to be laid on immediate transactions with God, personal seeing of his works. Herein they had an advantage above those who could only say with the Psalmist, Ps. xlv. 1, 'We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.' They saw with their own eyes what was but told or reported unto others. And herein they had a double advantage.

1. In point of evidence.—They had the highest and most unquestionable evidence that the works mentioned were wrought, and wrought of God—they saw them. And this is clearly the most satisfactory evidence concerning miraculous works: Hence our Saviour chose those to be the witnesses of his miracles who had been *αὐτοπται*, 'spectators of them.'

2. In point of efficacy for their end.—Things seen and beheld, have naturally a more effectual influence on the minds of men, than those which they only hear of, or which are told them.

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.

This therefore greatly aggravates their sin, that they themselves saw these works of God, which were signal means of preserving them from it.

Secondly. From the nature of the works themselves which they saw. They were such as were eminent effects of the properties of God, and means of their demonstration, and therein of the revelation of God to them. Some of them were works of power, as his dividing of the sea whose waves roared. Some of majesty and terror, as the dreadful appearances in thunders, lightnings, fire, smoke, and earthquake at the giving of the law. Some of severity and indignation against sin, as his drowning the Egyptians, the opening of the earth to swallow up Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, and the plagues that befel themselves. Some of privilege, favour, love, and grace; as the giving of the law entrusting them with his oracles, and forming them into a church and state, Isa. li. 16. Some of care and providence for their continual supply in giving water from the rock, and bread from heaven, and preserving their garments from waxing old. Some of direction and protection, as in the cloud and pillar of fire to guide, direct, and refresh them night and day in that waste howling wilderness. In all which works God abundantly manifested his power, goodness, wisdom, grace, faithfulness, tendering them the highest security of his accomplishing his promises, if they rejected not their interest in them by their unbelief. And it is a matter well worthy of consideration, how excellently pathetically Moses pleads all these works of God with them in the book of Deuteronomy. And all these works of God were excellent means to have wrought up the hearts of the people to faith and obedience; and to that end and purpose were they wrought all of them. This he frequently declared whilst they were under the accomplishment, and thereon afterwards reproacheth them with their unbelief. What could be more suited to beget in the minds of men a due apprehension of the greatness, goodness, and faithfulness of God, than they were? And what is a more effectual motive to obedience than such apprehensions? The neglect of them therefore carries along with it a great aggravation of sin. To tempt God to murmur against him, as though he could not, or would not provide for them, or make good his word to them whilst they saw, as it were, every day, those great and marvellous works which had such an impression of his glorious image on them, it made way for their irrecoverable destruction.

Thirdly. The third aggravation of the sin of this people is taken from the time of their continuance in it, under the use of the means to the contrary before insisted on, it was forty years. The patience of God was extended towards them, and his works were wrought before them, not for a week, or a month, or a year, but for forty years together. And this increaseth the greatness and strangeness of this dispensation, both on the part of God, and on their part also. On the part of God, that he should bear with their manners so long, when they had so often deserved to be destroyed as one man, and which he had threatened often to do. And on their part, that so long a course of patience, accompanied with so many works of power and mercy, all of them for their instruction, most of them for their present benefit and advantage, should

have no effect on them to prevent their continuance in their sin to their ruin.

And these are the aggravations of their sin, which the Psalmist collects from the circumstances of it, and which the apostle repeats for our warning and instruction; and this we shall draw out in the ensuing observations.

Obs. XIX. No place, no retiredness, no solitary wilderness will secure men from sin and suffering, provocation, or punishment.

These persons were in a wilderness, where they had many motives and encouragements to obedience, and no means of seduction and outward temptation from others, yet there they sinned and there they suffered. They sinned in the wilderness and their carcasses fell in the wilderness. They filled that desert with sins and graves. And the reason hereof is, because no place as such can of itself exclude the principles and causes either of sin or punishment. Men have the principle of their sins in themselves, in their own hearts, which they cannot leave behind them, or yet get off by shifting of places, or changing their stations. And the justice of God which is the principal cause of punishment, is no less in the wilderness than in the most populous cities. The wilderness is no wilderness to him. He can find his path in all its intricacies. The Israelites came hither on necessity, and so they found it with them. And in after ages some have done so by choice, they have retired into wildernesses for the furtherance of their obedience and devotion. In this very wilderness on the top of Sinai, there is at this day a monastery of persons professing themselves to be religious, and they live there to increase religion in them. I once for some days conversed with their chief, (they call him Archimandrite,) here in England. For aught I could perceive, he might have learned as much elsewhere. And indeed, what hath been the issue of that undertaking in general? For the most part to their old lusts men added new superstitions, until they made themselves an abomination to the Lord, and utterly useless in the world, yea burdensome to human society. Such persons are like the men of Succoth, whom Gideon taught with 'the thorns and briers of the wilderness,' Judges viii. 16. Those learned nothing by it but the sharpness of the thorns, and the greatness of their own folly. No more did these at best learn any thing from their wilderness-retirements, but the sharpness of the place which was a part of the punishment of their sin, and by no means sanctified for the furtherance of their obedience. These two things then are evident.

1. That the principle of men's unbelief and disobedience is in themselves, and in their own hearts, which leaves them not on any change of their outward condition.

2. That no outward state of things, whether we voluntarily choose ourselves, or we be brought into it by the providence of God, will either cure or conquer, or can restrain the inward principles of sin and unbelief. I remember old Jerome some where complains, that when he was in his horrid cave at Bethlehem, his mind was frequently among the delicacies of Rome. And this will teach us,

First. In every outward condition to look principally to our own



hearts. We may expect great advantages from various conditions, but shall indeed meet with none of them, unless we fix and water the root of them in ourselves. One thinks he could serve God better in prosperity, if freed from the perplexities of poverty, sickness, or persecution. Others that they should serve him better if called to afflictions and trials. Some think it would be better with them if retired and solitary; others if they had more society and company. But the only way indeed to serve God better is to abide in our station or condition, and therein to get better hearts. It is Solomon's advice, מכל משמר נצר לבך; Prov. iv. 23. 'Above or before every watch or keeping, keep thy heart.' It is good to keep the tongue, and it is good to keep the feet, and it is good to keep the way, as he farther declares in that place; but, saith he, 'Above all keepings, keep thy heart;' and he adds a great reason for his caution, for, saith he, 'out of it are the issues of life.' Life and death, in the means and causes of them, do come out of the heart. So our Saviour instructs us, that in our hearts lie our treasures; what they are, that are we and nothing else. Thence are all our actions drawn forth, which not only smell of the cask, but receive thence principally their whole moral nature, whether they are good or bad.

Secondly. Look for all relief and for help against sin, merely from grace. A wilderness will not help you, nor a paradise. In the one Adam sinned, in whom we all sinned: in the other all Israel sinned, who were an example to us all. Men may to good purpose go into a wilderness to exercise grace, and principles of truth, when the acting of them is denied elsewhere. But it is to no purpose to go into a wilderness to seek for these things: their dwelling is in the love and favour of God, and nowhere else can they be found. See Job xxviii. 12—26. Do not expect that mercies of themselves will do you good, or that afflictions will do you good; that the city or the wilderness will do you good: it is grace alone that can do you good. And if you find inward benefits by outward things, it is merely from the grace that God is pleased to administer and dispense with them. And he can separate them when he pleaseth. He can give mercies that shall be so materially, but not eventually: like the quails which fed the bodies of the people whilst leanness possessed their souls. And he can send affliction that shall have nothing in it but affliction; present troubles leading on to future troubles. Learn then in all places, in every state and condition, to live in the freedom, riches, and efficacy of grace, for other helps, other advantages have we none.

Thirdly. Let us learn, that whithersoever sin can enter, punishment can follow. *Culpam sequitur pœna pede claudo.* Though vengeance seems to have a lame foot, yet it will hunt sin till it overtake the sinner. Psal. cxl. 11, 'Evil shall hunt the violent man to overtake him.' Go where he will, the fruits of his own evil and violence, the punishment due to them shall hunt him and follow him, and though it should sometimes appear to be out of sight, or off from the scent, yet it will recover its view and chase, till it hath brought him to destruction; למרחש, 'to thrustings down,' till he be utterly thrust

down; saith the Targum, 'The angel of death shall haunt him, until he thrust him down into hell.' The heathen owned this;

Quo fugis, Encelade, quascunque accesseris oras,  
Sub Jove semper eris.

Punishment will follow sin into the wilderness, where they are separated from all the world, and climb up after it to the top of the tower of Babel, where all the world conspired to defend it. It will follow it into the dark, the dark corners of their hearts and lives, and overtake them in the light of the world. God hath *εκδικον ομμα*, an eye of revenge that nothing can escape. 'Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?' Jer. xxiii. 24. God declares whence it is, that none can hide from his presence, or escape his justice. It is from his omnipresence; he is every-where, and all places are alike to him. Adam when he had sinned went behind a tree. And others, they would go under rocks and mountains, but all is one, vengeance will find them out. This is that *δικη* which the barbarians thought would not let a murderer live, however he might escape for a season, Acts xxviii. 4.

Obs. XX. Great works of providence are a great means of instruction; and a neglect of them as to their instructive end, is a great aggravation of the sin of those who live when and where they are performed.—They saw my works, saith God; works great and wonderful; and yet continued in their sin and disobedience. This heightened their sin, and hastened their punishment.

We shall take an instance in one of the works here intended, which will acquaint us with the design, end, and use of them all. And this shall be the appearance of the majesty of God on Mount Sinai at the giving of the law. The works accompanying it consisted much in things miraculous, strange, and unusual; as thunder, lightening, fire, smoke, earthquakes, the sound of a trumpet, and the like. The usual working of the minds of men, towards these unusual effects of the power of God, is to gaze on them with admiration and astonishment. This God forbids in them, Exod. xix. 21, 'Charge the people lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze.' This is not the end or design of God in these works of his power, in these appearances and evidences of his majesty, that men should gaze at them to satisfy their curiosity. What then was aimed at in and by them? It was to instruct them to a due fear and awful reverence of God, whose holiness and majesty was represented to them, that they might know him as a consuming fire. And this was declared in the issue. For the people coming up to a due fear of God for the present, and promising obedience thereon, God took it well of them, and approved it in them, as that which answered the design of his works, Deut. v. 23—29, 'And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire) that ye came near unto me,' (they are the words of Moses to the people,) 'even all the heads of your tribes and your elders. And ye said, Behold the Lord our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and we

have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; now therefore why should we die, for this great fire will consume us. Go thou near and hear all that the Lord our God shall say, and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words when you spake unto me, and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. Oh that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and their children for ever.' God never casts bruta fulmina, all his works are vocal. They speak or rather he speaks in them. Now that they may be instructive to us, sundry things are required.

First. That we take notice of them, and notice of them to be his. Some are so stayed or so obstinate, or so full of self and other things, that they will take no notice at all of any of the works of God. His hand is lifted up, and they will not see, they will not behold it. He passeth by them in his works on the right hand and on the left, but they perceive it not. Others, though they take notice of the works themselves, yet they will not take notice of them to be his; like the Philistines, they knew not whether the strange plague that consumed them and destroyed their cities, were God's hand or a chance. But till we seriously consider them and really own them to be the works of God, we can make no improvement of them.

Secondly. We are to inquire into the special meaning of them. This is wisdom, and that which God requireth at our hands. So Micah vi. 9, 'The voice of the Lord crieth unto the city, the man of wisdom shall see thy name, hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.' קול יהוה: 'the voice of the Lord,' is often taken for the power of God manifesting itself in its effects and mighty works. In this sense it is repeated six or seven times in one psalm, Psal. xxix. 3—9. The voice of God here then is the works of God, and what do they do? they have a voice, they 'cry to the city.' The voice of God in his rod doth so, that is his afflicting and correcting works, as in the end of the verse. It cries, לעיר, 'to the city,' that is, the city of God, Jerusalem or the church. Though some think that לעיר is put for להעיר ad excitandum, it cries to excite or stir up men, that is, to repentance and amendment. And what is the issue? רועיה, 'the man of wisdom' say we. It is wisdom, or rather substance, that is, 'the substantial wise man,' who gives no place to vanity and lightness. He shall see the name of God, that is, he shall discern the power and wisdom of God in his works; and not only so, but the mind of God also in them, which is often signified by his name. See John xvii. 6. And so it follows, 'Hear ye the rod,' they are works of the rod or correction that he speaks of. This he commands us to hear, that is, to understand. So שמע frequently signifies. So speak the servants of Hezekiah to Rabshakeh, Isa. xxxvi. 11, 'Speak we pray thee unto thy servants in the Syrian language,' כי שמעיים אדמו: 'for we hear it,' that is, can understand it. So are we to 'hear the rod,' that is, to learn and understand the mind of God in his works.

This is required of us. And that we may do so, two things are necessary.

1. That we consider and be well acquainted with our own condition. If we are ignorant hereof we shall understand nothing of the mind of God in his dispensations. Security in sin will take away all understanding of judgments. Let God thunder from heaven in the revelation of his wrath against sin, yet such persons will be secure still. God doth not often utterly destroy men with great and tremendous destructions, before he hath given them previous warnings of his indignation. But yet men that are secure in sin, will know so little of the sense of them, that they will be crying peace and safety, when their final destruction is seizing on them, 1 Thess. v. 3. God speaks out the curse of the law in his works of judgment. For thereby is the 'wrath of God revealed from heaven against the ungodliness of men,' Rom. i. 18. But yet when men hear the voice of the curse so spoken out, if they are secure they will bless themselves and say, They shall have peace, though they 'add drunkenness to thirst,' Deut. xxix. 19. And this for the most part blinds the eyes of the wise men of this world. They neither see nor understand any of the works of God, though never so full of dread and terror; because, being secure in their sin, they know not that they have any concern in them. If they do at any time attend to them, it is as the people did to the voice that came from heaven to our Saviour; some said it thundered, others that an angel spake: one says one thing of them, another, another thing, but they endeavour not to come to any certainty about them. This is complained of Isa. xxvi. 11, 'Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not see.' The lifting up of the hand in general is to work or to effect any thing; in particular to correct, to punish, it being the posture of one ready to strike, or redoubling his blows in striking, as God doth when his judgments are in the earth, ver. 9. In this state of things, saith the prophet, 'they will not see,' they will neither consider, nor endeavour to understand the mind of God in his works and judgments. And how doth God take this of them? Saith he, 'The fire of thine adversaries shall devour them.' That is, either their own fiery envy at the people of God, mentioned in the foregoing words, shall consume themselves; they shall be eaten up and consumed with it, whilst they will not take notice of the mind of God in his judgments towards them. Or the fire wherewith at length thou wilt consume all thine adversaries shall fall on them; or lastly, thou wilt turn in on them a wicked furious people, who shall destroy them, as it befel the Jews, to whom he speaks in particular. One way or other God will severely revenge this security and neglect of his works thereon. But they who will wisely consider their own condition, how it is between God and them, wherein they have been faithful, wherein false or backsliding, what controversy God hath, or justly may have with them, what is the condition of the state, church, or nation whereunto they do belong, will discern the voice of God in his great works of providence. So is the matter stated, Dan. xii. 10, 'Many shall be purified, and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall



understand.' And when shall this be? 'When there is a time of great trouble,' ver. 1. When God's judgments are greatly in the world. The end of these troubles is to purify men, to cleanse them by the removal of all filth of flesh and spirit that they may have contracted, as dross is taken away from silver in the furnace; and to make them white, by causing their sincerity, constancy, and perseverance in their holy profession to appear in their trials. But the wicked men, secure in their sins, shall yet continue in their wickedness, and thereby shall be so blinded, that none of them shall understand the mind of God in his great works and tremendous dispensations. But המשיכילים, they that have an understanding in their own state and condition, and in the state of things in the church of God, (as it is said of the men of Issachar, 2 Chron. xii. 32, that they were יודעי בינה לעתים, 'knowing in the seasons,') they shall understand or come to the knowledge of the will of God and their duty in those things. And of a failure herein, see how God complains, Deut. xxxii. 28, 29.

2. That we consider what peculiar impressions of his will God puts on any of his works. Hereby we may know much of his mind and design in them. All the works of God if duly considered, will be found to bear his image and superscription. They are all like him, were sent by him, and are becoming of him. They have on them tokens and marks of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness. Those of providence which he intends to be instructive, have a peculiar impression of the design of God on them, and a wise man may see the eye of God in them. So he speaks in the Psalmist, 'I will guide thee with mine eye,' Ps. xxxii. 8. He would make him see the way and paths that he was to walk in, by that respect which he would have to them in the works of his providence. This then I say we should inquire after and wisely consider; because,

Obs. XXI. 1. The greater evidence that God gives of his power and goodness in any of his works, the louder is his voice in them, and the greater is the sin of them that neglect them; which also is another proposition from the words.—God made then his works evident to them, so that they saw them, 'they saw my works,' so they could not deny them to be his. And if men will shut their eyes against the lights, they justly perish in their darkness: God sometimes hides his power, Hab. iii. 4, 'that was the hiding of his power.' That is, as the Targumist adds, was 'laid open,' his power that before was hid from the people was now manifested. But sometimes he causeth it to shine forth. As in the same place he had 'horns coming out of his hand.' קרנים מידו לו: Horns or shining beams, rays of glory arose from his hand, or his power in the manifestation of it in his works. He caused his wisdom and power to shine forth in them, as the sun gives out light in its full strength and beauty. Then for men not to take notice of them, will be a signal aggravation of their sin and hastening of their punishment. Now we can never know what appears of God in his works, unless by a due consideration of them we endeavour to understand them or his mind in them. Again, we should ponder the the works of God's providence,

Obs. XXII. Because the end of all God's works, of his mighty works of providence towards a person, a church, or nation, is to bring them to faith and dependence, which is also another observation that the words afford us.—This end he still declared in all his dealings with this people. And it is the principal design of the book of Deuteronomy to improve the works of God which they had seen to this end. And 'who is wise, and he shall understand these things; prudent and he shall know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein,' Hos. xiv. 9. And herein lies a great aggravation of the misery of the days wherein we live. The works, the great works of God are generally either despised or abused. Some account all that is spoken of them *ὡσεὶ λησος*, as 'a mere fable,' as some did of old the things concerning the resurrection of Christ on the first report of it, Luke xxiv. 11. And if they are not so in themselves, but that such things as are spoken of are done in the world, yet as to their relation to God, they esteem it a fable. Chance, natural causes, vulgar errors, popular esteem, were the originals with such persons, of all those great works of God which our eyes have seen, or our ears heard, or which our fathers have reported to us: 'Brutish persons and unwise.' There is scarce a leaf in the book of God, or a day in the course of his providence, that doth not judge and condemn the folly and stupidity of their pride. The very heathen of old, either by reason scorned, or by experience were made afraid, to give countenance to such atheism. Nor do I esteem such persons who live in open rebellion against all that is within them or without them, against all that God hath done or said, worthy any consideration. 'Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hands, he shall destroy them and not build them up,' Ps. xxviii. 5. Others will not deny God to be in his works, but they make no use of them but to gaze, admire, and talk. There is somewhat less evil in this than in the former atheism, but no good at all. Yea, where God multiplies his calls by his works, men by this slight consideration of them, insensibly harden their hearts into security. Others abuse them, some by making them the rise of their vain and foolish prognostications; there is such a prodigy, such a strange work of God, such a blazing star or the like—what then? such or such a thing shall follow this or that year, this or that month. This is a specious way whereby atheism exalts itself. For nothing can give countenance to these presumptions, but a supposition of such a concatenation of causes and effects, as shall exclude the sovereign government of God over the world. Others contend about them; some whose lives are profligate, and whose ways are wicked, are afraid lest they should be looked on as pointed against them and their sins, and therefore they contend that they have no determinate language, no signification in them. Others are too forward to look on them, as sent or wrought to countenance them in their desires, ways, and aims. Amongst most, by these and the like means, the true design of God in all his great and strange works is utterly lost, to the great provocation of the eyes of his glory. This, as I have shown, is every man's faith, repentance, and obedience, which how

they have been improved in us by them, we may do well to consider. Again, observe from the words, that

Obs. XXIII. God is pleased oft-times to grant great outward means to those, in whom he will not work effectually by his grace.—Who had more of the first than these Israelites in the wilderness? As the works of God amongst them were the greatest and most stupendous that ever he had wrought from the foundation of the world, so the law was first vocally given to them, and promulgated amongst them, and not only so, but they had the gospel also preached to their ears, as we; not so clearly indeed, but not less truly, Heb. iv. 1. See their privileges and advantages, as they are enumerated by our apostle, Rom. iii. 2, ix. 4, 5. God might well say of them, as he did afterwards of their posterity, ‘what could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it,’ Isa. v. 3, for fencing, and planting, and stoning, nothing more could have been done. Outward means, ordinances, afflictions, mercies, they wanted not; and yet all this while, God did not ‘circumcise their hearts to love him with all their heart, and all their soul, that they might live,’ as he promised at other times to do, Deut. xxx. 6, yea, it is said expressly that he gave them not ‘eyes to see, or ears to hear,’ that they might know him and fear him. He did not put forth or exercise an effectual work of inward grace, during their enjoyment of the outward means before mentioned. And therefore when God promiseth to make the covenant of grace under the gospel, effectual to the elect, by writing his law in their hearts, and putting his fear into their inward parts: he says expressly and emphatically that he will not make it as he made that with the people in the wilderness, and that for this reason, because they, that is the generality of them, had only the outward administration of it, and did not enjoy this effectual communication of saving grace, which is there called a ‘writing of the law in our hearts, and putting of the fear of God in our inward parts,’ Heb. viii. 8—10, from Jer. xxxi. 31—34. In like manner when our Lord Jesus Christ preached the gospel to all, yet it was to some only to whom ‘it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God;’ Matt. xiii. 11—16. I know some are displeased at this, but for the most part they are such as will be pleased with nothing that God either doth or saith, or can do or say, unless he would give them a law or a gospel to save them in and with their sins. They are ready to dispute that God is unjust, if he give not grace to every man to use or abuse it at his pleasure, whilst they themselves hate grace and despise it, and think it not worth acceptance if laid at their doors. But thus God dealt with this people in the wilderness. Yea they had means of obedience granted them, after he had sworn they should die for their disobedience. And who art thou, O man, that disputest against God? Nay the righteousness of God in this matter is clear and conspicuous: for,

First. God is not obliged to grant any special privilege, even as to the outward means of grace, to any of the sons of men. And to show his sovereignty and absolute freedom herein, he always granted them with great variety in a distinguishing manner. So he did of old,

'he showed his word' (דְּבָרָיו, 'his words,' that is, his institutions) 'unto Jacob, and his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not done so unto any nation, and as for his judgments they have not known them,' Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. These outward means themselves were their peculiar privilege and enclosure. This was the advantage of the Jews, that to them, and to them alone, 'were committed the oracles of God,' Rom. iii. 2. And God as he gave and granted these outward means of grace to them alone, so he might have justly denied them to them also, or he might have granted them to all others and withheld them from them. For he dealt not thus with them, because they were in and of themselves in any thing better than those who were excluded from their privileges, Deut. vii. 6—8, ix. And thus God dealeth still even to this day with the nations of the world : some he entrusteth with the gospel, and some have not the sound of it approaching to them. Man would not abide in the condition wherein God made him, Eccles. vii. 29. And God may justly leave him in the condition whereinto by sin he hath cast himself. That he will afford outward means to any is of mere grace, liberality, and bounty, and shall we say he is unjust if he give no more, when no rule or law of justice obligeth him to do what he doth ? Men may by such means and apprehensions sooner provoke God to take away what they have, than to add to them what they have not. A beggar's murmuring as though he had not his due, when any thing is given him, is the worst way of getting his alms increased.

Secondly. Even outward means themselves, when singly dispensed, have many blessed ends which shall be effected by them, for they all tend variously to the glory of God. This I acknowledge is despised by men of profane and wicked principles, who have no concern therein. Men, whom nothing will satisfy but the making of all grace so common, as that it should be prostituted unto the corrupt wills of men, to be used or abused at their pleasure, as indeed they utterly evert all effectual grace, so they must find another Scripture to countenance them in their opinion. The book of God will not do it. They measure things merely by their own advantage. But to those that know God and love him, this is of great weight. That the wisdom, holiness, goodness, righteousness, and severity of God, be exalted and glorified, as they are in the dispensation of the outward means of grace, though, eventually, not effectual to the salvation of some, is a matter of great rejoicing unto all that do believe. Again, they may redound unto the great advantage of men, and that both in this world, and unto eternity. So saith our Saviour, Matt. xi. 23, 'And thou Capernaum which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell ; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day,' The exaltation of Capernaum consisted in its enjoyment of the outward means of grace, in the preaching and miracles of our Saviour. And although the end of all was, that she was to be brought down to hell for her obstinacy, in unbelief, yet while she enjoyed these things she had a real privilege, and was much exalted thereby. And there might have been an use of these means, which although it would not have delivered Capernaum from hell at last, because not prevalent against final impeni-



tency, yet it might have delivered it from that hell of temporal destruction, which befel it not long after, as prevailing against their open and professed obstinacy. And so Sodom had she been intrusted with the like means of instruction, might have continued in her outward state and condition, by such an use of them, unto that or unto this day. For there may be such a conviction of sin, as may produce that repentance and humiliation which will avert temporal judgments, which will not produce repentance unto salvation and deliverance from judgments eternal. And this renders the gospel the greatest privilege and advantage of any kingdom or nation in the world, and their principal interest to maintain it. Whatever work God is pleased to do secretly and effectually on the hearts of any, to bring them to the eternal enjoyment of himself; the very outward dispensation of the gospel itself, is suited to bring forth that profession and amendment of life in all, which shall secure unto them the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity in this world. Besides, the taking men off from their present sinful courses, will tend to the mitigation of their future punishment, or a diminution of their stripes. There are then many mercies in this one of the outward means of grace, considered absolutely and in itself.

Thirdly. Where God grants the use of the outward means of grace to any, ordinarily, if not always, he hath a design to communicate by them especial saving grace unto some. These means granted unto the people in the wilderness, where they seem to have had as sad an event as ever they had any where in the world, yet were not lost as to their end and use of the conveyance of especial grace towards some; some, yea doubtless many were converted unto God by them, and made obedient. That they died in the wilderness, is no argument as unto individuals that they died in final unbelief; no, though we should conclude that they died all penally. For they did so as they were members and parts of that people, that provoking generation, which God dealt withal according to the demerit of the community. And so, many men may fall and be cut off penally in national desolations, as those desolations are just punishments for the sins of that nation, though they themselves were not personally guilty of them. So the daughters of Zelophehad state the matter, Num. xxvii. 3, 'Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them who gathered themselves against the Lord, but died in his own sins.' He was a sinner, as all men are, and so on his own personal account there was no reason to complain of his dying in the wilderness, but yet he had no hand in those especial provocations, for which God was so displeased, as that in his wrath he cut them off signally and finally. But he, it may be, and many others of them doubtless, had the spiritually efficacious benefit of the means of grace which they enjoyed. The matter is plain in Caleb, Joshua, and a great multitude of the new generation who believed and entered into rest. Now the saving of one soul is worth the preaching of the gospel to a whole nation, and that for many years. And whilst God carries on his work visibly, he will take care secretly that not one hidden grain of his Israel shall fall unto the ground.

To sum up this whole matter, these outward means are granted

unto men in a way of grace, favour, and bounty. Their ends, singly considered, are good, holy, and righteous. Moreover, they are all of them properly effectual, in that they always attain the end whereunto they are designed. And that men are not bettered by them, or more advantaged than they are, is merely from their own perversity and obstinacy. And those who approve not of this dispensation, seem to have a great mind to contend with him who is mightier than they.

Furthermore, from the exposition before premised, we may observe; that,

Obs. XXIV. No privilege, no outward means of grace, no other advantage whatever, will secure men in a course of sinning, from the wrath and justice of God.—Who could be made partakers of more advantages than were this people at that time? Besides the great privilege derived unto them from their fathers, in that they were the posterity of Abraham, the friend of God, and had the token of his covenant in their flesh, they had newly erected amongst them a glorious church state, wherein they were entrusted with all the ordinances of God's worship. These privileges the apostle sums up, Rom. ix. 4, 5, 'Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers.' The adoption was theirs: God had no other children or family in the world but them: they were his family, when his curse was upon all other families of the earth. And the glory was theirs: it was unto them and amongst them, that God so manifested his glory, as that it became their glory, their glory above all the nations of the world. And the covenants were theirs; both the covenant that was made with Abraham in all the benefits of it, and the special covenant that God made with them at Sinai. There also was the law given unto them, and the solemn worship of God in all the law and ordinances thereof, made their peculiar. What works of providence God wrought amongst them, we have declared. Doubtless they bear themselves high on these things. So when they contended with Moses and Aaron, their plea was, that all the people was holy, so that they saw no reason for their peculiar preeminence. And who also amongst the sons of men is not ready on far less occasions so to do. Some cry, They are the church, and some boast of other things. But be men what they will, their privileges and advantages what they can desire, if they are secure and obstinate sinners, the wrath of God at one time or other will overtake them. And some will one day find to their sorrow what their boasting will cost them. Laodicea hath done so long ago; and so in due time will she, who says, 'I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow.' For although the hand of church privilege should join in with the hand of secular advantage, yet the guilty shall not go unpunished. And one reason hereof lies in another proposition that ariseth from the words; namely, that,

Obs. XXV. There are determinate bounds fixed unto God's patience and forbearance towards obstinate sinners.—So here he assigned the space of forty years, for the consumption of this provoking generation.

And as in the point of promise it is observed, that the very same night wherein the time limited was accomplished, the people were delivered out of Egypt; so, in the point of threatening it is remembered, that at the end of forty years, wherein the people wandered in the wilderness, there was not one remaining of those who were first numbered in Horeb. However men may flatter and please themselves, nothing can secure sinners from punishment in the appointed season; see 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

We shall now proceed to the last thing contained in the example insisted on by the apostle, and that is, the consequent of the sins of the people in their punishment. And this is expressed, first, in the procuring cause of it; that in the sense God had of their sin—it grieved him. ‘Wherefore I was grieved with that generation.’ The meaning of the words, both in the Psalm and in this place, hath been before declared. It expresseth how God stood affected towards the people as to the inward frame of his heart. For these affections doth God take upon himself for our instruction. He says that he will rejoice over his people assuredly with his whole heart and his whole soul, Jer. xxxii. 41. And upon the account of their sin, it is said, that it grieved him at his heart that he had made man on the earth, Gen. vi. 6. And those expressions, wherever they are used, are signs of great and signal actions. So in the last case mentioned, God said it grieved him at his heart, because he was going to do that which could proceed from no principle that we can apprehend, but great trouble and molestation. That then which is here intended, is such a *σχεσις*, such a frame or habit of mind or heart in God, as had the people of that generation for its object. It is not then *λυπη*, dolor, or ‘grief,’ properly so called, that is here intended; neither do either of the words here used, the one by the Psalmist, the other by the apostle, express that passion. For although God ascribes it often unto himself, yet it is not here intended, but rather indignation and trouble. He was burdened, vexed, displeased, beyond what patience or forbearance could extend to. In brief, it includes these two things: 1. The judgment or mind of God concerning the greatness of their sin, with all its aggravations; and, 2. His determinate will of punishing them. Hence we may observe, that,

Obs. XXVI. The heart of God is greatly concerned in the sins of men, especially of those who on any account are his people, and so esteemed.—Men live, and act, and speak as if they thought God very little concerned in what they do, especially in their sins; that either he takes no notice of them, or if he do, that he is not much concerned in them. That he should be grieved at his heart, that is, have such a deep sense of men’s sinful provocations, they have no mind to think or believe. They think that as to thoughts about sin, God is altogether as themselves, Psal. l. 21. But it is otherwise; for God hath,

1. A concernment of honour in what we do. He made us for his glory and honour: nothing whereof can we any way assign unto him, but by our obedience. And whatever is contrary hereunto tends directly to his dishonour. And this God cannot but be deeply sensible

of. He cannot deny himself. If men lose the rent which they expect from their tenants, and have obliged them to pay, and which they refuse upon mere will and stubbornness, they will find themselves to have a concernment therein. And shall God lose all the revenue that is due unto him, without expressing an indignation against the guilt of men who deal so unjustly and fraudulently with him? Nay, he is deeply concerned in this matter, as he is our sovereign Lord.

2. He is concerned in point of justice also, as he is the supreme ruler and governor of all the works of his own hands. He is God, to whom vengeance doth belong; who hath said, 'Vengeance is mine, and I will recompense.' And he needs no other reason to induce him to punish sin but himself, his holiness and his justice being his nature. And this he expresseth after the manner of men; affirming that he is grieved or vexed and provoked to indignation with the sins of men. How this provocation is heightened by this aggravation of sin, that it is committed by his own people, under unspeakable, peculiar obligations unto obedience, hath been declared before.

We now proceed with the exposition of the words. There is, secondly, in them the judgment that God made and gave concerning this people and their sin, which is expressed as the reason why he was grieved with them. He said, 'They do always err in their hearts, and they have not known my ways.'

'He said.'—Not that God expressly used these words; but he made this judgment concerning them. This was the sense he had and conceived of them. So the word is most frequently used for the conception of the mind. It is the *λογος ενδιαθετος*, or 'sense of the mind,' not the *λογος προφορικος*, or 'outward expression,' that is intended.

And in this judgment which God passed on that sinful generation, he declares three things.

1. The principle of all their sins—they did err in their hearts.
2. Their constancy in, or obstinacy unto this principle—they did so always.
3. The consequent, or rather concomitant evil, unto, or with these: they knew not the ways of the Lord—and they have not known my ways.

First. God placeth the original of all their miscarriages in their error—the error of their hearts. An error of the heart in things moral, is a practical misjudging of what is good or evil unto men. So this people, through the power of their lusts and darkness, their temptations and obstinacy, did in many instances wherein they were tried, judge that sin and rebellion were better for them, than faith, submission, and obedience. They did not, in general, notionally and formally judge that sin, as sin was better than obedience, which no creature is capable of doing; but practically and particularly they judged, that it was better for them to do the things wherein their sin consisted, than to omit or forego them; so they erred in their hearts. There the seat of their error is fixed. Now, besides that the heart is here, as in sundry other places, taken for the practical understanding, or for the whole principle of all our moral actions, as it regards both the mind, will, and affections, the expression seems to intend a further



discovery of the nature of their sin with a further aggravation of it. They sinned from and with their hearts. And God lets them know that he doth not so much insist on their outward actions, as that he took notice that their hearts were not right with him: that was the principle of all their rebellions for which he abhorred them. As he spake, in another place, of the same people, when their hearts went after their idols, he regarded them not.

Secondly. The adjunct of this their error, is their constancy unto it, or persisting in it—they did always err. Two things may be denoted hereby. 1. That in all instances, whenever it came to a trial, they practically chose the wrong side. It may be they did not so universally, but they did so generally, which warrants the denomination. Or, 2ndly. It denotes the continuance in their error: *æi* is, ‘not to cease or give over.’ Though God had exercised great patience and forbearance towards them for a long season, yet they would never change their minds or hearts at any time.

Thirdly. There is the consequent of this great principle of their sin; or rather another concomitant principle of their miscarriages, they knew not the ways of God—and they have not known my ways. This may be exegetical of the former, and declare wherein their error consisted, namely in this, that they knew not they judged not aright of the ways of God. But as I said, I shall rather look upon it as another principle of their miscarriages. As they erred in their hearts because they liked the ways of sin, so they disliked the ways of God because they knew them not; and from both rushed into all manner of miscarriages and provocations. We are hence instructed, first, that,

Obs. XXVII. In all the sins of men, God principally regards the principle; that is the heart, or what is in it. ‘They do err,’ saith he, ‘in their hearts.’ The heart he principally requires in our obedience, and this he principally regards in men’s disobedience. ‘My son,’ saith he, ‘give me thine heart;’ and, ‘O that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me.’ When the heart is upright, as to its general frame, design, and principle, God will bear with many failings, many miscarriages. And when it is false and gone off from God, thousands of duties are of no esteem with him. We know little, yea directly nothing of the hearts of men. And a man would therefore think, that we should little concern ourselves in them, or not at all, but merely rest satisfied in outward acts and effects wherein our concernment lies. But yet even amongst us it is quite otherwise. If once a man begins justly to suspect that the hearts of them with whom he hath to do, are not upright with him, but false and guileful, let them pretend what they will, and act what they please, all is utterly disregarded and despised; so saith he,

Εχθος γαρ μοι κεινος ὁμως αἰδωο πυλῆσιν,  
 ‘Ὅς χ’ ἑτερον μεν κευθει ενι φρεσιν, αλλο δε βαζει.

‘I hate him like the gates of hell, who, pretending fairly to me, reserves other things in his mind.’ And if it be thus with men who judge of the hearts of others only by effects, and that with a judgment

ble to be inflamed by groundless suspicions and corrupt imaginations, how much more must it be so with God, before whose eyes all the hearts of men lie open and naked; whose glory and property it is to be καρδιογνωστης, the Judge, Searcher, Knower of all hearts. gain,

Obs. XXVIII. The error of the heart in the preferring the ways of in, before obedience with its promises and rewards, is the root of all great provoking sins and rebellions against God.—Many sins are the effects of men's impetuous lusts and corruptions. Many they are hurried into, by the power and efficacy of their temptations. Most are produced by both these in conjunction. But as for great provocations, such as carry in them apostasy or rebellion against God, they proceed from a deceiving and a deceived heart. There are many noisome and hurtful errors in the world; but this is the great soul-ruining error, when the heart is practically corrupted to prefer sin and its wages, before obedience and its reward. It seems indeed a hard and difficult thing to do this notionally, especially for such as admit of any sense of eternity. But yet the contrary hereunto, namely, to prefer obedience with its promises and rewards, consisting in things future and invisible, unto sin and its present ways, is expressed as an act or fruit of faith, and which nothing else will enable us unto. This was the evidence of the faith of Moses, that 'he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward,' Heb. xi. 25, 26. And so the apostle expresseth the working of faith in this matter, 2 Cor. iv. 18, 'Whilst we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.' It is the work of faith so to look into, so to see and discern invisible and eternal things, as on their account to prefer obedience to God, with afflictions, temptations, and persecutions, to sin with all its present pleasures and wages. But practically this is frequently found amongst men. And how this is brought about, or effected; how the mind is prejudiced and obstructed as to its making a right judgment concerning its rules; how it is diverted from a due consideration of the things and reasons that should influence it and lead it thereunto; how it is entangled and seduced to a present approbation of appearing satisfactions; and how the will is thereby deceived into a consent to sin, I have declared in a particular discourse to that purpose. In brief, when the directive part of the mind is diverted from attending to the reason of things proposed to it; when it is corrupted by false pretences imposed on it by the outrage of corrupt lusts and affections, which have possessed the imagination with their objects and their present deceivableness; when the accusing judging faculty of it, is baffled, slighted, and at best partially silenced, as wearied with doing its work in vain, and accustomed to repulses; when in its reflective acts, whereby it should receive impressions from its own self-accusations and reproofs, it is made obtuse, hard, and senseless, not regarding what is spoken in it or to it; and

when by these means carnal affections bear sway in the soul, impetuously inclining it to seek after their satisfaction, then is the heart under the power of the error we speak of, that error which is the principle of all great provocations and apostasies from God.

For, 1. This sets all the lusts of the soul at liberty to seek after their satisfaction in sin. 2. Makes it slight and condemn all the promises annexed to obedience: and, 3. Disregard the threatenings that lie against sin, and so prepares it for the utmost rebellion.

And of all errors let us take heed of this practical error of the heart. It is not men's being orthodox or sound in their opinions that will relieve them if they are under the power of this great fundamental error. And it is a matter to be lamented to see how men will contend for their opinions under the name of truth, and cast all manner of severe reflections on those that oppose them, whilst themselves err in their hearts and know not the ways of God. And this is a frame which of all others God most abhorreth. For when men pretend to be for him, and are really against him, as all such are, shall not the Searcher of hearts find it out? Orthodox liars, swearers, drunkards, adulterers, oppressors, persecutors, are an unspeakable burden to the patience of God. Again,

Obs. XXIX. A constant persisting in a course of sin, is the utmost, highest, and last aggravation of sin.—They do err always, in every instance of disobedience, and that continually. This filled up their measure. For herein consists that 'finishing of sin which brings forth death,' Jam. i. 14. Sin may be conceived and brought forth, and yet death not ensue. But if it be finished, if men 'err in their hearts always,' inevitable destruction will be the consequent of it. This, as was said, is the highest and last aggravation of sin. For,

First. It includes a neglect and contempt of all times and seasons of amendment. God gives to men, especially to those who live under the dispensation of the word, many peculiar times or seasons for their recovery. They have their day, their especial day, wherein they ought in an especial manner to look after the things of their peace, as hath been declared. It may be this 'day,' is often revived to the person spoken of, and often returned on them; but it is as often despised and neglected by them.

Secondly. It includes a rejection and disappointment of the means of repentance, which God is pleased graciously to afford to them. During the season of his patience towards sinners, God is pleased to grant to them sundry means and advantages for their amendment, and that in great variety. But they are all rejected and rendered fruitless in an unchanged course of sinning.

Thirdly. It includes a contempt of the whole work of conscience from first to last. Many assistances conscience doth receive in its work. Convictions from the word, excitations by judgments, mercies, dangers, deliverances; but yet in this condition all its actings are baffled and despised. And what can be more done against God? what can add to the guilt of such sins and sinners?

And this may serve to justify God in his severity against persons that always err in their hearts, that continue in a course of sinning. In the

day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, and all transactions between God and the souls of men laid open, the holiness, righteousness, and just severity of God against impenitent sinners, will on these and other accounts be gloriously displayed.

Obs. XXX. None despise or desert the ways of God, but those who know them not.—For, whatever they may profess, yet indeed profligate sinners know neither God nor his ways. ‘They err in their hearts and have not known my ways.’ Who would seem more fully to have known the ways of God than this people? The ways of his providence wherein he walked towards them; and the ways of his law wherein they were to walk towards him, were all before them. They saw the former themselves; and that appearance of the power, wisdom, and greatness of God in them, as no generation of men from the foundation of the world ever had. And for the ways of his law and worship, who should know them if they did not? They heard God himself proclaiming his own law on Mount Sinai; and they had it afterwards written by him in tables of stone. And for the residue of his institutions, they received them by fresh revelation, seeing them all exemplified in the erection of the tabernacle and in the practice of the service of it. And yet all this while being unbelieving and obdurate, they knew not the ways of God; nay, though they professed that they knew them, and that they would observe them, yet in truth they knew them not. And such were their posterity and successors in unbelief and disobedience, of whom the apostle speaks, Titus i. 16, ‘They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.’ So was it with this people: so it is with all that despise the ways of God. Whatever they profess, as some of them will be forward enough to profess much, yet indeed they know not God or his ways. So our Saviour tells the Pharisees, that notwithstanding all their boasting of their wisdom, skill, and knowledge of the law, and of God himself, yet being as they were, proud, hypocritical self-justiciaries, that they had not indeed ‘heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape,’ John v. 37, that is, that they had no real acquaintance with him or knowledge of him.

Whatever notion such persons have or may have of the ways of God, whatever skill in the outward letter of his laws and institutions, yet they know neither the righteousness, nor the holiness, nor the grace, nor the efficacy, nor the usefulness, nor the beauty of any of them. These things are spiritually discerned, and they are spiritually blind. These are spirit and life, and they are flesh and dead. And all this is evident from men’s despising of the ways of God or their dereliction of them. This none can do but those that know them not. For they that ‘know the name of the Lord,’ that is, any of the ways whereby he reveals himself, ‘will put their trust in him,’ Ps. ix. 10. They will forsake neither him nor them. What Paul speaks in a way of extenuation as to some of the Jews; had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of life; we may apply by way of exprobration unto some; had they known the ways of God, as once they professed they did, they would not have forsaken



them. And this may support us against the offences and scandals that are in the world upon the account of the apostasies of professors. Some that have professed religion in its power, turn sensual worldlings ; some who have professed it in its truth, as Protestants, turn Papists and Idolaters. Shall any reflection be taken from hence, or be cast on the right ways of God, as though they were such as deserved to be deserted ? Whatever men, such men, have pretended or professed, the truth is they never knew the ways of God in their light, power, efficacy, or beauty. Julian, that infamous apostate, was wont to boast concerning the Scriptures, that he had read them, known them, and condemned them : unto whom it was truly replied, that if he had read them, yet he understood or knew them not, of which there needed no other evidence but that he condemned them.

‘Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.’

This is the last thing that remaineth to be considered ; and it is the issue or event of the sin before declared, what it came to, in the holiness and righteousness of God, and what was the punishment that was inflicted on the offenders. And in this decretory sentence of God concerning this people, after all their temptations and provocations, there is to be considered,

First. The irrevocableness of the sentence denounced against them.—It is not any longer a mere threatening, but a sentence irreversibly past, and enrolled in the court of heaven, and committed for execution unto the honour, power, and veracity of God, for he swore unto it or confirmed it by his oath. All mere promises or threatnings whatever about temporal things, have a tacit condition included in them. This, as occasion requires, is drawn forth so as to alter and change the event promised or threatened. But when God interposeth with his oath, it is to exclude all reserves on such tacit conditions ; it is to show that the time wherein they might take place, or be of use, is elapsed. And the threatening so confirmed becomes an absolute sentence. And until it comes unto this, the state of sinners is not absolutely deplorable. But when the oath of God is gone out against them, all reserves for mercy, all former allowances of conditions, are utterly cut off. And this is not the state only of them concerning whom it is recorded in an especial manner that he did so swear, but in such instances God shows what is the way of his holiness and severity with all sinners, who fall into the like provocations with them. For hereon doth the apostle ground his exhortation and caution, chap. iv. 11, ‘Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.’ For if the tenor of God’s dealings with such unbelievers were not absolutely the same, if the oath of God extended only unto that generation ; though they fell, yet others might stand under the same guilt with them, which the apostle hence demonstrates to be otherwise.

Secondly. The greatness of their sin in the great offence that God took at it, and the provocation which as it were befel him thereon ; he swore in his wrath, that is with great indignation. Let the place be read as before set down, where the frame of the heart of God towards

them is expressed, and the greatness of his wrath and indignation will appear. Now whereas the holy nature of God is not in itself capable of such commotions, of such smoking wrath and anger as are therein described and represented, the sole end of these expressions must needs be to show the heinousness of the sin that the people were guilty of. And herein lies an infinite condescension of God, in taking care to instruct some in and by his deserved wrath against others. For such weak and mean creatures are we, that we have need thus to be instructed in the holiness of God's nature, and the severity of his justice against sin. For whatever we may ween concerning ourselves, we are not indeed capable of any perfect notions, or direct apprehensions of them; but stand in need to have them represented unto us by such effects, as we can take in the species of, into minds.

Thirdly. There is in the words, the punishment itself denounced against this provoking people; that they should not enter into the rest of God. And there is a double aggravation of the punishment in the manner of the expressing of it.

1. In the act denied; they shall not enter; no not so much as enter into it. Doubtless many of the people during their wandering in the wilderness, had great desires that they might at least see the place promised for an habitation to their posterity, and wherein all their future interests were to be stated. So in particular had Moses. He prayed, saying, 'I pray thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon,' Deut. iii. 25. So doubtless did many others of them pray and desire. But the sentence is past, they shall not now so much as enter into it, nor set one foot within its borders.

2. In the expression of the object denied there lieth another aggravation. He doth not say, that they shall not enter into the land of Canaan, no nor yet into the promised land; but he describes it by such an adjunct, as may let them see the greatness of their sin and their punishment, and of his displeasure. They shall not, saith he, enter into my rest. It is *my rest*, the place where I will dwell, where I will fix my worship and make myself known; you shall not enter into my rest.

And so have we passed through this passage of this chapter, on which, though it may be we have seemed to dwell somewhat long, yet as I suppose not longer than the matter doth require; nor indeed so long as we should and would have done, but that sundry concerns of it will again occur to us, both in this and the next chapter. Some few observations from the last clause of the words we may yet touch on, as,

Obs. XXXI. When God expresseth great indignation in himself against sin, it is to teach men the greatness of sin in themselves.—For that end is he said here, 'to swear in his wrath.' There are expressions in Scripture about God's respect to the sins of men that are strangely emphatical. As sometimes he is said to be 'pressed under them as a cart is pressed that is laden with sheaves:' sometimes that he is 'made to serve with sin and wearied with iniquity;' sometimes to be 'broken' with the whorish heart of a people, and 'grieved at the

heart' that he had ever made such a creature as man ; sometimes that the sins of men are a 'fume in his nostrils,' that which his soul loatheth ; commonly to be angry, vexed, and grieved, to be wrathful, stirred up to fury, and the like. Now all these things taken properly do include such alteration, and consequently imperfections and weaknesses, as the pure, holy, perfect nature of God can by no means admit of. What is it then that God intends by all these expressions, by these ascriptions of that to himself which really is not in him, but might indeed justly befall that nature whereof we are partakers, on the supposition of the like occasions ? As was said, it is all to express what sin doth indeed deserve, and that a recompence of revenge is to be expected, or that it is of so great a demerit, as to excite all the perturbations mentioned in the nature of God, were it any way capable of them. So doth he make use of all ways and means to deter us from sin. And there is much of love, tenderness, and care in all these expressions of anger, wrath, and displeasure. So is he pleased to teach us, and such teachings do we stand in need of. Again,

Obs. XXXII. God gives the same firmitude and stability to his threatenings that he doth to his promises.—He swears to them also as he doth in this place. Men are apt secretly to harbour a supposition of a difference in this matter. The promises of God they think indeed are firm and stable, but as for his threatenings they suppose one way or other they may be evaded. This deceit hath greatly prevailed in and inflamed the minds of men ever since the first entrance of sin. By this deceit sin came into the world, namely, that the threatenings of God either would not be accomplished, or that they were to be understood after another manner than was apprehended. 'Hath God said so, that you shall die if you eat ?' Mistake not, that is not the meaning of the threatening ; or if it be, God doth not intend to execute it ; it will be otherwise, and God knows it will be otherwise. This gave sin its first entrance into the world. And the same deceit still prevails in the minds of men. Hath God said that sinners shall die, shall be cursed, shall be cast into hell ? Nay, but sure enough it will be otherwise, there will be one way or other of escape ; it is good to affright men with these things, but God intends not so to deal with them. Whatever the threatening be, many things may intervene to prevent their execution. What God promiseth indeed that shall come to pass, we may expect it and look for it. But as for these threatenings, they depend on so many conditions, and may so easily at any time be evaded, as that there is no great fear of their execution. But what is the ground of this feigned difference between the promises and threatenings of God, as to their stability, certainty, and accomplishment ? Where is the difference between the two clauses in that text, 'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned ?' Is not the holiness of God and his faithfulness as much concerned in the comminatory part, as in the promissory part of his word ? Would not a failure in the one, be as prejudicial to his glory as in the other ? The principles from which his threatenings proceed, are no less essential properties of his nature, than those which are springs of his promises. His declaration of them, is no less accom-

panied with the engagement of his veracity and faithfulness, than that of the other. And the end aimed at in them is no less necessary to the demonstration of his glory, than that which he designeth in his promises. We see in this particular instance, that they are also confirmed with the oath of God, even as his promises are. And let none think that this was an extraordinary case, and concerned only the men of that generation. This oath of God is part of his law, it abides for ever; and all that fall into the like sin with them, attended with the like circumstances, do fall under the same oath of God; he swears concerning them, 'that they shall not enter into his rest.' And we little know how many are even in this world overtaken in this condition; the oath of God lying against them for their punishment and that eternal. Let men take heed of this great self-deceiving; and let no men be mockers in this matter, lest their bonds be made strong; for,

Obs. XXXIII. When men have provoked God by their impenitency, to decree their punishment irrevocably, they will find severity in the execution.—They shall not enter, no not so much as enter. 'Behold,' saith our apostle, 'the severity of God; towards them that fell, severity,' Rom. xi. 22. Men will find that there is a severity in the execution who despised the threatening; and that it is a 'fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' When sinners shall see the whole creation on fire about them; hell open under them, and the glorious dreadful Judge of all over them, they will begin to have a due apprehension of his terror. But then cries, outcries, repentings, and wailings will be of no use. This is the time and place for such considerations, not when the sentence is executed, no not when it is irrevocably confirmed.

Obs. XXXIV. It is the presence of God alone that renders any place or condition good or desirable. 'They shall not,' saith God, 'enter into my rest.'—This makes heaven to be heaven, and the church to be the church; every thing answers the manner and measure of the presence of God. And without this, Moses expressly preferred the wilderness before Canaan.

VER. 12—14.—IN the close of this chapter, the apostle makes application of the example which he had produced out of the Psalmist unto his present purpose; namely, to dehort the Hebrews from that sin which in them would answer unto the unbelief and disobedience of their forefathers, from the pernicious and destructive event which befel them thereon. And it must be still remembered that he presseth on them the consideration of that season of trial which they were then under, and which directly answered unto that time of trial which their fathers had in the wilderness. And there are three parts of that discourse of the apostle which ensueth unto the end of this chapter.

First. An exhortation built upon what he had before laid down and given evidence of, with confirmation unto by the example produced out of the Psalmist, ver. 12—14.

Secondly. An especial consideration and improvement unto the end aimed at of sundry parts of the example insisted on, ver. 15—18,



and therein many enforcements of the exhortations laid down are contained.

Thirdly. A general conclusion is drawn out of his whole previous discourse, and laid down as the ground of his future progress, ver. 19.

The first part of this discourse comes now under consideration in the ensuing words.

VER. 12—14.—Βλεπετε, αδελφοι, μηποτε εσται εν τινι υμων καρδια πονηρα απιστιας, εν τω αποστηναι απο Θεου ζωντος· αλλα παρακαλειτε εαυτους καθ' εκαστην ημεραν, αχρις ου το σημερον καλειται· ινα μη σκληρυνθη τις εξ υμων απατη της αμαρτιας· μετοχοι γαρ γεγοναμεν του Χριστου, εανπερ την αρχην της υποστασεως μεχρι τελους βεβαιαν κατασχωμεν.

Μηποτε; ποτε is omitted or neglected in many translations; as the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic; ne sit, 'that there be not, let there not be.' Vulg. Lat. ne forte, lest haply; with respect unto the uncertainty of the event; some, ne quando, ne ullo tempore, 'lest at any time, that at no time;' with respect unto the season of such events.

Εν τινι υμων; in aliquo vestrum. So the Vulg. Lat. An. in ullo vestrum, Beza; more properly: so we, 'in any of you;' באש מוכן in homine ex vobis, 'in a man,' 'in any man of you.' Arab. in corde ullius vestrum; 'in the heart of any of you;' taking in the word HEART out of the next clause, which it there supplies by adding wickedness; the wickedness of unbelief.

Καρδια πονηρα απιστιας, cor malum incredulitatis. So the Vulg. Lat. 'An evil heart of unbelief.' לבא בישא דלא מדין: cor malum quod non fidele sit. 'An evil heart that is not faithful or believing;' others, cor malum et incredulum; 'an evil and unbelieving heart.'

Εν τω αποστηναι. An. in discedere. Vulg. Lat. discedendi; Beza, ut desciscatis: properly, descisco is to depart unlawfully, to withdraw wickedly; that is, to apostatize from an engagement of duty. Syr. חפרק: and you should withdraw or draw back.

Παρακαλειτε εαυτους; Vulg. Lat. adhortamini vosmetipsos, 'exhort yourselves.' Eras. vos invicem, to the same purpose. Beza, exhortamini alii alios, 'exhort one another;' as we also. Syr. אלא בעי מן נפשכון; sed postulate ab anima vestra; 'but ask or require it of your soul;' that is of yourself. Tremel. sed examine vos ipsos, 'but examine yourselves;' that is by inquiry; this expresseth somewhat another duty as to the manner of its performance, but to the same purpose.

Καθ' εκαστην ημεραν, Arias, per unumquemque diem: Vulg. Lat. per singulos dies, 'every day;' that is, sigillatim, separately and distinctly considered. Syr. בלחון יומא: omnibus diebus, 'always.' Beza, quotidie; that is, as ours, 'daily, every day.'

Αχρις ου το σημερον καλειται, Vulg. Lat. Donec hodie cognominatur. Arias, usque quo. Beza, quoad dies appellatur hodiernus; whilst it is called the present day; to-day. עדמא ליזמא דמהקרא יומא: 'until the day which is called to-day;' or this day. It is uncertain

what day is intended by that translator. It seems to be the day of death; which answers the omnibus diebus before; that is, hujus vitæ; all the days of this life.

ἵνα μὴ σκληρυνθῇ τις ἐξ ὑμῶν. Vulg. Lat. ut non induretur quis ex vobis. Beza, ne quis ex vobis; 'lest any of you be hardened.' The Ethiopic adds; 'that there be none that may say, that any one of them is hardened in any sin.'

Ἀπατη; is rendered by some deceptio, by some seductio; a seducing deceit; Rhemist, 'That none of you be obdurate with the fallacy of sin:' most darkly and corruptly.

Μετοχοὶ γενομεν τοῦ Χριστοῦ; Christi participes facti, effecti sumus. Beza, consortes. Syr. مَبْتَطِقُونَ commixti sumus Christo. 'We are immixt with Christ;' that is, as I suppose, united unto him. Ethiop. 'we are as Christ.'

Ἐάντερ. Vulg. Lat. si tamen; but πέρ is not exceptive. Si modo; Beza, 'If so be.' The Syriac takes no notice of it; nor we in our translation, 'if.'

Ἀρχὴν τῆς ὑποστάσεως. Vulg. Lat. Initium substantiæ ejus; adding ejus to the text and corrupting the sense. Beza. Principium illud quo sustentamur; 'that beginning,' or the beginning of that, 'whereby we are supported.' We, 'the beginning of our confidence.' Rhemist, 'Yet so, as if we keep the beginning of his substance firm.' Castalio, Hoc argumentum ab initio ad finem usque, 'this argument or evidence from the beginning unto the end.' Syr. 'If from the beginning unto the end we abide in this firm substance or foundation.' Ethiop. 'If we persevere to keep this New Testament.' All to the same purpose.

Ver. 12—14.—*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing (wickedly) from the living God. But exhort one another (yourselves) daily (every day) whilst it is called to day, lest any of you (among you) be hardened through the (seducing) deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if so be we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.*

In these three verses there are three things in general proposed by the apostle.

First. An exhortation unto the avoidance of an evil, even that which it is his principal design to caution them against, and to dissuade them from, ver. 12.

Secondly. A proposal of one useful means whereby they may be assisted in its avoidance, ver. 13.

Thirdly. An enforcement of the exhortation from that evil, and unto the use of that means, from sundry considerations, is added, ver. 14.

In the first of these we may consider; 1. What is included in it, namely the dependence of this exhortation on the discourse foregoing. 2. The compellation used by the apostle in this renovation of an especial address unto the Hebrews, 'brethren.' 3. The duty he exhorts

them unto; and that, 1st. As to the act of it; 'take heed.' 2nd. As to the persons concerned; 'lest there be in any of you.' 3rd. As to the object of it, or the evil dehorted from; 'an evil heart of unbelief,' which is further described by its effects,' in departing from the living God.'

Secondly. The means of preventing the evil dehorted from, is presented, ver. 13, and this in general is by exhortation against it, 'exhort,' which had a triple qualification; 1. As to the persons by whom it is to be performed, or the means used; 'one another.' 2. The season of its performance, which also includes the manner of it, 'every day.' 3. With a limitation of that season; 'whilst it is called to-day.' (2) An especial enforcement of this preventive duty from the danger of their condition, which would be increased by a neglect thereof. And this is described, 1. From the cause of it; 'the deceitfulness of sin.' 2. From its tendency and effects; 'lest any be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.'

Thirdly. There is a general enforcement of the whole, both as to the evil to be avoided and the means to be used to that purpose; and this is taken from their state and condition, on supposition of the avoidance of the one and observance of the other, ver. 14. And this is (1.) expressed; for we are partakers of Christ, and (2.) declared as to its dependence on the preceding exhortation; 'if so be we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.'

In the exhortation proposed,

First. There is included a dependence on the foregoing discourse. Some suppose an hyperbaton in the words, and that this 'take heed,' depends immediately on the 'wherefore,' which is in the beginning of ver. 7, as was intimated on that place. So the following words are introduced only as an instance, to enforce the exhortation. In this sense the reference here is to be taken immediately from the authority of Christ over his house, and the necessity of our perseverance to the securing of our interest in that house, as ver. 5, 6, 'Wherefore take heed brethren.' But the truth is, the matter of this exhortation is educed so directly and immediately out of the foregoing example, that we must in it own a respect thereunto, for the words are a plain inference from that discourse, though the note of illation be omitted. As if the apostle had said; seeing it is thus, seeing our forefathers who were our types, and are proposed for an example unto us, did so miscarry under a dispensation of God, representing that which he exerciseth now towards us, let us take heed; this is the dependence of the words.

Secondly. The apostle returning unto the Hebrews with an especial address and exhortation, renews his former affectionate compellation; *αδελφοι*, 'brethren.' This hath been spoken unto, ver. 3, of this chapter, where the reader may find the reason of it, and what is contained in it. Only the cause wherefore he repeats it again, seems to be, that it might appear that he had no commotion of spirit upon him, in his pressing the severe instance and example insisted on. A minister must be *επιεικής*, 1 Tim. iii. 3, meek, patient, not easily provoked, *μη οργιλος*, Tit. i. 7, not 'soon angry' with his flock, or any of them. And tenderness, gentleness, demonstrations of love and care towards them with whom we have to do, secretly softens them, and opens their

ears and hearts to let in a word of instruction and exhortation. Ὁ ἡλῖος τον ανεμον ενικησε. Besides, he obviates any suspicion that might arise, as though he insinuated a fear of such an evil in them, as might make them think that he had hard thoughts of them. By this appellation he removes all such jealousies, and lets them know that the best of saints had need to be cautioned sometimes against the worst of evils.

Thirdly. The manner of the performance of the duty exhorted unto, and the act of it, is expressed in the first word, βλεπετε, 'take heed;' βλεπω is first and properly to see and behold, as that is an act of sense; then to take heed or beware, an act of the mind; by an easy translation, first video, then caveo. And when it is used for to see as an act of sense, it commonly hath respect unto expectation, either of some good to be received, or of some inconvenience to be watched against. And because men look out or about them to beware of dangers, the word is used for to take heed or beware. In this sense it is often used in the New Testament, yea, so far as I have observed, it is peculiar unto the sacred writers, especially it is frequently used by our apostle, as 1 Cor. i. 26, x. 18; Phil. iii. 2; Eph. v. 15; Col. ii. 8. And sometimes it is used transitively affecting the object, merely for to consider, 1 Cor. i. 26, βλεπετε την κλησιν υμων, 'consider your calling,' chap. x. 18, βλεπετε τον Ισραηλ κατα σαρκα, 'consider Israel according to the flesh.' Sometimes it hath a reciprocal pronoun joined with it, βλεπετε εαυτους, 2 John 8. 'Consider, or look well to yourselves.' Sometimes it is used absolutely, as here, and signifies to beware of somewhat. But in this sense, it hath often απο joined with it, as Mark viii. 15. βλεπετε απο της ζυμης των φαρισαιων, which in Mat. xvi. 6, is προσεχετε, take heed of, 'beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.' And απο is sometimes omitted, as Phil. iii. 2, βλεπετε τους κυνας, βλεπετε τους κακους εργατας, βλεπετε την κατατομην, that is, απο των κυνων, and so of the rest. 'Take heed of dogs, take heed of evil workers, take heed of the concision,' that ye neither join with them, nor be hurt by them. This is here the use of the word care. Heedfulness, circumspection, with respect to danger and opposition, and those imminent or near, is that which the word imports; whence observe, that

Obs. 1. There is need of great care, heedfulness, watchfulness, and circumspection for a due continuance in our profession to the glory of God and advantage of our own souls.—A careless profession will issue in apostasy, open or secret, or great distress, Matt. xiii. 4; Cant. iii. 1, 5. Our course is a warfare, and those who take not heed, who are not circumspect in war, will assuredly be a prey to their enemies. Be their strength never so great, one time or other they will not avoid a fatal surprisal.

And there is a necessity of this heedful attention in us, from the manifold duties that in all things and at all times, are incumbent on us. Our whole life is a life of duty and obedience. God is in every thing to be regarded by us. So that we are to be attentive unto our duty on all occasions, Ps. xvi. 8; Gen. xvii. 1. If we fail in matter or manner, what lies in us, we spoil the whole; for bonum oritur ex integris, malum ex quolibet defectu. 'Any one defect is enough to



denominate an action evil, but unto that which is good, there must be a concurrence of all necessary circumstances.' See Eph. v. 15, 16. And who is sufficient for these things? God alone by his Spirit and grace can enable us hereunto. But he works these things by us as well as in us, and gives heedful diligence where he gives success.

But it is with especial reference unto difficulties, oppositions, dangers, temptations, that this caution is here given us to be cautious. And who can reckon up the number, or dispose into order these things? and that whether we consider those that constantly attend us, or those that are occasional. Among oppositions, snares, and dangers that we are constantly exposed unto, and which without heedfulness we cannot avoid, the apostle here instanceth in one, namely, that of an evil heart of unbelief, which must be spoken unto. And he giveth an instance in those that are occasional, Eph. v. 15, 16, 'Walk circumspectly because the days are evil.' There is an especial evil in the days wherein we live, which we cannot avoid without great circumspection. Now this taking heed consisteth,

1. In a due consideration of our dangers; he that walks in the midst of snares and serpents, and goes on confidently, without consideration of his danger, as if his paths were all smooth and safe, will one time or other be entangled or bitten. Blind confidence in a course of profession, as if the whole of it were a dangerless road, is a ruining principle, 1 Pet. i. 17; Prov. xxviii. 14. 'A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished,' Prov. xxii. 3. It is the highest folly not to look out after dangers, and it usually ends in sorrow, trouble, and punishment. Fear is necessary in continual exercise. Not a fear of distrust or diffidence, of anxious scrupulosity, but of care, duty, and diligence. Continually to fear dangers in all things, brings an useless, perplexing scrupulosity, where men's principle of duty is only a harrassed, convinced conscience, and the rule of it is the doctrines and traditions of men. But where the principle of it is the spirit of grace, with all this fear there is liberty; and where the rule of it is the Word, there is safety, peace, and stability. Men at sea that are in the midst of rocks and shelves, and consider it not, will hardly avoid a shipwreck. Livy tells us, that Philopœmenes, that wary Grecian commander, wherever he went, though he were alone, he was still considering all places that he passed by, how an enemy might possess them, and lay ambushes in them to his disadvantage, if he should command an army in those places. Hereby he became the most wary and expert captain of his age. So should a Christian do; he should always consider how, where, and by what means, his spiritual adversaries may ensnare or engage him, and so either avoid them or oppose them; and not like the simple, pass on heedlessly and be punished, Eph. vi. 11, 12, &c.

2. In a due consideration of the especial nature of those snares and dangers that we are exposed unto. It is not enough that in general we know and reckon on it, that we are obnoxious unto dangers, but we must learn what are the especial dangers, as things are circumstanced in our lives, callings, ways, times, and seasons, that are apt easily to beset us. To know and continually ponder their nature and advantages, this is wisdom; the greatest wisdom we can exercise in

the whole course of our walking and profession, 1 Pet. v. 8. takes heed in this, will not likely fail in any other instance here custom, security, false pleasing confidence of our own strength, negligence, and sloth, all put in to delude us. And if we are imposed on, that we weigh not aright the nature and efficacy of our own peculiar snares and temptations, we shall assuredly at one time or another fail and miscarry, in the course of our obedience. This was David's wisdom, when he kept himself from his own iniquity, Ps. xviii. 23. God would have us cast all our care about earthly things on him, but be watchful ourselves through his grace about spiritual. But we are apt to fail on both hands.

3. It is so to heed them as to endeavour to avoid them; and that in all their occasions, causes, and advantages,—in their whole work and efficacy. We are not only to consider them when they assault us, but to watch against all ways whereby they may do so. This is the duty of a man that stands armed on his guard. He is very regardless of his enemy, who never seeks to avoid him but when he sees him or feels him. Men will consider the lion's walk, so as not without good means of defence to be found in it. The lion is in all the special oppositions we are exercised with. We had need continually to be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear, as 2 Sam. xxiii. 7, and yet to avoid them what we are able. God expresseth his great dislike of them that walk contrary to him, as we have rendered the words, Lev. xxvi. 21, וְאִם חָלַכְתִּי עִמִּי, if you walk with me at peradventure or at all adventures, carelessly, negligently, without due consideration of your duty and your danger, this God will not bear.

4. Consider them so as to oppose them. And this consisteth in these things. 1. In being always ready armed and standing on your guard, Eph. vi. 13; Mark xiii. 35, 36; 2 Sam. xxiii. 7. 2. In calling in help and assistance, Heb. ii. 18, and iv. 16. 3. In improving the supplies granted us with faith and diligence, Heb. xii. 1. And these are some of the things that belong unto this duty, and they are but some of them; for it is diffused through the whole course of our profession, and is indispensably required of us, if we would abide in the beauty and glory of it unto the end. And, therefore, the negligence and sloth of many professors can never enough be bewailed. They walk at all adventure, as if there were no devil to tempt them, no world to seduce, ensnare, or oppose them, no treachery in their own hearts to deceive them. And hence it is that many are sick, and many are weak, and some are fallen asleep in sin. But what our Saviour said to all of old, he says still to us all, 'Watch,' Mark xiii. 37.

Thirdly. There are the persons concerned in this duty, Μηποτε εσται εν τινι υμων, 'Lest there be in any of you.' Μηποτε is somewhat more emphatical than the *lest*, whereby alone we render it. *Ne forte*, say some translations, 'lest perchance,' with respect unto a dubious event. Others, *ne quando*, 'lest there be at any time;' lest so, that there should be, εν τινι υμων, 'in any of you.' The apostle doth not seem in these words strictly to intend every individual person, as if he had said, let every one of you look to himself and his own heart, lest it be so with him; but he speaks unto them collectively, to take care that there be none such amongst them; that none be found amongst

them with such a heart as he cautions them against. And this consequently falls on every individual, for where all are spoken unto, every one is concerned. The same kind of expression is used to the same purpose, ch. xii. 15, 16, *ἐπισκοποῦντες ἅλληλους ὥστε μὴ τις ὑστερῶν*, 'watching, overseeing mutually with diligence, lest any (among you) fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau.' Here the caution is evidently given unto the whole church, and the duty of the whole is expressed thereon. So is it likewise in this place, as appears from the direction that he gives for the right performance of this duty, in and by mutual watchfulness and exhortation in the next verse. This, then, is proposed first to the whole church, to the whole society, and consequently to every member thereof; so that we may hence observe,

Obs. II. Godly jealousy concerning, and watchfulness over the whole body, that no beginnings of backsliding from Christ and the gospel be found amongst them, is the duty of all churches of believers. —He that first put in an exception to this rule, was the first apostate from God, who did it to cover a former sin. *השמר אדני אחי*, says Cain, Gen. iv. 9. 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Is it my duty to look after him, to take care of him, or what becomes of him? God proposed the question so unto him, as it was apt in its own nature to lead him to confession and repentance. But he was now hardened in sin, and having quarrelled with God, and slain his brother, he now casts off all the remaining dictates of the law of nature, accounting that one brother is not bound to take care of the welfare of another. Mutual watchfulness over one another by persons in any society, is a prime dictate of the law of our creation, which was first rejected by this first murderer; and every neglect of it hath something of murder in it, 1 John iii. 11, 12, 15. In a church-relation, the obligation unto this duty is ratified by institution. Upon the officers of the church, it is incumbent by the way of office; on all believers as members of the church, in a way of love, Lev. xix. 17, 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.' He that doth not watch over his brother to prevent his sin, or recover him from it, as much as lies in him, he hates him, and is so far a murderer. And the necessity of this duty is expressed in the word used to declare it, and the manner of its usage. *הוכח חבירו*, 'rebuking, thou shalt rebuke him,' that is, plainly and effectually; and that with such rebukes as consist in arguings, reasonings, and pleadings to bring on a conviction. So the word signifies, and is used as to the pleadings or reasonings of men with God, to prevail with him, Job xiii. 3. Surely I would speak to the Almighty, I desire *אֶל אֱלֹהִים הוֹכֵחַ*, to reason, argue, plead with God, until I can prevail with him. And it is used of God's pleading with men to bring them to conviction, Isa. i. 18, *לכו נא ונוכח*, 'Go to, or come now, and let us plead together;' so that an effectual dealing with a brother about sin is included. And this is enforced in the latter clause of the words, *וְלֹא תִשָּׂא עֲלֶיךָ חַטָּאתוֹ*, which may well be rendered, 'and thou shalt not bear iniquity for him;' that is, make thyself guilty of his sin, by not improving him. And for that jealousy which is to accompany this

watchfulness and the effects of it, our apostle gives in an example in himself, 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3, 'I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I fear *μηπως* (as here *μηποτε*) lest by any means your minds be corrupted from the simplicity of the gospel.' This belongs to their watch; as they watch for the souls of their people, 'as those that must give an account,' Heb. xiii. 17. The discharge of this duty will be required of them on the account of their office, and that when I fear some will be hard put to it for an answer. For the Scripture is full of threatenings and denunciations of sore judgments, against those that shall be found neglective herein. But doth this excuse other believers, members of churches, from a share and interest in this duty? No doubtless, unless it renders them Cains; that is, transgressors against the light of nature, and who, as to the institutions of Christ, manifest themselves not to be members of the same mystical body with them that really believe. For in the observance of this and the like duties of their common interest, doth the preservation of that body consist. Christ is the head 'from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according unto the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love,' Eph. iv. 16. Every joint, —every part in this mystical body that receives influences of life from Christ the head, and so holds of him, is to work effectually, and to give out the supplies which it receives from Christ unto the preservation, increase, and edification of the whole.

There is, indeed, a causeless suspicion that some are apt to indulge in, instead of this watchful jealousy. But this is the bane of churches and of love, as that is the preservation of them both. The apostle placeth *ὑπονοίας πονηρας*, 'evil surmises' or suspicions among the works of men of corrupt minds, 1 Tim. vi. 4, and that deservedly. But this godly watchful jealousy, is that which he commends unto others in the example of himself. And whatever appearance they may have one of the other, they may be easily distinguished. Jealousy is a solicitous care proceeding from love; suspicion, a vain conjecturing proceeding from curiosity, vanity, or envy. He that hath the former, hath his heart ruled by love towards them concerning whom he hath it. From thence he is afraid lest they should miscarry,—lest any evil should befall them; for love is the willing of all good unto others that they may prosper universally. Suspicion is an effect of curiosity and vanity of mind; whence commonly there is somewhat of envy and secret self-pleasing in the miscarriages of others, mixed with it, a fault too often found amongst professors. And this vice puts forth itself in vain babbling and unheedful defamations; whereas the other works by love, tenderness, prayer, and mutual exhortation, as in the next verse. Again, this jealous watchfulness hath for its end, the glory of Christ and his gospel, with the good of the souls of others. This is that which the gospel aims to ingenerate, and to which he stirs up in the Hebrews, as is evident from his discourse; when vain suspicion hath no end but the nourishing of the lusts from whence it doth proceed. The foundation whereon this duty is built, is the common concern of all believers, in the same good or evil, which are the conse-



quences of men's abiding in Christ, or of their departing from him, in reference whereunto this jealous watch is to be ordered. 'Take heed lest there be among you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' The good that will ensue on the avoidance of this evil, is twofold. The glory of Christ, and the salvation of the souls of them who make profession of his name. And have we not a concern in these things? Is it not our concern that Christ be glorified by the professed subjection of the souls of men unto him, and by their perseverance therein? that his name, his grace, his power be glorified in the holiness, fruitfulness, and stability in profession, of all that are called by his name? If we are not concerned in these things, if we are not deeply concerned in them, we are none of his.

In like manner, are we not concerned that the members of the same body with us should be kept alive, kept from putrifying, from being cut off and burned before our eyes? Are we not concerned that an eye doth not go out, that an arm do not wither, that a leg be not broken, yea, that a finger be not cut? If it be so, we are not ourselves members of the body. The like may be said of the evil that ensues on the sin of apostasy, which in this duty we labour to obviate and prevent. That which principally of this kind might be insisted on, is the troublesome defiling infection wherewith apostasy in any is attended, which our apostle speaks unto, ch. xii. 15. The falling of one is commonly the infection and defiling of many. There is a filthy leaven in apostasy, which if not carefully heeded, may leaven the whole lump. Oft-times also it springs from, or is accompanied with some word of error that eats like a gangrene. *Principiis obsta* is the great rule in these cases. And the duty spoken unto is one signal means of the prevention of this evil. And herein lies our concern, as also in the preventing of that punishment that may befall the whole for the sins of some, Josh. xxii. 18, 20. And it is the defect which is in this and the like kind of duties, which manifests and makes naked that miserable degeneracy which Christians in general, in these latter evil days are fallen into. Who almost hath any regard unto them? Instead of these fruits of spiritual love, men for the most part follow divers lusts and pleasures, living in envy and malice, hateful and hating one another. The practical duties of Christianity are amongst many derided. To watch over one another, to warn, to exhort one another, are looked on as things, if possible, beneath contempt. And it is a shame to mention or report the ways and means of dealing with and about the sins of men, which by some are substituted in the room of those appointed in the gospel, unto their utter exclusion. But the rule is stable, and will in due time, through the strength of Christ, prevail against the lusts of men.

Obs. III. Secondly. It is the duty of every individual believer, to be intent on all occasions, lest at any time, or by any means, there should be found in him an evil heart of unbelief.—This, as was shown, follows on the former, and is a necessary consequence of it. But this so directly falls in with what will be offered from the next clause, that thereunto we refer it.

The evil thus earnestly cautioned against, is expressed,

1. In the principle of it; and that is, *καρδια πονηρα της απιστίας*; and,

2. In the work or effect of that principle in those words, *εν τω αποστηναι απο Θεου ζωντος*.

The principle of the evil, is an evil heart of unbelief. What was meant by *καρδια*, ‘the heart,’ in the sense wherein it is here used, was declared on the verses preceding; what is meant by *πονηρα*, ‘evil,’ shall be shown in its proper place. In special, it is said to be ‘an evil heart, *της απιστίας*, of unbelief;’ that is, say most, *απιστος*, cor malum et incredulum, ‘an evil heart, and incredulous or unbelieving;’ an evil and unbelieving heart. So the genitive case of the substantive is put for the adjective, *απιστίας* for *απιστος*, by a Hebraism not unusual. In this sense, unbelieving is either exegetical, declaring what is meant by an evil heart in this place, even an unbelieving heart, or it is additious; and so a heart is signified which in general is evil, and in particular unbelieving.

But there seems to me to be more in this expression, and that *απιστίας* here, is genitivus efficientis, denoting the principal efficient cause, rendering the heart so evil, as that it should depart from the living God. *Καρδια απιστίας*, then, ‘a heart of unbelief,’ is more than *καρδια απιστος*, ‘an unbelieving heart.’ For this latter word is sometimes used to express a defect in believing, and not unbelief absolutely. So John xx. 27, *μη γινου απιστος αλλα πιστος*, ‘Be not unbelieving, but believing.’ They are the words of Christ to Thomas, who, though he failed in his faith, yet was not absolutely without faith. I confess the word is generally used in Scripture to express a negative unbeliever or an infidel; but there is something peculiar in this expression, ‘a heart of unbelief,’—that is, under the power of it, principled by it in its actings. What this unbelief is, and how the heart is rendered *πονηρα*, ‘evil,’ thereby, we must now inquire.

First. For unbelief; it is usually distinguished into that which is negative and that which is privative. Negative unbelief is whenever any man or men believe not, or have not faith, although they never had the means of believing granted unto them. For where men believe not, they are unbelievers, whether they have had any means of believing or not; or whether their unbelief be culpable or not, whatever may be the nature or degree of its demerit. So the apostle calls him an unbeliever, who comes in accidentally to the assemblies of the church, who never heard the word preached before, 1 Cor. xiv. 23, 24. In this sense, all those persons and nations who never had as yet the gospel preached unto them, are infidels or unbelievers; that is, they are so negatively,—they believe not, but yet cannot be said to have in them an evil heart of unbelief.

Secondly. It is privative, when men believe not, although they enjoy the means of faith or believing. And herein consists the highest acting of the depraved nature of man. And it is, on many accounts, the greatest provocation of God that a creature can make himself guilty of. For it is, as might be manifested, an opposition unto God in all the properties of his nature, and in the whole revelation of his will. Hence the gospel, which is a declaration of grace, mercy, and

pardon, though it condemn all sin, yet it denounceth the final condemnation of persons only against this sin. 'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.' Mark xvi. 16.

Now this privative unbelief is twofold. First. In refusing to believe when it is required. Secondly. In rejecting the faith after it hath been received. The first is, when the object of faith, or that which is to be believed, is according unto the mind of God, and in the ways of his appointment proposed unto men; when sufficient evidence is given unto the truth and goodness of what is so proposed, and the authority is made known on which faith is required, yet they refuse to believe. For these three things, a revelation of the things to be believed made known in the way of God; sufficient evidence given unto the truth proposed; and a just assertion of the authority of God requiring faith and obedience; do render the unbelief of men privative. Now, as this hath its root in the natural darkness, blindness, and depravedness of the minds of men, so it is educed and acted not without new sinful prejudices, and stubbornness of the will, refusing to attend unto, and consider the evidences that are given unto the truth proposed, or the goodness and excellency of the things themselves contained in the propositions of truth; or without signal effects of hardness of heart, love of sin and pleasure, keeping men off from the obedience required. Some instances may clear these particulars.

First. The root of this unbelief is in the original depravation of our natures, with that spiritual impotency and enmity to God, wherein it doth consist. There is such an impotency in us by nature, that no man of himself, by his own strength, can believe, can come to Christ; so himself informs us, John vi. 44. 'No man,' saith he, 'can come unto me, except the Father draw him;' that is, none can believe unless they are in an especial manner taught of God, as he explains himself, ver. 45. Again, by nature that carnal mind is in all men, which is enmity against God, which is not subject unto his law, nor can be so, Rom. viii. 7. Hereunto may be referred all that is spoken about the death of men in sin, their blindness and distrust, their alienation from God and obstinacy therein. This is the root and remote cause of all unbelief. Men, in the state of nature, neither can, nor will believe the gospel; but,

Secondly. Besides this general cause of unbelief, when it comes unto particular instances, and the gospel is proposed unto this or that man for his assent and submission unto it, there is always some especial corruption of mind or will, voluntarily acted, if the soul be kept off from believing; and on the account thereof principally, and not merely of original impotency and enmity against God, is the guilt of unbelief reflected upon the souls of the sinners. There is the same fundamental remote cause of unbelief in all that refuse the gospel; but the next immediate proper cause of it, is peculiar to every individual unbeliever.

1st. Some are kept off from believing the gospel by inveterate prejudices, in their minds, which they have taken in upon corrupt principles and interests. This shut up of old most of the Jews under their unbelief. They had received many prejudices against the person

of Christ, which on all occasions they expressed, and so were offended at him, and believed not. That he was poor, that he came out of Galilee, that the rulers of the church rejected him, were their pleas against him. So also they had against his doctrine, and that principally on two false principles, one of justification by the works of the law, as the apostle directly declares, Rom. ix. 31, 32, ch. x. 3; the other of the perpetuity or unchangeableness of the institution of Moses, with which the apostle deals in this Epistle. And these prejudices arose partly from their pride in seeking after righteousness by the works of the law, and partly from a corrupt desire of earthly things, riches, dominion and wealth, which they expected with and by their Messiah, whereof I have treated elsewhere at large. These were in many the immediate causes of their unbelief, as is every-where manifest in the gospel. And so is it with many at all times. Prejudices against the preachers of the gospel on sundry accounts, and against their doctrine, as either useless, or false, or unintelligible, or somewhat they know not what, which they do not like, keep them off from attending to the word and believing; see John v. 44.

2dly. An especial obstinacy of will from those prejudices, offereth itself in this matter. So our Saviour tells the Pharisees, John v. 40, 'Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.' It is not the perverseness and obstinacy that is in the wills of all men by nature, that our Saviour here intendeth; but an especial perverseness in them, arising out of an especial envy unto, and hatred of him and his doctrine. Hence they did not only not receive him, which might be charged on their natural impotency, but they put forth a positive act of their wills in refusing and rejecting him. And on this account, the guilt of men's unbelief is absolutely resolved into their own wills. And whether it be discovered or not, this is the condition with many in all times and seasons.

3dly. Love of sin is with some the immediate cause of their actual unbelief: John iii. 19, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.' The light of the gospel is brought unto any place or people; they come so near as to discover its end and tendency; but so soon as they find that it aims to part them and their sins, they will have no more to do with it. And on this account doth condemnation follow the preaching of the gospel, though its own proper end be salvation, and that only. And this is the common way of the ruin of souls. They like not the terms of the gospel, because of their love of sin; and so perish in and for their iniquities.

4thly. Stupid ignorance, arising from the possessing of the minds of men, with other things inconsistent with faith and obedience of the gospel through the craft and subtilty of Satan, is another cause hereof. So our apostle tells us, 2 Cor. iv. 4, that 'the god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.' When the minds of men are beamed with the light of the gospel, it is that they do believe. For by that light is faith produced. How is this hindered, how is it obstructed? It is by the darkness and blind-



ness of their minds. What darkness is this? that which is natural and common unto all? No: but that which is in a peculiar manner, brought and reflected on the minds of some men, by the crafts and deceits of the god of this world; that is, through his temptations and suggestions, he so fills and possesses their minds with the things of this world, (whence he is here peculiarly called *the god of this world*;) that they are kept in a stupid and brutish ignorance of spiritual things. And this keeps them off from believing. These are a few of the many instances that might be given of the immediate causes of their privative unbelief, which consists in the rejecting or not receiving the truths of the gospel, when they are proposed in a due manner unto the minds of men.

And this fully clears the holiness and righteousness of God, in his judgments against final and impenitent unbelievers, to whom the gospel is preached; for as that impotency which is in them naturally, is culpable, and it is no excuse for them for not believing, because of themselves they could not do so, seeing it is by their own default that they are brought into that condition, so every one in his own person who believeth not, doth, by a voluntary act of his own will, reject the gospel, and that on such corrupt principles as none can deny to be his sin.

Secondly. There is an unbelief that consists in a rejection of the truth of the gospel, after that it hath been admitted, acknowledged, and professed. Some, after they have been convinced of the truth, and made profession of it, yet through the temptations of the world, the corruption of their own hearts, love of sin, or fear of persecution, do suffer their convictions to wear off, or cast them out, and reject the faith they have owned. Hereof is frequent mention made in the gospel, and no less frequent caution given against it. And this in general is the highest aggravation of this sin. For although the former kind of private unbelief will certainly prove destructive to them that continue in it, and it may be said that this can do no more, yet this hath two great evils attending it, that the other hath no concern in. The first is the difficulty that there is in being recovered out of this condition. He who hath already withstood the efficacy of the only remedy for his distempers, who hath rejected and despised it, what can cure him? This, he who never received the gospel, be he never so bad or sinful, is not obnoxious unto. He hath not as yet as it were, made a trial of what it is; and is free from the contempt cast upon it, which is done by the other who declares that he hath made trial of it, and valueth it not. This, on many reasons, renders his recovery difficult, almost impossible.

Again. There is a degree of this unbelief which puts a soul absolutely into an irrecoverable condition in this world. For wherein soever the formality of the sin against the Holy Ghost that shall not be pardoned, doth consist, yet this is the matter of it, and without which it is impossible that any one should be guilty of that sin. There must be a renunciation of truth known and professed, or the guilt of that sin cannot be contracted. Now this, be they never so wicked, they are free from who never received, admitted, or professed the truth. The

sin against the Holy Ghost is a sin peculiar unto them who have made profession. And from this ariseth an especial aggravation of the punishment of the last day. So the apostle determines this matter, 'It had been better for men not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them,' 2 Pet. ii. 21.

Again. This unbelief in rejecting the gospel, is either notional and practical, or practical only. If it be notional, it will also be practical. If men once reject their profession of the truth of the gospel, quenching their light into it, and understanding of it, their practice of sin will be answerable thereunto. Renegadoes from the gospel are the greatest villains in the world. Neither do men voluntarily renounce the light, but to give themselves up to the deeds of darkness.

Secondly. It may be practical only. So is it in them 'who profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate,' Tit. i. 16; men who walk in some kind of profession, yet their end is destruction, and that because 'their god is their belly, and their glory is their shame, who mind earthly things,' Phil. iii. 19. The corruptions of such men do absolutely prevail over their convictions, and the power of sin in their wills and affection casts off all influencing light from their minds or understandings. Such men as these, although they do not in words deny the truth of the gospel, yet they yield no obedience unto it. They neither expect any good from its promises, nor fear any great evil from its threatenings, which formerly have made some more effectual impressions upon them. And this is the condition of unspeakable multitudes in the world.

Now the unbelief here intended by the apostle, is this privative unbelief, consisting in the rejection of the truth of the gospel, after it hath been received and professed. And this also may be considered two ways; 1st. Initially, as to some degrees of it: 2dly. As it may be finished and completed. Of these, our apostle treateth severally and distinctly. Of the former, in this place, and ch. iv. 11—13, ch. xii. 10, 16; of the latter, ch. vi. 4—6, ch. x. 26, 27. The first consists in any declension of heart from Christ and the gospel. This may be in various degrees, and on several accounts. The latter is a total renunciation of the gospel, of which we spake before. It is the former that the apostle here intends, and therein a prevention of the latter; and therefore, concerning it, we must consider two things: 1. Wherein it consists; or what are the ways of its entrance into, and prevailing upon the minds of men. 2. By what means it renders the heart evil when it is brought under the power thereof.

First. It consists in the soul's receiving impressions from arguments and reasonings against profession in the whole, or any degrees of it. Satan is, and will be casting fiery darts at the soul; but where the shield of faith is held up constantly and steadfastly, they are immediately quenched, Eph. vi. 16. Yea, it is the work of faith to arm the soul on all hands, that assaults may make no impression upon it: if that fail, if that faint, more or less they will take place. And when, or wherein the soul is brought but to parly with an objection, then and

therein unbelief is at work, whether it be as unto a particular fact, or as unto our state. It was so with our first parents in the very entry of their treaty with Satan, in giving a considering audience unto that one question, 'Hath God said so?' Our great Pattern hath shown us what our deportment ought to be in all suggestions and temptations. When the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, to tempt him withal, he did not stand and look upon them, viewing their glory, and pondering their empire, though he was fully assured that after all he could despise and trample upon the offer, and him that made it; but instantly, without stay, he cries, 'Get thee hence, Satan,' and further strengthens his own authority with a word of truth, which was his rule, Matt. iv. 10. Innumerable are the inclinations, objections, temptations, that lie against the profession of the gospel, especially in times of difficulty, particularly against steadfastness and preciseness in profession. That the whole of it be laid aside, or the degrees of it be remitted, is the great design of Satan, the world, and the flesh. To hearken unto what Satan suggests, though but under a pretence of seeing what is in it, to reason with the world, to consult with flesh and blood, contains the first actings of unbelief towards corrupting the heart, in order to a departure from God.

Secondly. It consists in, or acts itself by a secret dislike of any thing notionally or practically in the gospel. This was a common thing in the hearers of our Saviour. They disliked this or that in his doctrine, or teaching, and that sometimes in things concerning faith, sometimes in things concerning obedience. So did those with whom he treated, John vi. Whilst he taught them in general of the bread of God that came down from heaven, they were pleased with it, and cried, 'Lord give us evermore of this bread,' ver. 34; but when he began to acquaint them in particular that he himself was that bread, that his flesh was meat, and his blood was drink, that is, that they were the spiritual nourishment of the souls of men, especially as given for them in his death, they began to be offended, and to murmur: they disliked it, crying, 'This is an hard saying, who can hear it?' ver. 60, 61. And what was the effect of this dislike? plain and open apostasy: ver. 66, from that time, many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. And whence did this dislike and murmuring arise? It was merely the acting of their unbelief, as our Lord declared, ver. 63, 64, 'My words, which you so dislike, are spirit and life; but there are some of you that believe not.' You pretend exceptions against my words, apprehended in your gross and carnal manner; but the true reason of the dislike of them is your own unbelief. God, saith he, hath not as yet given faith unto you; for I told you before, that 'no man can come unto me,' that is, believe in me and my gospel, 'except it were given unto him of my Father,' ver. 65, and in this doth your unbelief act itself. This was in matter of faith; and we have an instance unto the same purpose in the matter of obedience. The young man, mentioned Matt. xix. had a great respect unto the teachings of the Lord Christ, for he comes unto him to be instructed in the way of eternal life. And this he did with so much

zeal and sincerity according to his present light, that our Saviour approved them in him; for it is said, 'he looked on him, and loved him,' Mark x. 21. And he likes his first lesson or instruction, according to his understanding, very well. But when the Lord Jesus proceeded to make a particular trial of him in an especial instance, bidding him sell what he had, and give it to the poor, and follow him, this he liked not, but went away sorrowful, ver. 21, 22.

Now there are three things in the gospel, and the profession of it, about which unbelief is apt to exert itself by this dislike, which, if not obviated, will prove a beginning of turning away from the whole.

1. The purity and spirituality of its worship. 2. The strictness and universality of its holiness or obedience. And, 3. The grace and mystery of its doctrine.

First. It exerts itself in dislike against the purity, simplicity, and spirituality of its worship. This was that wherein our apostle had principally to do with the Jews. All of them were apt to admire the old glorious pompous worship of the temple, and so to dislike the naked simplicity of gospel institutions. And in like manner was he jealous over the Corinthians, lest they should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 3, that is, in the worship of God, as instituted and appointed by him. This was always a great offence unto all unbelievers. Hence the Pagans of old objected unto the Christians, that they had a religion, or a worship of God, without temples, altars, images, or pompous ceremonies, whence they looked on them as mere atheists. And this dislike of the purity and simplicity of the gospel worship, is that which was the rise, and gave increase or progress unto the whole Roman apostasy. And this is that which, through the unbelief of men, keeps the gospel in other nations under so much reproach, contempt, and persecution, at this day. Men like not the plain unspotted institutions of Christ, but are pleased with the meretricious Roman paint, wherewith so great a part of the world hath been beguiled and infatuated.

Secondly. The severity and universality of obedience which it requireth, is another thing that unbelief prevails to put forth dislike against. It makes use of the flesh to this purpose. Something or other it would be gratified in, within doors or without, or at least be spared, and not in all things pursued, as the gospel requires. To be always, and in all things, private and public, personal and in all relations, mortified, crucified, and denied, to have no rest given unto it, the flesh likes it not, and unbelief makes use of its aversion to bring the whole soul into a dislike of that doctrine whereby all this is required. Thus Peter tells us of some that turn aside from the holy commandment that was given unto them, 2 Pet. ii. 21. He gives us not only the nature of the sin of them whom he blames, that they turn away from the commands of Christ in the gospel; but he gives us also the reason why they do so—it is because of their holiness they turn aside from the holy commandment. Many professors have been wearied out with an observance of that holiness which this profession doth require. Thence commonly there are most apostates from the



strictest ways of profession. The more universally holiness is pressed, the more weary will prevailing unbelief make men of their ways.

Thirdly. It worketh accordingly with respect unto the grace and mysteries of the gospel. Of old time it prevailed with many to look upon the whole of it as folly. The preaching of the cross was foolishness unto them that believed not. That is, the saving of sinners by the substitution of Christ in their room, and the atonement he made by his death and blood-shedding, was so. Now, this being a matter of great importance, I shall crave a little to digress from our immediate work and design, whilst I demonstrate, *That a secret dislike of the principal mysteries of the gospel, is the original and cause of most of the degeneracies, backslidings, and apostasies, that are found amongst professors in these latter days.*

Our apostle tells us, that the preaching of the cross was foolishness to them that perished, 1 Cor. i. 18, and they perished merely on that account. It was foolishness unto them: they liked not the mystery of it: they saw no wisdom in it. And this was the case with respect both to Jews and to Gentiles, as is manifest in that place.

To confirm this, I shall instance in some of the principal heads of the doctrine of the gospel, and show how unbelief prevails with men to dislike them, to reject them, and to look on them as folly.

And the first is this:

That Jesus of Nazareth, poor and contemptible as he was in the world, generally esteemed by the men of those days wherein he lived, to be a seducer, a glutton, a blasphemer, a turbulent person, hated of God and man, being taken as a thief, and hanged upon a tree, and so slain by the consent of the world, Jews and Gentiles, as a malefactor, was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and is both Lord and Christ.

This is the beginning of the gospel, which the apostle preached to the Jews and Gentiles, Acts ii. 22—24, ‘Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up.’ That is, this Jesus of Nazareth whom we preach; whom you remember well enough, who was among you but the other day, and preached unto you, and wrought signs and miracles among you; and you may further remember him by an infallible token; for, with wicked hands you crucified and slew him. Well! and what of this Jesus whom we slew and crucified? Why, saith the apostle, *ασφαλως γινωσκετω*, ‘Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ,’ ver. 36. Him, who is that, an appearance of the eternal Word? A dispensation of grace appearing in him; the sight of God in man? No, no, but *τουτον τον Ιησουν ον υμεις εσταυρωσατε*, ‘that same Jesus whom ye crucified.’ That same man whom, about eight weeks ago, you crucified; him hath he made both Lord and Christ; or in his resurrection and exaltation declared so to

be. And this the Holy Ghost lays a sure foundation of, in his expression of incarnation and birth. The angel tells Mary his mother, *συλληψη εν γαστρι, και τεξη υιον*, Luke i. 31, 'Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bear a Son,' conceive him by the power of the Most High, and bear him after the manner of women. And then, ver. 35, *το γεννωμενον αγιον*, 'That holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.' That holy thing was the child which she conceived, afterwards called Jesus of Nazareth. And it was termed a holy thing, because it was *ανυποστατον*, not a person of itself, as conceived by her; had not a personal subsistence in, by, and of itself, but subsisted in the person of the Son of God, on which account it was called the Son of God. And when he was born, the angel tells the shepherds, that that day was born 'the Saviour, Christ the Lord,' Luke ii. 11, who he tells them in the next verse was *βρεφος εσπαργανωμενον, και κειμενον εν τη φατινη*, 'the infant that was wrapt in swaddling clouts, and placed in the manger.' To this purpose do the apostles declare themselves again, Acts iii. 13—15. 'The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go: but ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead.' Still they direct them to the man whom they saw, and knew, and dealt wickedly and injuriously withal. And this man, he tells them, this Christ, must be received in the heavens, until the restitution of all things, when he shall come again, ver. 19—21. So himself lays this as the foundation of all his preaching, John viii. 24, 'If,' saith he, 'ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;' that I, Jesus of Nazareth, that speak unto you, and converse with you, am the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, you shall die and perish for evermore. This I say is one, and one of the first fundamental principles of the gospel; and I shall a little manifest how unbelief dislikes this principle, and by that dislike prevails with men unto an apostasy from the gospel itself.

I might insist upon the great instance hereof in the nation of the Jews, unto whom he was sent first, and in an especial manner; but I have done this at large in the first part of our prolegomena unto this work, whereunto I refer the reader. Only we may mind how this was fore-expressed concerning them by the prophet, Isa. liii. 2, 'He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.' They could not see or discern any thing in him, for which they should receive him, or believe in him, as to the end for which he was sent of God. As Hiram, king of Tyre, when he saw the cities which Solomon had given him, they displeased him, and he called them Cabul, and so he rejected them, 1 Kings ix. 13. So did the Jews when they came to see the Lord Christ, they were displeased with him, and reproaching him with many opprobrious terms, utterly rejected him; under the power of which unbelief, they yet reject him. I might also insist on the Pagans of old, who derided the crucified God of the Christians. But

I will leave them under the conquest which the gospel obtained against them. Mention also might be made of the Gnostics, and other ancient heretics, with their endless genealogies and fables, making him to be only an appearance of a man; and though himself said he was a man, and his friends said he was a man, and God himself said he was a man, and that he sent forth his Son, 'made of a woman, made under the law,' though he lived and died a man, yet they would not acknowledge him so to be. But these are long since gone off the stage, although we have yet to do with their offspring, under several forms and shapes. The popish figment also of transubstantiation, springing from the same root, utterly overthrowing the human nature of Christ, and our salvation wrought therein, might be on this account remarked. And so also might the imagination of the Mennonites, who will not grant that the man of whom we speak, took flesh of the substance of the virgin, but that his flesh was spiritual, as they speak, brought from heaven, and only passing through the womb of the virgin, that he might appear to be a man. And so said some of old; concerning whom Tertullian says, that according to their opinion, *Maria non filium gestabat in utero, sed hospitem*; 'Mary bare not her son in her womb, but a guest?' For they utterly dislike it, that one partaker of flesh and blood like ourselves, should be this Son of God. And therefore this figment which overthrows the covenant of God with Abraham, and all the promises of the Messiah, that he should be of his seed, and of the seed of David, at once rejecting the whole Old Testament, and turning the stories of the genealogy of Christ, recorded to manifest the faithfulness of God in his promises, into fables, must be exalted in the room and place of that truth which is so fully, so frequently asserted in the gospel, and which is the prime foundation of all our profession. All these oppositions unto, and apostasies from, the gospel, sprang from this especial cause; or the dislike of unbelief against this principle of its mystery and doctrine. But I shall particularly instance in two sorts of persons, that are of nearer concernment unto us than any of these.

And the first is of them whom they call Quakers. It is strange to think into how many forms and shapes they have turned themselves to darken the counsel of God in this matter, and to hide their own apprehension from the light. At their beginning in the world, they made (many of them) no scruple plainly to affirm, that all that is spoken concerning Christ, was a mere dispensation of God, and an appearance of the light; but as for such a man as we have described, they had no regard of him. This at first served their turns, and they intended no more by Christ, but that which they call the light of God within them. But what shall we say unto these things? If all the testimonies that we have given unto the man Christ Jesus, if all that is spoken of him in the gospel, all that he did, all that he suffered, all that he now doth in heaven by intercession, what he shall do at the day of judgment, all that is required of us towards him, in faith, love, and obedience, be not enough to prove him a real individual man, we may certainly be all of us in a mistake as to what we ourselves are in this world, we may all be dispensations, who have hitherto taken our-

selves to be the sons and daughters of men. But it is somewhat since they seem to have forsaken this imagination, being driven from it by the common expostulations of every ordinary Christian. What do you think of Jesus that died at Jerusalem? They have begun in words to acknowledge his person, but yet continue strangely to obscure their thoughts concerning him, and to confound it or the presence of God in and with him, with their own pretended light. And whence doth this arise? It is merely from the secret dislike that unbelief hath of this mystery of God. Hence they cannot see that form and comeliness in him, for which he should be desired.

Again, Others there are who grant, that all we have spoken concerning the human nature of Christ is true. That he was so born, that he so died, that he was so a man as we have declared. And this man, say they, was justly called and is so, the Son of God, because God employed and exalted him unto all power in heaven and earth. But that he should be the eternal Son of God, that the eternal Word should be made flesh; that a divine person should receive the human nature into subsistence with itself, this they utterly reject. This is the way of the Socinians. The testimonies being so many, so plain, so uncontrollable, that are given in the Scripture unto this truth, what is it that can carry men to advance a contradiction unto them, to their own ruin? Why, unbelief doth not like this mystery of God manifested in the flesh; this insensibly alienates the soul from it; and what men pretend to receive by the conduct of reason and argument, is, indeed, nothing but prejudice imposed on their minds by the power of unbelief.

Secondly. Another main fundamental principle of the gospel is, that by the obedience unto God, death, and blood-shedding of this same Jesus, who was crucified and slain, is redemption, forgiveness of sins, deliverance from the wrath to come, righteousness and acceptance with God to be obtained, and by him only.

The other proposition respected the person of Christ, this doth his mediation; and this in the second place was insisted on in the first preaching of the gospel. That this was the sum of the doctrine of the Scriptures concerning him, himself taught his disciples, Luke xxiv. 45—47, 'Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.' And this the apostles jointly express, exclusively unto all other mediums as to the end proposed. Acts iv. 12, 'There is no salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved.'

The great inquiry of men in the world, convinced of an immortal condition, is that which we have expressed, Acts xvi. 30, 'What must we do to be saved?' This lies in their thoughts, more or less, all their days, and is rolled in their hearts under that severe notion, Isa. xxxiii. 14, 'Who among us shall dwell with that devouring fire? Who amongst us shall inhabit with everlasting burnings?' And of this inquiry there are two parts.



1. How they may obtain forgiveness of sin; Micah vi. 6, 'Where-with shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, and calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' When a real sense of the guilt of sin is by any means brought upon the soul, it is vehement and urgent, and will give them in whom it is, no rest until they can fix on some way of relief.

2. What they shall do for a righteousness, upon the account whereof they may obtain acceptance with God. For it is not enough that men be one way or other acquitted from sin, but they must be made righteous also. In this case the Jews sought for righteousness, as it were by the works of the law, Rom. ix. 32. For a righteousness they knew they must have, and being ignorant of the righteousness of God, they went about to establish their own righteousness, Rom. x. 3.

Now this head of the gospel that we mentioned, is a direct answer unto these two questions. For, in answer unto the first, it declares, that by this Jesus Christ alone, is forgiveness and remission of sins to be obtained. 'In him we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins, Eph. i. 7. See Heb. ix. 12—14. This was, as the apostle declares, the design of God the Father, Rom. iii. 24, 25; and his own love and good-will, Rev. i. 5. And this the apostles preached, *ἐν πρώτοις*, 'amongst the chiefest things' of their message to the world, 1 Cor. xv. 3. And to the second it answers, that by the obedience and sufferings of Christ alone, is the righteousness inquired after, to be obtained, for by this obedience, the obedience of one, are many made righteous, Rom. v. 19. For not only by him is preached unto us the forgiveness of sins, but by him all that believe are justified, Acts xiii. 38, 39. See Phil. iii. 8, 9; 1 Cor. i. 30.

This is another important part of the mystery of the gospel, and that which unbelief greatly dislikes; that is, it is apt to beget in the soul a dislike of it. And a great instance we have in the world of its power and efficacy to draw men off from the gospel. For unbelief in this matter is the real foundation of the whole papacy. They cannot rest in Christ alone for righteousness and forgiveness of sins. Hence hath sprung their sacrifice of the mass for the quick and dead; hence their indulgences from the treasures of the church; hence their penances and works satisfactory for sin; hence their purgatory, religious houses, pilgrimages, intercession of saints and angels, confessions and absolutions, with the remainder of their abominations. All these things spring from no other root but this; namely, that from the power of their unbelief, men think it a foolish thing to look for pardon and righteousness solely from another, and not to trust to themselves in any thing. And the reason why they have multiplied instances to the same purpose is, because they can indeed find rest and satisfaction in none other, and do therefore please and deceive their souls with this variety. And what is it that hath driven a company of poor deluded souls amongst ourselves, to trust unto a fancied light

within them, and a feigned perfection in their ways? They cannot think it wise, prudent, safe, they like it not, to rest, to trust for their all upon one who lived and died so long ago. Men make sundry pretences, use divers arguings and pleas for their turning aside unto their crooked paths, endeavour by all means possible to justify themselves; but the bottom of all lies here, that this doctrine of the cross is foolishness unto them; and they are under the power of their unbelief which dislikes the mysteries of it.

Thirdly. Another principle of the same mystery is, That the way and means whereby forgiveness of sin, righteousness, and acceptance with God for sinners is obtained by this Jesus Christ, is, that by the sacrifice of himself, his death and blood-shedding, with the punishment for sin, which he voluntarily underwent, God was atoned, his justice satisfied, and his law fulfilled: and that because he had ordered in his infinite wisdom and sovereignty, with the will and consent of Christ himself, to charge all the sins of all the elect upon him, and to accept of his obedience for them, he undertaking to be their surety and Redeemer.—To clear this principle, the gospel teacheth,

(1.) That notwithstanding all that was visibly done to Jesus, by the Jews and others, yet the hand and counsel of God was in the whole business, designing him thereunto. See Acts ii. 22, 23; Rom. iii. 25.

(2.) That his own merciful and gracious goodness concurred herein. Although the Jews seemed to hale him up and down as a malefactor, and violently to slay him; yet if his own will had not been in the work, unto another end than what they had in design, they had had no power over him, John x. 18. But he came on set purpose to lay down his life a ransom, Matt. xx. 28, and to offer himself a sacrifice for sinners, which he performed accordingly, Eph. v. 2; Gal. ii. 20; Rev. i. 5; Heb. i. 3.

(3.) That the end of all this, was that which we before laid down, namely, that 'he might be made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him,' 2 Cor. v. 21. So also, Gal. iii. 13; Isa. liii. 4—6, 10; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

And this principle also unbelief riseth up with great power and efficacy against in many; and that on sundry accounts: For,

1. That God should comply as it were, and have a hand in that work for any end of his, wherein Satan and men as wicked as ever the sun shone upon, did execute the fulness of their rage and villainy, and for which he afterwards utterly and miserably destroyed those murderers, is folly to some. Hence were a thousand fables raised of old about the passion of Christ. Some turned the whole story into an allegory; some said it was acted only in show and appearance, and not in reality and truth. Some, that he was conveyed away, and Barabbas crucified in his stead, with sundry other such foolish abominations.

2. Some of late refusing to see the wisdom, holiness, and righteousness of God in this matter, in bringing about his own counsels, and doing his own work, notwithstanding the interposition of the sins of

the worst of men, deny that God determined any thing herein; but left it wholly unto the liberty of the Jews, on the determination of whose wills the whole work of salvation was suspended.

3. Some reject the whole matter itself. That the Just should suffer for the unjust; the innocent undergo the punishment due to the guilty; that one should sin and another suffer; that he whom God loved above all, should undergo his wrath for them and their deliverance, whom he had grounds of righteousness to hate and destroy, is a foolish thing unto them. This all the Socinians in the world despise. And it is rejected by the Quakers amongst ourselves, and variously corrupted by the Papists and others. And there is none of all these, but will plead reasons and arguments for their opinions. But this that we insist on, is the true and real ground of their miscarriages. They are under the power of that unbelief, which exerts itself by a dislike of the mysteries of the gospel. Pretend what they will, it is unbelief alone that is the cause of their apostasy. I might instance in other principles of the like nature and importance, but I should dwell too long on this digression.

Thirdly. Unbelief works by, and consists in, a growing diffidence of the promises and threatenings of the gospel. The great work and duty of faith is to influence the soul unto universal obedience, and an abstinence from all sin, out of a regard unto the promises and threatenings of God. So our apostle directs in 2 Cor. vii. 1. And when the efficacy of this influence begins to wear off and decay, it is from the prevalency of unbelief. And there are many ways whereby it works and produceth this effect, to take off the soul from a due regard to the promises and threatenings of the gospel. A sense, liking, love of, and satisfaction in present things, with carnal wisdom, arising from an observation of strange promiscuous events in the world, give a principal contribution hereunto; but these things are not here to be insisted on.

And these things have been spoken, to discover the nature and the work of that unbelief which the apostle here warns and cautions all professors concerning; and we have especially considered it as to its entrance towards a departure from God. And hence we may observe, that,

Obs. IV. The root of all backsliding, of all apostasy, whether it be notional or practical, gradual or total, lies in unbelief.

I have dwelt long already on this matter of unbelief; and I had reason so to do; for this is the hinge on which the discourses of the apostle in this chapter and the next do turn. The nature of it, with its causes, ways, and means of prevalency, with its danger and means of prevention are the things which he lays before them. But I shall confine my discourse within due bounds; and therefore speak unto this proposition only, with reference unto that influence which unbelief hath on the heart to render it evil. Take heed lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief. *Καρδια πονηρα*, cor malum. This is the only place in the New Testament, where a disapproved heart hath this adjunct of evil; an evil heart, that is in other places termed *σκληρος*, hard; and *μετανοητος*, impenitent, Rom. ii. 5, but here



only evil. In the Old Testament it is sometimes said to be  $\gamma\rho$ , evil; as Jer. iii. 17, vii. 24, xi. 8, xvi. 12, xviii. 12. This the LXX. renders by  $\piονηρος$ ; that is, malus, perversus, scelestus, improbus, one that is wicked and flagitious. The original of the word would denote one that is industriously wicked; for it is from  $\piενω$ , by  $\piονεω$ ; to labour diligently, and with industry, though conflicting with difficulties. Hence the Devil, because he is industriously and maliciously wicked, is called  $\delta \piονηρος$ , the wicked one: 'when any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh  $\delta \piονηρος$ , the wicked one,' Matt. xiii. 19. So are we taught to pray:  $\rho\upsilonσαι \eta\mu\alpha\varsigma \alphaπο \tauου \piονηρου$ , Matt. vi. 13, 'deliver, or rescue us from that evil one.' And it is said, that the whole world lieth  $\epsilonν τω \piονηρω$ , 1 John v. 19, under the power of that wicked one.' When therefore any heart is said to be  $\piονηρα$ , an evil, wicked, flagitious frame is intended.

Our present inquiry is only how the heart is gradually brought under this denomination by the power and efficacy of unbelief; and that with especial respect unto that particular sin of departing from God. And this is done several ways.

First. Unbelief sets all the corrupt lusts and affections of the heart at liberty, to act according to their own perverse nature and inclination. The heart of man is by nature evil; all the thoughts and imaginations of it are only evil continually, Gen. vi. 5. It is full of all corrupt affections which exert themselves, and influence men in all they do. The gospel cometh in a direct opposition unto those lusts and corrupt affections, both in the root and the fruit of them. For this grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto us, teaching us that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. ii. 11, 13. There is no greater duty that it chargeth our souls withal, than the mortification, crucifying, and destruction of them, and this indispensably, if we intend to be made partakers of the promises of it, Col. iii. 5—8; Rom. viii. 13. Moreover, it is the first proper work of that faith whereby we believe the gospel in and upon our own souls, to cleanse them from these lusts and affections. It is the work of faith to purify the heart, being the great work or instrument whereby God is pleased to effect it; 'purifying our hearts by faith,' Acts xv. 9. For receiving the promises, it teacheth, persuadeth, and enables us to cleanse ourselves from all uncleannesses of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1. Now these two, faith and the gospel, make up our profession; the one being that wherewith or whereby we profess, the other that which we do profess. And they both concur in this design, namely the purifying of the heart. So far as these prevail upon us or in us, this work is useful. And where there is no weakening of the lusts of the heart, no restraint laid upon them, no resistance made unto them, there is no profession at all, there is nothing of faith or gospel, that takes place. 'For they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts,' Gal. v. 24. They have done so actually in some measure or degree. All then who have taken upon them the profession of the gospel in reality, although it be only upon the account of light and



conviction, have restrained, and have curbed them, and taken upon themselves a law of resistance unto them. Hence all of them proceed so far at least, as 'to escape the pollutions that are in the world, through the knowledge of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ,' 2 Pet. ii. 20. Those who attain not hereunto, are in no sense to be esteemed such as profess the gospel. But now wherever unbelief beginneth to influence the heart towards the frame described, it sets in the first place these corrupt lusts and affections at liberty to exert themselves according to their own nature. And this it doth two ways.

1. With respect unto the gospel, and its efficacy for the mortification of them. For it takes off, weakens, and disarms those considerations which the gospel tenders unto the souls of men for that end. The way and means whereby the gospel of itself worketh towards the mortification of the lusts of the heart, is by proposing its promises and threatenings unto the minds of men. These work morally upon them, for the consideration of them causeth men to set themselves against all those things which may cause them to come short of the one, or make them obnoxious unto the other, 2 Cor. vii. 1. Now all influence upon the soul unto this end from hence is intercepted by unbelief. Its proper nature and work lies in begetting a disregard of gospel promises and threatenings, through a diffidence of them. And hereof we have examples every day. Men are in a constant way wrought upon by the preaching of the word; that is, their minds are influenced by a taste of the good things proposed and promised in it, and are brought under a sense of the terror of the Lord in its threatenings. The first proper effect hereof in themselves is the resistance of their lusts, and the reformation of their lives thereon. But we see that many of these, losing through unbelief a sense of that impression that was on them from the word, have all their lusts let loose unto rage and violence, and so return again with the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire, as 2 Pet. ii. 22.

2. With respect unto faith itself. This is evident from the nature of the thing. For where unbelief thrives or grows, there faith must decay and wax weak. But especially it impedes and hinders faith in the work before described, by depriving it of the means and instruments whereby it works, which are care, watchfulness or vigilance against sin. For its great design lies in making the soul negligent, careless, and slothful in the opposition to sin. Where this is attained the whole work of faith is defeated, and lust is set at liberty. And where this is so, it immediately returns to act according to its own corrupt and perverse nature, which, as we have elsewhere at large declared, is enmity against God. And this consists both in an aversion from God, and an opposition unto him. Look then whatever approaches a man, in his profession, hath made towards God, the work of these lusts and corruptions now at liberty, is to incline him to withdraw and depart from them. This renders the heart evil, and disposeth it unto an utter departure from the living God.

Secondly. It renders the heart evil by debasing it, and casting all good, honest, ingenuous, and noble principles out of it. The gospel

furnisheth the mind of man with the best and highest principles towards God and man, that in this world it is susceptible of. This might be easily evinced against all the false and foolish pretences of the old philosophy, or present atheism of the world. Whatever there is of faith, love, submission, or conformity to God, that may ingenerate a return into that image and likeness of him, which we fell from by sin and apostasy; whatever is of innocence, righteousness, truth, patience, forbearance, that may render us fruitful in, or needful unto the community of mankind; whatever is pure, comely, peaceable, praiseworthy, in a man's own soul, and in the retirements of his mind, is all proposed, taught, and exhibited by the word of the gospel. Now, principles of this nature do in a lively manner, ennoble the soul, and render it good and honourable. But the work of unbelief is to cast them all out, at least as to their especial nature communicated unto them by the gospel, which alone brings with it an impression of the image and likeness of God. And when this is separated from any of the things before mentioned, they are of no value. This then renders the heart base and evil, and gives it an utter dislike of communion or intercourse with God.

Thirdly. It burdens the heart with a dreadful guilt of ingratitude against God, which before profession it was incapable of. When a person hath been brought unto the knowledge of the gospel, and thereby vindicated out of darkness, and delivered from the sensuality of the world, and hath moreover, it may be, tasted of the good word of God, and of the power of the world to come, for such a one to draw back, to forsake the Lord and his ways, through the power of unbelief, there is a great aggravation attending his sin, 2 Pet. ii. 1. And when once the heart is deflowered by this horrible sin of ingratitude, it will prostitute itself of its own accord unto all manner of abominations. And for us, it is good to have this spring of all our danger in the course of our profession, continually in our eye. Here it lies, the root of it is here laid open; and if it be not continually watched against, all our other endeavours to persevere blameless unto the end, are, and will be vain.

The next thing in the words, is that especial evil which the apostle cautions the Hebrews against; as that which a heart made evil by the prevalency of unbelief would tend unto, and which is like to ensue, if not prevented in the causes of it; and that is, departing from the living God, *εν τῷ αποστηναι απο Θεου ζωντος*.

*Εν τῷ*; that is, say some, *εις το*; the sense whereof would be, 'So that you should depart.' But *εν τῷ* is more significant, and no less proper in this language. And the article thus varied with the infinitive mood denotes a continued act, that it should be departing, that the evil heart should work and operate in a course of departing from God.

*Εν τῷ αποστηναι*. *Αφιστημι* is a word, *εκ των μεσων*, of an indifferent signification in itself, and is used to express any kind of departure, physical or moral, from a person or thing, a place or a principle. Sometimes it is expressive of a duty, 2 Tim. ii. 19. Whosoever nameth the name of Christ, *αποστητω απο αδικιας*, 'let him depart

from iniquity.' So also, 1 Tim. vi. 5. Sometimes it denotes the highest sin, 1 Tim. iv. 1. The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter season, *αποστήσονται τινες της πιστεως*, 'that some shall depart from the faith.' And the departure here prophesied of, is signally termed, *ἡ αποστασια*, 'the departure or apostasy,' 2 Thess. ii. 3; so that the word is to be expounded from the subject-matter treated of, and the especial object of it. And it is a word in its moral sense oftener used by our apostle, than all the other sacred writers besides. Once in the gospel it is used absolutely for a sinful falling away, Luke viii. 13. They believe for a season: *και εν καιρω πειρασμου αφιστανται*, 'In the time of persecution they fall away,' they turn apostates. And from this word are the common names of apostates and apostasy taken; that is, the great sin of forsaking or departing from the profession of the gospel. In discedendo, say interpreters: Beza, In deciscendo, properly. It is in an evil sense, 'a revolting, a treacherous defection from truth and duty.' It answers unto *סור*, which is used in an indifferent sense to depart from any thing good or evil, and sometimes is applied unto a perverse departure from God; as Hosea vii. 14. And in this especial sense it expresseth *סור*, which is to be perverse, stubborn, and contumacious in turning away from God, or that which is good and right in any kind, so as to include a rebellion in it, as the departure he intended doth; that is, to revolt.

The object of this departure is by our apostle, in this place, particularly expressed, *απο Θεου ζωντος*, 'from the living God.' It is plain that it is apostasy from the profession of the gospel which is intended; and we must inquire into the reasons why the apostle doth thus peculiarly express it by a departure from the living God. I shall propose those which to me seem most natural.

First. It may be that these Hebrews thought nothing less than that their departure from the profession of the gospel was a departure from the living God. Probably they rather pretended and pleaded that they were returning to him. For they did not fall off unto idols or idolatry, but returned to observe, as they thought, the institutions of the living God; and for a relinquishment whereof, the blaspheming and persecuting part of them traduced our apostle himself as an apostate, Acts xxi. 28. To obviate this apprehension in them, and that they might not thereby countenance themselves in their defection, which men are apt to do with various pretences, the apostle lets them know that after the revelation of Christ and profession of him, there is no departure from him and his institutions, but that men do withal depart from the living God. So John positively declares on the one hand and the other, 2 John 9. 'Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God; but he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.' In a recession from the gospel or doctrine of Christ, God himself is forsaken. He that hath not the Son, he hath not the Father; as on the other side, continuance in the doctrine of the gospel secureth us an interest not in the Son only, but in the Father also. He then that rejects Christ in the gospel, let him pretend what he will of adhering unto one God, he



hath forsaken the living God, and cleaves unto an idol of his own heart. For neither is the Father without the Son, nor is he a God unto us but in and by him.

Secondly. It may be he would mind them of the person and nature of him from whom he would prevent their departure; namely, that however in respect of his office, and as he was incarnate, he was our Mediator, our Apostle and High Priest, yet in his own divine person he was one with his Father and the blessed Spirit, the living God.

Thirdly. (which either alone, or in concurrence with these other reasons, is certainly in the words.) That he might deter them from the sin he cautions them against, by the pernicious event and consequent of it. And this is, that therein they would depart from him who is the great, terrible, and dreadful God, the living God who is able to punish and revenge their sin, and that to all eternity. And this appears to be in the words, in that he again insists on the same argument afterwards. For, to the same purpose, he tells them that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, ch. x. 31. And as this property of life, as it is in God essentially and casually, whence he is called the living God, is exceedingly and eminently accommodated to encourage us unto faith, trust, confidence, and affiance in him, in all straits and difficulties, whilst we are in the way of our duty as the apostle declares, 1 Tim. iv. 10, 'For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God;' or, this is that which encourageth us unto, and supporteth us in all our labourings and sufferings, namely, because he whom we trust in, from whom we expect assistance here, and a reward hereafter, is the living God; so it is that which deservedly casts the greatest awe and terror upon the minds of men in their sins and rebellion against him. For as this life of God includes in it the notions and considerations of all those properties which hold out encouragements unto us in things present and to come; so it doth also that of those dreadful attributes of his power, holiness, and eternity, which sinners have reason to bethink themselves of, in their provocations of him. Thus he frequently prefaceth expressions of his severity against stubborn sinners, with *אני חי*, 'I live, saith the Lord;' as it were bidding of them to consider what thence they were to expect. And this seems to me the principal reason why the apostle thus states the sin of their apostasy, that it is a departure from the living God.

Fourthly. He may also so express it, at once to intimate unto them the greatness and folly of their sin. They thought, it may be, it was but the leaving of these or those observances of the gospel; but, saith he, it is a departure, a flagitious defection and revolt from the living God. And who knows not this to be the greatest sin and highest folly imaginable? To depart from him who will be so great a reward unto them that obey him, and so severe a judge of them that forsake him; what greater guilt or folly is the nature of man capable of?

And this is the evil which the apostle here cautions professors against, which I have insisted on the longer, because it is directly opposite unto that great duty which it is the general design of the



Epistle to press them unto. And we shall take such observations from this last clause of the verse, as the words and the reasons of using them do present unto us. And the first is, that,

Obs. V. The malignity and venom of sin, is apt to hide itself under many, under any shades and pretences.—I speak not of the evasions and pretexts wherewith men endeavour to cover or countenance themselves in their miscarriages in the world, and unto others, but of those pleas and pretences which they will admit of in their own minds; partly to induce their wills and affections unto sin, and partly to relieve and countenance their consciences under sin. Amongst those reasonings which these Hebrews had in themselves about a relinquishment of the gospel and its institutions, they never considered it as an apostasy from the living God. They looked upon it, as a peculiar way of worship, attended with difficulties and persecutions, in the omission of which, perhaps, they might please God as well. By this means did they hide from themselves that mortal malignity and poison that was in their sin. And so it is in every sin. The subtlety and deceit of lust, doth still strive to conceal the true and proper nature of sin whereunto it enticeth, or is enticed. When Naaman, the Syrian, would, notwithstanding his conviction, abide in his idol worship, because of his secular advantage, it is but a going with his master into the house of Rimmon, and bowing there; not that he intended to have any other God but the God of Israel, 2 Kings v. 18. So long ago had he practically learned that principle which men had not, until of late, the impudence doctrinally to advance in the world; namely, that an arbitrary rectifying of men's intentions alters the nature of their moral and spiritual actions. Hence they say, that if one man kill another, not with an intention to kill him, but to vindicate his own honour by his so doing, it is no sin, or at least no great sin, or much to be regarded. And what is this but directly to comply with the deceitfulness of sin, which we have laid down. For none surely is so flagitiously wicked, as to make the formal nature of sin their object and end. Nor, it may be, is human nature capable of such an excess and exorbitancy from itself, and its concreated principles. But still some other end is proposed by a corrupt design and incitation of the mind, which is a blind unto its wickedness. But of this deceit of sin, I have treated at large in another discourse. Therefore,

Obs. VI. The best way to antidote the soul against sin, is to represent it unto the mind in its true nature and tendency.—The hiding of these was the way and means whereby sin first entered into the world. Thereby did Satan draw our first parents into their transgression. Hiding from them the nature and end of their sin, he ensnared and seduced them. In the same way and method doth he still proceed. This caused our apostle here to rend off the covering and vain pretences, which the Hebrews were ready to put upon their relinquishment of the gospel. He presents it here naked unto them, as a fatal defection and apostasy from the living God; and therein gives them also to understand its end, which was no other but the casting of themselves into his revenging hand unto

eternity. So dealt Samuel with Saul, in the matter. Saul pretended that he had only brought fat cattle for sacrifice. Samuel lets him know, that there was rebellion in his doing, which was abhorred of God like the sin of witchcraft. Indeed, if not a principal efficacy of temptation consists in hiding the nature and tendency of sin, whilst the mind is exercised with it. And therefore the discovery and due consideration of these must needs be an effectual means to counterwork it, and to obviate its prevalency. And this is the principal design of the Scripture in all that it treats about sin. It establisheth the command against it, by showing what it is, the iniquity, folly, and perversity of it; as also what is its end, or what in the righteousness of God it will bring the sinner unto. Hence the great contest that is in the mind, when it is hurried up and down with any temptation, is whether it shall fix itself on these right considerations of sin, or suffer itself at the present to be carried away with the vain pleas of its temptation in its attempt to palliate and cover it.

And on this contest depends the final issue of the matter. If the mind keep up itself unto the true notion of the nature and end of sin, through the strength of grace its temptation will probably be evaded and disappointed. So it was with Joseph. Various suggestions he had made to him, but he keeps his mind fixed on that, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?'—which preserved him and delivered him, Gen. xxxix. 9. But if the mind be prevailed with to admit of those representations of sin, which are made unto it in its temptations, sin in the perpetration of it will ensue. And this is the principal part of our wisdom about sin and temptations; namely, that we always keep our minds possessed with that notion and sense of the nature and end of sin, which God in his word represents unto us, with a complete watchfulness against that which the deceit of lust and the crafts of Satan would suggest. Again,

Obs. VII. Whoever departs from the observance of the gospel and the institutions thereof, doth in so doing depart from the living God; or, an apostate from the gospel, is an absolute apostate from God.—This the apostle expressly teacheth the Hebrews in this place. Men think it almost a matter of nothing to play with gospel institutions at their pleasure. They can observe them, or omit them as seems good unto themselves; nay, some suppose they may utterly relinquish any regard unto them, without the least forfeiture of the favour of God. But this will appear to be otherwise. For,

First. In their so doing, the authority of God over their souls and consciences is utterly rejected, and so consequently is God himself. For where his authority is not owned, his being is despised. Now there are various ways whereby God puts forth and manifests his authority over men. He doth it in and by his works, by his law, by the consciences, or inbred notions of the minds of men. Every way whereby he reveals himself, he also makes known his sovereign authority over us. For sovereign power or authority is the very first notion that a creature can have of its Creator. Now all these ways of revealing the authority of God, are recapitulated in the gospel; God having brought 'all things unto an head in Christ Jesus,' Eph. i.

τ.υ. 'All power in heaven and earth,' that is, as to the actual administration of it, is given into his hand, Mat. xxviii. 18. And he is given or appointed to be head over all things, Eph. i. 20—22; as we have at large declared on the third verse of the first chapter. God therefore doth not put forth, nor exercise the least of his power, but in and by Christ. 'For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,' John v. 22. Now the Lord Christ exerciseth this power and authority principally by the gospel, which is the rod of his power, Ps. cx. 2. Hereunto then are reduced all other ways whatever, whereby the authority of God is exerted over the souls and consciences of men. And if this be rejected, the whole authority of God is utterly cast off. This therefore is done by all who reject, relinquish, or despise the gospel; they forsake God himself, the living God, and that absolutely and utterly. God is not owned where his monarchy is not owned. Let men deal so with their rulers, and try how it will be interpreted. Let them pretend they acknowledge them, but reject the only way, all the ways they have for the exercise of their authority, and it will doubtless be esteemed a revolt from them.

Secondly. There is no other way or means whereby men may yield any obedience or worship unto God, but only by the gospel; and so no other way whereby men may express their subjection unto him, or dependence upon him. And where this is not done, he is necessarily forsaken. Whatever men may say or do, or pretend as to the worship of God, if it be not in and by the name of Christ, if it be not appointed and revealed in the gospel, it is not performed unto the living God, but to an idol of their own hearts; for the only true God, is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore by what act or acts soever men may design to give honour unto God, and to own their dependence on him, if it be not done in Christ according to the gospel, it is all an abomination unto him. He says of all such worship, as he did of the sacrifices of the Israelites, when their hearts went after their idols, Amos v. 26, 'It is all to Moloch and Chiun, and not to him.' Such, I say, is all the worship that men design to offer unto the living God, but not according to the gospel. Such was the worship of the Samaritans of old, as our Saviour testified; and such is the worship of the Jews and Mahometans at present. Their pretence of owning one God, will not free them from offering their sacred services to Moloch and Chiun, images and stars of gods which they have framed unto themselves. When therefore any depart from the gospel, they depart from the living God, because they have no way left unto them whereby they may glorify him as God, and he that doth not so, renounceth him. And therefore our apostle speaking of those Heathens who had those notions of one God, which some boast of at this day, and choose to rest in, affirms plainly that they were, *αθεοι εν τω κοσμω*, Eph. ii. 12, 'Atheists whilst they were in the world.' They knew not how to glorify God by any acceptable worship; and it is as good not to own God at all, as not to glorify him as God. For after God in the first precept hath required that we should have him for our God, and none else; that we may do so, and know how



to do so, he required in the second, with the same authority, that we worship and glorify him according to his own mind and prescription.

Thirdly. There is no other way whereby we may obtain the least encouraging intimation of the favour or good will of God towards us; no way whereby his grace or his acceptance of us may be firmed and assured unto us, but this only. And where there is not a sufficient ground hereof, no man can abide with God in a due manner. If men have not a stable foundation to apprehend God to be good and gracious and willing to receive them, they will no otherwise respect or esteem him, but as the poor Indians do the Devil, whom they worship that he may do them no harm. I do know that men have strange presumptions concerning the goodness and inclination of God to sinners, and according unto them they pretend highly to love God, and delight in him, without respect unto the Lord Christ or the gospel. But it were an easy thing, to divest their notions of all those swelling words of vanity wherewith they dress them, and manifest them to be mere presumptions, inconsistent with the nature of God, and all the revelation that he hath made of himself. Whatever may be apprehended in God of this nature, or to this purpose, is either his *χρηστοτης*, his natural goodness, kindness, benignity, and love; or his *φιλανθρωπια*, which includes all the free acts of his will towards mankind for good. And our apostle affirms that the *επιφανεια*, the revelation, declaration, and appearance of both these, is merely from and by the gospel, or the grace of God by Jesus Christ, Tit. iii. 4—7. And without this it is impossible, but that men will abide in their apostasy from God, or return unto it.

Fourthly. There is no other way wherein we may look for a reward from God, or hope to come unto the enjoyment of him, but only by the gospel. And this also is necessary that we may honour him as God, as the living God. This is the end whereunto we were made; and if we leave the pursuit hereof, we cast off all regard unto God. For if God be not considered as a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, as in himself an exceeding great reward; he is not considered as God. And whoever doth not pursue a design of coming to the enjoyment of God, he hath forsaken him. Now there is no direction herein, or hereunto, but the gospel, as Acts iv. 12.

And this will discover the great multitude of practical Atheists that are in the world. Many there are who have been educated in some observance of the gospel, and some who have been brought under great conviction by the word of it; who do yet by the power of their lusts and temptations in the world, come to renounce and despise all the institutions, ordinances, and worship of the gospel; and consequently the author of it himself. For it is a vain thing to pretend love or honour unto Christ, and not to keep his commandments. However they would not be reckoned among Atheists, for they still acknowledge One, or the one God. But they do herein but industriously deceive their own souls. Then they forsake the living God when they forsake the gospel of his Son.

And let us all know what care and reverence becomes us in the



things of the gospel. God is in them, even the living God. Otherwise he will be neither known nor worshipped. His name, his authority, his grace is enstamped on them all.

Obs. VIII. When a heart is made evil by unbelief, it is engaged in a course of sinful defection or revolt from the living God. So that word imports, *εν τῷ αποστηναι*; the sense whereof was explained before.

Ver. 13.—*But exhort one another (every day) daily, whilst it is called to-day, lest any (among you) of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*

Here lies one means of preventing the evil mentioned in the verse foregoing. And we have in it, as was shown, the duty itself, and the persons concerned in it, the manner and season of its performance, with a limitation of that season and an especial enforcement from the danger of its neglect, as we shall see in our opening of the words.

First. The duty intended is expressed in the first word *παρακαλεῖτε*. *Παρακαλεω* is to exhort, intreat, beseech, and also to comfort, to refresh, to relieve; and *παρακαλεομαι* is constantly to receive comfort or consolation, to be comforted: *παρακλησις* is used in the same variety, sometimes for comfort or consolation; as Luke ii. 25; Acts ix. 31, xv. 31; Rom. xv. 5; 2 Cor. i. 3—5. Sometimes for exhortation, Acts xiii. 15; Rom. xii. 8; 1 Tim. iv. 13; 2 Cor. viii. 17. Sometimes interpreters are at doubt whether to render it by exhortation or consolation, as Acts xv. 31; 1 Thess. iv. 18. In this very epistle it is used in both these senses; for consolation, chap. vi. 18, for exhortation, chap. xii. 5, xiii. 22. Hence the Holy Ghost, in the writings of John the apostle, is called *ὁ Παρακλητος* in the gospel, John xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 7. And the Lord Christ himself, 1 John ii. 1. And this from the ambiguity of the application of the word, we render in the first place a comforter, in the latter an advocate.

The first and principal signification of *παρακαλεω*, is to 'exhort,' to 'desire,' to 'call in,' and so it is constantly used in Greek authors, and scarce otherwise; and it is secondarily only to 'comfort.' But there is a near affinity between these things. For the way of administering consolation is by exhortation; 1 Thess. iv. 18. 'Comfort one another with these words,' *παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους*, that is, exhorting and persuading one another, by these words administer unto each other mutual consolation. And all exhortation ought to be only by consolatory words and ways, to render it acceptable, and so effectual. So it is observed of Barnabas, who was a son of consolation, that he had a great excellency in exhorting men also. Acts xi. 23, 24. 'When Barnabas came, and had seen the grace of God, he exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord; for he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.' The word intimates a very prevalent way of exhorting in Barnabas; and that because he was *ανηρ αγαθος*, a good man; not in the ordinary sense, a holy just man; but one that was benign, kind, condescending, apt to comfort and refresh them with whom he had to do. In this sense is *ανηρ αγαθος* used Rom. v. 7.; *παρακαλειν* therefore, 'to exhort,' is

to persuade with good, meek, and comfortable words upon grounds of consolation and unto that end that men may be comforted. This is incumbent on some by virtue of office, Rom. xii. 8. 'He that exhorteth, on exhortation;' and on all believers as occasion doth require: as the next word manifests, declaring the persons concerned in this duty.

ἑαυτοὺς vosmetipsos; Vulg. Lat. and the Rhemist, 'yourselves;' improperly: for the apostle doth not require of every one to exhort himself, nor will the word bear that sense. But ἑαυτοὺς, yourselves is put for ἀλλήλους, that is, one another; as also it is Col. iii. 16; Eph. iv. 32; 1. Thess. v. 13. Vos invicem; alii alios. This is incumbent on all believers, mutually to exhort, and to bear the word of exhortation.

The season of the performance of this duty is adjoined, which includeth also the manner of it, καθ' ἑκαστην ἡμέραν, 'daily,' say we, or every day. A day is often taken for a season. So that to do a thing daily, is to do it in its season. To do it sedulously, heedfully, in every proper season, is to do it daily. For although the expression denote every day distinctly and separately, yet the sense is not, that no natural day be omitted wherein we do not actually discharge this duty towards one another. But plainly two things are intended: First, a constant readiness of mind inclining, inducing, and preparing any one for the discharge of this duty. Secondly, an actual discharge of it, on all just occasions, which are to be watched for and willingly embraced. So we are commanded to pray, ἀδιαλείπτως 1 Thess. v. 17, incessantly; that is, without remitting the habitual inclination of the mind unto prayer; or omitting any meet occasion or opportunity for it. So also it is said that we ought παντοτε προσευχεσθαι, Luke xviii. 1, to pray always; which is interpreted, Col. iv. 1, by τη προσευχη προσκατεριτε, abide or persevere in prayer against all opposition. In Hebrew עֲמַד בְּלִי לְפָנָיו: as Isa. li. 13, continually, every day. Καθ' ἑκαστην ἡμέραν, is sedulously and constantly, both as to the frame of our hearts, and opportunities of actual performance of this duty. And this these Hebrews now stood in an especial need of, because of the manifold temptations and seductions wherewith they were exercised.

Hereunto is added a limitation of the season of this duty as to its continuance, ἀχρις οὗ το σημερον καλειται, 'whilst it is called to-day:' that is, be sedulous in the discharge of this duty whilst the season of it doth continue. The occasion of this expression is taken from what was before discoursed of. There was a day proposed unto the people of old; a season that was called יוֹם, or σημερον, 'to-day.' And two things are included in it. 1. An opportunity as to advantage. 2. A limitation of that opportunity as to duration or continuance. First, a day of opportunity is intended: the word in the psalm, יוֹם, had, as was judged on good ground, respect unto some solemn feast wherein the people assembled themselves to celebrate the worship of God; it may be the feast of tabernacles, which was a great representation of the dwelling of the Lord Christ amongst us, John i. 14. This was a season which they were to improve, whilst they did enjoy it. But it was typical only. The apostle now declares to these Hebrews, that

the great day, the great season of old shadowed out unto their forefathers, was now really and actually come upon them. It was justly called to-day with them whilst they enjoyed the gospel. Secondly, There is a limitation of this day of opportunity included in the words, "whilst it is called to-day:" whilst the time wherein you live is such a season as to be called a day, that is a day of grace, whilst that season was continued unto them which was prefigured in the day before mentioned. The apostle saw that the day or season of these Hebrews was almost ready to expire. It continued but a few years after the writing of this Epistle. This he secretly reminds them of; and withal exhorts them to improve their present advantages, and that especially in and unto the discharge of the great duty of mutual exhortation, that so they might prevent among them the great evil of departing from the living God, and that which tends thereunto in the hardening of their hearts through the deceitfulness of sin. For herein lies the enforcement of the exhortation unto the duty insisted on, namely, from the pernicious consequent of its neglect; wherein occurs,

First. The persons concerned, *τις ἐξ ὑμῶν*, 'any of you,' any among you; any one that is of your society, that is engaged in the same profession with you, and partaker of the same privileges; any of you believing Hebrews. And herein the apostle extends his direction unto mutual watchfulness and exhortation unto all, even the meanest of the church.

Secondly. The spring or cause of the evil that is to be feared in the neglect intimated, and that is sin, *ἁμαρτία*, חַטָּאת: a general name for all or any sin. Our apostle constantly useth it to express original sin, the sin of our nature, the root on which all other sins do grow. And this is the sin here intended; the sin that by nature dwelleth in us, that is present with us, when we would do good, to hinder us; and is continually working to put forth its venomous nature in actual sins or transgressions. This he calls elsewhere a root of bitterness, which springs up unto defilement, chap. xii. 15.

Thirdly. There is the way or means, whereby this sin worketh to produce the effect expressed, and that is by deceit. *Τῇ ἀπατῇ τῆς ἁμαρτίας*. Vulg. Lat. fallacia peccati; and the Rhemists thence, the fallacy of sin; somewhat improperly, considering the ordinary use of that word, being taken only for a caption or deceit in words. But yet there is a fallacy in every sin; it imposeth paralogisms, or false arguings on the mind to seduce it. *Απατῇ* is deceit, and signifies both the faculty of deceiving, the artifice used in deceiving, and actual deceit, or deceiving itself. The derivation of the word, gives some light unto the nature of the thing itself. *Απαταω* is from *α*, privative, and *πατος*, as Eustathius and the etymologist agree; *πατος* is via trita, 'a beaten way, a path.' So that *απαταω*, is to draw any one out of the right way, the proper beaten path. And it is well rendered by seduco, that is seorsum duco, 'to lead aside, to seduce.' But it is of a larger sense, or by any ways or means to deceive. And *απατῇ* principally denotes an innate faculty of deceiving rather than deceit itself, *απατῇ τοῦ πλουτου*, Mat. xiii. 22, the 'deceitfulness of riches;' and *απατῇ τῆς*



αδικίας, 2 Thess. ii. 10, the ‘deceitfulness of unrighteousness,’ is that aptitude that is in riches and unrighteousness, considering the state and condition of men in this world, and their temptations, to deceive them with vain hopes and to seduce them into crooked paths. Once it is put for sin itself, Eph iv. 22, *κατα τας επιθυμιας της απατης*, ‘according to the lusts of deceit;’ that is, of sin which is deceitful; unless it may be rendered by the adjective, *απατηλους* or *απατηλιους*, as it is done by ours, ‘deceiving or deceitful lusts.’ See 2 Pet. ii. 13. Here, as it is joined with sin, as an adjunct of it, it denotes not its acting primarily, but that habitual deceit that is in indwelling sin, whereby it seduceth men and draweth them off from God.

Lastly, The evil itself particularly cautioned against, is expressed in the word *σκληρυνθη*, ‘should be hardened;’ of the sense and importance whereof, we have spoken fully on the foregoing verses. The design then of this verse, is to prescribe a duty unto the Hebrews, with the manner of its performance, and the season they had for it; which might prevent their departure from God, through an evil heart of unbelief, by preserving it from being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Our concernment wherein will be manifest in the ensuing deductions from it.

Obs. I. Sedulous mutual exhortation, is an eminent means to obviate and prevent the design of the deceitfulness of sin.—The apostle having declared the pernicious consequence of departing from God, through the deceitfulness of sin, and the danger that professors are in of so doing, singles out this duty as a signal means of its prevention. And hereby, as great weight is laid upon it, so great honour is done unto it. We may therefore do well to consider both the nature of it, and the manner of its performance; for its efficacy unto the end proposed depends merely on its institution. There are many practical duties that are neglected because they are not understood, and they are not understood, because they are supposed to have no difficulty in them, but to lie open to every lazy and careless inquiry. High notions, curious speculations, with knotty controversies, are thought to deserve men’s utmost diligence in their search and examination. But for these practical duties, it is generally supposed that they are known sufficiently at a word’s speaking, if they were but practised accordingly. Yet it will be found that the great wisdom of faith consists in a spiritual acquaintance with the true nature of these duties, which indeed are therefore practically neglected because they are not doctrinally understood. I shall therefore offer somewhat here briefly towards the right understanding of the nature of this duty, and the manner of its performance; and to this purpose some things we are to observe with respect unto the persons that are to perform it, and some things with respect unto the duty itself.

First. For the persons concerned. This duty of exhortation is incumbent on some by virtue of especial office; and on others by virtue of especial love.

1. Some it is expected from, upon the account of their office. So it is of all ministers of the gospel. The duty of constant exhortation, that is, of persuading the souls of men unto constancy and growth in



faith and obedience, unto watchfulness and diligence against the deceitfulness of sin, and that from the word of truth, in the name and authority of Christ, is the most important part of their ministerial office. This are they diligently to attend unto. *ὁ παρακαλῶν ἐν τῇ παρακλησει*; Rom. xii. 8. 'Let him that exhorteth' (his office taketh name from this part of his work,) 'attend unto,' or abide in 'exhortation.' This is it which is required of him, and will be expected from him. So our apostle distributes the whole ministerial work into three parts, enjoining their observance unto his son Timothy. 1 Tim. iv. 13, 'diligently attend,' saith he, *τῇ ἀναγνώσει*, 'to reading;' that is, studying and meditating on the Holy Scriptures for his own information and growth, which ministers ought to do all their days, and not to sit down lazily with a pretence of their attainments; and secondly, *τῇ παρακλησει*, to 'consolatory exhortation,' the duty before us; and lastly *τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ*, to 'doctrinal instruction' for the enlightening and informing of the minds of his disciples. These are the principal duties of an evangelical minister. So he again conjoins teaching and exhortation, as the two main parts of preaching, 1 Tim. iv. 2. And these he would have a minister to be instant in, or insist upon, *ἐνκαιρῶς, ἀκαιρῶς*; 'in and out of season,' 2 Tim. iv. 2. A proverbial expression, denoting frequency and diligence. Where this is neglected by any of them, they deal treacherously with God, and the souls of men. But this ministerial work is not that which is here intended. But,

2. There is that which is mutual among believers founded in their common interest, and proceeding from especial love. And this especial love is that which distinguisheth it from another duty of the same nature in general with this, which we owe unto all mankind. For the eternal law of nature binds us to love our neighbours as ourselves. Now we neither do, nor can love any without endeavouring of their good, and effecting of it according to our power. And herein is comprised a persuading of men unto what is good for them, and a dehorting them from that which is morally evil and pernicious as occasions and opportunities are offered. Thus dealt Lot with the Sodomites, whom the Holy Ghost therefore commends, though they reviled him as a pragmatistical intruder into their concerns. So God and the world have very difficult measures and touchstones of moral duties. But there is somewhat special in the duty here intended. For it is confined unto them who are brethren in the same fellowship of professing gospel, ver. 1; and proceeds from that mutual love which is wrought in them by the Spirit of Christ, and required in them by the law of Christ. And this differs from that philanthropy, or love to mankind in general, which ought to be in us. For they have different principles, different motives, different effects, and different ways of expression. The one is an inbred principle of the law of nature, the other an implanted grace of the Holy Ghost. The one required from a common interest in the same nature, the other from an especial interest in the same new nature. In brief, the one is a general duty of the law; the other an especial duty of the gospel. I say this especial love is the spring of this mutual exhortation. And to the right performance of it, the things ensuing do

1. That they who perform it, find in themselves a special concern in the persons with whom, and things about which they treat in their exhortations. It will not admit of any pragmatical curiosity leading men to interpose themselves in matters wherein they are no way concerned. Knowing, saith the apostle, *τον φοβον του Κυριου, ανθρωπους παιδομεν*, 2 Cor. v. 11. The reason why we exhort men, or persuade them to their duty, is because of our compassion towards them, inasmuch as we know the terror or dread of God with whom in this matter they have to do ; and that it is *φοβερον*, a very fearful thing to fall into his hands when he is provoked, Heb. x. 31. If men find not themselves really concerned in the glory of God, and their hearts moved with compassion towards the souls of men, whether they are in office in the church or not, it will be their wisdom to abstain from this duty, as that which they are no way fitted to discharge.

2. An especial warrant for the particular exercise of this duty is required of us. Our duty it is in general to exhort one another by virtue of this and the like commands. But as unto the especial instances of it, for them we must look for especial warrant. Those who shall engage into this or any other duty at adventures, will but expose themselves and it to contempt. Now this special warrant ariseth from a due coincidence of rule and circumstances. There are sundry particular cases wherein direct and express rule requires the discharge of this duty. As, 1. In case of sin, Levit. xix. 17. 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any ways rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.' For even rebukes belong to this general head of exhortation, nor are they ever to be without it. 2. Of ignorance in the truth, so dealt Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos when they instructed him in the way of God, Acts xviii. 24—26. And many the like cases are instanced in. Add unto such rules a due consideration of circumstances relating unto times, seasons, persons, and occasions, and it will firm the warrant intended.

3. Especial wisdom, understanding, and ability are hereunto required. It is an easy thing to spoil the best duty in the manner of its performance. And as other things may spoil a duty, so a defect in spiritual skill for the performance of it, can never suffer it to be right. If men then have not a sound judgment and understanding of the matter about which this mutual exhortation is to be exercised, and of the way whereby it is to be managed, they may do well to leave it unto them who are better furnished with the tongue of the learned to know how to speak a word in season ; I mean as to the solemn discharge of it ; otherwise occasional mutual encouragements unto faith and obedience, are the common and constant duties of all believers. And the apostle speaks of the generality of Christians in those primitive times, that they were so filled with knowledge as that they were able to admonish one another, Rom. xv. 14. Wherein, as he requires an ability for it, so he ascribes it unto them. And unto them it belongs to see, 1. That it be done with words of truth. It is truth alone that in things of this nature is accompanied with authority, and attended with efficacy. If there be any failure in this foundation, the whole superstructure will sink of itself. Those then who undertake this duty must be sure to

have a word of truth for their warrant; that those who are exhorted may hear Christ speaking in it, for whatever influence other words or reasonings may have on their affections, their consciences will be unconcerned in them. And this should not only be virtually included in what is spoken, but also formally expressed, that it may put forth its authority immediately and directly. As exhortations that fail in truth *materially* (as they may, for men may exhort and persuade one another to error and false worship) are pernicious; so those which are not *formally* spirited or enlivened by an express word of Scripture, are languid, weak, and vain. 2. That it may be managed, (unless especial circumstances require some variation) with words good and comfortable, words of consolation and encouragement. The word here used, as hath been shown, signifies to comfort as well as to exhort, Morose, severe expressions become not this duty, but such as wisdom will draw out from love, care, tenderness, compassion, and the like compliant affections. These open and soften the heart, and make the entrance of the things insisted on, smooth and easy into it. 3. That it be accompanied with care and diligence to afford a suitable example, in the practice and walking of the persons exhorting. An observation of the contrary will quickly frustrate the weightiest words that look another way. Exhortation is nothing but an encouragement given unto others to walk with us or after us, in the ways of God and the gospel. 'Be followers of me,' saith our apostle, 'as I am of Christ.' And these are some of the heads under which we might discourse on this duty; which in that great degeneracy of Christianity whereunto the world is fallen, were not unnecessary to do; but I must not too much enlarge upon particulars.

Obs. II. Gospel duties have a special efficacy attending them in their special seasons. Whilst it is called to-day. Every thing hath its beauty, order, and efficacy from its proper season. Again,

Obs. III. We have but an uncertain season, for the due performance of most certain duties. How long it will be called to-day, we know not. The day of our lives is uncertain, so is the day of the gospel, as also of our opportunities therein. The present season alone is ours; and for the most part, we need no other reason to prove any time to be a season for duty, but because it is present.

Obs. IV. The deceit which is in sin, and which is inseparable from in it, tends continually to the hardening of the heart. This is that which is principally taught us in these words, and it is a truth of great importance unto us, which might here be properly handled. But having at large discoursed the whole of the deceitfulness of sin in another treatise, I shall not here resume the discussion of it.

VER. 14.—*For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end,*

This is the last part of this fourth περιόχη or section of this chapter. As to its coherence with the verses foregoing, it containeth an enforcement of the general exhortation unto perseverance, and the avoidance of backsliding or apostasy in all the causes and tendencies unto it; as also of the particular duties which the apostle had now proposed as



effectual means unto those ends. For he lets them know that all their interest in Christ, and all the benefits they did expect, or might be made partakers of by him, did depend upon their answering his exhortation unto constancy and perseverance in their profession. And moreover, that whereas men are apt to wax weary and faint, or to grow slothful in the course of their profession, sometimes so soon almost as they are entered into it, he assures them that unless they continue the same diligence and earnestness of endeavours as at the first, so as to abide steadfast unto the end, they would have no benefit either by Christ or the gospel, but rather fall assuredly under that indignation of God which we had newly warned them of. This in general is the design of the words. In the particulars there are, 1. A state and condition expressed, from whence the force of the argument is taken. 'We are made partakers of Christ.' 2. An application of that condition unto ourselves, as to the way whereby it may be declared and evinced. 'If we hold-fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.'

The causal connexion, *γαρ*, 'for,' shows the respect of these words unto those foregoing, according as we have declared it. And it manifests that the apostle induceth an enforcement of his preceding exhortation.

The state and condition intimated is expressed in those words, *μετοχοι γεγοναμεν του Χριστου*. *Γεγοναμεν* denotes some time past; 'we have been made;' which excludes one application of the words; namely, unto a future participation of Christ in glory, which here should be promised, but suspended upon the condition of our holding steadfast 'the beginning of our confidence unto the end.' As if it were said, We are made partakers of Christ, that is, we shall be so hereafter, in case we continue constant, and persevere; which sense (if it be so) is embraced by those who are ready to lay hold on all apparent advantages of opposing the assurance and perseverance of believers. But a present state is here declared, and that which is already wrought and partaken of. And indeed the consideration of this word, doth rightly state the relation of the several parts of the words mentioned. We are 'made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence;' that is, we are so thereby, either causally and formally, or interpretatively and declaratively. If in the first sense, then, our participation of Christ depends on our perseverance unto the end; nor can we come unto the one, until we have attained the other. But this is contrary to the text, which supposeth us actually instated in that participation, as the words necessarily require. If it be in the latter sense, then our perseverance is enjoined as an evidence of our participation of Christ; that whereby it may be tried whether it be true and genuine, which if it be, it will be producing this effect. As James requires that we should try or evidence, and manifest our faith by our works, of what sort it is.

We are made *μετοχοι του Χριστου*, 'partakers of Christ.' This expression is nowhere used but only in this place. The word *μετοχος* itself, is but once used in the New Testament, except by our apostle: and *μετεχω*, from whence it comes, is not used at all but by him. And



he interprets it by *κοινωνια*, 'communion or participation.' For affirming that the bread which we break is *κοινωνια του σωματος του Χριστου*, 'the communion of the body of Christ,' 1 Cor. x. 16, he adds, *παντες εκ του ενος αρτου μετεχομεν*, ver. 17, 'we all partake of that one bread,' which is a sacramental expression of the same thing here intended. Most expositors suppose the name Christ to be here taken metonymically, for the benefits of his mediation; in grace here and right to future blessedness. Some suppose it to be only an expression of being a disciple of Christ, and so really to belong unto him. But the true and precise import of the words may be learned from the apostle, in his use of those of a like signification with reference unto Christ himself, Heb. ii. 14. Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, that is, because those whom he was to redeem were men, partakers of human nature, *και αυτος παραπλησιως μετεσχε αυτων*, 'he himself in like manner took part of the same.' He was partaker of us, partook of us;—how? by taking flesh and blood; that is, entire human nature, synecdochically so expressed to be his own, as he expresseth it, ver. 17. 'He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham;' that is, the nature of man derived from the loins of Abraham according to the promise made unto him. How then are we partakers of him,—partakers of Christ? It is by our having an interest in his nature, by the communication of his Spirit, as he had in ours by the assumption of our flesh. It is, then, our union with Christ that is intended, whereby we 'are made members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones,' Eph. v. 30. A participation of the benefits of the mediation of Christ is included in these words, but not first intended, only as a consequent of our intimate union with him. And this the Syriac translation seems to have understood, reading the words by *אנא, כלן גר לם משיחא*, 'we are mingled or mixed with Christ;' that is, joined with him, united unto him. And this is that which the apostle puts to the trial, as the hinge on which their present privileges and future happiness did entirely depend. And this is the sense which Chrysostome and the Greeks that follow him do fix upon. Saith he, *Τι εστι μετοχοι γεγοναμεν του Χριστου; μετεχομεν αυτου, φησιν, εν εγενομεθα ημεις και αυτος, ειπερ αυτος μεν κεφαλη, σωμα δε ημεις: συγκληρονομοι και συσσωμοι: εν σωμα εσμεν, εκ της σαρκος αυτου, φησι, και εκ των οστων αυτου*, 'What is it to be partakers of Christ? He and we are made one. He the head, we the body, co-heirs, and incorporated with him. We are one body with him, as he speaks of his flesh and bones.' So he. The trial and evidence hereof is declared in the last words, *εαντερ την αρχην της υποστασεως μεχρι τελους βεβαιαν κατασχωμεν*, 'If so be that we hold fast or steadfast, the beginning of our confidence unto the end.' So we. It is by all agreed, that for the substance of it, the same matter is here intended as in ver. 6, and that that which is there called *καυχημα της ελπιδος*, 'the glorying of hope,' is here termed, *αρχη της υποστασεως*, 'the beginning of confidence;' because it is said of each of them, that they are to be kept steadfast unto the end. But the expression here used is singular, and hath left an impression of its difficulty on most translations and expositions. Hence hath arisen that great variety that is

amongst them in rendering and expounding of these words. Initium substantiæ ejus, saith the Vulgar; and the Rhemists from thence, the ‘beginning of his substance,’ adding *his* to the text. Arias Montan. and Erasmus, principium substantiæ, the ‘beginning of substance.’ Beza, principium illud quo sustentamur, ‘that beginning or principle whereby we are sustained.’ Castalio, hoc argumentum ab initio ad finem usque, ‘this argument from the beginning to the end.’ Syriac, ‘from the beginning unto the end, if we abide in this substance or foundation.’ Ethiopic, ‘if we persevere to keep this new testament.’ We, ‘the beginning of our confidence.’ By which variety it appears that some knew not how to express the words, as not well understanding them; and that others were not satisfied with the conjectures of their predecessors. Neither are expositors more agreed about the meaning of the words. Some by ἀρχὴ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, understand the gospel; some faith, some hope, some confidence, some Christ himself. Most fix on faith to be intended, which they say is termed ὑποστασις, or ‘substance,’ because it is that which supports us, causeth us to subsist in Christ, as the just doth live by faith. But it may not be amiss to inquire a little more exactly into the proper emphasis and importance of this expression.

Ὑποστασις properly signifies ‘substance.’ It is applied unto somewhat distinct in the being of the Deity, Heb. i. 3, where it is said, that the Son is the express image of the Father’s hypostasis. And there it can signify nothing but an especial manner of existence or subsistence in the divine nature,—that is, a person. Whence the eastern church first, and after the western, agreed in three hypostases in the divine nature; that is, as we speak, three persons, or three different manners of the subsistence of the same individual being. In things human, it denotes acts and not substances; and as it is used only by our apostle, so it is used by him variously. As for confidence, 2 Cor. ix. 4, ἐν τῇ ὑποστάσει ταύτῃ τῆς καυχήσεως, ‘in this confidence of boasting.’ Whence ours have translated it in this place, confidence. And it may be the rather, because as it is there joined with καυχῆσις, so he maketh use of καυχῆμα in the same subject with this, ver. 6. But the ὑποστασις of the apostle in that place, was not a confidence of boldness, but that infallible certainty which he had of his apostleship, wherein he gloried. That was it which he stood firmly on. Ch. xi. 1, of this Epistle, the apostle maketh use of it in the description he gives of faith, yet so as to denote an effect of it, and not its nature. Ἐστὶ δὲ πίστις ἐλπιζομένων ὑποστασις, ‘Faith is the hypostasis of things hoped for;’ illud quo extant quæ sperantur. That whereby the things that are hoped for do exist. Things that are absolutely in themselves future, absent, unseen, are as unto their efficacy, use, benefit, fruits, and effects, made by faith present unto the soul, and have a subsistence given them therein. It is not, then, faith itself, but an effect of it, that is there described by the apostle.

If, then, by the beginning of our substance, subsistence, or confidence, faith is intended, it is because it is that which gives us all these things, by our interest in Christ and the benefits of his mediation. But I confess, the expression is abstruse in this sense, and difficult to be understood.

It may, therefore, be understood of the gospel itself, which is called the beginning of our confidence, because it is the means of begetting faith in us, and producing that profession wherein we are to persevere; and this sense is embraced by some expositors.

There seems yet to me that there is another more genuine sense of the word, suited to the scope of the place, and design of the apostle, without wresting it from its native signification. We have shown that our partaking of Christ, is our being united unto him, and the *ὑποστάσις*, 'hypostasis,' which on that union we are bound to preserve and maintain, is our subsistence in Christ, our abiding in him, as the branches in the vine; so the word signifies, and so it is here used. And although Chrysostome supposes that it is faith which is intended, yet it is on the account of this effect of our subsistence in those things, that he so judgeth. *Τι ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ τῆς ὑποστάσεως; τὴν πίστιν λέγει; δι' ἧς ὑπέστημεν, καὶ γεγεννημέθα καὶ συννοουσιωθήμεν, ὡς ἂν τις εἰποι,* 'He speaks of faith, by which we subsist (in Christ) and are begotten, and as I may so say, consubstantiated with him;' that is, solidly substantially united unto him. Now, our subsistence in Christ is twofold. 1. By profession only, which is the condition of the branches of the vine that bear no fruit, but are at length cut off and cast into the fire. 2. By real union, and the trial of which of these it is that we are partakers of, depends on our perseverance.

*Τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ὑποστάσεως.* Beza, principium illud quo sustentamur,—that principle or 'beginning whereby we are sustained.' But this I do not understand. For it makes *ἀρχή*, the 'beginning,' to denote the thing itself recommended unto us, and which we are to preserve, whereof the hypostasis mentioned is only an effect, or that whereby the work of the beginning is expressed. But *ἀρχή* is nowhere used in any such sense, nor doth it appear what should be intended by it. Besides, it is plainly here an adjunct of our subsistence in Christ; the beginning of it. And this may be considered two ways, 1. Absolutely, it is begun in profession or reality, and it is to be continued. 2. Emphatically, for the usual attendants of our faith and profession at their beginning. The beginning of our engagements unto Christ, is for the most part accompanied with much love, and other choice affections, resolution, and courage, which, without great care and watchfulness, we are very ready to decay in, and fall from. And in this sense it is here used. \*

\* The remainder of the words, *μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν κατασχωμεν*, 'hold steadfast unto the end,' have been opened on ver. 6, and we need not again insist upon them.

I shall only add, that the apostle joining himself here with the Hebrews in this matter, 'we are partakers, if we hold fast,' he shows that this is a general and perpetual rule for professors to attend unto, and the touchstone of their profession, by which it may be tried at the last day. And hence are the ensuing observations.

Obs. I. Union with Christ is the principle and measure of all spiritual enjoyments and expectations.—The apostle sums up all, both what we do enjoy by the gospel at present, and what right unto or expectation we have of future blessedness and happiness, in this one



expression, 'we are partakers of Christ.' That our union with him is thereby intended, hath been declared in the exposition of the words. The nature of this union and wherein it doth consist, I have elsewhere manifested and vindicated. I shall, therefore, here only confirm the proposition laid down. It is the principle and measure of all spiritual enjoyments. For as Christ is unto us all and in all, Col. iii. 11, so without him we can do nothing, we are nothing, John xv. 5; for whereas we live, 'it is not we, but Christ liveth in us,' Gal. ii. 20. And the truth hereof appears,

First. Because it is itself in the order of nature, the first truly saving spiritual mercy, the first vital grace that we are made partakers of. And that which is the first of any kind, is the measure and rule of all that ensues in that kind. As is the root, so are the branches and the fruit. They do not only follow the nature of it, but live upon its supplies. All our grace is but a participation of the root, and therein of the 'fatness of the olive tree; and we bear not the root, but the root bears us,' Rom. xi. 17, 18. Whatever precedes this, is not true saving grace; and whatever follows it, proceeds from it. 1. Whatever work of excision or cutting off there may be of a branch from the wild olive, it is its incision into the true olive, which communicates unto it life and fruit-bearing. For after it is cut off from the wild olive and dressed, it may either be cast away or left to wither. Whatever work of conviction by the word of the law, or of illumination by the word of the gospel, or of humiliation from both by the efficacy of the Spirit in all, there may be wrought in the minds and souls of men, yet there is nothing truly saving, vital, and quickening in them, until they be implanted into Christ. Under any other preceding or preparatory work, however it be called, or whatever may be the effects of it, they may wither, die, and perish. Men may be so cut off the old stock of nature, as not to have sin growing or flourishing in them, so as not to bear its blossoms nor visible fruit; and yet have no principle of grace to bring forth fruit unto holiness. And 2. That whatever grace follows it, proceeds from it, is evident from the nature of the thing itself. For our uniting unto Christ, consisteth in, or immediately ariseth from the communication of his Spirit unto us. For 'he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit,' 1 Cor. vi. 17. Our conjunction unto him, consists in our participation of the same spirit with him. And by this spirit is Christ himself, or the nature of Christ formed in us, 2 Pet. i. 4. And if all the grace that we are, or can be made partakers of in this world, be but that nature, in the several parts and acts of it, that from whence it proceeds, whereby it is formed in us, must needs, in order of nature, be antecedent unto it. No grace we have, or can have, but what is wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ. Whence else should we have it? Doth it grow naturally in our own gardens? Or can other men plant and water it, and give it life and increase? Nay, but all grace is the fruit and effect of the Spirit, as the Scripture every-where declares, see Gal. v. 22, 23. It implies, then, a contradiction, that any one should have any lively saving grace, and not antecedently in order of nature, receive the Spirit of grace from Christ. For he is the cause, and grace is the effect; or as he is savingly bestowed according to the



promise of the covenant, he is the spring and fountain, or efficient cause of all grace whatever. Now, our union with Christ, our participation of him, consists in the inhabitation of the same Spirit in him and us. And the first work of this Spirit given unto us, bestowed upon us, is to form Christ in us, whereby our union is completed. But it will be asked, whether the Spirit of Christ doth come into a soul that hath no grace?—if so, then he may be in a graceless person. I answer, that although this in order of nature, is consequent unto the communication of the Spirit unto us, as the effect is, and must be to the cause, as light and heat in the beam is unto the sun; so it hath a *simultry* of time with it. As Austin speaks well of the original of the soul, *creando infunditur, et infundendo Creatur*. God doth not first create a soul, giving it an existence of its own, without union with the body, but creates it in and by its infusion. So the Spirit doth not come unto us, and afterward quicken or sanctify us, but he doth this by his coming unto us, and possessing our hearts for and with Christ. This the apostle calls the ‘forming of Christ in us,’ Gal. iv. 19, *αχρις ου μορφωθη Χριστος εν υμιν*, ‘until Christ be formed or fashioned in you,’ as a child is fashioned or formed in the womb; that is, until the whole image and likeness of Christ be imparted unto, and implanted upon your souls. This is the new creature that is wrought in every one that is in Christ; that every one is who is in Christ; for the introduction of this new spiritual form gives denomination unto the person; ‘he that is in Christ Jesus is a new creature,’ 2 Cor. v. 17. And this is ‘Christ in us, the hope of glory,’ Col. i. 27.

First. It is Christ in us. For, 1. It is from him, he is the author of it, and thence he is said to be our life, Col. iii. 3. 2. It is like him, it is his image, and by and through him the image of God, 2 Cor. iii. 18; Eph. iv. 23, 24. 3. It is that which gives us a spiritual continuity unto Christ. For being united unto him as members unto the head, there must be a constant communicative motion of blood and spirits, between him and us; which is hereby, Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19. And without this, we are without Christ, or so separated from him, as that we can do nothing, John xv. 5. For, suppose a believer to stand *seorsim*, alone by himself, *χωρις Χριστου*, at a distance from Christ, without a course and recourse of spiritual supplies from him, and he can do nothing but die. Cut off a member from the body, dissolve its natural continuity to the head, and all the world cannot fetch life into it. Take a member—suppose a hand, lay it as near the head as you will, bind it to it; yet if it have not a natural continuity with the head, it will not live. It is so here. A member separated from Christ hath no life. Let it seem to lie near the head by profession and many engagements, if it have not this spiritual continuity unto Christ, it hath no life in it. Secondly. It is the hope of glory. 1. As the kernel is the hope of fruit. 2. As a pledge or earnest is the hope of the whole contract. In this forming of Christ in us, are we made partakers of all grace and holiness in the principle and root of them, for therein doth this image of God in Christ consist. Now, this proceeding from our union, that is and must be before it in order of nature, and so be the rule, measure, and cause of all that ensues.

Secondly. It is the first in dignity ; it is the greatest, most honourable, and glorious of all graces that we are made partakers of. It is called ‘glory,’ 2 Cor. iii. 18. The greatest humiliation of the Son of God consisted in his taking upon him of our nature, Heb. ii. 8, 9. And this was ‘the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich,’ rich in eternal glory, the glory that he had with the Father before the world was, John xvii. 5, as being in himself God over all blessed for ever, Rom. ix. 5, ‘for our sakes he became poor,’ 2 Cor. viii. 9, by taking on him that nature which is poor in itself, infinitely distanced from him, and exposed unto all misery, which our apostle fully expresseth, Phil. ii. 5---7. ‘Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no 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.’ There was indeed great grace and condescension in all that he did, and humbled himself unto in that nature, as it follows in that place, ‘and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,’ ver. 8. But his assumption of the nature itself, was that whereby most signally, *ἐαυτον ἐκένωσε*, he emptied and humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation. On this all that followed did ensue, and on this it did depend. From hence all his actings and sufferings in that nature received their dignity and efficacy. All, I say, that Christ as our Mediator did and underwent in our nature, had its worth, merit, use, and prevalency from this his first condescension in taking our nature upon him, for from thence it was that whatever he so did, or suffered, it was the doing and suffering of the Son of God. And on the contrary, our grace of union with Christ, our participation of him and his nature, is our highest exaltation, the greatest and most glorious grace, that we can be made partakers of in this world. He became poor for our sakes, by a participation of our nature ; that we through his poverty may be rich in a participation of his, 2 Cor. viii. 9. And this is that which gives worth and excellency unto all that we may be afterwards entrusted with. The grace and privileges of believers are very great and excellent ; but yet they are such as do belong unto them that are made partakers of Christ ; such as are due to the quickening and adorning of all the members of his body ; as all privileges of marriage after marriage contracted, arise from and follow that contract. For being once made co-heirs with Christ, we are made heirs of God and have a right to the whole inheritance. And, indeed, what greater glory or dignity can a poor sinner be exalted unto, than to be thus intimately and indissolubly united unto the Son of God ; the perfection whereof is the glory which we hope and wait for, John xvii. 22, 23. Saith David in an earthly temporary concern, ‘What am I, and what is my father’s family, that I should be son-in-law to the king, being a poor man, and lightly esteemed ?’ How much more may a sinner say, What am I, poor sinful dust and ashes, one that deserves to be lightly esteemed by the whole creation of God, that I should be thus united unto the Son of God, and thereby become his son by adoption ? This is honour and glory unparalleled. And all the grace that ensues, re-

ceives its worth, its dignity, and use from hence. Therefore are the graces and the works of believers excellent, because they are the graces and works of them that are united unto Christ. And as without this, men can have no inward effectual saving grace, so whatever outward privileges they may lay hold of or possess, they are but stolen ornaments, of which God will one day strip them naked to their shame and confusion.

Thirdly. It is the first and principal grace, in respect of causality and efficacy. It is the cause of all other graces that we are made partakers of; they are all communicated unto us by virtue of our union with Christ. Hence is our adoption, our justification, our sanctification, our perseverance, our fruitfulness, our resurrection, our glory. Hence is our adoption; for it is upon our receiving of him, that this right and privilege is granted unto us, of becoming the sons of God, John i. 12. No man can be made the adopted son of God, but by an implantation into him who is the natural son of God, John xx. 17; Heb. xi. 16. And thence also are the consequent privileges that attend that estate: For 'because we are sons, God sends forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father,' Gal. iv. 6, that is, to own God, and address ourselves unto him, under the consideration of the authority and love of a father. And hence is our justification. For, 1. being united to Christ, we are interested in that acquittal from the condemning sentence of the law, which was granted unto himself when he satisfied it to the utmost, Rom. i. 3, 4; Isa. l. 8, 9, for he was acquitted as the head and surety of the church, and not on his own personal account; for whereas he did no sin, he owed no suffering nor satisfaction to the law. But as he suffered for us, the just for the unjust, so he was acquitted as the representative of his whole church. By our union therefore unto him, we fall under the sentence of acquittal, which was given out towards whole Christ mystical, head and members. 2. Our union with him, is the ground of the actual imputation of his righteousness unto us; for he covers only the members of his own body with his own garments; nor will cast a skirt over any, who is not bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. And so he is of God made unto us righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30. Hence also is our sanctification, and that both as to its principle in a new spiritual nature, and as to its progress in fruitfulness and holiness. The principle of it, is the spirit itself of life, holiness, and power. This God sheds on us, through Jesus Christ, Tit. iii. 6. Or, on the account of our interest in him, according to his promise, John vii. 38, 39. And for this cause is he said to be our life, Col. iii. 3, because in him lie the springs of our spiritual life, which in and by our regeneration, renovation, and sanctification is communicated unto us. And its progress in fruitfulness is from thence alone. To teach this, is the design of the parable used by our Saviour concerning the vine and its branches, John xv. For as he sheweth our abiding in him to be as necessary unto us, that we may bear fruit, as it is to a branch to abide in the vine to the same purpose; so that without our so doing we are of no more use in the ways of God, than a branch that is cut off and withered, and cast aside to burn. And men do

but labour in the fire, who in the pursuit of their convictions, endeavour after holiness or the due performance of good works, without deriving strength for them from their relation unto Christ; for all that they do is either nothing in itself, or nothing as unto acceptance with God. 'We are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,' Eph. ii. 10. Becoming new creatures by our inbeing in him, 2 Cor. v. 17, we are thereby enabled to those good works, or fruits of holiness, which God hath ordained, that we should walk and abound in. And hence on many accounts is our perseverance; for, 1. By virtue hereof, we are interested in the covenant, which is the great means of our preservation; God having engaged therein so to write his law in our hearts, as that we shall not depart from him, Jer. xxxi. 32. Now this covenant is made with us under this formal consideration, that we are the children and seed of Abraham, which we are not but by our union with Christ, the one Seed, to whom the promises of it are originally made, as our apostle declares, Gal. iii. 16. 2. His care is peculiar for the members of his body. For as no man hateth his own flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it, nor will suffer any of his members to perish, if by any means he can prevent it; so is the heart of Christ towards those that are united to him, and therein are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, Eph. v. 29, 30. And therefore, 3. The care of giving out supplies unto us, for assistance against opposition, and strength for duties, which is the grace of perseverance, is incumbent on him. 4. Our resurrection also depends on this union: I mean a blessed resurrection in joy and glory, unto light and life eternal. For this resurrection is nothing but the entire gathering up together of the whole body of Christ unto himself, whereof he gave us a pledge, example, and assurance, in his own person. So the apostle assures us, Rom. viii. 11, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you,' (which, as hath been shown; is the means of our union with him,) 'he hath raised up Christ from the dead, shall quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.' And this he expressly proveth at large, 1 Cor. xv. And this lands us in eternal glory, which, as was observed before, is nothing but the consummation and perfection of this union with Christ. And hence it appears on how many accounts it is the principle and measure of all other graces and privileges whatever.

And we may see hence how great our concern is to inquire diligently into this foundation of all grace, mercy, and glory. If we fail here, as too many seem to do, we do but run in vain, and build in vain, and boast in vain, for all will be lost and perish. We may do well to remember what became of the house that was built on the sand, when its trial came: it fell, and its fall was great and irreparable. Such will be the end of the profession of men, that doth not spring and arise from union with Christ. Many ways there are whereby this may be put to the trial, on which all our peace, satisfaction, and assurance of spirit in the things of God, doth depend. I shall only consider that which our apostle here proposeth, and that in the ensuing observation.

Obs. II. Constancy and steadfastness in believing, is the great



touchstone, trial, and evidence of union with Christ, or a participation of him.—So it is here proposed by the apostle. We are partakers of Christ, that is, declared, manifested, and evidenced so to be, if we hold fast the beginning of our subsistence in him firm unto the end. So our Saviour, describing the great trials of men's faith that shall befall them, adds, that in the close, as the certain note of discrimination, 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved,' Matt. x. 22. It is enduring faith that is true faith, and which evidenceth us indeed to be partakers of Christ. And he gives it as a mark of a false profession, that it dureth but for a while, Matt. xiii. 21. Further, to explain, evince, and improve this truth, it may be observed,

First. That there are many appearing evidences of union with Christ, that may, and do fail. The blade is an appearing evidence of well-rooted corn, but it often fails, and that for want of root, Matt. xiii. 12. Now, by such an appearance, I do not intend a pretence, or that there is therein a show made of what is not; only there is something which appears to be that which it is not. Or it is somewhat, but not what it appears to be; and so it is a failing sign, not a τεκμηριον, or assured infallible token. Things of this nature may be such as to satisfy them in whom they are, that they are really united unto Christ, but this through their own darkness and mistakes. And they may be such as others may, nay ought to be satisfied in, to the same purpose concerning them, as not being able to evince them to be otherwise by any rule or word of truth. So was it with many that are mentioned in the gospel, they professed themselves to belong unto Christ. This they did on some grounds that were satisfactory to themselves. They were also accepted by others as such, and that judging according to rule, and as they ought. And yet, after all, they were either discovered to be hypocrites, or declared themselves apostates. Now, these kind of signs must extend so far, as there is nothing whereby union with Christ may be evidenced, nothing that is required according to rule thereunto, but there must be something in those who are thus deceived, and do deceive, that shall make an appearance and resemblance thereof. They must have μορφωσιν ενσεβειας, 2 Tim. iii. 5, a complete delineation of holiness upon them, or they can have no pretence unto any such plea. They must be able to give an account of a work of conviction, humiliation, illumination, conversion, and of closing with Christ, as also of affections some way suitable unto such a work. If they utterly fail herein, however any out of darkness and self-love may flatter and deceive themselves, yet others have a rule to judge them by. But this now we have in daily experience, as there was the same also from the first preaching of the gospel. Men may give such an account of the work of grace of God in them, as themselves may believe to be saving, and such as others who have reason to be concerned in them, may rest in and approve. In this apprehension, they may walk in a course of profession many days, it may be all their days, and yet at last be found utter strangers from Christ. But yet this happens not from the nature of the thing itself, as though our union with Christ in this life were absolutely indiscernible, or at least attended with such darkness, and inextricable

difficulties, as that it is impossible to make a true and undeceiving judgment thereof; but mistakes herein proceed from the blindness of the minds of men, and the deceitfulness of sin, with some secret inclination to rest in self, or sin that is in them. And these are such effectual causes of self-deceivings in this matter, that the Scripture abounds in commands and cautions for our utmost diligence in our search and inquiry, whether we are made partakers of Christ or not, or whether his Spirit dwell in us or not; which argue both the difficulty of attaining an assured confidence herein, as also the danger of our being mistaken, and yet the certainty of a good issue upon the diligent and regular use of means to that purpose. For,

Secondly. There may be certain and undeceiving evidences of a present participation of Christ; or, which is all one, men may have a certainty sufficient at present to support and comfort them in their obedience, and which in the issue will neither fail them, nor make them ashamed, that they are partakers of Christ. And this in our passage must necessarily be briefly confirmed. We speak of them who are really believers, who have received saving faith as a gift from God. Now faith is *ἐπιζόμενων ὑποστάσις, πραγμάτων ἐλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων*, Heb. xi. 1. It is that which gives subsistence unto the things believed in our minds, and is such an argument of them as will not deceive. There is nothing can possibly give the mind a more undeceiving assurance, than that which causeth its object to subsist in it, which unites the mind and the truth believed in one subsistence. This faith doth in spiritual things. Hence our apostle ascribes unto it, as its effect, *παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει*, Eph. iii. 12, ‘a grounded boldness with a confident trust,’ which are the highest expressions of the mind’s assurance. And if this be not enough, he asserts a *πληροφορία*, as that which it may be regularly improved into, Heb. vi. 11, x. 22, that is, such a persuasion as fills the mind with all the assurance that the nature of it is capable of. For as a ship can have no impression from the wind, farther than it is able to receive in its sails, no more are we capable of any impression of the certainty of divine truths, or things believed, other than the nature of our minds can admit of; which is, that there must still be an allowance of some doubts and fears, by reason of its own imperfection. But if the expressions before used may fail us, it is evident that we can be certain of nothing; no, not of this, that we are certain of nothing. For they are expressions of the highest certainty and assurance, that the mind of man is capable of. It is then in the nature of faith itself, rightly exercised and improved, to evidence this matter unto our souls. Again. The Holy Ghost himself, who neither can deceive nor be deceived, gives peculiar testimony to our sonship or adoption, which is a consequent of our union with Christ; for none have any power to become the sons of God, but such as are united unto him, John i. 12. This testimony is asserted, Rom. viii. 15, 16, ‘Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God.’ And wherein soever this testimony doth consist, or by what means soever it be granted unto us, concerning which I

shall not here dispute, it is a testimony sure and infallible in itself, and bringing assurance to the mind to which it is granted, sealing unto it its sonship, adoption, and union. And when the Holy Spirit giveth this new name of a son of God unto any believer, he knows it, though others understand it not, Rev. ii. 17. For he makes his own testimony evident unto us, without which his care and love towards us would be lost, and the end of our peace and comfort be frustrated. Hence we are said to 'receive the Spirit of God, that we may know the things which are freely given unto us of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 12. It is the Spirit of God, whereby the good things mentioned are bestowed on us, and wrought in us; but this is but part of his work and office towards us: he doth moreover distinctly satisfy and assure us, that we are indeed made partakers of those good things.

Moreover, we have in this matter the examples of those who have gone before us in the faith, proposed unto our imitation, and for our consolation. They had that evidence and assurance of an interest in Christ, which we insist upon. So our apostle declares in the name of all believers, Rom. viii. 38, 39, 'I am persuaded,' saith he, 'that nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' And the rejoicing, yea triumphant manner wherein he expresseth this his persuasion, manifests his full satisfaction in the truth which he proposed. And so the apostle John tells us, that we both perceive the love of God towards us, and that we know that we are passed from death to life, 1 John iii. 14, 16, both which depend on our union with Christ, and which by them is made evident and sure unto us; see Ps. xxiii. 6. Hereon is founded that great command, that we should give diligence to make our calling and election sure, 2 Pet. i. 10, that is, unto our own souls; for in themselves they are unalterable. And if this, in the use of means, may not be effected, there were no room left for this precept or exhortation.

This is also confirmed unto us from the nature and use of the sacraments, which I know not what they think of, who deny this truth. In the one of them, God sets his seal unto our initiation into Christ. For it is, as circumcision was of old, the seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv. 11, which, as I have shown, we obtain not, but by a participation of Christ, and initiation into him. And therefore is there required in us the restipulation of a good conscience, to answer the testimony of God therein, 1 Pet. iii. 21. The other expressly confirms our participation of Christ, and our interest in the pardon of sins through his blood, being appointed of God as the way whereby mutually is testified his grace unto us, and our faith in him; see 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. And if we may not, if we ought not to rest assured of what God testifies unto us, and sets his seal unto, it cannot but be our duty sometimes to make God a liar, for so we do when we believe not his testimony, 1 John v. 10. But to prevent any hesitation in this matter, he hath not left this under a bare testimony, but hath also confirmed it by his oath; and that to this end, that we might have strong consolation, which, without an undeceiving assurance, we cannot obtain, Heb. vi. 17, 18. It is therefore certain that there

may be, and there are, infallible evidences of a present participation of Christ. But yet observe farther; that,

Thirdly. No grace, no sign or mark, will any longer or any farther be an evidence or testimony in this matter, but only as the soul is effectually influenced unto perseverance thereby.—If any grace whatever once lose its efficacy in or upon the soul, unto all such acts of obedience as are required unto constancy and persistency in our profession, it loseth all its evidencing power as to our present state and condition. For instance, faith, as unto the nature of it, and as unto its main effect of our adherence unto Christ, may abide in us, when yet, by reason of the power of temptation, or prevalency of corruptions, it may not act effectually unto spiritual experience, for the constant performance of all such duties as are required unto our persistency in Christ in a due manner, nor as unto such an abstinence from all sin, as is required thereunto. But when it doth so fail, it can no longer evidence our union with Christ, but the soul wherein it is, will be left unto many disquietments and uncertainties. It is faith only that is effectual by love and in universal obedience, and only as it is so, will give in this evidence. Although therefore perseverance is not of the essence of faith, but it is a grace superadded thereunto, yet the evidencing power of faith in this case, is taken from its efficacy towards that end, namely, as it is experimentally subservient unto the power of God to preserve us unto salvation. Hence, before the completing of our perseverance, which is not to be before the full end of our course, it is the principal evidence of our union with Christ, in the ways and means whereby itself is continued and preserved.

Fourthly. Perseverance is an evidence of union, in that it is an effect of it; and there is a good demonstration of a cause from its proper and peculiar effect. Where an effect is produced that cannot be wrought but by such a cause, it is declared and manifested thereby; as even the magicians concluded from the miracles of Moses, that the finger of God was in them. Now, our constancy and perseverance, as I have shown, are an effect of our union with Christ, and from no other original can they be educed. And this doth most eminently appear in the time and case of trials and oppositions, such as was the season and condition that the Hebrews were under at present. When a believer shall consider what difficulties, distresses, and spiritual dangers he hath passed through, and been delivered from, or hath prevailed against, and withal that he hath in himself no power, strength, or wisdom, that should procure for him such a success, but rather that on the contrary he hath been often ready to faint, and to let go the beginning of his confidence, it will lead him to a discovery of those secret springs of supplies that he hath been made partaker of, which are nothing but this union with Christ, and participation of him. Besides this perseverance is the due issue and exsurgency of grace constantly exercised, with an improvement and growth thereby. And all growth in grace, in what kind soever it be, is an emanation from this one foundation of our union with Christ, which is therefore manifested thereby.

Fifthly. This also may be added: Whatever profession hath by any been made, whatever fruits of it have been brought forth, whatever



continuance in it there hath been, if it fail totally it is a sufficient evidence that those who have made it, were never partakers of Christ. So our apostle having declared, that some of great name and note had apostatized and fallen off from the gospel, adds, that yet the foundation of God standeth sure, that God knoweth who are his, 2 Tim. ii. 17—19, manifesting that those who did so, notwithstanding their profession and eminency therein, were never yet owned of God as his in Christ. And another apostle tells us, that those who went out from them, by a defection from the faith, were in truth none of them, or really united unto Christ with them, 1 John ii. 19. And where there are partial decays in faith and profession, it gives great ground of suspicion and jealousy, that the root of bitterness is yet remaining in the heart, and that Christ was never formed in it. Let not men therefore please themselves in their present attainments and condition, unless they find that they are thriving, growing, passing, on towards perfection, which is the best evidence of their union with Christ.

Obs. III. Persistency in our subsistence in Christ unto the end, is a matter of great endeavour and diligence, and that unto all believers.—This is plainly included in the expression here used by the apostle, *εανπερ την υποστασιν βεβαιαν κατασχωμεν*. The words denote our utmost endeavour to hold it fast, and to keep it firm and steadfast. Shaken it will be, opposed it will be, kept it will not, it cannot be, without our utmost diligence and endeavour. It is true our persistency in Christ doth not, as to the issue and event, depend absolutely on our own diligence. The unalterableness of our union with Christ, on the account of the faithfulness of the covenant of grace, is that which doth, and shall eventually secure it. But yet our own diligent endeavour is such an indispensable means for that end, as that without it, it will not be brought about. For it is necessary to the continuance of our subsistency in Christ, both ‘necessitate præcepti,’ as that which God hath commanded us to make use of for that end; and ‘necessitate mediæ,’ as it is in the order and relation of spiritual things one to another, ordained of God to effect it. For our persisting in our subsistence in Christ, is the emergency and effect of our acting grace unto that purpose. Diligence and endeavours in this matter, are like Paul’s mariners when he was shipwrecked at Melita. God had before-hand given him the lives of all that sailed with him in the ship, Acts xxvii. 24, and he ‘believed that it should be even as God had told him,’ ver. 25. So now the preservation of their lives depended absolutely on the faithfulness and power of God. But yet when the mariners began to fly out of the ship, Paul tells the centurion and the soldiers, that unless those men stayed, they could not be saved, ver. 31. But what need he think of ship-men, when God had promised and taken upon himself, the preservation of them all? He knew full well that he would preserve them; but yet that he would do so in and by the use of means. If we are in Christ, God hath given us the lives of our souls and hath taken upon himself in his covenant the preservation of them. But yet we may say, with reference unto the means that he hath appointed, when storms and trials arise, unless we use our own diligent endeavours, we cannot be saved. Hence are the many cautions that are given us, not only in

this Epistle, wherein they abound, but in other places of Scripture also, that we should take heed of apostasy and falling away; as, 'Let him, that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall;' and, 'Take heed that we lose not the things which we have wrought;' and, 'Hold fast that thou hast, lest another take thy crown:' with the like innumerable.

These warnings are not given merely to professors in general, whose condition is dubious, whether they are true believers or not; nor unto those that are entering only on the ways of Christ, lest they should recoil and desert them; but they are given unto all true believers, those of the greatest growth and attainments, Phil. iii. 11—13; that they may know how indispensably necessary, from the appointment of God, and the nature of the thing itself, our watchful diligence and endeavours are unto our abiding in Christ. And they are thus necessary.

First. Upon the account of the opposition that is made thereunto. In this one thing, namely, to separate us from Christ, is laid out all the skill, power, and craft of our spiritual adversaries. For this end are the gates of hell, that is the power, counsel, and strength of Satan, peculiarly engaged. His great design is to cast them down and prevail against them who are built upon the rock; that is, who are united unto Christ. Our Saviour indeed hath promised, that he shall not prosper, Matt. xvi. 15. But it is that he shall not prevail; which argues a disappointment in a fight or contest. So the gates of hell shall not prevail; but we are to watch and contend that they may not. This also is the principal design of the world upon us and against us. It sets all its engines on work to separate us from Christ. Our apostle reckons them up, or at least gives a catalogue of the principal of them, Rom. viii. 35, 36, and gives us assurance that they shall never be able to attain their end, or to dissolve the union between Christ and us. But yet he lets us know that our success is a conquest, a victory, which is not to be won without great care and watchfulness, undergoing many difficulties, and going through many hazards, ver. 37. And, which is worst of all, we fight against ourselves; we have lusts in us that 'fight against our souls,' 1 Pet. ii. 11, and that in good earnest. Yea, these are the worst enemies we have, and the most dangerous, as I have elsewhere declared. This opposition to our persistency in Christ, makes our diligence for the continuance and preservation of it necessary.

Secondly. It is necessary upon the account of our peace, consolation, and fruitfulness, in this world. And these belong to our subsistence in Christ. Without the two former, we have no satisfaction in ourselves; and without the latter, we are of no use to the glory of God, or good of others. Now, as our eternal happiness depends on this diligence as the means of it, so do these things as their condition; which if we fail in, they also will fail, and that utterly. It is altogether in vain to expect true peace, solid consolation, or a thriving in fruitfulness, in a slothful profession. These things depend wholly on our spiritual industry. Men complain of the fruit, but will not be persuaded to dig up the root. For all our spiritual troubles, darkness, disconsolations, fears, doubts, barrenness, they all proceed from this bitter root of negligence, which springs up and defiles us. Those

then that know how to value these things, may do well to consider how the loss of them may be obviated. Now this spiritual diligence and industry consisteth;

1. In a watchful fighting and contending against the whole work of sin, in its deceit and power, with all the contribution of advantage and efficacy that it hath from Satan and the world. This the apostle peculiarly applies it unto, in the cautions and exhortations given us, to take heed of it, that we be not hardened by it; seeing its whole design is to impair or destroy our interest and persistency in Christ, and so to draw us off from the living God.

2. In a daily, constant, cherishing, and labouring to improve and strengthen every grace by which we abide in Christ. Neglected grace will wither, and be ready to die, Rev. iii. 2, yea, as to some degrees of it, and as to its work in evidencing the love of God unto us, or our union with Christ, it will utterly decay. Some of the churches in the Revelation, had lost their first love, as well as left their first works. Hence is that command that we should grow in grace, and we do so when grace grows and thrives in us. And this is done two ways. First. When any individual grace is improved. When that faith which was weak, becomes strong; and that love which was faint and cold, becomes fervent and is inflamed; which is not to be done but in and by the sedulous exercise of these graces themselves, and a constant application of our souls by them to the Lord Christ, as hath been before declared. Secondly. By adding one grace unto another, 2 Pet. i. 5, 'And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge;' this is the proper work of spiritual diligence, namely, to add one grace unto another. This is the nature of gospel-graces, because of their concatenation in Christ, and as they are wrought in us by one and the self-same Spirit, that the exercise of one leads us to the stirring up and bringing in the exercise of another into the soul. And the graces that in order of practice lie as it were behind, will not be taken notice of or known, but by the due improvement of those whose practice is antecedaneous unto them. Hence some good men live all their days, and never come to the actual exercise of some graces, although they have them in their root and principle. And the reason is, because way is not made unto them by the constant improvement of those other graces from out of whose exercise they do spring.

And is it any wonder if we see so many either decaying or unthrifty professors? and so many that are utterly turned off from their first engagements? For consider what it is to abide in Christ; what watchfulness, what diligence, what endeavours are required thereunto. Men would have it to be a plant that needs neither watering, manuring, nor pruning; but that which will thrive alone of itself. But what do they then think of the opposition that is continually made unto it, the endeavours that are used utterly to root it out? Certainly, if these be not watched against with our utmost industry, decays, if not ruin, will ensue. We may also add here; That,

Obs. IV.—Not only our profession and existence in Christ, but the gracious beginnings of it also, are to be secured with great spiritual

care and industry. The substance whereof may be spoken unto in another place.

### VERSES 15—19.

THERE is some difficulty about these verses; namely, whether they appertain unto, and depend upon the discourse foregoing; or whether they are the beginning of another, on which the exhortation in the first verse of the next chapter doth depend. Chrysostome, with the Greeks that follow him, as Theophylact and Œcumenius assert the latter. And therefore they suppose an hyperbaton in the words; and that all that discourse which is between the 15th verse of this chapter, and the 1st of the next is an occasional digression. As if the sense of the apostle ran to this purpose: Seeing it is said, To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation; let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. But there is no necessity of such a long trajection of the sense, nor of feigning the hyperbaton intimated. The genuine sense and proper contexture of the apostle's discourse, requires their connexion with what went before. And the exhortation in the first verse of the next chapter, is taken from what he immediately after argueth and proveth. And I shall not insist upon the division of the chapters, which is arbitrary and of no authority. I shall therefore, in the first place, rightly state the coherence of these discourses, and then proceed to the exposition of the words.

Three things the apostle hath stated in his preceding arguing and exhortation. First. The evil which he would have the Hebrews carefully to avoid under the preaching of the gospel unto them, or their hearing of the voice of God; and that is the hardening of their hearts. Secondly. The cause hereof, which he persuades them diligently to obviate; which is the deceitfulness of sin. Thirdly. The effect and consequent of that evil, which is apostasy, or a departing from the living God. Hereunto he subjoins one special means for the prevention of this evil in its causes and consequents, and that is mutual exhortation. Now whereas he had drawn all the parts of his discourse, from an example recorded in Moses, and resumed by David in the Psalms, with an intimation that it was by the Holy Ghost in him, put over unto the use of the church under the gospel, and therein in an especial manner of the present Hebrews; he returns to show, that his discourse was fully warranted from that example as recorded originally by Moses, and repeated by the Holy Ghost in the Psalms. Moreover, there were yet remaining some circumstances of the example insisted on, which the Holy Ghost would have us observe for our instruction, which lay not in the way of his former discourse, to collect and observe. These here he gathereth up, and in them gives a great confirmation to the grounds and reasons of his exhortation. This is his general design; the parts of his discourse are as followeth.

1. He calls over the example and his own improvement of it summarily again, to lay it as a foundation of what he had further to infer from it, verse 15.



2. He makes a tacit comparison between them who came out of Egypt under the conduct of Moses, which part of it is expressed, and those who were then called to the profession of the gospel, which is implied, ver. 16.

3. The former sort he expressly distributes in two kinds; the first whereof he describes, First. By their sin. 1. In general, they ‘hardened their hearts and provoked God,’ ver. 16. 2. In particular; this their sin was their unbelief, ver. 18, 19. Secondly. By the respect that God had towards them, which also is two-fold: 1. That he was grieved with them. 2. That he swore in his wrath against them, ver. 17, 18. Thirdly. By their punishment; which in like manner is expressed two ways: 1. Positively, that their carcasses fell in the wilderness, ver. 17. 2. Negatively, that they did not enter into God’s rest, ver. 18, 19. By all which instances, the apostle manifests that his exhortation of them from this example was well founded therein; especially seeing the Psalmist had in a spirit of prophecy prepared it for the use of those days and these. For justly ought they to be jealous over themselves, lest any of them should fall into the like sin, and fall by the same punishment.

4. He manifests, that he doth not insist only on the danger of the sin dehorted from, and the penalty annexed unto it, as though the nature of this example was merely comminatory or threatening; but he declares also partly expressly, and partly by just consequence, the blessed success which they obtained who fell not into the sins of infidelity and apostasy from God; and so strengthens his exhortation from the promises of God, and his faithfulness in them. This he doth in these words, ‘Howbeit, not all that came out of Egypt,’ ver. 16, that is, did not provoke God; which is but one head of the antithesis between the two several sorts mentioned, which is to be understood and preserved in all the other instances. As if he should have said, Some on the other side hardened not their hearts, provoked not God, but believed and obeyed his voice; hence God was not angry with them, swore not against them, their carcasses fell not in the wilderness, but they entered into the rest of God. And thus will it be with them, who shall continue to believe and obey the gospel.

5. He adds a general conclusion, as the sum of what he had evinced out of the words of the Psalm, which also he intended farther to improve, as he doth in the next chapter, ver. 19.

VER. 15—19.—*Εν τῷ λεγέσθαι, σημερον εαν της φωνης αυτου ακουσητε, μη σκληρυνητε τας καρδιας υμων· ὡς εν τῷ παραπικρασμῳ. Τινες γαρ ακουσαντες παρεπικραναν; ἀλλ’ ον παντες οἱ ἐξελθοντες ἐξ Αιγυπτου δια Μωσεως. Τισι δε προσωχθισε τεσσαρακοντα ετη; ουχι τοις ἁμαρτησασιν, ὡν τα κωλα ἐπεσεν εν τη ερημῳ. Τισι δε ωμοσε μη εισελευσεσθαι εις την καταπαυσιν αυτου, ει μη τοις απειθησασι; Καὶ βλεπομεν ὅτι οὐκ ἠδυνήθησαν εισελθειν δι’ ἀπιστιαν.*

Some few differences there are amongst translations; some of them, such as may give light in the sense of the words, may be remarked.

VER. 15.—*Εν τῷ λεγέσθαι*; Beza, interdum dum dicitur: ‘in the

meantime, while it is said.' Interdum, dum, are not amiss supplied, if that be the sense of the words, which generally is supposed so to be. Erasmus, in hoc quod dicitur; 'in this that is said;' or, 'whereas it is said.' Which is suited unto the trajection of the words supposed by the Greeks, before mentioned. Syriac, *איפא דאמר*, sicut dictum est, 'as it is said;' respecting a repetition of the testimony, 'again.' Arias; in dici, that is, in dicendo; 'in saying.' So the Arabic, Vulgar Lat. dum dicitur; and so we, 'while it is said.' I had rather, for reasons after to be mentioned, render the words, 'whereas it is said;' which also is the proper sense of *εν τω λεγεσθαι*. The infinitive with a preposition being often to be construed by the subjunctive mood.

*Εν τω παραπικρασμῳ*. Beza, and the Vulg. Lat. quemadmodum in illa exacerbatione, 'as in that provocation;' expressing the article which Erasmus and most translators omit. Neither is it needful to be expressed; it being a mere repetition of the words, and not a reference unto them, that the apostle hath in hand. Syriac; harden not your hearts, 'to provoke him,' or 'that you should provoke him' to anger, exasperate him: respecting the sin feared in them, when it is the past sin of their forefathers that is intended. Ethiopic, Because he saith, 'To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, for they provoked him who heard.'

VER. 16.—*Τινες γὰρ ἀκουσαντες παρεπικράναν*; the Syriac begins here the interrogatory part of this discourse. 'For who are they that when they have heard provoked him?' But *τινες* is indefinite, and not interrogative, as the following words manifest, for the process is not by a redditive pronoun, but an exceptive adverb.

*Δια Μωσεως*. *בד מושה*, 'by the hands of Moses;' a frequent Hebraism for guidance or conduct.

VER. 17.—*Τισι δε προσωχθισε*; Beza, quibus infensus fuit: 'with whom was he angry or provoked?' Vulg. Lat. infensus est, in the present tense; which is blamed by Erasmus, and corrected by Vatablus and Arias: as that which regards what was long since past. Arabic, as before, 'whom did he curse?' Syr. 'who were a weariness to him?' Of the ground of which variety we spake before, on ver. 10.

*Ὡν τα κῶλα ἐπεσεν*; Beza, quorum artus conciderunt; 'whose members fell.' Vulg. Lat. quorum cadavera prostrata sunt; 'whose carcases were cast down.' Erasmus, quorum membra. Syr. *וגרמיהון*, 'and their bones;' whose members, bodies, bones, carcases fell in the wilderness; of the proper signification of the word I shall speak afterwards.

VER. 18.—*Εἰ μὴ τοις ἀπειθήσασι*. Beza and Erasmus; nisi iis qui non obediunt, 'but unto them who obeyed not.' Arias; si non incredulis, 'if not unto the unbelievers.' Vulg. Lat. iis qui increduli fuerunt; which our Rhemists render, 'but unto them which were incredulous.' Syr. *דא אהמפסו*, qui non acquieverunt; qui assensum non præbuerunt; 'who gave not assent,' that is, to the word or voice of God which they heard.

VER. 15.—The introduction unto the ensuing discourse is in these first words, *εν τω λεγεσθαι*, 'whilst it is said;' so we after the Vulgar

Latin, and sundry other interpreters; dum dicitur, or to what purpose, as was observed. Thus these words are a reintroduction of the former exhortation; and therefore some supply *ὑμιν* or *ἡμιν* unto them; 'to you,' or 'to us;' 'whilst it is said to you, (or us). To-day, if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts:' and so this exhortation is reinforced with new considerations unto the end of the chapter. But this seems not to be the meaning of the apostle, and so not the due connexion or construction of the words. For the same exhortation being before laid down from the Psalmist, and applied unto the Hebrews, ver. 7, 8, with a full improvement of it in the verses following, it is not reasonable to think that he should immediately again repeat it, and that in the same words, only somewhat more obscurely expressed. For in this way the meaning of the words must be; 'while it is day with you, while you enjoy the season that is so called, harden not your hearts.' But this is far more clearly expressed, ver. 13, 'exhort one another DAILY, while it is called to-day,' with respect to what was before spoken; ver. 7, 8. Others, therefore, as Erasmus, render the words by *in hoc quod dicitur*; 'in this that,' or, 'whereas it is said.' And so a new exhortation should be intended, whose application after a digression, in a long hyperbaton unto the end of this chapter, is laid down in the first verses of the next. But this sense also we rejected in opening the general design of these verses. The words, therefore, are to be taken simply and absolutely, so as to indicate a repetition of the former testimony, and its improvement unto some further ends and purposes. *Ἐν τῷ λεγέσθαι*, כִּאֲמֹר, 'whereas it is said;' whereas these words are used in the Psalmist, and are recorded for our instruction. And herein the apostle intends, 1. Not only the repetition of the precise words here mentioned, but by them calls over again the whole story that depends upon them, which is usual in such quotations. Out of the whole, he intends now to take new observations unto his purpose in hand. For there are yet remaining some particular circumstances of the matter of fact insisted on of great importance, and much conducing unto his design, and to the establishment of the conclusion that he lays down, ver. 19, which the apostle in his first view of the words, had not yet considered nor improved, as not lying in the way of his discourse then in hand. For their sakes doth he give this review unto the whole. 2. As of the story, so of his own exhortation upon it, the apostle lays down these words as a recapitulation; which gives influence unto the process of his discourse; 'for some,' saith he, 'when they had heard did provoke,' ver. 16. As if he had said, Consider what hath been spoken, that the same befall not you, which befel them who provoked and perished.

Obs. 1. And we may see hence, that every circumstance of the Scripture is instructive.—The apostle having before urged the authority of the psalm, and the example recorded in it unto his purpose, here he again resumes the words before insisted on, and from sundry circumstances of them, with the matter contained in them, further argues, reasons, and carrieth on his exhortation. For, 1. He considers who they were that sinned and provoked God, wherein he observes

that it was some of them, and not absolutely all who came out of Egypt; and how useful this was unto his purpose, we shall afterwards declare. 2. What became of them who so sinned? 'Their carcasses,' saith he, 'fell in the wilderness;' which circumstance doth not a little set forth the indignation of God against their sin, and his severity against their persons. 3. He presseth in particular the consideration of the oath of God, and manifests its exact accomplishment, that none who shall fall under the same condition may ever expect or hope for an escape. Lastly. From the consideration of the whole, he collects evidently what was the direct and especial sin, that procured so great a destruction, and peremptorily excluded that people out of that rest of God; namely, their unbelief. These are the *παραλειπομενα* that the apostle gathers up in these verses, which belonging unto the subject he insisted on, fell not before orderly under his consideration.

Obs. II. God hath filled the Scripture with truth.—Whence one said well, Adoro plenitudinem Scripturarum; 'I reverence the fulness of the Scripture.' Ps. cxxxviii. 2, 'He hath magnified his word above all his name,' or made it more instructive than any other way or means whereby he hath revealed himself. For not only doth the whole Scripture contain the whole counsel of God, concerning his own glory and worship, our faith, obedience, and salvation; but also every parcel of it hath in it such a depth of truth as cannot by us be perfectly searched into, Ps. cxix. 18, 'Open thou mine eyes,' saith the Psalmist, 'that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.' There are wonderful things in the word, if God be pleased to give us light to see it. It is like a cabinet of jewels, that when you pull out one box or drawer and search into it, you find it full; pull out another, it is full; and when you think you have pulled out all, yet still there are some secret recesses in the cabinet, that if you search further, you will find more. Our apostle seemed to have drawn out all the boxes of this cabinet, but making a second search into the words, he finds all these things treasured up which he hath not before intimated nor touched upon. It was said by some of old, that the Scripture hath fords where a lamb may wade, and depths where an elephant may swim. And it is true in respect of the perspicuity of some places, and the difficulty of others. But the truth is also, that God hath in his grace and wisdom so ordered its concerns, that what, 1. From the nature of the things themselves, which are suited unto the various states, conditions, and apprehensions of the minds of men; 2. What from the manner of their expression, on which a character of divine wisdom is impressed; 3. What from the authority of God putting itself forth in the whole and every particular; 4. What from its being not only *propositio veritatis*, but *vehiculum gratiæ*; many, most, yea, all the particular places of it, and passages in it, are such as through which a lamb may wade safely, and an elephant swim without danger of striking against the bottom. Let any lamb of Christ come in that order, with that reverence which is required, unto the reading or hearing the word of God, the Scripture itself I mean, and he will find no place so dark or difficult, but that it will yield him that refreshment which is suited unto him, and safe for him; and something of God



he will obtain: for either he will find his graces excited, or his mind enlightened, or his conscience peculiarly brought into a reverence of God. And let the wisest, the most learned and experienced person, that seems like an elephant in spiritual skill and strength among the flock, come to the plainest place to search out the mind and will of God in it, if he be humble as well as learned, (which if he be not he is not wise,) he will scarce boast that he hath been at the bottom of it, and hath perfectly comprehended all that is in it; seeing whatever we know, we know but in part. And they may all of them, elephants and lambs, meet at the same passages of this river that makes glad the city of God, these waters of rest and quietness, Ps. xxiii. 2, where the lambs may wade safely, and the elephants swim together. The poorest of the flock, in the right use of means, may take enough for themselves, even suitable direction and refreshment, from those very places of Scripture whose depths the most learned guides of the church are not able to sound or fathom. Not only in several places, but in the same place, text, or testimony of Scripture, there is food meet for the several ages of Christians, whether babes and children, or strong men; with light and direction for all sorts of believers, according to the degrees of their own inward light and grace. It is like manna, which, though men gathered variously according to their strength and appetite, yet every one hath that proportion which suited his own eating. When a learned man, and one mighty in the Scriptures, undertakes the consideration of a place of Scripture, and finds it may be in the issue, that with all his skill and industry, with all his helps and advantages, though attended in the use of them with fervent prayer and holy meditation, he is not able to search it out unto perfection, let him not suppose that such a place will be of no advantage unto them who are not sharers in his advantages, but rather are mean and unlearned; for they may obtain a useful portion for themselves, where he cannot take down all. If any one look on this river of God, like Behemoth on Jordan, ‘trusting that he can draw it up into his mouth,’ or take up the whole sense of God in it, he of all others seems to know nothing of its worth and excellency. And this ariseth, as was observed, principally from the things themselves treated of in the Scripture. For divine and spiritual truths, having God not only as their immediate fountain and spring, but also as their proper and adequate object, there is still somewhat in them that cannot be searched out unto perfection. As he said, ‘Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?’ Job xi. 7. עַד תִּכְלִית שְׂדֵי הַמִּצָּח : find him out to a perfect comprehension; or to a consummation of knowledge, that it should be perfect. This neither the nature of God, nor our condition will admit of. We do at best but follow after, that we may in our measure apprehend that, for which we also are apprehended of Jesus Christ, Phil. iii. 12. And these things are so tempered by divine wisdom unto the faith and light of believers, and therein unto the uses of their consolation and obedience; that something hereof is plainly exhibited to every spiritual eye. Always provided, that their search and inquiry be regulated according to the will of God, in a due sense of the means. For to

this purpose, not only the private endeavours of men are required, but the use also of the public ministry, which is ordained of God to lead men gradually into continual further acquaintance with the will of God in the Scripture.

Some think that it belongs unto the fulness of the Scripture, that each place in it should have various senses, some say three, some four. But this indeed is to empty it of all fulness. For if it have not everywhere one proper determinate sense, it hath none at all. This it hath; but the things which the words of it are signs of, and are expressed by, are so great, deep, and mysterious, and have such various respects unto our light, faith, and obedience, as that it is unsearchably instructive unto us. 'The commandment is exceeding broad,' Ps. cxix. 96, *מאד רחבה*; the word used to express the wideness of the sea; Ps. civ. 25, *הים גדול ורחב ידים*: 'the great sea that hath wide and large arms,' which it stretcheth out to comprehend the whole earth: so doth the command widen and stretch out its arms, to comprehend the whole church of God, to water it, and to make it fruitful. God having enstamped his authority and wisdom upon it, every concernment of it, every consequence from it, every circumstance reported in it, hath its authority in and upon the consciences of men for the end whereunto it is designed. Hence we may observe, that in the quotations of testimonies out of the Old Testament in the New, it is very seldom that the principal aim and intendment of any place is insisted on, but rather some peculiar specialty that is either truly included in the words, or duly educed by just consequence from them.

And this may teach men what diligence they ought to use in searching and studying of the Scripture. Slight inadvertent considerations will be of little use in this matter. Especially is this incumbent on them, whose duty and office it is to declare and expound them unto others. And there is amongst many a great miscarriage in these things, and that both in some that teach, and some that only privately read or meditate on the word. Some men preach with very little regard to the Scripture, either as to the treasure and promptuary of all the truth they are to dispense, or as to the rule whereby they are to proceed. And some are ready to coin notions in their own minds, or to learn them from others, and then attempt to put them upon the Scripture, or obtain countenance from thence unto them. And this is the way of men who invent and vent false opinions and groundless curiosities, which a previous due reverential observance of the word might have delivered them from. And some again, and those too many, superficially take up with that sense of the words which obviously presents itself unto their first consideration, which they improve to their own purpose as they see cause. Such persons as these see little of the wisdom of God in the word; they enter not into those mines of gold; they are but passengers; they do not stand in the 'counsel of God, to hear his word,' Jer. xxiii. 22. It is certain that the diligent search into the Scriptures which is commended unto us, which the worth of them, and the things contained in them requires, and which that fulness and comprehension of truth that is in them doth make necessary, is by most neglected. And the same may be

observed in multitudes of commentators and expositors. They express things otherwise one than another, but for the most part directly the same. Seldom any one ventures into the deep one step beyond what he sees his way beat before him, and as he supposes his ground secure; though a diligent inquirer may often find the most beaten path either to turn away from the fountain, or at least to end and fail before it comes there. I would not speak any thing to encourage men in bold adventures, groundless conjectures, and curious prying into things hidden, secret, and marvellous. But it is humble diligence, joined with prayer, meditation, and waiting on God for the revelation of his will in the study of the Scriptures, upon the account of the fulness of its treasury, and the guiding, instructive virtue wherewithal its concerns are accompanied, that I would press after. And hence I am persuaded, that the church of God hath, through his care and faithfulness, had great advantage from their opposition unto the truth, who, to countenance their own errors, have searched curiously into all the concernments of the words of many testimonies given unto the truth. For though they have done this to their own destruction, yet out of this eater there hath come forth meat. For they have not only given an occasion unto, but imposed a necessity upon us to search with all diligence into every concernment of some most material passages in the Scripture, and that to the clearing of the truth, and the establishing of the minds of many. That which I would press from these considerations grounded on the precedent before us, wherein the apostle, from sundry latent circumstances of the text, draws out observations singularly useful in reference unto our faith and obedience, is, that our utmost diligence, especially in them who are called unto the instruction of others, is required in this neglected, yea despised work of searching the Scriptures. And as a consequent of the neglect hereof, I cannot but say, that I have observed a threefold defect amongst sundry teachers, that were in general intimated before. As, first, When men scarce at any time make use of the Scripture in their preaching, any farther than to make remarks and observations on the obvious sense of any place, neither entering themselves, nor endeavouring to lead their hearers into the secret and rich recesses of them. And secondly, which is worse, When men without the Scripture design their subjects, and project the handling of them, and occasionally only take in the words of the Scripture, and that guided more by the sound than the sense of them. And thirdly, which is worst of all, When men by their own notions, opinions, curiosities, and allegories, rather draw men from the Scripture, than endeavour to lead them unto it. The example of our great apostle will guide us unto other ways of proceeding in our work.

VER. 16.—*For some when they heard (the word) provoked; howbeit not all who came out of Egypt by Moses.*

The intention of the apostle in this and the ensuing verses, as hath been observed, is to confirm his preceding exhortation from the example proposed unto them, and that on the consideration of the va-

rious events that befel their forefathers in the wilderness, with respect on the one hand, unto the promises and threatenings of God, and on the other, to their faith and disobedience. To this end, in this verse he makes a distribution of the persons who came forth of Egypt under the conduct of Moses, and heard the voice of God in the wilderness. They *all* came out of Egypt, they *all* heard the voice of God; howbeit all did not provoke, but only some. Two things then are affirmed of them all in general; First. That they all came out of Egypt by Moses; Secondly. That they all heard the voice of God. And the distribution respects one instance only. Some of these *all* provoked, and some did not. The first thing in general ascribed unto them is, that they came out of Egypt by Moses. A few words, but comprehensive of a great story; a work wherein God was exceedingly glorified, and that people made partakers of greater mercies and privileges than ever any before them from the foundation of the world; the pressing whereof upon the minds and consciences of the people is one main end of the book of Deuteronomy. Moses sums up much of it, ch. iv. 34, ‘Did ever God assay to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs and wonders, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God hath done for you?’

Tantæ Molis erat Judæam condere Gentem.

And besides the other circumstances that the apostle expressly insists upon, this is mentioned here, to intimate what obligation was on this people to attend to the voice of God, in that he brought them up out of Egypt; and therefore it pleased God to preface the whole law of their obedience with the expression of it, ‘I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt,’ *Exod. xx. 2, δια Μωσέως*, by Moses; by the hand of Moses, saith the Syriac. That is, either under his conduct and guidance, or through the prevalency of the miraculous works which God wrought by him. Both these senses the prophet expresseth, *Isa. lxiii. 11, 12*, ‘Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea, with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them to make himself an everlasting name?’ Both the conduct of Moses, and the miracles that God wrought by him, are comprised in their coming up by Moses. And by the way it may be observed, that in this preparation and consultation as it were about new mercies to be bestowed on that people, there are several persons in the Deity introduced treating about it, and calling to remembrance their former actings towards them. He that speaks is the person of the Father, whose love and compassion are celebrated *ver. 7—9*, as they are everywhere peculiarly ascribed unto that person. And he that is spoken of, and as it were inquired after to appear again in the work of their salvation, which peculiarly belongs unto him, he is called the Angel of his Presence, *ver. 9*, and the Lord himself, *ver. 14*, that is, the person of the Son, unto whom the actual deliverance of the church in every



strait doth belong ; and he is therefore here as it were inquired after. And with reference unto this work by Moses it is said, ‘And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved,’ Hos. xii. 13. And this belongeth unto the whole people, none excepted. Secondly. This also is ascribed unto them, that *they* heard ; for whereas it is said, ‘Some when they heard provoked ;’ it is not meant that some only heard, and provoked ; but of them that heard, some only provoked. What they heard was declared before ; the voice of God, as it is said, ‘To-day if you will hear his voice.’ And this may be taken either strictly, for the hearing of the voice of God at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, when the whole congregation heard קולות, those voices of God in thundering and dreadful agitations of the mount wherewith it was accompanied, and the voice of God himself whereby the law was pronounced, that is, an audible voice framed for that purpose by the ministry of angels. Or it may be taken more largely for a participation in all those instructions which God granted unto them in the wilderness. There seems indeed to be an especial respect unto the giving of the law, though not merely the promulgation of the ten words on Sinai, but the whole system of precepts and ordinances of worship that attended ; for therein they were evangelized as we, chap. iv. 2. And also their hearing is spoken of as that which was past, ‘When they had heard,’ before their provoking, which yet signally happened in the second year after their coming out of Egypt. This then was the voice of God which they heard.

The sin which is appropriated unto some of them who thus came out of Egypt and heard, is that *παρεπικραναν*, they provoked ; that is, God, whose voice or word, or law they heard. The meaning of this word, and the nature of the sin expressed by it, have been spoken to before. I shall add one place that explains it, Hos. xii. 14. *הכעיס אפרים המרורים*, ‘Ephraim hath provoked bitternesses ;’ that is, very bitterly. Great provocations have a bitterness in them, as the word here denotes, which causeth God to loath the provokers.

By these considerations doth the apostle enforce his exhortation before insisted on ; and show the necessity of it. This is, that they would diligently attend unto the word of the gospel, and steadfastly continue in the profession thereof. For, saith he, when the people of old heard the voice of God in that dispensation of law and grace which was suited unto their condition, some of them provoked God ; whereas they may do so also who hear his voice in the dispensation of the gospel, therefore doth it highly concern them to take care, that this be not the event of their mercy therein.

Lastly. The apostle adds expressly a limitation, with respect to the persons who heard and provoked ; ‘Howbeit not all.’ In his preceding discourse he had expressed the sin and punishment of the people indefinitely, so as at first view to include the whole generation in the wilderness, without exception of any. Here, out of the story, he puts in an exception of some even of them who came out of Egypt under the conduct of Moses. And there are three sorts of persons who lay claim to an interest in the privilege. First. Those who being

under twenty years of age, were not numbered in the wilderness of Sinai, in the second year after their coming up out of Egypt, Num. i. 1, 3. For of those that were then numbered, there was not a man left save Caleb and Joshua, when the people was numbered again in the plains of Moab, by Moses and Eleazar, ch. xxvi. 63, 64. These were they who died because of their provocation; those who before were under twenty years old being now the body of the people that was numbered. Secondly. The tribe of Levi; for the threatening and oath of God was against all of them that were numbered in the wilderness of Sinai, Num. xiv. 29, and the account is accordingly given in of the death of the numbered ones only, ch. xxvi. 63, 64. Now in the taking of that first muster-roll, Moses was expressly commanded not to take the number of the Levites, ch. i. 47—49. However, I much fear by the course of the story, that the generality of this tribe fell also. Thirdly. Caleb and Joshua; and it is certain that these are principally if not solely intended. Now, the reason why the apostle expresseth this limitation of his former general assertion is, that he might enforce his exhortation, with the example of them who believed, and obeyed the voice of God; and who thereon both enjoyed the promises, and entered into the rest of God; so that he takes his argument not only from the severity of God, which at first view seems only to be represented in his instance and example, but also from his faithfulness and grace, which are included therein. And we may now a little farther consider what is contained in these words for our instruction. As,

Obs. I. First. Many hear the word or voice of God to no advantage, but only to aggravate their sin.—Their hearing renders their sin provoking unto God, and destructive to their own souls. ‘Some, when they heard provoked.’ Daily experience is a sufficient confirmation of this assertion. The word of God is preached unto us, the voice of God sounds among us. As our apostle speaks, ch. iv. 2, ‘Unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them;’ and that with many advantages on our part. They heard the gospel indeed, but obscurely and in law-language, hard to be understood; we have it plainly, openly, and without parables declared unto us. They heard the voice of him that spake on the earth: we his, who speaks from heaven. But what is the issue of God’s thus dealing with us? Plainly, some neglect the word, some corrupt it, some despise it, few mix it with faith, or yield obedience unto it. The dispensers of it may, for the most part, take up the complaint of the prophet, ‘Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?’ Isa. liii. 1. And unto many, after their most serious and sedulous dealing with them in the name of God, they may take up the apostle’s close with the unbelieving Jews, Acts xiii. 41, ‘Behold ye despisers, wonder and perish.’ Most of them unto whom our Saviour preached, perished. They got nothing by hearing his doctrine through their unbelief, but an aggravation of their sin, and the hastening of their ruin. So he told Capernaum, and the rest of the towns wherein he had wrought his miracles, and to whom he had preached the gospel. His presence and preach-

ing for a while, brought them into a condition above that of Jerusalem: they were lifted up to heaven, but their unbelief under it, brought them into a condition worse than that of Sodom, they were brought down to hell, Matt. xi. 21—24. It is, I confess, a great privilege for men to have the word preached unto them, and to hear it, Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. But privileges are as men use them. In themselves, they are of worth, and to be prized. But unto us, they are as they are used. Hence the gospel comes unto some 'a savour of death unto death,' 2 Cor. ii. 16. Yea, Christ himself, in his whole ministry was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, a gin and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Isa. viii. 14; Luke ii. 34. And the enjoyment of any part of the means of grace, is but a trial. And when any rest therein, they do but boast in the putting on of their harness, not knowing what will be the end of the battle. And let none mistake unto whom the word of God comes, as it did unto this people in the wilderness. They are engaged; and there is no coming off but conquerors, or ruined. If they receive it not, it will be the aggravation of their sins, the eternal destruction of their souls. The reasons why it will do so, I have insisted on, in the exposition of ch. ii. ver. 1—3.

Obs. II. In the most general and visible apostasies of the church, God still reserves a remnant unto himself, to bear witness unto him and for him, by their faith and obedience: 'They provoked; howbeit not all.'—They were indeed many who provoked, but not all. A few they were, but yet some there were who inherited the promise. The professing church in the world, was never nearer ruin than at this time. Once, had Moses stood out of the way, had he not with all his might of faith and zeal abode in the breach; God had disinherited them all, and utterly destroyed them, and reserved him only for a new stock or spring, Exod. xxxii. 9, 10, 14; Ps. cvi. 23. God had indeed at this time a great secret people in the children of that generation. But the visible professing church consisted principally in the men that were numbered; and it is not to be supposed, that their wives were much behind their husbands in their murmurings, being more naturally than they, in straits and difficulties, prone to such miscarriages, by reason of their fears. And quantillum abfuit, how near was this whole church to destruction! how near to apostasy! How many so ever retained their faith, only Caleb and Joshua retained their profession. When God of old brought a flood upon the world for their wickedness, the professing church that had been very great and large in the posterity of Seth, was reduced to eight persons, and one of them a cursed hypocrite. And once Elijah could see no more in Israel but himself. There were indeed then seven thousand latent believers, but scarce another visible professor. And it is not hard to imagine how little true faith, regularly professed, there was in the world, when Christ was in the grave. And under the fatal apostasy foretold in the Revelation, those that kept the testimony of Jesus are reduced to so small a number, as that they are spoken of under the name of two witnesses. But yet in all these hazardous trials, and reductions of the numbers of professors, God always hath maintained,

and ever will, a remnant, true, faithful, pure, and undefiled, unto himself. This he hath done, and this he will do,

1. To maintain his own kingdom in the world. Satan by his temptations, and the entrance of sin, hath greatly defaced the beauty, glory, and order of that kingdom which God first erected in the world, to be governed by the law of creation. But God still retains his sovereignty, in it and over it, in all its disorder, by his all-disposing providence. But that he might lose nothing by this attempt of his adversary, as not in power or interest, so neither in honour or glory, he erected in the first promise a new kingdom of grace. Unto this kingdom he gives his son to be the head; 'the head over all things unto the church,' Eph. i. 22, and he gives the church unto him to have therein an everlasting dominion, enduring through all ages, so that of the increase of his rule and government therein there should be no end, Isa. ix. 7. Now this kingdom cannot be thus preserved, unless some be always by real saving grace and the profession of it, kept and maintained as subjects thereof. The kingdom of providence, indeed, under all its alterations, is natural unto God and necessary. It implies a contradiction that there should be a creature, and God not the sovereign Lord of it. But this kingdom of grace depends on the purpose and faithfulness of God. He hath taken upon himself the continuance and preservation of it unto the end. Should it at any time totally fail, Christ would be a king without a kingdom, a head without a body, or cease to be the one or the other. Wherefore God will secure some, that neither by the abuse of their own liberty, nor by the endeavours of the gates of hell, shall ever be drawn off from their obedience. And this God in his grace, power, and faithfulness will effect, to make good his promises unto Christ, which he multiplied unto that purpose from the foundation of the world.

2. Should all faith utterly fail in the earth, should all professors provoke God and apostatize from him, all gracious intercourse between the Holy Spirit and mankind in this world, would be at an end. The work of the Spirit is to convert the souls of men unto God, to sanctify them to be temples for himself to dwell in, to guide, teach, lead, and comfort them by supplies of his grace. Suppose then that no saving faith or obedience should be left in the earth, this work of the Spirit of God must utterly fail and cease. But this consisteth not with his glorious immutability and power. He hath undertaken a work, and he will not faint in it, or give it over one moment until it be accomplished, and all the elect brought unto God. If therefore the natural children of Abraham fail, he will out of the stones and rubbish of the Gentiles, raise up a living temple unto God, wherein he may dwell, and provide a remnant for him on the earth.

3. God will do this for the work that he hath for some of his in all ages and seasons to do in the world. And this is great and various. He will have some always to conflict with his adversaries and overcome them, and therein give testimony to the power of his grace and truth. Could sin and Satan drive all true faith, grace, and obedience out of the world, they would complete their victory. But so long as they have any to conflict withal, against whom they cannot prevail,



themselves are conquered. The victory is on the other side, and Satan is sensible that he is under the curse. Wherever faith is, there is a victory, 1 John v. 4. By this doth God make his remnant as a brazen wall that his enemies shall fight against in vain, Jer. xv. 20. Be they therefore never so few, they shall do the work of God, in conquering Satan and the world through the blood of the Lamb.

4. God will always have a testimony given to his goodness, grace, and mercy. As in the ways of his providence, he never left himself without witness, Acts xiv. 17; no more will he be in the ways of his grace. Some he will have to give testimony to his goodness, in the calling, pardoning, and sanctifying of sinners, and who shall do this, if there be none on earth made partakers of that grace? They are proper witnesses who testify what they know, and have experience of.

5. And lastly. God will always have a revenue of especial glory out of the world, in and by his worship. And this also must necessarily cease and fail, should not God preserve to himself a remnant of them that truly fear him.

And if this be the way of God's dealing, we may see what becomes sometimes of that which the Papists make a note of the church; namely, number and visibility. He that would chose his party by tale, would scarce have joined himself with Caleb and Joshua against the consent of about six hundred thousand men, who cried out to stone them, because they were not of their mind. God's way, indeed, is always to preserve some, but sometimes his way is to reserve but a few; as we have seen in sundry instances before mentioned.

Again, It is evident from whence it is, that the church of God hath passed through so many trials, hazards, and dangers, and yet hath not to this day, at any time utterly been prevailed against. It escaped of old, when Cain slew Abel; 'when all flesh had corrupted its ways,' and God brought the flood upon ungodly men: it escaped then in the family of Noah, as it did afterwards in that of Abraham; so it did in the wilderness, by the fidelity of Moses, Caleb, and Joshua. Since the establishment of the Christian church, it is known what dreadful opposition it hath been exercised withal. At one time the world groaned, admiring to see itself surprised into Arianism. Afterwards, all wondered after the beast, and none were suffered to live that received not his mark; a high renunciation of the authority of Jesus Christ. Yet, from the jaws of all these hazards, these deaths, hath the church been preserved, and triumphed against all oppositions. God hath undertaken its preservation, and he will make it good to the uttermost. He hath given the Lord Christ power and authority to secure his own interest and concerns in the earth. And he sends the Spirit to convert and sanctify his elect, and will do so until the consummation of all things. A thread of infinite wisdom, care, and faithfulness, hath run along in this matter from the beginning hitherto, and it shall not be cut off or broken. And this may also give us satisfaction and security for the future, as to that remnant of Jacob which lies in the midst; in the bowels of many nations, it shall be

preserved. He spake proudly who encouraged the pilot in a storm, with *Cæsaris fortunam vehis*, fear not, thou 'carriest the fortune of Cæsar;' which, though not then, yet soon after failed him. Believers are engaged in a bottom, that hath Christ in it, and his interest, and the faithfulness of God to secure its safe arrival in the harbour of eternal rest and peace. There is at this day a dreadful appearance of an opposition to the city of God. Paganism, Mahometanism, Popery, Atheism, with sundry gross heresies, are in combination, as it were, against it. The contribution also of strength and craft, which they have from the lusts and worldly interests of men, is incredible. But yet we see that in the midst of all these storms and fears, the Lord is pleased to preserve a remnant to himself, neither themselves nor their adversaries knowing how: and upon the grounds mentioned, he will assuredly continue to do so to the end.

Obs. III. God lays a few, oft-times a very few of his secret ones in the balance against the greatest multitude of rebels and transgressors. They that provoked God were about six hundred thousand men, and upon the matter two only opposed them. But in the language of the Holy Ghost, all that great multitude were but some; some, not all. The principal part was preserved in those who were obedient. They are his portion, his inheritance, his jewels, dear to him as the apple of his eye, and deservedly preferred unto the greatest heap of chaff and rubbish.

VER. 17, 18.—IN the two next verses, the apostle proceedeth to evince the necessity, and enforce the use of his preceding exhortation, from the circumstances of the example insisted on; and this he doth by way of interrogation. He proposeth in them, questions on the matter of fact, and answers them from what is either directly expressed, or undeniably included in the words insisted on.

VER. 17, 18.—*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 unto them that believed not?*

The kind of arguing here used by the apostle, is not simply interrogatory, but it is that which is said to be by interrogation and 'subjection'; that is, when a question is drawn, and an answer substituted out of the same matter, which hath such an efficacy for conviction and persuasion, that the great Roman orator seldom omits it in any of his orations. And it is so especially when the question proposed is *interrogatio rei*, an inquiry into a matter of fact, and the answer returned is *interrogatio λεξεως*, in form of speech an interrogation, but really an answer. Such is the apostle's manner of arguing here. The interrogation, ver. 17, 'With whom was he grieved forty years?' is *interrogatio rei*: and the answer returned is in an interrogatory form of speech, 'Was it not with them that sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?'

The words of the interrogation were explained on ver. 10, where-

unto the reader is referred. In this repetition of them, the design of the apostle is to fix on the minds of the Hebrews, the consideration of the people's sin, and God's dealing with them thereon.

The answer unto this first inquiry, consists in a double description of them with whom God was so long grieved or displeased: first, by their sin—'Was it not with them that sinned?' secondly, by their punishment—'whose carcases fell in the wilderness.'

And we may consider first what is included, and then what is expressed in this answer. For the first, it is plainly included that God was not thus displeased with them all. Let not any apprehend that God took a causeless distaste at that whole generation, and so cast them off, and destroyed them promiscuously without distinction. As they were some only, and not all, that provoked; so it was with some only, and not all, that God was displeased. And two things do thence necessarily ensue to his purpose and advantage. First. That his exhortation is enforced by showing, that it was not an ordinary promiscuous event that befel their fathers in the wilderness, but that they passed under a distinguishing dispensation of God towards them, according to their deportment, as they also were like to do. Secondly. That they might also consider, that with those who sinned not, who provoked not, God was not displeased, but according to his promise, they entered into his rest; which promise, in a more excellent sense, still remains for their benefit, if they were not disobedient.

The first thing expressed in the words, or the first part of the description of them with whom God was displeased, is their sin: *τοῖς ἁμαρτησασιν*, 'was it not with them that sinned?' Their sin is first mentioned in general, and then the particular nature of it is afterwards declared. There were three sorts of sins that the people were guilty of in the wilderness. First. They were universally guilty of personal sins in their distinct capacities. And these may justly be supposed to be great and many. But these are not they which are here intended. For if in this sense God should mark iniquity, none could stand, Ps. cxxx. 3. Neither were they free from sins of this nature, who are here exempted from being objects of God's displeasure. Secondly. Especial provocations, wherein great numbers of the people were engaged, but not the whole congregation. Such was the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their accomplices, who were many and great, even two hundred and fifty princes, famous in the congregation, men of renown, Num. xvi. 2; the idolatry and adulteries of Peor, which infected many of the princes and people, with the like instances. Thirdly. General sins of the whole congregation, which consisted in their frequent murmurings and rebellions, which came to a head as it were in that great provocation upon the return of the spies, Num. xiv., when they not only provoked God by their own unbelief, but encouraged one another to destroy those two persons, Joshua and Caleb, who would not concur in their disobedience: 'all the congregation bade stone them with stones,' ver. 10. This distinction was observed by the daughters of Zelophehad, in their address for an inheritance among their brethren. 'Our father,' say they,

‘died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them that gathered themselves together against the Lord in the company of Korah, but died in his own sin,’ Num. xxvii. 3. They acknowledge him guilty of personal sins, and deny not but that he joined in the general provocation of the whole congregation; but only deny that he had a hand in those especial provocations, on which God fixed an eminent mark of his displeasure, by cutting off the provokers with fearful, sudden, and signal judgments; whereas others were gradually consumed by death in a natural way. But it was this last kind of sin, in the guilt whereof the whole congregation was equally involved, that the apostle intends in this expression, ‘was it not with them that sinned?’ Observe,

Obs. I. God is not displeased with any thing in his people but sin; or, sin is the only proper object of God’s displeasure, and the sinner for sin’s sake.—‘With whom was he displeased, but with them that sinned?’ I need not set up my candle in the sun of this truth. I wish it were as seriously considered practically, as it is confessed and acknowledged notionally. Every revelation of God by his word or works bears witness hereunto; and every man hath that witness hereof in himself, as will not admit him to doubt of it. The nature of God, the law of God, the light of conscience, the sense that is in all of a judgment, at present fixed, and certainly future, testify unto it. And doubtless great is the power of sin, and the craft of Satan, which prevail with most to continue in sin, notwithstanding this uncontrollable conviction.

Obs. II. Public sins, sins in societies, are great provocations of God.—It was not for their private and personal sins that God was thus provoked with this people, but for their conspiracy, as it were in sin. The reasons hereof are manifest, and I shall not insist upon them. God help cities and nations, especially such as hear the voice of God, well to consider it; and all of us to take heed of national prevailing sins.

Secondly. The apostle describes these persons by their punishment ‘Whose carcases fell in the wilderness.’ *Κωλα*: how variously this word is rendered by translators, I have shown before. That which the apostle intendeth to express, is the words of God unto the people, Num. xiv. 29, במדבר הזה יפלו פגריכם: ‘in this wilderness shall your carcases fall;’ which is emphatically repeated, ver. 32. פגריכם אהם יפלו במדבר הזה, ‘your carcases, you, shall fall in this wilderness.’ אהם, *you*, is emphatically added, as to apply the threatening to their persons immediately, so to show them it should be their lot, and not their children’s, as they murmured; as also to express a *πᾶτος* and indignation in the delivery. פגר is from פגר, ‘to be weary, faint, cold,’ *frigore enecari*, (whence is that word) ‘slothful.’ Thence is פגר, *peger*, ‘a dead carcase, a thing cold, without life, heat, or motion.’ It is used sometimes for the carcase of a beast commonly called נבלה, ‘That which is fallen;’ so Gen. xv. 11, most frequently for the carcases of men. Elias Levita supposeth that it denotes only the carcases of wicked men. And indeed it is most commonly, if not always so used; see Amos viii. 3; Isa. xiv. 19, xxxiv. 3, lxvi. 24; Jer. xxxiii. 5; Ezek. xliii. 9. There seems to be an exception unto this observation



of Elias, from Jer. xli. 9, 'And the pit whereinto Ishmael cast, *אֶת כָּל פְּרִי הָאָשִׁים*, all the carcasses of the men whom he slew.' But whether this be of force against the observation of Elias, I know not. Those men might be wicked for aught appears in the text. Now this word the LXX. render sometimes by *σωμα*, 'a body,' Gen. xv. 11, *σωμα νεκρον*, 'a dead body,' Isa. xxxvii. 36, sometimes by *νεκρος*, 'a dead person,' 2 Chron. xx. 24; Jer. xxxiii. 5, *πτωμα*, *cadaver*, 'a carcass,' Ezek. vi. 5, but most frequently by *κωλον*, the word here used by the apostle; as, Num. xiv. 29, 32, 33, the place here referred unto. *Κωλον* is 'a member,' *membrum* or *artus*, which words are of the same import and signification; and the whole *compages* of them is the same with the body. As Tydeus in Statius,

Odi hos artus, fragilemque hunc corporis usum.

And the same author again of Agylleus,

Luxuriant artus, diffusaque sanguine laxo  
Membra natant.

Hence interpreters promiscuously render the word here by *membra* or *artus*. *Κωλα* are principally *crura et lacerti*, the greater members of the body, arms, legs, and thighs, whose bones are greatest, and of longest duration. In the singular number, therefore, it signifies not the whole body, but some distinct member of it; and thence it is translated into the use of speech, and denotes a part of a sentence, a sub-distinction. But *κωλα* in the plural number may denote the whole carcass. I suppose the *פְּרִי*, or carcasses, of the people, may here be called their *κωλα*, 'their members or their bones,' as Suidas renders the word, because probably in those great plagues and destructions that befel them, their rebellious carcasses were many of them left on the ground in the wilderness, where consuming, their greater bones lay scattered up and down. So the Psalmist complains, that it befel them at another season: Ps. cxli. 7, 'Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood on the earth.' In such a work, pieces of the hewed or cleft wood will lie scattered up and down, here and there, in some places covering the earth: so did their bones; and said to be at the mouth of the grave, because the opening of the earth is that which gives a grave to the carcasses of men. The appearance and spectacle hereof, the Roman historian represents in the carcasses, or bones rather, of the legions cut off by Arminius in Germany with Quintilius Varus, and left in the open field, when six years after Germanicus brought his army to the same place. In medio campi albetia ossa (*κωλα*) ut fugerant, ut restiterant, disiecta vel aggerata; adiacebant fragmina telorum, equorumque artus, Tacit. Ann. lib. 1. 'In the midst of the field, bones grown white, scattered, or heaped, as they had fled or resisted; by them lay pieces of broken weapons, with the members of horses.' A great and sore destruction or judgment this is accounted amongst men; and therefore is it made a representation of hell, Isa. lxvi. 24, 'They shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be

quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.' Some of the Jews refer these words to the victory they fancy they shall have against Gog and Magog, when they come to fight against their Messiah. It is literally much more true concerning the believing Gentiles, whose calling is expressly foretold and prophesied of in the foregoing verses, who saw the severe judgment of God on the unbelieving Jews, when in the fatal destruction of their city and temple, their carcases were truly cast out on the earth, and were an abhorring unto all flesh.' But here is also a representation of the final judgment of the last day, and everlasting punishment of the wicked, whereunto some of the words are applied, Mark ix. 44, which the Targum on the place also applies them unto. The casting therefore out of carcases to be beheld and abhorred, is a sore judgment. And the Jews suppose that all those who died under God's displeasure in the wilderness, were shut out of heaven or the world to come, Tractat. Saned. Perek. 10. They inquire expressly who shall, and who shall not be saved; and at once they deal pretty liberally with themselves: כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא, 'All Israel shall have a part in the world to come;' which they prove out of those words of the prophet, 'and thy people shall be all righteous,' Isa. lx., which indeed would do it to the purpose, could they prove themselves all to be the people there intended. But afterwards they lay in many exceptions to this rule, and among the rest, דור המדבר הבא, 'The generation in the wilderness have no portion in the world to come;' and they add their reasons, שנא במדבר הזה יחמו ושם ימותו, 'Because it is said, In the wilderness shall ye be consumed, and there shall ye die.' The redoubling of the expression, 'ye shall be consumed, ye shall die,' they would have to signify death, first temporal, then eternal.

Their carcases, *επιστοι*, prostrata sunt, say some, were 'cast down;' properly *ceciderunt*, 'fell,' that is, penally, an aggravation of their destruction. He doth not say, *they died*, but their carcases *fell*, which intimates contempt and indignation; and so do the words denote in the story itself. And this is the second part of the description that is given of those with whom God was displeased for their sin: 'Their carcases fell in the wilderness;' the use whereof to the apostle's purpose hath been declared. And we may see, that,

Obs. III. God sometimes will make men who have been wickedly exemplary in sin, righteously exemplary in their punishment.—'They sinned,' saith the apostle, 'and provoked God, and their carcases fell in the wilderness.' To what end is this reported? It is that we might take heed, that we fall not after the same example of unbelief, ch. iv. 11. There is an example in unbelief, and there is an example in the fall and punishment of unbelievers. This subject our apostle handles at large, 1 Cor. x. 5, 8—11. The substance of his discourse in that place is, that God made the people in the wilderness, upon their sinful provocations, examples of his severity unto them that should afterwards live ungodly. And the apostle Peter declares the same truth in the instances of the angels that sinned, of the old world, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, 2 Pet. ii. 4--6. God made them *ὑποδειγμα*, an express example and representation of what should be done in

others. And in the law of old, the reason why punishment was to be indispensably inflicted on presumptuous sinners, was that others might hear, and fear, and do so no more. Besides, in that government of the world by his providence, which God is pleased to continue, all ages and stories are full of instances of exemplary judgments and punishments, inflicted on such as have been notorious in their provocations; he thereby revealing his wrath from heaven against the ungodliness of men, Rom. i. 18. And oftentimes those judgments have had in them a direct testimony against, and discovery of the nature of the sins revenged by them. Our Saviour indeed hath taught us, that we are not to fix particular demerits and sins by our own surmises, on persons that may be overtaken with dismal providences in the world, merely because they were so overtaken. Such was the condition of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, and the eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them; of whom he denies, that from what befel them we have any ground to judge that they were greater sinners than others, Luke xiii. 3, 5. This only in such cases may be concluded; namely, that such persons were sinners as all are, and therefore righteously obnoxious at any time unto any severe judgment of God.

And the reason of God's singling them out in such a manner, is that mentioned in the same place by our Saviour; namely, to declare and proclaim unto others in the like condition with themselves, that unless they repented, they should all likewise perish. And so it befel this people who neglected these instructive examples. Within a few years, thousands and ten thousands of them had their blood as it were mingled with their sacrifices, being slain by multitudes in the temple, the place of their offerings, and no less number of them perishing in the fall and ruin of their walls and buildings, battered down by the Romans. But in such cases, God takes out men to be instructive in their sufferings unto others in a way of sovereignty, as he caused the man to be born blind, without any respect unto particular demerit in himself or his parents, John ix. 2, 3. But yet this hinders not but that when men's sins are visible, they are, as the apostle speaks, open before hand, and going before to judgment, 1 Tim. v. 24. They are *προδηλοι*, manifest to the judgment of all men, before they come to be laid open at the last day. And they go to judgment before the sinners themselves are brought thither. And with respect unto such as these, God may, and doth oftentimes so connect provoking sins, and extraordinary judgments or punishments, that men cannot but see and own the relation that is between them. Such were the sins of the old world and the flood, of Sodom and the fire, of Dathan and the earth opening its mouth to receive him, with the rest of the instances frequently enumerated in the Scripture. Such are all stories and reports of what has happened in former times, with which the world is filled; and our own days have abounded with pregnant instances to the same purpose. And God will do thus,

First. To bear witness to his own holiness and severity. In the ordinary course of the dispensation of his providence, God gives constant testimony unto his goodness and patience. 'He causeth his sun to

rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,' Matt. v. 45. He never left himself 'without witness, in that he did men good, and gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness,' Acts xiv. 17. This constant testimony doth God give unto his goodness and patience amongst men; and his design therein is to bring them to an acknowledgment of him, or to leave them in their wickedness utterly without excuse. For, under the enjoyment of these things, he leaves the generality of mankind; by whom, for the most part, they are abused, and God in them is despised. But things will not end so. He hath appointed a day wherein he will call them over again, and will require his corn, and wine, and oil, his health, his peace, his plenty, his prosperity, at the hands of men. Yet, though this be his ordinary way of proceeding, he doth not absolutely commit over his severity and indignation against sin, to be manifested and asserted by his written threatenings and comminations of things future. He will 'sometimes rise up to his work, his strange work, his act, his strange act,' Isa. xxviii. 21. That is, to execute great and fearful present judgments on sinners; which, though it be, and seem a strange work, seldom coming to pass or effected, yet it is his work, a work that becomes him, and whereby he will manifest his holiness and severity. He reveals his judgments from heaven against the ungodliness of men, Rom. i. 18. And this he doth by exemplary punishments on exemplary sinners.

Secondly. God doth this to check and control the atheism that is in the hearts of men. Many whilst they see wicked men, especially open and profligate sinners, prospering in a constant course, are ready to say in their hearts, that there is no God, or that he hath forsaken the earth; or with them, Job ix. 24. 'The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, if not, where and who is he?' where is he, or who is he, that should punish them in or for all their enormous provocations? or, as they, Mal. ii. 17, 'Where is the God of judgment?' And this encourageth men in their wickedness, as the wise man expressly tells us. '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,' Eccles. viii. 11. The consideration hereof, makes them cast off all regard of God, and to pursue the lusts of their hearts according to the power of their hand. To stay men in this course, God sometimes hurls a thunderbolt amongst them, casts out an amazing judgment, in a way of vengeance on some notable transgressors. When men have long travelled, or have been long upon a voyage at sea, if they meet with nothing but smiles of sun and wind, they are apt to grow careless and negligent, as though all must needs be smooth to their journey's end. But if at any time they are surprised with an unexpected clap of thunder, they begin to fear lest there be a storm yet behind. The language of nature upon such judgments as we speak of, is, *est profecto Deus, qui hæc videt et gubernat*; or, as the Psalmist expresseth it, 'Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.' And were it not that God did sometimes awe the world with his strange works of vengeance which he executes at his pleasure,



so that great sinners can never be secure one moment from them ; it is to be feared that the atheism that is in the hearts of men would bring them every-where to the condition of things before the flood ; when the ' whole earth was filled with violence, and all flesh had corrupted its ways.' But these judgments do secretly influence them with that dread and terror, which prescribe some bounds to the lusts of the worst of men.

Thirdly. God will do thus for the encouragement of them whom he hath designed to bear witness to himself in the world against the wickedness of men. The principal work of the servants of God in the world, is to bear witness unto God ; his being, his holiness, his righteousness, his goodness, his hatred of sin. For this cause are they for the most part mocked, despised, and persecuted in the world. So saith our apostle. ' For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God,' 1 Tim. iv. 10. And sometimes they are ready to faint in their trials. It is unto them ' like a sword in their bones, while their enemies say unto them, Where is your God ?' Ps. xlii. 10. They have indeed a sure word of providence to trust unto, and to rest upon ; and that which is able to carry them safely and quietly through all temptations and oppositions. But yet God is pleased sometimes to relieve and refresh their spirits by confirming their testimony from heaven, bearing witness to himself and his holiness by his visible tremendous judgments upon openly notorious provokers. So saith the Psalmist, ' God shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living and in his wrath ;' in the midst of their days he shall bring judgment and destruction upon them, fearfully, suddenly, unexpectedly, unavoidably, like a whirlwind. And what then ? ' The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance, he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked,' Ps. lviii. 9, 10. That is, God's executing of dreadful judgments on wicked men to their destruction, shall justify them in their testimony and profession, and wash off all aspersions cast upon them, which shall cause them to rejoice, or cleanse their own ways, upon the example set before them, and the mouth of iniquity shall at least for a season be stopped.

The *first* use hereof is that which Hannah proposeth, 1 Sam. ii. 3, ' Talk no more so exceeding proudly ; let not arrogance come out of your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.' Let men take heed how they arrogantly boast themselves in their sin and wickedness, which is too common with provoking-sinners ; for God is a God of knowledge and judgment. If they regard not the judgment that is to come, but put the evil day far away from them, yet let them take heed lest God single them out unto some signal vengeance in this world, to make them examples unto those that shall afterwards live ungodly. It is to me strange, that some men, considering their course and ways, should be so stupidly secure, as not to fear every moment, lest the earth should open and swallow them up, as it did Dathan and Abiram, or that thunder or lightning from heaven should consume them as it did Sodom, or that one judgment or other should overtake them as they are acting their villanies. But they are secure, and will cry peace, until they are surprised with sudden destruction.

*Secondly.* Let us learn to glorify God because of his righteous judgments. The saints in heaven go before us in this work and duty, Rev. xi. 15—18, xv. 3, 4, xix. 1, 2. So they did of old in the earth, as in that signal instance of the song of Moses upon the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, Exod. xv. 1—20. And God requires it at our hands. Not that we should rejoice in the misery of men, but we should do so in the vindication of the glory of God, which is infinitely to be preferred before the impunity of profligate sinners.

Obs. IV. Great destructions in a way of judgment and vengeance, are instituted representations of the judgment and vengeance to come. I dare not say with the Jews, that all this provoking generation perished eternally, and that none of them shall have a blessed lot or portion in the world to come. They might repent of their sins and provocations. The oath of God was to their temporal punishment, not to spiritual impenitency. There is a repentance which may prevail for the removal, or at least deferring of a temporal judgment threatened and denounced, if not confirmed by oath; which yet is not prevalent to free the sinner from eternal ruin. Such was the repentance of Ahab, and probably that of Nineveh. And there is a repentance and humiliation that may free the soul from eternal ruin, and yet not take off a temporal judgment threatened against it. Such was the repentance of David upon his adultery. The Lord put away the guilt of his sin, and told him that he should not die penally, but would not be intreated to spare the life of the child, nor to spare him in those other sore afflictions which afterwards befel him on the same account. And thus might it be with some, yea, with many of these Israelites. God might give them repentance to make way for the pardon and forgiveness of their persons; nevertheless, he would so far take vengeance on their inventions, as to cause their carcasses to fall in the wilderness. But yet this must be acknowledged, that their punishment was a great representation of the future judgment, wherein ungodly unbelievers shall be cast off for ever. For, as they fell visibly under the wrath and displeasure of God, and their carcasses were cast out in the wilderness as a loathsome abomination, so their judgment overtook them under this formal consideration, that they were excluded out of the rest of God. And these things together give an evident resemblance of the judgment to come, when sinners shall perish eternally under the wrath of God, and be for ever excluded out of his rest. So Jude affirms the same of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, ver. 7. And hence, many of God's great judgments in this world, are set out under such expressions, as that the teaching of the dread of the final judgment at the last day, seems principally to be intended in them. See Isa. xxxiv. 1—5; Dan. vii. 9—11; Matt. xxiv. 29; Heb. x. 26, 27; 2 Pet. iii. 5—7; Rev. vi. 13—17.

VER. 18.—The apostle pursues his design yet further, in making application of the example laid down and insisted on unto the Hebrews, by way of interrogation, as to one circumstance more. And hereunto an answer is returned by him, and that such as is evidently supplied out of the story itself. Here, also, he discovers what was that particu-

lar sin, which was the ground of all their other transgressions and miscarriages, the declaration of the danger and guilt whereof he principally intends.

VER. 18.—*And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?*

The question proposed is annexed unto that foregoing, and declared to be designed unto the same purpose by the respective copulative *δε*, which we render ‘and.’ ‘And to whom.’ The words of this question have been explained before, on ver. 11. Only here is one thing added. For whereas it is there said only, ‘God sware in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest;’ that is, he sware so concerning them; it is here intimated, that for the greater terror, and the manifestation of his wrath and indignation, he sware so to them. *Τισι ωμοσε*, ‘to whom did he swear?’ and so it appears to have been from the story. For though the words of the Lord were repeated unto the people by Moses and Aaron, yet the people themselves are proposed as they unto whom he spake and sware; ‘As you have spoken, so will I do unto you; your carcases shall fall in this wilderness,’ Num. xiv. 28, 29. This inquiry the apostle makes upon that typical example, wherein the present condition of the church of the Hebrews was represented.

The answer which he returns hereunto, which is evidently collected from the whole matter, contains the instruction intended by him:---*μη τοις απειθησασι*. This word, as I have shown, is variously rendered; by some, ‘obeyed not;’ by some, ‘believed not;’ by some, ‘assented not, acquiesced not.’ *Πειθω*, is to ‘persuade,’ by words or any other means. And *απειθεω* is properly, ‘not to be persuaded,’ so as to do the thing that the persuasion leads unto. And if that persuasion be with authority, that dissent is to be disobedient or contumacious. And these are varied, according as the proposal of the persuasion which they respect hath been. For it may sometimes be by an exhortation in general, and sometimes it may be attended with commands, promises, and threatenings, which vary if not the kind, yet the degree of the sin intended. *Απειθεια* is usually inobedientia, contumacia, and sometimes rebellio, ‘disobedience, stubbornness,’ or ‘rebellion.’ But the same words are often in the New Testament rendered by unbelief, infidelity, incredulity, not to believe. As indeed the word *πιστις* itself, or ‘faith,’ is from *πειθω*, to ‘persuade.’ And in other authors it is nothing but that persuasion of mind which is begotten in any man by the arguments and reasons that are proposed unto him for that purpose. But the promiscuous rendering of that word by disobedience or unbelief, seeing these things formally differ, is not so safe, and ought to be reduced unto some certain rule. This, for aught I can perceive, interpreters have not done, but have indifferently rendered it by the one word or the other. *Απειθεια*, we render ‘unbelief,’ Rom. xi. 30, 32; Heb. iv. 11; and by ‘disobedience,’ Eph. ii. 2, and v. 6; Col. iii. 6; but for the most part, we place the other word in the margin. *Απειθεω* we render commonly by, ‘believe not,’ Rom. xi. 30, 31, xv. 31; Acts xiv. 2, xvii. 5, xix. 9; sometimes by ‘obey not,’ Rom. ii. 8, x. 21;

1 Pet. ii. 7, 8, iii. 20, iv. 17. And ἀπειθης every where by ‘disobedient,’ Luke i. 17; Acts xxvi. 19; Rom. i. 30; 2 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 16, iii. 3. And the like variety may be observed in other interpreters. I suppose, as was said, that the translation of this word may be reduced unto some certain rule. Απειθεια and ἀπειθεω do certainly denote a denial of the proper effect of πειθω; the effect of persuasion is not produced. Now, this persuasion is not merely and solely an exhortation by words, but whatever it is that hath, or ought to have, a moral power to prevail with the mind of a man to do or not to do any thing, it hath the virtue of a persuasion. Thus, in commands, in promises, in threatenings, there is a persuasion. This is common to them all, that they are fitted and suited to prevail with the minds of men, to do or not to do the things which they do expect. But there is some peculiar adjunct, whereby they are distinguished as to their persuasive efficacy; as authority in commands, faithfulness in promises, severity in threatenings, power and holiness in all. That which is persuasive in commands, as formally such, is authority and power. That which is so in promises, is faithfulness and power; and so of threatenings. Look, then, in any place, what is the formal reason of the persuasion, whose disappointment is expressed by ἀπειθεω and ἀπειθεια, and we shall understand what it is that first and directly is intended by them. That whereby we answer a command is obedience, because of the authority wherewith it is attended, and our not being persuaded or prevailed on thereby is disobedience; that whereby we answer a promise is faith, or trust, or believing; and our failing herein is unbelief. Not that these things can be separated one from another, as though we could obey and not believe, or believe and not obey; but that they are thus distinguished one from another. Wherever, then, these expressions occur, we must consider whether they directly express the neglect of the command of God or of his promise. If it be of the former, they are duly rendered by disobeying and disobedience; if the latter, by unbelief, incredulity, and the like. Now, because these things are of a near alliance and cannot be separated, wherever one is expressed, the conjunction of the other is also understood. As in this place their ἀπειθεια did principally respect the promise of God to give them the land of Canaan, and his power to effect it; so that unbelief is first and principally intended. They would not believe that he would or could bring them into that land. But yet because they were also under the command of God to go up and possess it, their unbelief was accompanied with disobedience and rebellion. This, then, is the meaning of these words in this place. ‘To whom did he swear, that they should not enter into his rest?’ It was unto them to whom the promise of it being made, and a command given that they should be ready to go up and possess it, they would not, they did not acquiesce in the faithfulness and power of God, believed not his word, and thereupon yielded not obedience unto his commands; and this was sufficient both to provoke and justify the severity of God against them, in his oath, and the execution of it.

Obs. 1. All unbelief is accompanied with contumacy and rebellion; it is ἀπειθεια; and those in whom it is, are not persuaded to comply



with the mind and will of God. I intend that privative unbelief which hath been before explained. When the object or thing to be believed is sufficiently proposed and made known unto any person, which renders it his duty actually to believe, especially when it is proposed in the way and manner prescribed by God in the gospel, that is, with the highest reasons, motives, and persuasive inducements conceivable, if such a person mix not the word spoken with faith, his unbelief is privative and ruinous to his soul; and that because it hath contumacy and rebellion accompanying of it. Now two things concur in disobedience, contumacy, and rebellion; for I use them in the same general sense, as those which agree in the same general nature, for they denote only distinct aggravations of the same sin.

First. An unpersuadableness of mind, and that against evident convincing reasons. When a man is persuaded by such as have right, or whose duty it is to deal with him, unto the doing of any thing, or the belief of any truth, with and by the use of such arguments as are suited in such cases to work and prevail with the minds of men, and he have nothing to object to what is proposed unto him, and yet complieth not in a way of obedience or assent, we say such a one is obstinate and perverse; one not persuaded by reason; he is contumax. See Prov. i. 23—25.

Secondly. A positive act of the will in opposition unto, and in rejection of the things proposed unto it as those which it likes not, it approves not of, but rather despiseth, Isa. xxx. 15, 16. Now if among the arguments used to prevail with the mind, that os upreme authority be one, then rebellion is added unto disobedience and stubbornness, Rom. x. 21. And both these concur in unbelief. Unbelievers may pretend, may plead other things, why they do not believe; or they may profess that they do believe when they are utter strangers to it; but the true reason of this abode in their state and condition is the unpersuadableness of their minds, and the disobedience of their wills, both attended with contumacy and rebellion against God. To evince this we may consider,

First. That the gospel requiring faith in the promises, doth obviate or take away all objections that can be made against it, on any account whatever. Objections against believing may arise either, First, On the part of him who is the author of the things proposed to be believed; and that either, 1. As unto his power and faithfulness, or, 2. As unto his will, goodness and grace. Or, Secondly, They may arise on the part of the things themselves proposed to be believed; as that they are not, 1, either good and desirable in themselves; or, 2, not needful; or 3, not adequate or suited unto the end for which they are proposed. Or, Thirdly, On the part of the persons themselves required to believe; as that they are not things for them; but that they are either, 1, too hard and difficult for them to attain; or, 2, too good for them to expect; or, 3, too far above them to understand. But now all these objections are obviated and prevented in the gospel. And no ground is left to any sinner whereon he may manage any of them against the exhortations and commands of it to believe. This hath been so well evidenced in particular by sundry holy and learned persons as I shall not need to insist thereon.

Secondly. The gospel makes it appear that its commands and exhortations to believe are most reasonable in themselves, and most reasonably to be accepted by sinners; and that on all accounts of reason whatever. As, 1. Upon the account of righteousness in him that requires faith or belief of men. He that doth so, may do so, and that justly. He requires no more but what is due unto him; and which cannot be denied him without the highest sin, folly, and disorder. This the gospel fully declares. It is God who requires faith in us; and it is so far from being unrighteous that he should so do, that it is of infinite grace, and love that he will. 2. On the account of necessity, on the part of them who are required to believe. This also the gospel lays open and naked before the eyes of men. It doth not leave them to flatter themselves with vain hopes, as though they might do well enough without answering the command of God in this matter, or might find out some way for their help and relief; but it plainly and frequently declares that without the due performance of this duty, they must perish and lie under the wrath of God to eternity. 3. On the account of the goodness, grace, and condescension, that is in the proposal of the object of faith, and the command of believing. The things themselves are excellent and precious, and our advantage by an interest in them so great and unspeakable, as that they are every where in the gospel manifested to be the effects of infinite grace and love. 4. On the account of safety. An end is proposed to be aimed at; and that deliverance from sin, death, hell, and vengeance everlasting; with the attainment of rest, peace, and blessedness in the enjoyment of God. This end all convinced persons aim at; and there is a secret preparation in the seeds of natural light to incline the minds of men to seek after this end. Now the gospel proposeth the things which it requires to be believed, as the only way and means for the attaining of this end. And that this way is safe, and secure, that never any one miscarried in it, or shall so do for ever, it gives all the assurance that the word, promise, covenant, and oath of God can yield or afford. On all which it follows, that it is a reasonable thing that we should believe.

Thirdly. Consider the manner how the gospel proposeth unto us the object of faith, or the things which it requireth us to believe. It doth not do this by a mere naked revelation or declaration of them unto us, attended with a severe command. It adds entreaties, exhortations, reasonings, encouragements, promises, threatenings; every way it proceedeth, that is meet and suited to prevail on the minds of rational creatures. All the things of our own eternal concernment are proposed unto us, with that gentleness, tenderness, condescension, that love, that earnestness, that evidence of a high concern in us, and our good, that patheticalness and compassionate affection, as will assuredly aggravate the guilt of rejecting the tender which it makes.

Fourthly. All these things the gospel proposeth, urgeth, presseth upon us in the name and authority of God. It requireth, exacteth, and commandeth faith in men, in a way of obedience unto the supreme authority of God.

Now if these things and sundry others of the like consideration, do

concur in the proposals and commands of the gospel, it is evident that the unbelief of sinners must have disobedience, contumacy, and rebellion accompanying it. For can a man refuse that which is so proposed unto him, upon such reasons and considerations, in the way and manner intimated, all enforced with the authority of God, without contracting the guilt of the highest rebellion against him? And hence it is that the Scripture every-where layeth the cause of men's unbelief on their wills, their love of sin, their obstinacy and hardness of heart, as hath been before declared. And hence it will follow, that,

Obs. II. Unbelief not only justifies, but glorifies the greatest severities of God against them in whom it prevails.—The apostle having declared the severity of God towards the people in the wilderness, adds this as the reason of it, 'It was because of their unbelief.' They provoked him by their unbelief, and therefore were so severely destroyed as he had declared. And besides, his principal intention is to manifest, that those who follow them in the same sin now under the gospel, should in like manner perish, and that eternally, and that in their destruction God will glorify himself. The truth of this proposition is sufficiently evinced, from what hath been discoursed on that foregoing. For if there be that contumacy and rebellion attending unbelief which we have manifested, it will undeniably follow that God is exceedingly righteous and glorious in his greatest severities against them who abide in the guilt of it: in this, that 'he who believeth not the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,' John iii. 36. I shall add only one consideration more for the further evidencing of this truth. The design of God in the gospel, in and by the things proposed unto our faith, is to glorify himself, and all the holy attributes of his nature. And this is the effect of his counsel and wisdom, after that many of them were, as it were, obscured by sin, unto the eternal ruin of sinners: God, I say, in the gospel, through the mediation of Christ, the principal subject of all the promises, and immediate object of our faith, designeth to manifest and glorify his righteousness and holiness, Rom. iii. 24—26; his power and wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 18, 23, 24; his mercy, grace, and goodness, Eph. i. 6; his patience and forbearance, 2 Pet. iii. 9; his faithfulness and bounty, in rewarding believers with eternal life, Rom. vi. 23. In sum, by this way and means he hath designed that manifestation of himself, his nature, his will, his goodness, his wisdom and counsel, wherein he will be admired, adored, and glorified by angels and men, unto eternity, 2 Thess. i. 10. This is the design of God in and by the gospel. And it is that which "becomes him," because it is natural and necessary unto him in all things to will his own glory. Now unbelief is nothing but the attempt of sin and Satan to frustrate the whole design of God, to make him a liar, 1 John v. 10, to keep him from being known, owned, acknowledged and worshipped, as God only wise, infinitely righteous, holy, faithful, gracious, and bountiful. And this upon the matter is to oppose the being of God. It is to deny that he was righteous and holy, in requiring the punishment due to sin of our Sponsor or Mediator, that is, in punishing sin; to deny that he was infinitely wise and gracious in sending his Son to save that

which was lost; to deny that the way which he hath provided for the salvation of sinners is good, sufficient, and safe; to deny his faithfulness in the accomplishment of his promises; and his truth and veracity about what he hath affirmed concerning the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ. And where then is the glory of God? or what is left unto him for which he should be glorified or worshipped? And can this atheistical rebellious attempt be too severely revenged? Is not God not only justified in that decretory sentence, 'He that believeth not shall be damned?' but doth it not in the hearts of all the creation call aloud for the vindication of his glory, from this great contempt cast upon it, and horrible attempt to frustrate his design for the advancement of it? As sure as God is God, unbelief shall not go unpunished. Yea, from the gracious salvation of believers, and righteous condemnation of them who will not believe, doth arise that great and triumphant glory, wherein God will be admired and adored by the whole rational creation unto eternity. And this further appears; for,

Obs. III. The oath of God is engaged against no sin but unbelief. —As God hath given his oath for the confirmation and consolation of believers, both as to the things which they are to believe, and as to their assured safety on their believing, and to nothing else directly in a way of grace, for it is annexed unto his covenant; so he hath in a way of justice engaged his oath against no sin but that of unbelief, and to the exclusion of unbelievers from eternal rest. To whom sware he, that they should not enter into his rest, but unto them that believe not? Other sins there are that have great provocations in them. So had the murmurings of the people in the wilderness. But it is their relation unto unbelief, their growing upon that stock or root, that gives them such a height of provocation, as that God at any time enters a caveat against them by his oath. And in this sense it is not said amiss, that UNBELIEF is the only damning sin; because, as there is no other sin but may be, but shall be, remitted or pardoned unto men upon believing, so the formal consideration on which other sins fall under judgment in them to whom the gospel is preached, is unbelief.

These things I shall put together, to represent the apostle's exhortation, with the grounds and reasons of it, as unto our own concernment therein. For these things belong unto us, and they may be improved unto the use of all sorts of persons. As,

1. Unto them who have never much considered their duty or concern in this matter. I intend not open and profligate sinners, though the terror hereof will one day reach them in particular. 'This is their condemnation, that light is come into the world, and they love darkness more than light, because their deeds are evil.' But it is them whom I aim at, whose consciences are so far awakened, as that they would abstain from sin, and do good, with respect unto their latter end. They would be saved from the wrath to come; but as to believing, or mixing the promise of the gospel with faith, they have not endeavoured after it, or do not at all understand it. But this is the hinge on which their eternal condition doth turn. They may do well therefore to consider what hath been said from the apostle in this matter, and what is their concern therein, to examine their hearts,



that they may know what hath passed between God and them. For with whom is God provoked? Concerning whom doth he thus swear that they shall not enter into his rest? Is it not against you, and such as you are who believe not whilst you continue in that state and condition?

2. Unto those who are in doubt whether they should believe or not, not notionally and indefinitely, but practically and in particular. This is the state of many in their minds and consciences, which causeth them to fluctuate all their days. But what is it that they doubt of in this matter? Is it whether it be their duty to believe or not? It is indispensably required of them by the command of God; so that not to do so, is the greatest height of disobedience that they can make themselves guilty of. Is it whether they may do so or not, and whether they shall find acceptance with God in their so doing? This calls the righteousness and faithfulness of God in question. It is no otherwise, where to believe is our duty by virtue of his command, to question our acceptance in the performance of that duty. Is it because of the many objections which they find arising up in themselves against themselves, which leave them no hope of a personal participation of the good things promised? But what are all their objections before those evidences that are tendered in the gospel unto the contrary, which we have touched upon? The truth is, if men will not believe, it is out of love to sin, and a dislike of the design of God to glorify himself by JESUS CHRIST; and what will be the issue thereof hath been declared. If then it be a question with you, whether you shall believe or not, consider if you do not what will be the event. The demerit of your sin is such as that it will justify, yea and glorify God, in his greatest severity against you; and his OATH is engaged that you shall never enter into his rest. What like this can you fear on the other hand; and why do you doubt what course to take?

3. Unto believers. Meat may be taken for them out of this eater. All this terror and dread of God's severity, speaks peace and consolation unto their souls. For as the oath of God is engaged against the entrance of unbelievers into rest, so also is it for the eternal security of them that do believe.

VER. 19.—*So we see that they could not enter in, because of unbelief*

This verse contains, in a summary conclusion, what the apostle had evinced by all his former arguings from the example of their forefathers as recorded by Moses, and the renewed representation of it for their use by David. And he lays it down as the especial foundation of that exhortation which he intends to pursue in the next chapter.

Και βλέπομεν, 'and we see;' that is, it is evident from what hath been laid down and proved; or, this we have evinced, or given an ocular demonstration of. 'Now we see;' and this evident conclusion consists of two parts. 1. An assertion—that they could not enter in. 2. The reason of it—because of unbelief. In the first, the apostle doth not only declare the factum and event—they did not enter—they died in the wilderness—there their carcases fell; but the jus also in a

negation, *οὐκ ἔδυνήθησαν*, ‘they could not enter;’ that is, they lost all right unto an entrance, by virtue of any promise of God. Whatever desire they had so to do, as they manifested their desire by their murmuring at the heavy tidings brought them by Moses concerning their exclusion, Numb. xiv. 39.; whatever attempts they made for that end, as they got up and fell upon the Canaanites and Amalekites that were next them, so to begin their conquest, by whom they were defeated, ver. 40, 44, 45, having lost all right unto the promise, they could not enter. *Illud possumus, quod jure possumus*. In things moral, our ability is commensurate unto our right. This being lost, they could not enter. The expression is elliptical, and God’s rest is to be supplied from the foregoing verses. He sware they should not enter into his rest. And his determination is the rule of our right.

The reason and cause hereof is expressed in the last words: *δι’ ἀπιστίαν*, ‘because of unbelief.’ They that shall look over the whole story of the sins of the people, and of God’s dealing with them, would perhaps of themselves fix upon other causes of their exclusion from the rest of God, as the Jews their posterity do to this day. Might not they say, it was because of their idolatry in making the golden calf, which became a reproach unto them in all ages. So great a sin this was, that when God passed it by, as to their present destruction, he reserves as it were liberty to himself to remember it in after visitations, Exod. xxxii. 34. ‘Go,’ saith he, ‘lead the people to the place of which I have spoken unto thee; nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.’ Hence the Jews have a saying, that ‘no trouble befalleth Israel, but there is in it an ounce of the golden calf.’ Or, they might think the cause of it was, their abominable mixture of all sorts of sins, in their conjunction with the Midianites and Moabites, worshipping Baal-Peor, eating the sacrifices of the dead, and giving themselves up unto uncleanness. Their frequent murmurings also would occur unto their minds. But our apostle lays it here absolutely and wholly on their unbelief, and evidently proves it so to have been. A sin this is, that men are very unapt to charge themselves withal; but that which above all others will be charged on them by God. And this is here charged on this people most righteously.

1. Because the name which God was then designing to glorify among them, and himself thereby, was that of *JEHOVAH*, Exod. vi. 3, ‘I will now be known by my name *JEHOVAH*.’ And his purpose, by the renewed revelation and engagement of that name, was to teach them that he would now manifest the stability of his promises in their accomplishment. By their unbelief therefore did they rebel against God, and oppose his design in the especial revelation of himself whereby he would be glorified.

2. Because their unbelief was the spring and cause of all their other sins. Hence were their idolatries, and adulteries, and murmurings, and all their other provocations.

3. Because they had herein often broken with God from under great convictions. For oftentimes upon his mighty works their minds had been conquered for the profession of faith and confidence. ‘The people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses,’

Exod. xiv. 31. But immediately on the next trial they met withal, they renounced their own experiences, and despised the faithfulness and power of God, which before they acknowledged, ch. xv. 24.

4. Because their last provocation was with direct respect unto the promise, which we have at large insisted on from Num. xiv. 'So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.'

There are sundry things that these words present unto us for our instruction. But as this verse is but a recapitulation of, and conclusion from what was before disputed and confirmed, so the practical truths contained in it, have formerly occurred unto us as to the substance or main design of them; and some of them we shall be again minded of in the beginning of the next chapter. Here therefore I shall only briefly propose them; and they are these that follow.

Obs. I. Whatever we consider in sin, God principally considers the root and spring of it in unbelief, as that which maketh the most direct and immediate opposition unto himself.—The people in the wilderness were guilty of many provoking sins, before God entered the caution mentioned against their entrance into his rest. Yet the Holy Ghost sums up all here in their unbelief. This was that which God regarded, and which he would not pass by without a severe animadversion upon it. For indeed,

Obs. II. Unbelief is the immediate root and cause of all provoking sins.—As faith is the spring and cause of all obedience, (for without faith it is impossible to please God, and the obedience that is accepted with him is the obedience of faith,) so is unbelief of all sin. All sins of flesh and spirit have no other root. Did men believe either the promises or the threatenings of God, they would not by their sins so despise him and neglect him as they do. And as this is so with respect unto the total prevalency of unbelief, so it is as to its partial efficacy. As our obedience follows in proportion to the operation of our faith, so do all our sins and irregularities answer the working and prevalency of unbelief in us.

Obs. III. To disbelieve God with respect unto any especial design of glorifying himself, is the greatest and highest provocation.—Thus was it with this wilderness-generation. God in his dealings with them, had a great design in hand. He was now about to glorify himself by his faithfulness in his promise and oath unto Abraham, his power in the deliverance of the people, and his grace in the bringing of them into a typical rest. This design of God did they, as much as lay in them, endeavour to frustrate by their unbelief. This therefore God will not bear withal in them. The especial design of God under the gospel, is to glorify himself in JESUS CHRIST, by the deliverance of his elect according to his promise and covenant from hell and death, and the bringing of them unto eternal rest. Unbelief in this matter lies against this great and glorious design of God; and it is evident what will be the end thereof. For,

Obs. IV. Unbelief deprives men of all interest in, or right unto the promises of God.—There was a promise given unto this people of their being brought into the land of Canaan; but yet they entered not into it, they died in the wilderness. How came this to pass?

The apostle here declares that they disinherited themselves, and lost all their interest in the promise by their unbelief. And let not others entertain better hopes of their condition hereafter, whilst here they follow their example. For,

Obs. V. No unbeliever shall ever enter into the rest of God ;— which, *εαν ὁ Κυριος θελησῃ και ζησωμεν*, shall be confirmed in our considerations on the next chapter.

Μονω τῷ Θεῷ Δοξα.

## CHAPTER IV.

THIS chapter is of the same nature, and carrieth on the same design, with that foregoing. That contained an exhortation unto faith, obedience, and perseverance, enforced by an instance of the pernicious event or punishment which befel them who were guilty of sin contrary unto those duties. And this was done by the exposition and application of a prophetic testimony, suggesting an example of God's dealing with unbelievers formerly. Now, whereas in the words of the Psalmist there is not only a moral example proposed unto us, but a prophecy also is interwoven therein concerning the rest of God in Christ by the gospel, and our duty thereon, the apostle proceeds to expound, improve, and confirm his exhortation, from the scope, design, and words of that prophecy. Wherefore, in the beginning of this chapter, he resumes his exhortation in an immediate coherence with, and dependance upon what he had before discoursed. Hence some think that the first verse of this chapter is unduly cut off, and separated from that foregoing, whereunto it doth belong; yea, some, as we intimated before, that this discourse of the apostle doth immediately succeed unto the 14th verse of the preceding chapter, that which ensueth being a digression to be included in a parenthesis. But, as was said, the words of the Psalmist, containing a representation of a moral example from things past in the church, and a prophetic prediction of the future state and condition of the church, the apostle having made use of the former or moral example in the preceding discourses, arguings, expostulations, and exhortations, here entereth upon the exposition and improvement of the latter, or the words of the Psalmist, with reference unto their prophetic prospect towards the times of the gospel, and the instruction which was laid up for the use of those times in the example that he had insisted on. Herein,

1. He proposeth the duty which he aimeth to press upon those Hebrews, as that which is required in the words of the Psalmist, from the example represented in them, with an especial enforcement of it,



from the consideration of the sin and punishment of them whose example is proposed, which followeth thereon, ver. 1, 2.

2. He vindicates the foundation of his exhortation, by showing that the rest which the Psalmist speaks of, and which he persuades them to endeavour to enter into, and to take heed that they fail not, or come not short of, was yet remaining to be enjoyed, ver. 3, as being neither the rest of God from the works of creation, and the Sabbatical rest which ensued thereon, ver. 4—6, nor yet the rest of Canaan, which Joshua brought the people into, ver. 7, 8, but a spiritual rest, which remained for believers to enjoy, ver. 8—10.

3. Hence he resumes his exhortation with respect unto his explication and vindication of the prophetic testimony by him produced, ver. 11.

4. This he again strengtheneth by a double argument or consideration ;

1. In a way of caution, by proposing unto them the nature of the word of God wherein they were concerned, ver. 12, 13. 2. In a way of encouragement from the priesthood of Christ, whereby this rest was procured for believers, and therein makes a transition to the declaration and exposition of that priesthood, with the effects and consequences of it, in the six ensuing chapters.

VER. 1, 2.—Φοξηθωμεν ουν μηποτε, καταλειπομενης επαγγελιας εισελθειν εις την καταπαυσιν αυτου, δοκη τις εξ υμων υστερηκεναι. Και γαρ εσμεν ευηγγελισμενοι, καθαπερ κηκεινοι· αλλ' ουκ ωφελησεν ο λογος της ακοης εκεινους, μη συγκεκριαμενος τη πιστει τοις ακουσασιν.

Φοξηθωμεν ουν, Timeamus ergo ; metuamus igitur ; more properly, 'let us fear therefore.'

Μηποτε, Vulg. Lat. ne forte. Rhem. 'lest perhaps ;' as though it intended the uncertainty of the event. Beza and Eras. ne quando, 'lest at any time.' Ours omit the force of ποτε, 'lest.' If it have an especial signification, it respects the several seasons or occasions to which in the fear enjoined, we ought to have regard.

Καταλειπομενης επαγγελιας, Vulg. Lat. relicta pollicitatione ; pollicitatio being an improper word in this matter, all modern translations have changed it into promissio. Rhem. 'forsaking the promise.' But the words in the Vul. Lat. are capable of another sense ; namely, 'a promise being left.' Beza and Eras. derelicta promissione, which determines the sense ; 'the promise being left, forsaken, neglected ;' accordingly the Ethiopic, 'let us not reject his command.' The Syriac otherwise, with respect to the continuance of a promise, ܕܠܡܢܐ ܕܪ ܩܝܡ, ne forte stante promissione, ne forte dum stat promissio, 'lest whilst the promise standeth, continueth, or is firm ;' namely, of entering into rest. This is followed by the Arabic, 'whereas a certain promise remaineth.' Of this difference in sense, we must treat in our exposition of the words.

Εισελθειν εις την καταπαυσιν αυτου, see chap. iii. 11, 18.

Δοκη τις εξ υμων υστερηκεναι, Vulg. Lat. existimetur aliquis è vobis

deesse. Rhem. 'some of you be thought to be wanting;' deesse neither expresseth the meaning of the original word, nor hath any proper sense in this place, as both Erasmus and Beza observe. Arias, defici, 'fail.' Δοκῇ, Erasm. and Bez. videatur, 'should seem or appear;' more properly than existimetur, it referring to the persons spoken unto, and their deportment, not the opinion or judgment of others concerning them; ὑστερηκεναι, Erasm. frustratus fuisse, to have 'been frustrated;' that is, in his hopes, expectations, profession, or of entering. Men will be deceived, if they hope to enter into God's rest, and yet neglect his promise; which is the sense he takes the words in. Beza, fuisse per tarditatem exclusus; endeavouring to express the precise signification of the word, he somewhat obscures the sense. 'To have been excluded from it by keeping behind;' by slowness in not going forward. Δοκῇ τις ἐξ ὑμῶν. The Syriac, נשחבך אנש בכך, 'a man should be found amongst you;' omitting that sense of the word δοκῇ, which many expositors insist on, as we shall see. Arab. 'any one of you should think.' Ὑστερηκεναι, Syr. fills up the sense, ודפאש מן דלמעל, 'that should cease from entering,' or 'fail of entering.' Ours, 'seem to come short of it,' properly.

VER. 2. — Καὶ γὰρ ἐσμὲν εὐηγγελισμένοι. Vulg. Lat. etenim et nobis nunciatum est. Erasmus, annunciatum est. Rhem. 'for unto us it was denounced;' improperly all of them: nor is 'denounce' any way significant in this matter. Beza, etenim nobis evangelizatum est. Ours, 'for unto us was the gospel preached;' and so the word signifies, etenim sumus evangelizati, 'for we are evangelized;' of which construction afterwards. Syr. אסתברן, nunciatum est; more properly, evangelizatum est, the gospel is, or was preached.

Ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς, Vulg. Lat. sermo auditus. Rhem. 'the word of hearing;' taking auditus for a substantive, and not a participle, which also the original requireth. Erasm. non profuit illis audisse sermonem, 'it profited them not to have heard the word.' Ours, 'the word preached.' Syr. מלתא דשמעו, 'the word which they heard.' Of the meaning of the phrase of speech used in the original, we shall treat afterwards.

Μη συγκεκραμενος. The Complutensian copy, which is followed by sundry vulgar editions, reads, συγκεκραμενους, making this word agree with ἐκείνους, 'those that heard;' and not with λόγος, 'the word that was heard.' And this reading is followed by the Arabic and Ethiopic translations. Συγκεκραμενος, Vulg. Lat. admistus: Erasm. cum fide conjunctus: Beza, contemperatus; all to the same purpose; 'mixed, joined, tempered' with faith.

Τῇ πιστεῖ, fide, cum fide, fidei, 'with faith; unto the faith.'

Τοῖς ἀκουσασιν, Vulg. Lat. fidei ex iis quæ audiverant. Rhem. 'with faith of those things which they heard;' referring τοῖς to the things heard, and not to the persons hearing; but that ἀκουσασιν will not bear.

VER. 1, 2.—*Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left of entering into his rest, any of you should seem at any time to come short*

(to fail.) *For unto us was the gospel preached, even as unto them, (we were evangelized even as they) but the word of hearing did not profit them, being not mixed with faith in them that heard.*

These two verses, as they may and do contain an improvement of the example and of the inferences made from it, as expressed in the preceding chapter, so withal and principally the apostle gives the Hebrews a further demonstration that what he had insisted on was of near concern unto them, and that their condition was therein represented. For they might be apt to say, what have we to do with the people in the wilderness, with the promise of entering into Canaan, or with what the Psalmist from thence exhorted our fathers unto of old, who were still held under the same dispensation? But, saith the apostle, these things belong unto you in an especial manner; for, besides that you may in the example proposed, see evidently what you are to look for and expect from God, if you fall into the same sins which he therein expresseth his severity against, so the things treated of in the psalm, are a prophetic direction designed for your especial use in your present condition.

The way in particular which the apostle insists on to press these things upon them, is, 1. By exhorting them to that duty, and those considerations, which are the just consequents of the things by him proposed unto them. 2. By manifesting that their concern in those things, did afford him a just foundation of his exhortation. The exhortation is contained in the first verse, and the confirmation of it in the second.

VER. 1. In the first verse is expressed, 1. The frame of spirit which the apostle exhorts the Hebrews unto, on the consideration of what he had minded them of, and of their interest therein, 'let us therefore fear.' 2. A supposition on which the exhortation of this duty and frame is founded; 'a promise being left of entering into rest.' 3. The evil to be prevented by attendance unto the duty proposed, 'lest any of you should seem to come short of it;' whether this be an evil of sin or of punishment shall be afterwards inquired into.

VER. 2.—There ensues in the second verse a confirmation of what is proposed in the first, and that, 1. On the account of a parity in condition between us, and those from whom the example is taken: 'unto us was the gospel preached, even as unto them.' 2. On the account of the evil success of them in that condition, with the reason thereof, 'but the word preached did not profit them, because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard.'

Our way being thus prepared, we may open the words in particular as they lie in the context.

Ποϋθωμεν ουν. Ουν, 'therefore;' an illative, manifesting the deduction of the present exhortation, from the preceding discourse and example. We have now several times observed, that the apostle is constant unto this method; namely, of educing new exhortations immediately out of arguments doctrinally proposed and confirmed. This makes his discourse nervous, and his exhortation efficacious; shutting

up the minds of them with whom he deals, leaving them no place unto evasion or tergiversation. And herein, unto the weight and authority of his words, he adds the reasonableness of his inferences, and from both concludes the necessity of the duty which he proposeth.

Φοβηθωμεν, 'let us fear.' The noun φοβος, and the verb φοβεσθαι, are used in the New Testament to express all sorts of fears, and fearing, whether natural, civil, sinful, or religious. They are therefore of a larger extent, and more various use, than any one radical word in the Old Testament.

The fear here intended is religious, relating to God, his worship, and our obedience. And this is fourfold. 1. Of terror. 2. Of diffidence. 3. Of reverence. 4. Of care, solicitousness, and watchfulness. And concerning these, I shall first show what they are, or wherein they consist; and then inquire which of them it is that is here intended.

First. There is a fear of dread and terror; and this respecteth either God, or other things, wherein we may be concerned, in his worship. I. Of God; and this is either expressive of the object, the person feared, or God himself. Or, 2. The subject or person fearing; the frame of heart in him that feareth.

1. Fear respects the object of fear, that which we do fear. 'Knowing therefore, τον φοβον του Κυριου, 2 Cor. v. 11, the fear of the Lord,' or the terror, as we render it; that is, how great, dreadful, holy, and terrible he is. Hence Jacob calls God, פחד יצחק, Gen. xxxi. 42, 53, 'the fear of Isaac,' or him whom Isaac served, worshipped, feared. And פחד, when it respects the subject, denotes that kind of fear which hath greatness, dread, and terror for an object; whereas they express a reverential fear by יראת. This fear the apostle hath respect unto, Heb. xii. 28, 29, 'Let us serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.' The fear of dread and terror in God, requires the fear of reverence in us, in all that we have to do with him. A respect hereunto is expressed by sinners, Isa. xxxiii. 14, and Micah vi. 6, 7.

2. Fear expresseth that frame of heart and spirit, which is in men towards an object, apprehended as dreadful and fearful. And this also is twofold.

1. A consternation and dread of spirit on the apprehension of God as an enemy, as one that will punish and avenge sin. This is רעד, which is joined with פלצות, Psal. lv. 5, 'a trembling horror.' This befel Adam upon his sin, and that inquisition that God made about it, Gen. iii. 10, and Cain, Gen. iv. 13. Such a consideration of God as would beget this frame in him, Job often deprecates, ch. ix. 34, and xxiii. 6. And the same is intended in the places above cited, Isa. xxxiii. 14; Mic. vi. 6, 7. Something hereof befel them of old, who upon the apprehension that they had seen God, concluded that they should die. They had a dread fell on them, from an apprehension of his excellency and holiness, which terrified them with thoughts that they should be consumed. And this fear in its latitude is a consternation of spirit, on an apprehension of God's greatness and majesty, with respect unto present or future judgments, when the mind is not



relieved by faith in the reconciliation made by Jesus Christ, weakening, disheartening, and alienating the heart from God.

2. An awful fear of God's greatness and holiness, with respect unto deserved and impendent judgments in this world. This fear may befall believers, and be at some seasons their especial duty. This David expresseth, Ps. cxix. 120, 'My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.' And elsewhere on the same account he declares, that 'fearfulness and trembling laid hold on him,' Ps. lv. 5. So Habakkuk expresseth his condition under the like apprehension, ch. iii. 16, 'When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself.' And this fear of dread or terror thus qualified, is both good and useful in its kind. And this is that which Joshua labours to ingenerate in the minds of the people, Josh. xxiv. 19, 20. And of great use it is to the souls of men, both before and after their conversion unto God. Of a fear of awe and reverence in general, with respect unto the greatness and holiness of God, we shall treat afterwards.

Secondly. There may be a fear of dread and terror in our way of obedience, which may respect other things. Such are the oppositions and difficulties, which we do or may meet withal, either from within or without, in our course, which may incline us to despondency and despair. This in particular befel David, when, notwithstanding the promise of God to the contrary, he concluded that he should one day perish by the hand of Saul, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. This the Scripture expresseth by דָּחַק, which we render, 'to be dismayed:' Josh. i. 9. 'Be not terrified, nor be thou dismayed.' The word signifies, 'to be broken;' and when applied unto the mind, it denotes to be sore terrified, so as to sink in courage and resolution; which we well express by being dismayed, to be broken and weakened in mind, through a terror arising from the apprehension of oppositions, difficulties, and dangers. It is ascribed unto men, when God strikes a terror into them, or when they are terrified with their own fears, Isa. xxx. 32; Jer. x. 2. A consternation and horror of mind: and עָרֵץ, a word of the same signification, is often joined with it. This fear therefore, arising from a discouraging terrifying apprehension of dangers and oppositions, weakening and disabling the soul to make use of due means vigorously in the discharge of its duty, can have no place here. Yea, it is directly contrary to, and inconsistent with the end aimed at by the apostle. And this is the first sort of fear that any way respects our religious obedience unto God; see Isa. viii. 12, 13, li. 12, 13; Matt. x. 28,

Secondly. There is a fear of distrust and diffidence, or a fear arising from, or accompanied with a distrust of the accomplishment of God's promises, at least as to our interest in them. This is a defect in faith, and opposite unto it. This was the fear which ruined the Israelites in the wilderness. Being discouraged through their difficulties, they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation, Ps. lxxviii. 22. And this cannot be here charged on us as our duty. A fluctuation and hesitation of mind about the promises of God, or the event of our condition in a course of sincere obedience is not required of us, nor

accepted from us. For no duty is acceptable with God, but what is not only consistent with faith, but also proceedeth from it. The same faith that works by love, works also by delight; and it casts out this fear of bondage and diffidence. And no fear can be our duty, but what is a fruit and effect of it. Believers do not receive again the spirit of bondage to fear, Rom. viii. 15. Nay, it is that which Christ died to deliver us from, Heb. ii. 14. But it may be considered two ways: 1. As it partakes of the nature of diffidence in opposition to faith and liberty; and so it is utterly to be rejected. 2. As it partakes of the nature of godly jealousy, and is opposed to security, and so it may be cherished, though it be not here intended.

Thirdly. There is a fear of reverence, a reverential fear of God. This is that which most commonly is intended by the name of the fear of God, both in the Old Testament and the New. And it is not an especial duty suited unto some seasons and occasions, but that which concerns us in our whole course, in all our ways and actings. Sometimes it is taken subjectively for the internal reverential frame of our hearts, in all wherein we have to do with God; and sometimes objectively for the worship of God himself. So is the nature of it expressed, Deut. xxviii. 58, 'Observe the words of this law, that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, The Lord thy God.' The glorious and dreadful majesty of God is the object of it, and motive unto it, which gives it the nature of reverence. And the way whereby it is exercised and expressed, is a due observance of the worship of God, according to the law. But neither is this that which is peculiarly intended, as not being more incumbent on us in one season than another, on one account than another.

Fourthly. There is a fear of circumspection, care, and diligence, with respect unto the due use of the means, that we may attain the end proposed unto us. This some would confound with a fear of diffidence, dread, and terror, with respect unto the uncertainty of the end, but it is quite of another nature. And as that is every-where condemned in us, so this is no less frequently commended unto us, Rom. xi. 20, 'Be not high-minded, but fear.' Phil. ii. 12, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' 1 Pet. i. 17, 'See that you pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.' Prov. xxviii. 14, 'Happy is the man that feareth always;' that is, with this fear of watchfulness, diligence, and spiritual care. But unto the other it is affirmed, that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, 2 Tim. i. 7, or, of bondage through diffidence and uncertainty of the event of our obedience. Now, the acting of the soul in and about the use of means, is ascribed unto fear, when the mind is influenced by a due apprehension of the threatenings and severity of God against sin, they being the way whereby we are delivered from being obnoxious unto them. Thus Noah, when God had denounced his judgments against the old world, although they were not yet seen, or did not appear in any preparation made for them, yet believing that they would be inflicted accordingly, *εὐλαβηθεὶς*, 'being moved with fear, he prepared an ark,' Heb. xi. 7. Apprehending the severity of God, believing his threatenings, his

mind was influenced into that fear, which put him with diligence on the use of those means, whereby he and his family might be saved and preserved.

It will, from these considerations, be plainly evidenced what that fear is, which is here enjoined and prescribed unto us. An instance and example of God's severity against unbelievers, is laid down and proposed unto our consideration by the apostle in his preceding discourse. In this example of God's dealing with them of old, he declares also that there is included a commination of dealing with all others in the same manner, who shall fall into the same sin of unbelief with them. None may flatter themselves with vain hopes of any privilege or exemption in this matter. Unbelievers shall never enter into the rest of God. This he further confirms in these two verses, though his present exhortation be an immediate inference from what went before, 'Wherefore let us fear.' How must we do this? with what kind of fear? Not with a fear of diffidence, of doubting, of wavering, of uncertainty, as to the event of our obedience. This indeed may, this doth befall many; but it is enjoined unto none; it is a fruit of unbelief, and so cannot be our duty. Neither can it be that which was intimated in the second place under the first head; namely, a dread and dismayedness of mind upon a prospect of difficulties, oppositions, and dangers in the way. This is the sluggard's fear, who cries, There is a lion in the streets, I shall be slain. To expel and cast out this fear, as that which weakens, and disheartens men in their profession, is one of the especial designs of the apostle in this Epistle. Nor is it that general fear of reverence which ought to accompany us, in all wherein we have to do with God. For this is not particularly influenced by threatenings and the severity of God, seeing we are bound always so to fear the Lord and his goodness. Nor is this fear required of us, as was said, more at one season than another. It remains therefore that the fear here intended, is mixed of the first and last of those before mentioned. And so two things are included in it. First. An awful apprehension of the holiness and greatness of God, with his severity against sin, balancing the soul against temptation. Secondly. A careful diligence in the use of means, to avoid the evil threatened unto unbelief and disobedience. And the right stating of these things, being of great moment in our practice, it must be further cleared in the ensuing observations. As,

Obs. I. The gospel in the dispensation thereof, is not only attended with promises and rewards, but also with threatenings and punishments. This, for the substance of it, hath been already spoken unto, on Chap. II. Ver. 2.

Obs. II. Gospel comminations ought to be managed towards all sorts of professors promiscuously, be they true believers, temporary, or hypocrites. So they are here proposed by the apostle unto the Hebrews, without exception or limitation; and amongst them there were persons of all the sorts mentioned. But this also will be comprised under the third proposition; namely, that,

Obs. III. Fear is the proper object of gospel comminations, which ought to be answerable to our several conditions, and grounds of ob-

noxiousness unto those threatenings.—This is that which the apostle presseth us unto, on the consideration of the severity of God against unbelievers, peremptorily excluding them out of his rest, after they had rejected the promise. ‘Let us,’ saith he, ‘fear therefore.’ What fear it is, that in respect unto believers is here intended, hath been declared. We shall now inquire how far, and wherein the minds of men ought to be influenced with fear from gospel threatenings, and of what use that is in our walking with God.

For there is, as was said, a threatening included in the example of God’s severity towards unbelievers, before insisted on. And unto that the apostle hath a retrospect in this exhortation; as well as he hath also a regard to the present promise, whose consideration ought to have the same influence on the minds of men, as shall be declared.

Gospel threatenings are distinguished first with respect to their objects, or those against whom they are denounced, or to whom they are declared, and with respect to their own nature, or the subject-matter of them. Of the persons intended in them there are three sorts. First. Such as are yet open or professed unbelievers. Secondly. Such as make profession of the faith, profess themselves to believe, but indeed do not so in a due and saving manner; who also admit of many respective considerations. Thirdly. True believers.

For the subject-matter of them they may be referred unto these two general heads. First. Such threatenings as express displeasure to be exercised in temporary things. Secondly. Such as denounce everlasting wrath and punishment. According to this distribution, we may consider what is and ought to be their influence on the minds of men, with respect unto the fear which we inquire about.

First. Some gospel comminations respect, first, properly and directly, professed unbelievers, as such, and so continuing. As the sum of all promises is enwrapped in those words, ‘He that believeth shall be saved,’ Mark xvi. 16, so the sum of all these threatenings, is in those that follow: ‘He that believeth not shall be damned.’ ‘A similar summary of gospel promises and threatenings we have, John iii. 36. ‘He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.’ And threatenings of this nature are frequently scattered up and down in the New Testament; see Rom. ii. 8, 9; 2 Thess. i. 6—10; 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. And these threatenings may be so far called evangelical, inasmuch as they are proper to the gospel, and distinct from all the threatenings of the law. The law knows no more of gospel threatenings than of gospel promises. The threatenings of the law lie against sinners, for sins committed; the threatenings of the gospel are against sinners, for refusing the remedy provided and tendered unto them. They are superadded unto those of the law, and in them doth the gospel, when rejected, become death unto death, 2 Cor. ii. 16, by the addition of that punishment contained in its threatenings, unto that which was contained in the threatenings of the law. Now, the end of these threatenings, First. On the part of Christ, the Author of the gospel, is the manifestation of his power and authority over all flesh, with his holiness, majesty, and glory, 2 Thess. i. 6—10. Secondly.



On the part of the gospel itself. 1. A declaration of the necessity of believing. 2. Of the worth and excellency of the things proposed to be believed. 3. Of the price and esteem which God puts upon the acceptance or refusal of them; and in all, the certain and infallible connexion that is between unbelief and eternal destruction. 4. The vindication of it from contempt, 2 Cor. x. 6. Thirdly. On the part of unbelievers, to whom they are denounced, the end and design of them is to ingenerate fear in them. 1. A fear of dread and terror, with respect unto the authority and majesty of Christ their author. 2. A fear of anxiety, with respect unto their present state and condition. 3. A fear of the punishment itself to be inflicted on them. And these things do well deserve a more full handling, but that they are not here directly intended.

Secondly. Gospel-threatenings may be considered with respect unto all sorts of unsound and temporary believers. For besides that this sort of persons continuing such, do and will finally fall under the general threatenings against unbelief and unbelievers, there are peculiarly two sorts of threatenings in the gospel that lie against them.

1. Such as respect their present, and, 2. Such as respect their future condition. Of the first sort are those severe intimations of anger and displeasure, which our Lord Jesus Christ gave out unto sundry members of the churches in the Revelation, notwithstanding the profession that they made. He discovers their hypocrisy and falseness, under all their pretences; and threatens to cut them off, if they repent not, ch. ii. 16, 20—22, iii. 3, 15—18. And this duty is always incumbent on them, to whom the dispensation of the gospel is committed; namely, to declare these threatenings unto all that may be found in their condition. For not only may they justly suppose that such there are, and always will be, in all churches, but also many do continually declare and evidence themselves to be in no better state. And the discovery hereof unto them by the word, is a great part of our ministerial duty.

2. There are such as respect their future condition, or threatenings of eternal wrath and indignation, with especial regard unto that apostasy whereunto they are liable. It is manifest that there are such comminations denounced against deserters, apostates, such as forsake the profession which they have made, which we shall have occasion to speak unto in our progress, for they abound in this Epistle. Now these in the first place respect these unsound professors of whom we speak. And this for two ends. First. To deter them from a desertion of that profession wherein they are engaged, and of that light whereunto they have attained. For although that light and profession would not by and of themselves eternally save them; yet, 1. They lie in order thereunto, and engage them into the use of those means which may ingenerate that faith and grace, which will produce that effect. 2. The deserting of them casts them both meritoriously and irrecoverably into destruction. Secondly. To stir them up unto a consideration of the true state and condition wherein at present they are. Men may as well fail in their profession, or some short of that grace which they own, Heb. xii. 15, as fall from that profession which they have

made. And these threatenings are denounced against the one miscarriage as well as the other.

The general end of these gospel comminations with respect unto these unsound professors, is fear. Because of them, they ought to fear. And that, 1. With a fear of jealousy as to their present condition. The consideration of the terror of the Lord declared in them ought to put them on a trembling disquisition into their state, and what their expectations may be. 2. A fear of dread as to the punishment itself threatened, so far as they fall under conviction of their being obnoxious thereunto.

Thirdly. Gospel threatenings may be considered as they respect believers themselves, and in that sense we may consider what respect they have unto God, and what unto believers, with what is the proper effect of them designed of God to be accomplished in their spirits.

There is a difference between promises and threatenings of the gospel. For the promises of God are declarative of his purposes unto all believers that are 'called according to his purpose,' Rom. viii. 28—31. The threatenings are not so to all unbelievers, much less to believers. But they are means to work the one sort from their unbelief, and to confirm the other in their faith. Only they are declarative of God's purposes towards them who have contracted the guilt of the unpardonable sin: and declare the event as to all finally impenitent sinners.

First. They have a respect unto the nature of God and are declarative of his condemning, hating, forbidding that sin which the threatening is denounced against. It is an effectual way to manifest God's detestation of any sin, to declare the punishment that it doth deserve, and which the law doth appoint unto it, Rom. i. 32.

Secondly. They have respect unto the will of God, and declare the connection that is by God's institution, between the sin prohibited and the punishment threatened. As in that word, 'He that believeth not shall be damned.' God by it declares the infallible connection that there is by virtue of his constitution, between infidelity and damnation. Wherever the one is final, the other shall be inevitable. And in this sense they belong properly to believers; that is, they are to be declared and preached unto them, or pressed upon their consciences: for,

First. They are annexed to the dispensation of the covenant of grace, as an instituted means to render it effectual, and to accomplish the ends of it. The covenant of works was given out or declared in a threatening; 'The day that thou eatest, thou shalt die;' but in that threatening, a promise was included of life upon obedience. And the covenant of grace is principally revealed in a word of promise; but in that promise a threatening is included, in the sense, and to the purposes before mentioned. And as we have shown before these threatenings are variously expressed in the gospel. And they are of two sorts;

1. Those threatenings, the matter of which in the event hath no absolute inconsistency with the nature and grace of the covenant. Such are all the intimations of God's severity to be exercised towards his own children, in afflictions, chastisements, trials, and desertions. For although these things and the like, in respect of their principle and

end, belong unto love and grace, and so may be promised also, yet in respect of their matter, being grievous and not joyous; afflictive to the inward and outward man such as we may and ought to pray to be kept or delivered from, they are proposed in the threatenings annexed to the dispensation of the covenant. See Psal. lxxxix. 30—33; Rev. ii. and iii. And this sort of threatenings is universally and absolutely annexed to the dispensation of the covenant of grace; both as to the manner of this giving, and the matter or event of them. And that because they are every way consistent with the grace, love, and kindness of that covenant, and do in the appointment of God, tend to the furtherance of the obedience required therein.

2. Such, as in respect of the event are inconsistent with the covenant or the faithfulness of God therein; as the comminations of eternal rejection upon unbelief or apostasy, which are many. Now these also belong to the dispensation of the covenant of grace, so far as they are declarative of the displeasure of God against sin, and of his annexing punishment unto it; which declaration is designed of God, and sanctified for one means of our avoiding both the one and the other. And whatever is sanctified of God for a means of deliverance from sin or punishment, belongs to the dispensation of the covenant of grace.

Secondly. This denouncing of threatenings unto believers, is suited unto their good and advantage in the state and condition wherein they are in this world. For believers are subject to sloth and security, to wax dead, dull, cold, and formal in their course; these and many other evils are they liable and obnoxious unto whilst they are in flesh. To awaken them, warn them, and excite them unto a renewal of their obedience, doth God set before them the threatenings mentioned. See Rev. ii. and iii.

Thirdly. The proper effect of these threatenings in the souls of believers, whereby the end aimed at in them is attained and produced, is fear. 'Let us therefore fear.' Now, what that fear is, and therein what is the especial duty that we are exhorted unto, may briefly be manifested from what hath been already laid down.

First. It is not an anxious, doubting, solicitous fear about the punishment threatened, grounded on a supposition that the person fearing shall be overtaken with it; that is, it is not an abiding perplexing fear of hell-fire that is intended. We are commanded indeed 'to fear him who can cast both body and soul into hell,' Luke xii. 4, 5. But the object assigned unto our fear is God himself, his severity, his holiness, his power, and not the punishment of hell itself. It is granted that this fear with a bondage-frame of spirit thereon, doth and will often befall believers. Some deserve by their negligence, slothfulness, unfruitful walking, and sinful ways, that it should be no better with them. And others also walking in their sincerity, yet by reason of the weakness of their faith, and on many other accounts, are oftentimes detained in such a bondage state and condition, as to fear with dread and terror all the day long. This, therefore, is oftentimes a consequent of some of God's dispensations towards us, or of our own sins; but it is not any-where prescribed unto us as our duty; nor is the ingenera-

ting of it in us, the design of any of the threatenings of God. For,

1. This is contrary unto the end of all other ordinances of God ; which are appointed to enlighten, strengthen, and comfort, the souls of believers ; to bring them to constant, solid, abiding peace and consolation. It cannot be, therefore, that at the same time God should require that as a duty at their hands, which stands in a full contrariety and opposition to the end assigned by himself unto all his ordinances, whereby he communicates of himself and his mind unto us. See Rom. viii. 15 ; 2 Tim. i. 7.

2. This fear is no effect or fruit of that Spirit of life and holiness, which is the author of all our duties, and all acceptable obedience unto God. That this is the principle of all new-covenant obedience, of all the duties, which according unto the rule and tenor thereof, we do or ought to perform unto God, is evidently manifest in all the promises thereof. Now, this fear of hell, that is, as that punishment lies in the curse of the law, neither is nor can be a fruit of that Spirit, given and dispensed in and by the gospel. For where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty, 2 Cor. iii. 17.

3. This kind of fear is not useful to the confessed end of God's threatenings, namely, to excite and encourage men to diligence and watchfulness in obedience. For if this were its nature and tendency, the more it is heightened as to its degrees, the more effectual would it be to its proper end. But we see, on the contrary, that in those in whom it hath been most prevalent, it hath produced effects utterly of another nature. So it did in Cain and Judas, and so it doth constantly where it is absolutely prevalent. It appears, then, that its own proper effect is to drive them in whom it is from God ; and where it befalls any believer in any degree, it is the efficacy of the Spirit of grace in other fruits of it, which prevents its dangerous effects. We may add to what hath been spoken, that this fear is directly opposite to the life of faith, being indeed that 'bondage for fear of death,' which the Lord Christ died to deliver believers from, Heb. ii. 15. This is that fear which perfect love casts out, 1 John iv. 18.

Secondly. There is a watchful, careful fear with respect to the use of means ; and this is that which is here intended, and which is our duty, on the consideration of the threatenings of God, and instances of his severity against sinners. And this will appear by the consideration of what is required to this fear, which are the things that follow.

1. There is required hereunto a serious consideration of the due debt of sin, and the necessary vindication of God's glory. This is that which is directly in the first place presented to us in the threatenings of the gospel, and ought in the first place to be the object of our faith and consideration. This we have evinced to be the nature of divine comminations, namely, to declare that it is the 'judgment of God, that they who commit such sins are worthy of death,' Rom. i. 32 ; that 'the wages of sin is death,' and that this depends on the holiness of God's nature, as well as on the constitution and sanction of his law. Here may we see and know the desert of sin, and the concernment of the glory and honour of God in its punishment, the end why God originally gave the law with fire, and thunderings, and terror. An in-



stance hereof we have in Noah when he was warned of God concerning the deluge that he was bringing on the world for sin, 'being moved by fear he prepared an ark,' Heb. xi. 7. A due apprehension of the approaching judgment due to sin, and threatened by God, made him wary; *εὐλαβήσας*, he was moved from hence by this careful fear, to use means for his own deliverance and safety. This, therefore, is the first ingredient in this fear.

2. There belongs to it a due consideration of the greatness, terror, and majesty of God, who is the author of these comminations, and who in them and by them doth express to us those glorious properties of his nature. So our apostle adviseth us to 'serve God with reverence and godly fear, because he is a consuming fire,' Heb. xii. 29. The consideration of his infinitely pure and holy nature ought to influence our hearts to fear, especially when expressed in a way meet to put a peculiar impression thereof on us. Threatenings are the beamings of the rays of the holiness of God in them. And this the same apostle intends, when he gives an account of that 'terror of the Lord,' which he had regard to, in dealing with the souls of men, 2 Cor. v. 11; that is, 'how dreadful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God!' This also influenceth the fear required of us.

3. A conviction and acknowledgment that in the justice and righteousness of God, the punishments threatened might befall us. So was it with the Psalmist, 'If,' saith he, 'thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, who should stand?' Ps. cxxx. 3. And again, 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.' Without a due consideration hereof, the mind will not be subdued into that contrite and humble frame which in this matter is required.

4. An abhorrence of sin, as on other reasons, so also with respect to its proper end and tendency represented in the threatenings of God. There are many other reasons whereon sin is and ought to be everlastingly abhorred; but this is one, and that such a one, as ought never to be neglected. God hath, as we have shown, declared in his threatenings what is the desert of sin, and what will be its event in the sinner, if continued in. This ought always to be believed and weighed, so that the mind may be constantly influenced to an abhorrence of sin on that account, namely, that it ends in death, in hell, in the eternal indignation of God.

5. The nature of this fear, as discovering itself in its effects, consists principally in a sedulous watchfulness against all sin, by a diligent use of the means appointed of God for that purpose. This is the direct design of God in his comminations, namely, to stir up believers to a diligent use of the means for the avoidance of the sin declared against. And to this purpose are they sanctified and blessed, as a part of the holy sanctifying word of God. This, therefore, is that which the fear prescribed to us, is directly and properly to be exercised in and about. What is the mind, aim, and intention of God in any of his comminations, either as recorded in his word, or as declared and preached to us by his appointment? It is this and no other, that considering the terror of the Lord, and the desert of sin, we should apply ourselves

to that constancy in obedience, which we are guided to under the conduct of his good Spirit, whereby we may avoid it. And hence followeth,

6. A constant watchfulness against all carnal confidence and security. 'Thou standest by faith,' saith the apostle, 'be not high-minded, but fear,' Rom. xi. 20. And whence doth he derive this caution? From the severity of God in dealing with other professors, and the virtual threats contained therein. 'For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest also he spare not thee,' ver. 21. This fear is the great preventive of carnal security; it stands on its watch to obviate all influencing of the mind by the sloth, or negligence, or other lusts of the flesh, or by pride, presumption, elation of heart, and other lusts of the spirit. And, therefore, this fear is not such a dread as may take a sudden impression on believers by a surprisal, or under some special guilt contracted by them, but that which ought to accompany us in our whole course, as the apostle Peter adviseth us;—'See,' saith he, 'that you pass the time of your sojourning here with fear,' 1 Pet. i. 17. And it being undoubtedly of great importance to us, I have the longer insisted on it, and shall now proceed with the remaining words.

*Μηποτε καταλειπομενης της επαγγελιας.* The intention of these words is variously apprehended by interpreters. Neither will they of themselves, absolutely considered, give us a precise and determinate sense. By some it is reported to this purpose, 'Seeing God hath left a promise to us now under the gospel.' And this sense is followed by our translators, who, to make it plain, supply 'to us,' into the text. This way, the caution intended in the words, expressed in *μηποτε*, 'lest,' or 'lest at any time,' is transferred to the end of the sentence, with respect to the evil of sin that we are cautioned against. And this must be supposed to be the natural order of the words. 'Seeing there is a promise left unto us of entering into the rest of God, let us fear lest any of us seem to come short.' This sense is embraced by sundry expositors. Others take the words to express the evil of sin that we are cautioned against, whereof the following clause expresseth the punishment, or what will befall men on a supposition thereof. As if the apostle had said, 'We ought to fear, lest the promise being left, or forsaken, we should seem to come short of entering into the rest of God.' For this was the punishment that befel them of old who rejected the promise, and this way the sense is carried by most expositors. The difference comes to this, whether by *καταλειπομενης*, the act of God in giving the promise, or the neglect of men in refusing of it, be intended.

*Καταλειπω*, is of an ambiguous signification. Sometimes it is used for desero, negligo, to 'desert,' 'neglect,' or 'forsake' in a culpable manner. Frequent instances of this sense occur in all authors. And if that sense be here admitted, it confines the meaning of the words to the latter interpretation, 'Lest the promise being forsaken or neglected.' And the sin intended is the same with that ch. ii. 3. *τηλικαντης αμελησαντες σωτηριας*, 'neglecting so great salvation.' Sometimes it is no more than relinquo, which is a word *εκ των μεσων*, of a

middle or indifferent signification, and is oftentimes used in a good sense. To leave glory, riches, or honour to others that come after us, is expressed by this word. *Καταλείπειν την δόξαν*, is to leave glory to posterity. So Demosthen. in *Mid. εισφερων απο της δοξης, ὃν ὁ πατηρ μοι κατελειπε*, 'The glory of the things which my father left unto me.' And Budæus observes that *καταλείπειν* absolutely, is sometimes as much as *hæredem instituere*, 'to make or leave an heir,' opposed to *παράλείπειν*; for *παράλείπειν εν ταις διαθηκαις*, is 'to pass any one by in a testament,' without a legacy or share in the inheritance. Hence *καταλειμμα* is residuum, quod reliquum est, reliquiæ, Rom. ix. 27. So is *λειμμα*, 'a remnant,' Rom. xi. 5. Thus the apostle renders *יְהִי־שָׁמַיִךְ*, 1 Kings xix. 18, which is to leave a remnant, to leave some remaining, by *κατελιπον*, Rom. xi. 4. See Acts xv. 17. In this sense the word may here well denote the act of God, in leaving or proposing the promise to us. A promise remaining for us to mix with faith.

I see not any reason so cogent, as should absolutely determine my judgment to either of these senses, with a rejection of the other. For whethersoever of them you embrace, the main design of the apostle in the whole verse is kept entire, and either way the result of the whole is the same. Each of them, therefore, gives a sense that is true and proper to the matter treated of, though it be not evident which of them expresseth the peculiar meaning of the words. I shall, therefore, represent the intention of the apostle according to each of them.

In the first way, this is the sum of the apostle's exhortation. The promise that was made to the people of old as to their entrance into the rest of God, did not belong absolutely and universally to them alone, as is manifest from the Psalm where it is called over, and as will afterwards be made to appear. This promise for their parts, and as to their concern in it, they disbelieved, and thereby came short of entering into the promised REST. The same promise, or rather a promise of the same nature, of entering into the REST of God, remaining, continuing, and being proposed to us, the same duties of faith and obedience are required of us as were of them. Seeing, therefore, that they miscarried through contumacy and unbelief, let us fear lest we fall into the same sins also, and so come short of entering into the rest now proposed to us.

In the second way, what is said in the former exposition to be expressed in the words is taken to be granted, supposed, and included in them. Namely, that a promise of entering into the rest of God is given to us, no less than it was to them of old, which is farther also confirmed in the next verse. On this supposition, caution is given to the present Hebrews, lest neglecting, rejecting, despising that promise through unbelief, they should fall short of the rest of God, and come under his righteous indignation and judgments. As if the apostle had only said, Take heed lest by your unbelief rejecting the promise, you fall short of the rest of God.

I shall not absolutely determine on either sense, but do incline to embrace the former on a threefold account. 1. Because the apostle seems in these words to lay down the foundation of all his ensuing arguments and exhortations in this chapter. And this is, that a promise

of entering into the REST of God is left to us now under the gospel. On this supposition he proceeds in all his following discourses, which therefore, seems here to be asserted. 2. The last clause of the words, 'lest any of you should seem to come short of it,' do primarily and directly express the sin and not the punishment of unbelievers, as we shall see afterwards; the promise, and not the rest of God, is therefore the object in them considered. 3. The apostle after sundry arguments gathers up all into a conclusion, ver. 9. 'There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God;' where the word *απολειπεται*, of the same root with this is used in the sense contended for in the first interpretation.

This, therefore, I shall lay down as the import of these words,— 'There is yet on the part of God a PROMISE left to believers of entering into his rest.'

'Of entering into his rest,' *εισελθειν εις την καταπαυσιν αυτου*. What is this rest, this rest of God, the promise whereof is said to be left to us, that is, to them to whom the gospel is preached, is next to be inquired into.

Expositors generally grant that it is the rest of glory which is here intended. This is the ultimate rest which is promised to believers under the gospel. So they who are in glory are said to 'rest from their labours,' Rev. xiv. 13, and 'to have rest,' 2 Thess. i. 7. The rest of believers in heaven, after they have passed through their course of trials, sufferings, faith, and obedience in this world. This rest they take it for granted the apostle insists on throughout this chapter, and they make a supposition thereof the ground of their exposition of the several parts of it, regulating the whole thereby. But I must take the liberty to dissent from this supposition, and that on the reasons following.

First. The rest here proposed is peculiar to the gospel and the times thereof, and contradistinct to that which was proposed to the people under the economy of Moses. For whereas it is said that the people in the wilderness failed and came short of entering into rest, the rest promised to them; the apostle proves from the Psalmist that there is another rest, contradistinct from that proposed under the gospel. And this cannot be the eternal rest of glory, because those under the Old Testament had the promise thereof, no less than we have under the gospel. For with respect thereunto doth our apostle in the next verse affirm, that the 'gospel was preached unto them as it is unto us,' no less truly, though less clearly and evidently. And this rest multitudes of them entered into. For they were both 'justified by faith,' Rom. iv. 3, 7, 8, and had the 'adoption of children,' Rom. ix. 5. And when they died entered into eternal rest with God. They did, I say, enter into the rest of God, that is at their death they went to a place of refreshment under the favour of God. For whatever may be thought of any circumstances of their condition, as that their soul were only in loco refrigerii, in a place of refreshment, and not of the enjoyment of the immediate presence of God, yet it cannot be denied but that they entered into peace and rested, Isa. lvii. 2. This, therefore, cannot be that other rest which is provided under the



gospel, in opposition to that proposed under the law or to the people in the wilderness.

Secondly. The apostle plainly carrieth on in his whole discourse an antithesis consisting of many parts: the principal subject of it is the two people; that in the wilderness, and those Hebrews to whom the gospel was now preached. Concerning them he manageth his opposition as to the promises made to them, the things promised, and the means or persons whereby they were to be made partakers of them, namely, Moses and Joshua on the one hand, and JESUS CHRIST on the other. Look then what was that rest of God which they of old entered not into, and that which is now proposed must bear its part in the antithesis against it, and hold proportion with it. Now that rest, as we have proved, whereinto they entered not, was the quiet settled state of God's solemn worship in the land of Canaan, or a peaceable church-state for the worship of God in the land and place chosen out for that purpose.

Now it is not the rest of heaven that in this antithesis between the LAW and the GOSPEL is opposed hereunto; but the rest that believers have in Christ, with that church-state and worship which by him as the great Prophet of the church in answer to Moses was erected; and into the possession whereof, he powerfully leads them, as did Joshua the people of old into the rest of Canaan.

Thirdly. The apostle plainly affirms this to be his intention, for ver. 3, he saith, 'For we which have believed do enter into rest.' It is such a rest, it is that rest which true believers do enter into in this world, and this is the rest which we have by Christ in the grace and worship of the gospel, and no other. And thus the rest which was proposed of old for the people to enter into, which some obtained and others came short of by unbelief, was a rest in this world, wherein the effects of their faith and unbelief were visible, and therefore so also must that be wherewith it is compared. And this consideration we shall strengthen from sundry other passages in the context, as we go through with them in our way.

Fourthly. Christ and the gospel were promised of old to the people, as a means and state of rest; and according to those promises, they are here actually proposed unto their enjoyment; see Isa. xi. 1—10, xxviii. 12; Ps. lxxii. 7, 8, &c.; Isa. ix. 6, 7, ii. 2—4; Gen. v. 29; Matt. xi. 28; Isa. lxvi. 1; Luke i. 70—75. This was the principal notion which the church had from the foundation of the world, concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, or the state of the gospel, namely, that it was a state of spiritual rest and deliverance from every thing that was grievous or burdensome unto the souls and consciences of believers. This is that which the people of God in all ages looked for, and which, in the preaching of the gospel, was proposed unto them.

Fifthly. The true nature of this rest may be discovered from the promise of it. For a promise is said to remain of entering into this rest. Now, this promise is no other but the gospel itself as preached unto us. This the apostle expressly declares in the next verse. The want of a due consideration hereof, is that which hath led expositors

into their mistake in this matter. For they eye only the promise of eternal life, given in the gospel; which is but a part of it, and that consequential unto sundry other promises. That promise concerns only them who do actually believe; but the apostle principally intends those promises which are proposed unto men as the prime object of their faith, and encouragement unto believing. And of these the principal are the promises of Christ himself, and of the benefits of his mediation. These sinners must be interested in, before they can lay any claim to the promise of eternal life and salvation.

Sixthly. The whole design of the apostle is not to prefer heaven, immortality, and glory, above the law, and that rest in God's worship, which the people had in the land of Canaan, for none ever doubted thereof, no, not of the Hebrews themselves; nay, this is far more excellent than the gospel-state itself. But it is to set out the excellency of the gospel, with the worship of it, and the church-state whereunto therein we are called by Jesus Christ, above all those privileges and advantages which the people of old were made partakers of by the law of Moses. This we have already abundantly demonstrated; and if it be not always duly considered, no part of the Epistle can be rightly understood. The rest therefore here intended, is that rest which believers have an entrance into by Jesus Christ in this world.

This being the rest here proposed, as promised in the gospel, our next inquiry is into the nature of it, or wherein it doth consist. And we shall find the concernments of it reduced into these four heads:

First. In peace with God, in the free and full justification of the persons of believers from all their sins, by the blood of Christ, Rom. v. 1, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.' Eph. i. 4, 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins.' This is fully expressed, Acts xiii. 32, 33, 38, 39, 'We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise that was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.' The whole of what we contend for, is expressed in these words. The promise given unto the fathers, but not accomplished unto them, is no other but the promise of rest insisted on. This now is enjoyed by believers, and it consists in that justification from sin, which by the law of Moses could not be attained. This, with its proper evangelical consequents, is the foundation of this rest. Nor is it of force to except, that this was enjoyed also under the Old Testament; for although it were so in the substance of it, yet it was not so as a complete rest. Neither was it at all attained by virtue of their present promises, their worship, their sacrifices, or whatever other advantage they had by the law of Moses; but by that respect which those things had to the gospel. Justification and peace with God thereon, are properly and directly ours; they were theirs by a participation in our privileges, God having ordained some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect, Heb. xi. 40. Neither

had they it clearly, or fully, as an absolutely satisfactory spiritual rest. God revealed it unto them in and by such means, as never made them perfect in this matter, but left them under a renewed sense of sin, Heb. x. 1—4. But under the gospel, life and immortality being brought to light, 2 Tim. i. 10, and the eternal life which was with the Father being manifested unto us, 1 John i. 2, the veil being removed, both from the face of Moses and the hearts of believers by the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 13—18; they have now a plerophory, a full assured persuasion of it, at least in its causes and concomitants.

Secondly. In our freedom from a servile bondage frame of spirit in the worship of God. This they had under the Old Testament: they had the spirits of servants, though they were sons. For the heir, as long as he is *νηπιος*, 'an infant,' unable to guide himself, differeth nothing from a servant, but is under tutors and governors, until the appointed time of the Father: so were these children in their legal state in bondage, *ὑπο τα στοιχεια του κοσμου*, under the very first rudiments of instruction which God was pleased to make use of towards his children in this world, Gal. iv. 1—3. And this had particular respect unto that spirit of bondage unto fear, Rom. viii. 15, which they were under in the worship of God; for it is opposed unto that liberty, freedom, and filial boldness, which under the gospel believers are made partakers of, by the Spirit of adoption enabling them to cry, Abba, Father, Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 15, 16. And this kept them from that full and complete rest, which now is to be entered into. For this cannot be, namely, a rest in the worship of God, but where there is liberty; and this is only where is the Spirit of Christ and the gospel, as our apostle discourseth at large, 2 Cor. iii. 14—18. The Son making of us free, we are free indeed; and do by the Spirit of that Son, receive spiritual liberty, boldness, enlargedness of mind, and plainness of speech, in crying, Abba, Father.

Thirdly. Evangelical rest consists in a deliverance from the yoke and bondage of Mosaic institutions. For as the people of old had a spirit of bondage within them, so they had without upon them, *ζυγον*, 'a yoke;' and that not only in itself, *δυσβαστακτον*, 'heavy and grievous to be borne;' but such as eventually they could not bear, Acts xv. 10. They could never so bear or carry it, as to make comfortable work under it: 'Ο νομος των εντολων εν δογμασι, 'The law of commands, that principally consisted in commandments,' and those greatly multiplied, as we have shown elsewhere, being also positive, absolute, severe, or dogmatical, was burdensome unto them, Eph. ii. 15. This yoke is now taken away, this law is abrogated, and peace, with rest in Christ, in whom we are complete, Col. ii. 10, and who is the end of the law for righteousness, are come in the room of them. And this rest in the consciences of men, from an obligation unto an anxious scrupulous observance of a multitude of carnal ordinances, and that under most severe revenging penalties, is no small part of that rest, which our Saviour makes that great encouragement unto sinners to come unto him, Matt. xi. 28—30.

Fourthly. This rest consists in that gospel-worship whereunto we are called. This is a blessed rest on manifold accounts. 1. Of that

freedom and liberty of spirit, which believers have in the obedience of it. They obey God therein, not in the oldness of the letter, *εν παλαιωτητι γραμματος*, in that old condition of bondage wherein we were when the law was our husband, that rigorously ruled over us ; but *εν καινωτητι πνευματος*, ‘ in the newness of the Spirit,’ or the strength of that renewing Spirit which we have received in Christ Jesus, Rom. vii. 6, as was before declared. 2. Of the strength and assistance which the worshippers have for the performance of the worship itself in a due and acceptable manner. The law prescribed many duties, but it gave no strength to perform them spiritually. Constant supplies of the Spirit accompany the administration of the gospel in them that believe. There is an *επιχορηγια του πνευματος*, Phil. i. 19, ‘ a supply of the Spirit,’ continually given out to believers from Christ their Head, Eph. iv. 16. *Χορηγια*, or *χορηγημα*, is a sufficient provision administered unto a person for his work or business. And *επιχορηγια* is a continual addition unto that provision for every particular act or duty of that work or business : *Prioris suppletionis corollarium*, ‘ a complemental addition unto a former supply or provision.’ This believers have in their observance of gospel worship. They do not only receive the Spirit of Christ, fitting and enabling their persons for this work in general, but they have continual additions of spiritual strength, or supplies of the Spirit, for and unto every special duty. Hence have they great peace, ease, and rest, in the whole course of it. 3. The worship itself, and the obedience required therein, is not grievous, but easy, gentle, rational, suited unto the principles of the new nature of the worshippers. Hence they never more fully partake of spiritual rest, nor have clearer evidences of their interest and entrance into eternal rest, than in and by the performance of the duties of it.

Fifthly. This also is God’s rest ; and by entering into it, believers enter into the rest of God. For, 1. God resteth ultimately and absolutely as to all the ends of his glory in Christ, as exhibited in the gospel ; that is, he in whom his soul delighteth, Isa. xlii. 1, and in whom he is well pleased, Matt. xvii. 5. In him, his wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and grace do rest, as being exalted and glorified according to his purpose. 2. Through him he rests in his love towards believers also. As of old in the sacrifices which were types of him, it is said that he smelled a savour of rest, Gen. viii. 21, so that on his account he would not destroy men, though sinners ; so in him he is expressly said to rest in his love towards them, Zeph. iii. 17. 3. This is that worship which he ultimately and unchangeably requires in this world. He always gave out rules and commands for his outward worship, from the foundation of the world. But he still did so with a declaration of this reserve, to add what he pleased unto former institutions, and did accordingly, as we have declared on the first verse of the Epistle. Moreover, he gave intimation that a time of reformation was to come, when all those institutions should expire and be changed. Wherefore in them the rest of God could not absolutely consist, and which on all occasions he did declare. But now things are quite otherwise, with respect unto gospel worship. For neither will God ever make any additions unto what is already instituted and appointed



by Christ, nor is it liable unto any alteration or change unto the consummation of all things. This therefore is God's rest and ours.

Obs. IV. It is a matter of great and tremendous consequence, to have the promises of God left and proposed unto us.—From the consideration hereof, with that of the threatenings included in the severity of God towards unbelievers, before insisted on, doth the apostle educe his monitory exhortation, 'Let us fear therefore.' He knew the concernment of the souls of men in such a condition, and the danger of their miscarriages therein. When Moses had of old declared the law unto the people, he assured them that he had set life and death before them, one whereof would be the unquestionable consequent of that proposal. Much more may this be said of the promises of the gospel. They are a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, unto all to whom they are revealed and proposed. In what sense the promise is or may be left unto any, hath been declared before in general. That there is a promise of entering into the rest of God yet remaining; that this promise be made known and proposed unto us in the dispensation of the word; that a day, time, or season of patience and grace be left unto us, are required hereunto. When these things are so, it is a trembling concern unto us to consider the issue. For,

First, The matter of the promise is about the eternal concerns of the glory of God, and the good or evil state of the souls of men. The matter of the promise of old was in part typical, and related immediately to things temporal and carnal, a rest from bondage in the land of Canaan. But even this being neglected by them to whom it was left and proposed, exposed them to the high displeasure and indignation of God. And what will be the event of the neglect of such a promise, the matter of which is high above the other, as heaven is above the earth, excelling it as things spiritual and eternal do things temporary and carnal? God will have a strict account of the entertainment that is given unto gospel promises among the sons of men. This is no slight matter, nor to be slighted over, as is the manner of the most that are dealt withal about it. An eternity in blessedness or misery depends singly on this treaty that God hath with us in the promises. Hence are those frequent intimations of eternal severity which are recorded in the Scripture against those who reject the promise that is left unto them. As Heb. ii. 3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' 1 Pet. iv. 17, 'What shall be the end of them who obey not the gospel of Christ?' And the like everywhere.

2. The whole love, goodness, and grace of God towards mankind, the infinite wisdom of the counsel of his will about their salvation, are contained and exhibited unto us in the promise. This is the way that God from the beginning fixed on, to propose and communicate the effects of these things unto us. Hence the gospel, which is an explication of the promise in all the causes and effects of it, is termed *επιφανεια της χαριτος της σωτηριου του Θεου*, Tit. ii. 11, the 'illustrious appearance of the saving grace of God;' and *επιφανεια της χρηστοτητος και της φιλανθρωπιως του σωτηρος ημων Θεου*, ch. iii. 4, 'the glorious manifestation of the goodness, kindness, benignity, and

love of God our Saviour.' And *ευαγγελιον της δοξης του μακαριου Θεου*, 1 Tim. i. 11. As also *ευαγγελιον της δοξης του Χριστου*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. That is, either by a Hebraism, *ευαγγελιον ενδοξον*, the 'glorious gospel,' so called from the nature and effects of it; or the gospel which reveals, declares, makes known the great and signal glory of God, that whereby he will be exalted upon the account of his goodness, grace, love, and kindness.

Now, even among men, it is a thing of some hazard and consequence for any to have an offer made them of the favour, love, and kindness of potentates or princes. For they do not take any thing more unkindly, nor usually revenge more severely, than the neglect of their favours. They take themselves therein, in all that they esteem themselves for, to be neglected and despised; and this they do though their favour be of little worth or use, and not at all to be confided in; as Ps. cxlvi. 3, 4. And what shall we think of this tender of all that grace, love, and kindness of God? Surely we ought well to bethink ourselves of the event, when it is made unto us. When our Saviour sent his disciples to tender the promise unto the inhabitants of any city or house, he ordered them that upon its refusal they should 'shake off the dust of their feet,' Matt. x. 14; 'for a testimony against them,' Mark vi. 11. Shake off the dust of their feet as a token of God's dereliction and indignation. A natural symbol to that purpose. So Nehemiah shook his lap against them that would not keep the oath of God, saying, 'So God shake out every man from his house, that performeth not this promise,' Neh. v. 13. As it was the custom of the Romans when they denounced war and desolation against any country, they threw a stone into their land. So Paul and Barnabas literally practised this order, Acts xiii. 51. They 'shook off the dust of their feet against them;' and what they intended thereby they declared in their words unto them that refused the promise: ver. 46, 'Seeing you put the word from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn unto the Gentiles;' that is, we leave you to perish everlastingly in your sins. And this they did for a testimony against them; a sign and witness to be called over at the last day, that the promise had been tendered unto them, and was rejected by them. And that this is the meaning of that symbol, and not a mere declaration that they would accept of nothing from them, nor carry away aught of them, not so much as the dust of their feet, as some suppose, is evident from the interpretation of it, in the following words of our Saviour; ver. 15, '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.' That is, by so doing you shall give them an infallible sign of that certain and sore destruction which shall befall them for their sins. Severe, therefore, will be the issue of so much despised love and kindness as is exhibited in the promise. See more hereof on ch. ii. 2; 3.

3. This proposal of the promise of the gospel unto men is decretory and peremptory as to God's dealings with them about their salvation. 'He that believeth not shall be damned,' Mark xvi. 16. There is no other way for us to escape the wrath to come. God hath indispensa-

bly bound up mankind to this rule and law ; here they must close or perish for ever. From all which it appears what thoughts men ought to have of themselves and their condition, when the gospel in the providence of God is preached unto them. The event one way or other will be very great. Everlasting blessedness or everlasting woe, will be the issue of it one way or the other. ‘ Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left unto us,’ &c. Again,

Obs. V. The failing of men through their unbelief doth no way cause the promises of God to fail or cease. Those to whom the promise mentioned in this place, was first proposed came short of it, believed it not, and so had no benefit by it. What then became of the promise itself? did that fail also, and become of none effect? God forbid; it remained still and was left for others. This our apostle more fully declares, Rom. ix. 4—6. For, having shown that the promises of God were given unto the Israelites, the posterity of Abraham, he foresaw an objection that might be taken from thence against the truth and efficacy of the promises themselves. This he anticipates and answers, ver. 6, ‘ Not as though the word of God,’ that is, the word of promise, ‘ hath taken none effect;’ and so proceedeth to show, that whosoever and how many soever reject the promise, yet they do it only to their own ruin ; the promise shall have its effects in others, in those whom God hath graciously ordained unto a participation of it. And so also Rom. iii. 3, ‘ For what if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? God forbid.’ The faith of God, that is, his glory in his veracity, as the apostle shows in the next words, (‘ Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar;’) is engaged for the stability and accomplishment of his promises; men by their unbelief may disappoint themselves of their expectation, and cannot bereave God of his faithfulness. And the reason on the one hand is, that God doth not give his promises unto all men, to have their gracious effect upon them, whether they will or not, whether they believe them or reject them. And on the other, he can and will raise up them, who shall, through his grace, mix his promises with faith and enjoy the benefit of it. If the natural seed of Abraham prove obstinate, he can, out of stones, raise up children unto him, who shall be his heirs and inherit the promises. And, therefore, when the gospel is preached to any nation, or city, or assembly, the glory and success of it do not depend upon the wills of them unto whom it is preached, neither is it frustrated by their unbelief. The salvation that is contained in it, shall be disposed of unto others, but they and their house shall be destroyed. This our Saviour often threatened unto the obstinate Jews, and accordingly it came to pass. And God hath blessed ends in granting the outward dispensation of the promises even unto them by whom they are rejected, not here to be insisted on. Hence our apostle tells us, that those who preach the gospel ‘ are a sweet savour of Christ unto God, as well in them that perish, as in them that are saved,’ 2 Cor. ii. 15. Christ is glorified, and God in and by him, in the dispensation of it, whether men receive it or not. Again, it follows from these words that,

Obs. VI. The gospel state of believers is a state of assured rest and

peace; it is the rest of God. But this will more properly fall under our consideration on ver. 3, as to what is needful to be added to the preceding discourse.

The caution enforcing the exhortation insisted on, remains to be opened, in the last words of the first verse; 'lest any of you seem to come short of it.'

Τις ἐξ ὑμῶν, 'any one of you,' any one from amongst you. This expression the apostle used before, ch. iii. 12, ἐν τινὶ ὑμῶν, 'in any of you.' He respected them all so in general, as that he had a regard to every one of them in particular. Some here read ἡμῶν, 'of us.' And this seems more proper, for it both answers the preceding caution, 'let us fear,' viz. 'lest any one of us;' and continues the same tenor of speech unto what ensues, 'for unto us was the gospel preached.' If we read ἡμῶν, the sense of the caution is, that 'every one of us should take heed to ourselves;' if we retain ὑμῶν, with the most copies and translations, the intendment is that we all ought to take care of one another, or fear the dangers and temptations of one another, labouring to prevent their efficacy by mutual brotherly care and assistance. And this is most answerable unto the apostle's treating of them in sundry other places of this Epistle; as ch. iii. 12, 13, x. 23, 24, xii. 15.

Δοκῇ, 'should seem.' It refers unto μηποτε, 'lest at any time.' There is a threefold probable sense of this word or expression. 1. Some suppose it to be added merely to give an emphasis to the caution. And so there is no more intended, but that none of you come short of it. And this manner of speech is not unusual: lest any seem to come short, that is, lest any do so indeed. See 1 Cor. xi. 16, xii. 12; 2 Cor. x. 9. 2. Some suppose that by this word the apostle mitigates the severity of the intimation given them of their danger, by a kind and gentle expression; lest any of you should seem to incur so great a penalty, fall under so great a destruction, or fall into so great a sin as that intimated; without this the admonition seems to have some harshness in it. And it is a good rule, that all such warnings as have threatenings for their motive, or any way included in them, ought to be expressed with gentleness and tenderness, that the persons warned take no occasion of being provoked or irritated. 'A soft answer,' and so a soft admonition, 'turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger,' Prov. xv. 1. See the proceeding of our apostle in this case, ch. vi. 7—10, with what wisdom he alleviates the appearing sharpness of a severe admonition. But, 3. The apostle rather intends to warn them against all appearance of any such failing or falling as he cautioneth them against. He desires them to take heed that none of them do, by foregoing their former zeal and diligence, give any umbrage or appearance of a declension from or desertion of their profession. This is his intention. Let there be no semblance or appearance of any such thing found amongst you.

'To come short,' ὑστερηκεναι, 'to be left behind.' To have been left behind, that is, in the work of first receiving the promise when proposed. If men fail in the beginning, probably they will quite give over in their progress. Ὑστερεω is, posterior sum, 'to be behind' in



time, in place, in progress. Vulg. Lat. *desse*, 'to be wanting;' which renders not the words, nor gives any direct sense. Syr. *ܠܡܥܬ*, *quicesset*, *qui frustretur*, *qui deficeret*, so is it variously rendered; any one that should cease, fail, be frustrated, give over; whereunto it adds, *למנוח*, *ab ingressu*, 'from entering in;' that is, into the rest contained in the promise, making that, and not the promise itself, to be intended; and so the dehortation to be taken from the punishment of unbelief, and not the nature of the sin itself. *Ὑστερεω* also signifies *frustrari*, *non assequi*; 'to be disappointed,' and not to attain the thing aimed at. So Thucyd. lib. 3, *επειδη της Μιτυληνης ὑστερηκει*; 'after that he missed of Mitylene;' or was disappointed in his design of putting in there. And in Isocrates, *ὑστερειν των καιρων, και πραγματων*, is to be disappointed, or fail of occasions, for the management of affairs. The word also signifies to want, or to be wanting. *Τῷ ὑστερουντι περισσοτεραν δους τιμην* 1 Cor. xii. 24, 'giving honour to that which wanteth,' is wanting. *Ὑστερησαντος οινου*, John ii. 3, 'when wine failed,' was wanting, when they lacked wine. So also to be inferior; *ὑστερηκεναι των ὑπερλιαν αποστολων*, 2 Cor. xi. 5, 'to come behind the chiefest apostles;' that is, be inferior unto them in any thing.

Generally, expositors think here is an allusion unto them who run in a race. Those who are not speedy therein, who stir not up themselves, and put out their utmost ability and diligence, do fail, come behind, and so fall short of the prize. So *ὑστερειν*, is *ultimus esse*, *deficere in cursu*, a *tergo remanere*; to be cast, to faint or fail in the race, to be cast behind the backs of others. And this is a thing which our apostle more than once alludes to; and explains, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25.

But the allusion is taken from the people in the wilderness, and their passing into the land of Canaan. Most of them were heavy through unbelief, lagged in their progress, and were, as it were, left behind in the wilderness, where they perished and came short of entering into the promised land. These words therefore, 'lest any of you should come short of it,' are as if he had said; lest it fall out with you in reference to the promise left unto you, as it did with the people in the wilderness, with respect to the promise as proposed and preached unto them. For by reason of their unbelief they fell short, and enjoyed not the promise, nor did enter into the land promised unto them, or the rest of God. And take you heed lest by the same means you fall short of the promise now preached unto you, and of entering into the rest of God in the gospel. The word therefore directly respects the promise, fall short of the promise; consequentially the things promised, or the rest of God in the gospel. The scope and intention of this latter part of the verse, may be summed up in the ensuing observations.

Obs. VII. Many to whom the promise of the gospel is proposed and preached, do, or may, through their own sins, come short of the enjoyment of the things promised. The caution here given unto the Hebrews, with the foundation of it in the example of those who did so miscarry, not only warrants, but makes necessary this observation

from the words. And I wish it were a matter of difficulty to c the truth of what is here observed. But what is affirmed is l pressive of the state and condition of most of those in the w whom the gospel is preached. They come short of all benefit or advantage by it. It ever was so, and it may be, for the most part, ever will be so in this world. That sentence of our Saviour contains the lot and state of men under the dispensation of the gospel. 'Many are called, but few are chosen.' It is true, 'faith cometh by hearing,' but bare hearing will denominate no man a believer; more is required thereunto. Men indeed would probably much esteem the gospel, if it would save them merely at the cost and pains of others in preaching it. But God hath otherwise disposed of things: their own faith and obedience are also indispensably required hereunto. Without these, the promise considered in itself will not profit them: and as it is proposed unto them it will condemn them. What the ways and means are, whereby men are kept off from enjoying the promise, and entering by faith into the rest of God, hath been declared on ch. iii. 12. Again,

Obs. VIII. Not only backsliding through unbelief, but all appearances of tergiversation in profession, and occasions of them in times of difficulty and trials, ought to be carefully avoided by professors: 'lest any of you should seem.'—Not only a profession, but the beauty and glory of it, is required of us.

We have often observed that it was now a time of great difficulty and of many trials unto these Hebrews. Such seasons are of great concern to the glory of God, the honour of the gospel, the edification of the church, and the welfare of the souls of men. For in them all the things of God, and the interests of men in them, have a public and as it were a visible transaction in the world. Now therefore the apostle would not have the least appearance of tergiversation, or drawing back in them that make profession of the truth. So he gives us caution elsewhere with the same respect, Eph. v. 16, 'Walking circumspectly, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.' The reason of both the duties enjoined, is taken from the consideration of the evil of the days, filled with temptations, persecutions, and dangers. Then in all things professors are to walk *ακριβως*, exactly, circumspectly, accurately. And there are two heads of circumspect walking in profession during such a season. The first is to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, Tit. ii. 10. *Κοσμουντες την διδασκαλιαν*, rendering beautiful, lovely, comely, the doctrine of truth which we profess: *κοσμεω* is so to adorn any thing, as a bride decketh or adorneth herself with ornaments to appear lovely and desirable; an allusion which the Scripture elsewhere maketh use of, Isa. lxi. 10, and by which Solomon sets out the spiritual glory and beauty of the church in his mystical song. This is a season wherein by all accurate circumspection in their walking and profession, believers ought to render what they believe and profess glorious in the eyes of all. And this for two ends; 1. That those who are of the contrary part, those that trouble and persecute them, may have *μηδεν φανλον* o say of them, Tit. i. 8. *Nihil improbum aut stultum*; no wicked,

no foolish matter to lay to their charge. And though the conviction that falls upon ungodly men have no effect on them, but a secret shame that they should pursue them with wrath and hatred, against whom they have no evil or foolish matter to say, but are forced openly to fall upon them in things only concerning the law of their God, as Dan. vi. 5, yet God makes use of it to check and restrain that wrath, which if it brake forth would not turn to his praise, 1 Pet. iii. 16. 2. That others who by their trials may be led to a more diligent consideration of them than at other times, may by the ornaments put upon the truth, be brought over to liking, approbation, and profession of it. In such a season believers are set upon a theatre, and made a spectacle to all the world, 1 Cor. iv. 9—13. All eyes are upon them to see how they will acquit themselves. And this is one reason whence times of persecution and trouble have usually been the seasons of the church's growth and increase. All men are awakened to serious thoughts of the contest which they see in the world. And if thereon they find the ways of the gospel rendered glorious and amiable by the conversation and walking of them that do profess it, it greatly disposeth their minds to the acceptance of it. At such a season therefore above all others, there ought to be no appearances of tergiversation or decays. 3. The next head of circumspect walking in such a condition, that no semblance of coming short may be given, is, a diligent endeavour to avoid all 'appearance of evil,' 1 Thess. v. 22. Every thing that may give occasion unto any to judge that we are fainting in our profession. Things that it may be are lawful or indifferent at another time; things that we can produce probable and pleadable reasons for; yet if through the circumstances that we are attended with, they may be looked on by persons of integrity, though either weak or prejudiced, to have an eye or show of evil in them, are carefully to be avoided.

Now there are two parts of our profession that we are to heed, lest we should seem to fail when times of difficulties do attend us. The first is personal holiness, righteousness, and upright universal obedience. The other is the due observance of all the commands, ordinances, and institutions of Christ in the gospel. The apostle Peter joins them together, with respect unto our accurate attendance unto them in such seasons, 2 Pet. iii. 11. Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, *ἐν ἁγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς, καὶ εὐσεβείαις*, 'in holy conversations;' that is, in every instance of our converse or walking before God in this world. Herein we meet with many changes, many temptations, many occasions, duties, and trials, in all which a thread of holiness ought to run through in our spirits and actings. Hence it is expressed by holy conversations, which we have rendered by supplying *all* into the text. *Καὶ εὐσεβείαις*, 'and godlinesses.' The word principally respects the godliness that is in religious worship, which constitutes the second part of our profession. And although the worship of God in Christ be one in general, and no other worship are christians to touch upon, yet because there are many duties to be attended unto in that worship, many ordinances to be observed, and our diligent care is re-

quired about each particular instance, he expresseth it in the plural number, 'godlinesses, or worships; or as we, 'all godliness.' About both these parts of profession is our utmost endeavour required, that we seem not to fail in them. Men may do so, and yet retain so much integrity in their hearts, as may at last give them an entrance, as it were through fire into the rest of God; but yet manifold evils do ensue upon the appearance of their failings in the gospel, to the church of God, and to their own souls. To assist us therefore in our duty in this matter, we may carry along with us the ensuing directions.

1. Have an equal respect always to both the parts of profession mentioned, lest failing in one of them, we be found at length to fail in the whole. And the danger is great in the neglect hereof. For example; it is so, lest whilst we are sedulous about the due and strict observance of the duties of instituted worship, a neglect or decay should grow upon us, as to holiness, moral righteousness, and obedience. For,

1. Whilst the mind is deeply engaged and exercised about those duties, either out of a peculiar bent of spirit towards them, or from opposition that is made unto them, the whole man is oftentimes taken up therewith, as that it is regardless of personal holiness and righteousness. Besides the innumerable instances we have hereof in the Scripture, wherein God chargeth men with their wickedness, and rejects them for it whilst they pretended highly to a strict observance of oblations and sacrifices, we have seen it manifoldly exemplified in the days wherein we live. Whilst men have contended about ordinances and institutions, forms and ways of religion, they have grown careless and regardless as unto personal holy conversation, to their ruin. They have seemed like keepers of a vineyard, but their own vineyard they have not kept. How many have we seen withering away into a dry sapless frame, under a hot, contending, disputing spirit about ways and differences of worship! whilst they have been intent on one part of profession, the other of more importance hath been neglected.

2. Corrupt nature is apt to compensate in the conscience the neglect of one duty with diligence in another. If men engage in a present duty, a duty as they judge exceedingly acceptable with God, and attended with difficulty in the world, they are apt enough to think that they may give themselves a dispensation in some other things; that they need not attend to universal holiness and obedience with that strictness, circumspection, and accuracy, as seems to be required. Yea, this is the ruin of most hypocrites and false professors in the world.

Let it therefore be always our care, especially in difficult seasons, in the first place to secure the first part of profession, by a diligent attendance unto all manner of holiness, in our persons, families, and in our whole conversation in this world. Let faith, love, humility, patience, purity, charity, self-denial, weanedness from the world, readiness to do good to all, forgiving of one another and our enemies, be made bright in us, and shine in such a season, if we would not seem to come short. And this,

I. Because the difficulties in, and oppositions to the other part of



our profession, with the excellency of the duties of it in such a season, are apt to surprise men into an approbation of themselves in a neglect of those more important duties, as was before observed. It is a sad thing to see men suffer for gospel-truths, with worldly carnal hearts and corrupt conversations. If we give 'our bodies to be burned, and have not charity,' or are defective in grace, 'it will not profit us,' we shall be but as 'sounding brass or tinkling cymbals,' 1 Cor. xiii. 3. 2. God hath no regard to the observance of ordinances, where duties of holiness, righteousness, and love are neglected, Isa. i. 13—18. And in this state, whatever use we may be of in the world, or unto others, all will be lost as to ourselves, Matt. vii. 21—23. 3. We can have no expectation of strength or assistance from God, in cleaving to the truth and purity of worship against oppositions, if we fail in our diligent attendance unto universal holiness. Here hath been the original of most men's apostasy. They have thought they could abide in the profession of the truths whereof they have been convinced. But growing cold and negligent in personal obedience, they have found their locks cut, and they have become weak and unstable as water; God for their sins justly withholding the assistance of his Spirit, they have become a prey to every temptation. 4. What is it that we intend and aim at in our profession and our constancy in it; is it not that therein and thereby we may give glory unto God, and to honour the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel? If this be not our aim, all our religion is in vain? If it be so, we may easily see that without personal universal holiness, we do on many accounts dishonour God, Christ, and the gospel, by our profession, be it what it will. Here therefore let us fix our principal diligence that there be no appearance of any failure, lest we should seem to come short of the promise.

Secondly. The other part of our profession consists in our adherence unto a due observance of all gospel-institutions and commands, according to the charge of our Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. xxviii. 20. The necessity hereof depends on the importance of it, the danger of its omission unto our own souls, the dependence of the visible kingdom of Christ in this world upon it, which things may not here be insisted on.

Obs. IX. They who mix not the promises of the gospel with faith, shall utterly come short of entering into the rest of God.—And this the apostle further demonstrates in the next verse which follows.

VER. 2.—*For unto us was the gospel preached, even as unto them, (we were evangelized even as they); but the word of hearing (the word which they heard) did not profit them, being not mixed with faith in them that heard.*

The signification of the original words, as rendered by translators, hath been already considered.

In this verse the apostle confirms the reasonableness of the exhortation drawn from the instance before insisted on. And this he doth on two grounds or principles. First. The parity of condition that was between them of old represented in the example, as to privilege and

duty, and those to whom now he wrote in the first words of the verse; 'for we were evangelized, even as they.' Secondly. The event of that privilege and call to duty which befel them of old, which he would dehort the present Hebrews from; the 'word which they heard, profited them not, because,' &c.

His first ground must, in the first place, be opened and improved.

*Και γαρ, etenim.* The conjunction of these particles, manifests a relation unto what went before, and the introduction of a new reason for its confirmation. And *και* in this place, is not so much a copulative, as usually it is, as an illative particle. So is it used, Mark x. 26, *και τις δυναται σωθηναι*, 'and who can be saved?' which we render rightly, 'who then can be saved?' for an inference is intended from the former words, expressed by way of interrogation. And the same particle is sometimes causal; not respecting a conjunction with what went before, nor an inference from it, but is introductory of an ensuing reason. See Luke i. 42, and John vi. 54. Here as having *γαρ*, *for* or *because*, joined unto it, it signifies the induction of a reason for the confirmation of what was spoken before.

*Εσμεν ευηγγελισμενοι.* *Ευαγγελιζομαι* is of a various construction in the New Testament. It is mostly used in an active sense, and when spoken with respect unto persons, it hath a dative case, signifying *them*, annexed unto it. Luke iv. 18, *ευαγγελιζεσθαι πτωχοις*, 'to preach the gospel to the poor.' Rom. i. 15, *τοις εν Ρωμη ευαγγελισασθαι*, 'to preach the gospel to them at Rome;' so frequently. Sometimes it hath the subject of it joined unto it in the accusative case, Acts v. 42. 'They ceased not preaching from house to house,' *και ευαγγελιζομενοι Ιησουν τον Χριστον*, 'and preaching Jesus to be the Christ.' So also ch. viii. 4, Eph. ii. 17. And sometimes the object is expressed by the same case. *Ευηγγελιζετο τον λαον*, 'he evangelized the people,' preached unto them; so Acts viii. 25. And commonly it is used neutrally or absolutely, to preach the gospel, without the addition either of subject or object. Sometimes it is used passively; and that either absolutely, as 1 Pet. iv. 6, or with the nominative case of those that are the object of it; Matt. xi. 5, *πτωχοι ευαγγελιζονται*, 'the poor are evangelized,' or have the gospel preached unto them. And in this sense and construction is it here used. For the nominative case, *ημεις*, is included in the verb substantive *εσμεν*, 'we are evangelized,' we have the gospel preached unto us. And in what way or sense soever the word is used, it doth nowhere denote the receiving of the gospel in the power of it, by them who are evangelized; that is, it includes not the faith of the hearers, but only expresseth the act of preaching, and the outward enjoyment of it. The gospel, and therein the promise of entering into the rest of God, is preached unto us.

*Καθ'απερ κα̑κεινοι*, 'even as they.' It is plain from the context who are those whom this relative *κα̑κεινοι* directs unto; namely the fathers in the wilderness, who were before treated of. Those who had, those who disbelieved, and rejected the promise of God, and came short of entering into his rest. And three things are to be inquired into for the opening of these words.

1. Wherein consists the comparison expressed in the word *καθ' αὐτοῦ*, 'even as.'

2. How was the gospel preached unto them.

3. How unto us.

First. The comparison is not between the subject of the preaching mentioned, as though they had one gospel preached unto them and we another; as if he had said, we have a gospel preached unto us, as they had one before us. For the gospel is one and the same unto all, and ever was so from the giving out of the first promise. Nor, Secondly, is the comparison between two several ways, modes, or manners of preaching the gospel. For if so, the preaching of the gospel to them hath the preeminence above the preaching of it unto us; inasmuch as in the comparison it should be made the rule and pattern of ours: 'the gospel was preached unto us as unto them.' But the preaching of the gospel by the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles, which the Hebrews now enjoyed, (if that be here understood) was far more excellent, as to the manner of it, than that which their forefathers were made partakers of. The comparison therefore intended, is merely between the persons, *THEY* and *WE*. As they enjoyed the gospel, so do we; as it was preached to them, so to us. That it is in a far more excellent and eminent manner declared unto us, than unto them, he farther declares afterwards; yet, as I shall show, though this be true, yet probably it is not the sense of this place.

Secondly. It is supposed and granted that the gospel was preached to the people in the wilderness. The apostle doth not here directly assert it, it is not his intention to prove it, it was not the design or subject-matter that he had in hand, nor would the confirmation of it have been subvient to his present purpose. It is our privilege and duty, and not theirs, which he is in the immediate consideration of. But the matter being so indeed, a supposition of it, namely, that the gospel was preached to them, was necessary to his purpose. How this was done we must now inquire, and concerning it observe,

1. That the promise made to Abraham did contain the substance of the gospel. It had in it the covenant of God in Christ, and was the confirmation of it, as our apostle disputes expressly, Gal. iii. 16, 17. He says that the promise to Abraham and his seed, did principally intend *CHRIST* the promised seed; and that therein the covenant was confirmed of God in Christ. And thence it was attended with blessedness and justification in the pardon of sin, Rom. iv.; Gal. iii. 14, 15. So that it had in it the substance of the gospel, as hath been proved elsewhere.

2. This covenant or promise made to Abraham, was confirmed and established to his seed, his posterity, as the Scripture every-where testifieth. And hereby had they the substance of the gospel communicated to them. Therein were they evangelized.

3. All the typical institutions of the law that were afterwards introduced, had in themselves no other end but to instruct the people in the nature, meaning, and manner of the accomplishment of the promise. To this purpose they served until the time of reformation.

They were indeed by the unbelief of some abused to a contrary end. For men cleaving to them as in themselves the means of righteousness, life, and salvation, were thereby in their minds diverted from the promise, and the gospel therein contained, Rom. ix. 31, 32, x. 3. But this was but an accidental abuse of them, properly and directly they had no other end but that expressed. Nor had the whole law itself, in its Mosaic administration, any other end, but to instruct the people in the nature, meaning, and manner of the accomplishment of the promise, to lead them to the enjoyment of it, Rom. x. 4, and to compel them to betake themselves to it for life and rest, Gal. iii. 18—20.

4. With the spiritual part of the promise made to Abraham there was mixed or annexed to it a promise of the inheritance of the land of Canaan, Gen. xii. 3, 7. And this, First. That it might instruct him and his seed in the nature of faith, to live in the expectation of that which is not theirs in possession, Heb. xi. 8, 9. Secondly. That it might be a visible pledge of the love, power, and faithfulness of God in performing and accomplishing the spiritual and invisible part of the promise; or the gospel in sending the blessing and blessed seed to save and deliver from sin and death, and to give rest to the souls of them that do believe, Luke i. 72—74. Thirdly. That it might be a place of rest for the church, wherein it might attend solemnly to the observance of all those institutions of worship which were granted to it, or imposed on it, to direct them to the promise. Hence,

5. The declaration of the promise of entering into Canaan, and the rest of God therein, became in an especial manner, the preaching of the gospel to them, namely, 1. Because it was appointed to be the great visible pledge of the performance of the whole promise or covenant made with Abraham. The land itself, and their possession of it, was sacramental. For 2. It had in itself also a representation of that blessed spiritual rest, which in the accomplishment of the promise was to be asserted. 3. Because by the land of Canaan, and the rest of God therein, not so much the place, country, or soil was intended or considered, as the worship of God in his ordinances and institutions therein solemnly to be observed. And by these ordinances, or through faith in the use of them, they were led into a participation of the benefits of the promise of the gospel.

From what hath been spoken it appears how the gospel was preached to the fathers in the wilderness, or how they were evangelized. It is not a typical gospel, as some speak, that the apostle intends, nor yet a mere institution of types, but the gospel of Jesus Christ as it was in the substance of it, proposed to them in the promise, the entering into the land of Canaan, being the special instance wherein their faith was to be tried.

Thirdly. We may inquire how the gospel is said to be 'preached unto us,' which is the thing that is directly asserted. And First, by us, in the first place, the Hebrews of that time were principally intended. But this by due analogy may in the application and use of it, be extended to all others who hear the word. Secondly. The apostle had before declared, that the gospel, in the full, free, open,



and clear dispensation of it, had been preached to them and confirmed with signs and wonders amongst them, so that no doubt can be made of the gospel's being preached to them. And with respect to this sense and interpretation of the words, were the cautions given, at the entrance, about the terms of comparison which seem to be in them. Notwithstanding this, I do at least doubt whether that were the preaching intended by the apostle. The same declaration of it to them of old, and these present Hebrews their posterity, seems rather to be intended. The words 'for unto us was the gospel preached, even as unto them,' seems to be of this import, that we are no less concerned in the declaration of the gospel made to them, and the promise proposed to them, than they were. Otherwise the apostle would have rather said, 'The gospel was preached to them, even as to us,' seeing of its preaching to the present Hebrews there could be no doubt or question; and as we have now often declared, he is pressing on these Hebrews the example of their progenitors. Therein he minds them that they had a promise given to them of entering into the rest of God, which, because of unbelief, they came short of, and perished under his displeasure. Now, whereas they might reply, What is that to us? wherein are we concerned in it? can we reject that promise which doth not belong to us? the apostle seems in these words to obviate or remove that objection. To this purpose he lets them know, that even *unto us*, that is to themselves, to all the posterity of Abraham in all generations, the gospel was preached in the promise of entering into the rest of God, and may no less be sinned against at any time by unbelief, than it was by them to whom it was at first granted. This sense the words, as was said, seem to require, 'To us was the gospel preached, even as unto them;' that is, wherein and when it was preached to them, therein and then it was preached to us also. But it may be said, that these Hebrews could not be concerned in the promise of entering into the land of Canaan, whereof they had been now possessed for so many generations? I answer, they could not be so indeed, had no more been intended in that promise, but merely the possession of that land. But I have shown before, that the covenant rest of God in Christ was in that promise. Again, it might concern them as much as it did those in the time of David, who were exhorted and pressed, as he manifests out of the Psalm, to close with that promise, and to enter into the rest of God, when they were in a most full and quiet enjoyment of the whole land. And if it be said that the promise might belong to those in the days of David, because that worship of God, which had respect to the land of Canaan, was in all its vigour; but now as to these Hebrews, that whole worship was vanishing and ready to expire: I answer, that whatever alterations in outward ordinances and institutions of worship, God was pleased to make at any time, the promise of the gospel was still one and the same, and therein Jesus Christ 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8. This then I take to be the sense of the words, namely, that as the first preaching of the gospel to their forefathers, belonged in the privilege of it to those Hebrews by virtue of the covenant of God with them, so the obligation to faith and obe-

dience thereon, was no less on them, than on those to whom it was first preached. And the present dispensation of the gospel was but the carrying on of the same revelation of the mind and will of God towards them. We may now take some observations from the words.

Obs. I. It is a signal privilege to have the gospel preached unto us ; to be evangelized.—As such it is here proposed by the apostle ; and it is made a foundation of inferring a necessity of all sorts of duties. This the prophet emphatically expresseth, Isa. ix. 1, 2. ‘ Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations ; the people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light ; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.’ The connexion of this prophetic discourse is judged by many obscure and difficult ; but the general design of it as applied by the evangelist, Matt. iv. 16, is not so. For reckoning the various afflictions and distresses that God at several times brought upon the Galilean parts of the land, which lay exposed in the first place to the incursion of their enemies, and whose people were first carried away into captivity, whereby outward darkness and sorrow came upon them ; he subjoins that consideration, which though future, and for many ages to be expected, should recompense and out-balance all the evil that had in an especial manner befallen them. And this consisted in that great privilege ; that these people were the first that had the gospel preached unto them ; as the evangelist manifests in his application of this prophecy.

Hereunto he adds the nature of this privilege, and sheweth wherein it doth consist ; in a description of their condition before they were partakers of it, and in the relief which they had thereby. Their state was that they ‘ walked in darkness, and dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,’ than which there can be no higher description of a condition of misery and disconsolation. When the Psalmist would express the utmost distress that could befall him in this world, he doth it by this supposition, ‘ Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,’ Ps. xxiii. 4. And these persons are said to dwell in that land, which he thought it so dreadful and horrible to walk through. And it denotes the utmost of temporal and spiritual misery. And these people are but occasionally singled out as an instance of the condition of all men without the light of the gospel. They are in hideous darkness, under the shades of death, which in its whole power is ready every moment to seize upon them. Unto these the gospel comes as אור גדול, ‘ a great light,’ as the light of the sun, called המאור הגדל, the great light in its first creation, Gen. i. 16. In allusion whereunto, the Lord Christ in the preaching of the gospel is called שמש צדקה, Mal. iv. 2, the ‘ Sun of righteousness,’ as he who brings righteousness, life, and immortality to light by the gospel. Now what greater privilege can such as have been kept all their days in a dungeon of darkness under the sentence of death, be made partakers of, than to be brought out into the light of the sun, and to have therewith a tender of life, peace, and liberty made unto them ? And this is so much

more in this matter, as spiritual darkness in an inevitable tendency to eternal darkness, is more miserable than any outward temporal darkness whatever; and as spiritual light, the 'light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of JESUS CHRIST,' excelleth this outward light, directing the body in the things of this world. Hence Peter expresseth the effect of the gospel by this, that God by it, 'calletth us out of darkness into his marvellous light,' 1 Pet. ii. 9. And this is but one instance of the greatness of this privilege, for men to be evangelized. It is the gospel alone that brings the light of God, or life and blessedness unto men, who without it are under the power of darkness and misery hereafter. And more I shall not add; let them consider this, by whom it is not prized, not valued, by whom it is neglected, or not improved.

Obs. II. Barely to be evangelized, to have the gospel preached unto any, is a privilege of a dubious issue and event.—All privileges depend as to their issue and advantage on the use and improvement of them. If herein we fail, that which should have been for our good, will be our snare. But this hath in part been spoken to before.

Obs. III. The gospel is no new doctrine, no new law.—It was preached unto the people of old. The great prejudice against the gospel at its first preaching, was, that it was generally esteemed to be *καινη διδαχη*, a 'new doctrine,' Acts xvii. 19, a matter never known before in the world. And so was the preaching of Christ himself charged to be, Mark i. 27. But we may say of the whole gospel what John says of the commandment of love. It is a 'new commandment,' and it is an 'old one which was from the beginning,' 1 John ii. 7, 8. In the preaching of the gospel by the Lord Jesus himself and his apostles, it was new in respect of the manner of its administration, with sundry circumstances of light, evidence and power wherewith it is accompanied. So it is in all ages in respect of any fresh discovery of truth from the word, formally hidden or eclipsed. But as to the substance of it, the gospel is that 'which was from the beginning,' 1 John i. 1. It is the first great original transaction of God with sinners, from the foundation of the world. Hence the Lord Christ is said to be a lamb slain, *απο καταβολης κοσμου*, Rev. xiii. 8, 'from the foundation of the world.' It is not of the counsel and purpose of God concerning him that the words are spoken; for that is said to be, *προ καταβολης κοσμου*, Eph. i. iv, 'before the foundation of the world,' that is from eternity. And 1 Pet. i. 20, he is said expressly to be fore-ordained, *προ καταβολης κοσμου*, 'before the foundation of the world,' that is eternally in the counsel of God. But this *απο καταβολης κοσμου*, is as much as presently after or from the foundation of the world. Now how was the Lord Christ a Lamb slain 'presently upon the foundation of the world?' Why this *καταβολη κοσμου*, the foundation of the world, contains not only the beginning, but also the completing and finishing of the whole structure. So is the whole creation expressed, Ps. cii. 25, 26; Heb. i. 10; Gen. ii. 2, 3. Now upon the day of the finishing the world, or of completing the fabric of it, upon the entrance of sin, the promise of Christ was given; namely, 'That the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head,' Gen. iii. 15. In this pro-

mise the Lord Christ was a Lamb slain, though not actually, yet as to the virtue of his incarnation, whereby he became a LAMB, the LAMB of God, and of his death, wherein he was slain, to take away the sins of the world. Now the declaration of the Lord Christ as the Lamb of God slain to take away the sins of the world, is the sum and substance of the gospel.

This then having been given out and established *απο καταβολης κοσμου* ‘from the very beginning of the world;’ this was the rise of the gospel which ever since hath been the ground, rule, and measure of all God’s transactions with the children of men. Whatever new declarations have been made of it, whatever means have been used to instruct men in it, yet the gospel was still the same throughout all times and ages. The Gentiles therefore had no true ground to object against the doctrine of it, that it was new. For though by the sin and unbelief of themselves and their forefathers, who had lost, despised, and totally rejected the first revelation of it, it was new to them; yea, and God in his just and righteous judgments had hid it from them, and rendered it at length, *μυστηριον χρονοις αιωνιοις σεσιγημενον*, Rom. xvi. 25, ‘a mystery,’ the declaration whereof was ‘silenced from the past ages of the world,’ or all the secula that had passed from the beginning, yet in itself, it was not new, but the same that was revealed from the foundation of the world, by God himself. And this is for the honour of the gospel. For it is a certain rule; *quod antiquissimum id verissimum*, ‘that which is most ancient is most true.’ Falsehood endeavours by all means to countenance itself from antiquity, and thereby gives testimony to this rule, that truth is most ancient. And this discovers the lewdness of that imagination, that there have been several ways in several seasons, whereby men came to the knowledge and enjoyment of God. Some they say did so by the law, some by the light of nature, or the light within them, or by philosophy which is the improvement of it. For God having from the beginning, from the foundation of the world, declared the gospel in the manner before proved, as the means whereby sinners might know him, live unto him, and be made partakers of him; shall we think that when this way of his was despised, and rejected by men, he himself would do so also, and follow them in their ways, indeed their delusions, which they had chosen, in opposition to his truth and holiness? It is fond and blasphemous once so to imagine.

The Jews with whom our apostle had to do peculiarly, derived their privileges from the giving of the law, and concluded that because the law was given unto them of God, that according to the law they were to worship him, and by the law they were to be saved. How doth he convince them of their error and mistake in this matter? He doth it by letting them know, that the covenant or the promise of the gospel, was given unto them long before the law, so that whatever the end or use of the law were, (and what they were, he there declares,) it did not, nor could disannul, the promise; that is, take its work away, or erect a new way of justification and salvation, Gal. iii. 17. ‘And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, (that is, the promise given unto Abraham, ver. 16,) the law which was



four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.' As if he had said, God made a promise to Abraham, or made a covenant with him, whereby he was evangelized, and the way of life and salvation by Christ made known to him. Now if the end of the law was to justify sinners, to give them life and salvation, then the way of the promise and covenant instituted by God four hundred and thirty years before must be disannulled. But this the faithfulness and unchangeableness of God will not admit. And the apostle insists only on the precedency mentioned, and not that priority which it had of the law of Moses, in that it was preached from the foundation of the world; because dealing with the Jews, it was sufficient for him to evince, that even in their relation unto God, and God's especial dealings with them, the gospel had the precedency of the law. What then John the Baptist said of the Lord Christ and himself, 'He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me,' John i. 15, though he came after him in his ministry, yet he was above him in dignity, because he had a pre-existence in his divine nature unto him. The like in another sense, may be said of the law and the gospel as preached by Christ and his apostles. Though it came after the law, yet it was preferred above it or before it, because it was before it. It was in the substance and efficacy of it, revealed and declared long before the giving of the law, and therefore in all things was to be preferred before it.

It appears then that from first to last, the gospel is, and ever was, the only way of coming unto God; and to think of any other way or means for that end, is both highly vain, and exceedingly derogatory to the glory of God's wisdom, faithfulness, and holiness.

And these things have we observed from the first part of the confirmation of the preceding exhortation, taken from the parity of state and condition between the present Hebrews and those of old, inasmuch as they had both the same gospel preached unto them. The latter part of it is taken from the especial event of giving the promise unto the fathers. And hereof also there are two parts. First. An absolute assertion that the word that was preached unto them did not profit them. Secondly. That there might be no semblance of reflecting disrespect on the promise of God, as though it could not profit them that heard it, to whom it was preached, the reason of this event and miscarriage is subjoined in those words, 'not being mixed with faith in them that heard.'

The subject spoken of in the first proposition is, ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς, 'the word of hearing;' which expression being general is limited by ἐπαγγελία, the promise in the verse foregoing. Some would have the report of the spies, especially of Joshua and Caleb, to be intended in this expression. The people believed not the report which they made, and the account which they gave of the land that they had searched. But, as was said, it is plainly the same with the ἐπαγγελία, or the promise in the other verse, as the coherence of the words undeniably evinces. 'The word of hearing.' Hearing is the only way and means whereby the benefits contained in any word, may be conveyed unto us. The intendment then of this expression is that which is declared, Rom.

x. 17. *αρα ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς ; ἡ δὲ ἀκοὴ δια ῥήματος Θεοῦ* ‘Wherefore faith is from hearing, and hearing is by the word of God.’ This is the series of these things. The end of the word of God is to ingenerate faith in the hearts of men. This it doth not immediately and absolutely, but by the means of hearing; men must hear what they are to believe, that they may believe. Hence, although the term of hearing be in itself indifferent, yet in the Scripture it is used sometimes for the effect of it in faith and obedience, as was observed on the last chapter; and sometimes for the proper cause of that effect, whereof itself is the means; that is, the word itself. So *ἀκοὴ* expresseth *שמע*: So Jer. x. 22. *קול שמע*: *vox auditus*, ‘the voice of hearing;’ that is, of the word to be heard. And Isa. liii. 1. *מי האמין לשמענו*, ‘who hath believed our hearing?’ that is, the word which we propose to them to be heard and believed. Neither doth *ἀκοὴ* barely signify *auditus*, the hearing, or the sense of it, which is all that is properly denoted by that Latin word. But it is used sometimes for the reports or words themselves which are heard, Mat. xxiv. 6. *μελλήσετε ἀκοῦναι πολέμους, καὶ ἀκοὰς πολέμων*, ‘You shall hear of wars, and (not hearings but) reports and rumours of wars.’ And our translators have made use of a good word in this matter, namely report; which may denote either what is spoken by men, or what is spoken of them.

And so these words may be distinguished; *ὁ λόγος* is the word materially, that is here the word of promise, namely, of entering into the rest of God; and *ἡ ἀκοὴ* expresseth the manner of its declaration unto men according to the appointment of God, namely by preaching, so as that it may be heard, and hereon depends our concern in it. The word *ὁ λόγος* may be *ἐπαγγελία*, a promise in itself, but if it be not *ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς*, the word of hearing, that is, so managed by the appointment of God as that we may hear it, we could have no advantage thereby: in sum *ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς*, is *ἐπαγγελία εὐαγγελιζομένη*, ‘the promise preached,’ and as preached.

Of this word it is said *οὐκ ὠφέλησεν ἐκείνους* ‘it profited them not, they had no advantage by it. For we find that notwithstanding the promise given of entering into the rest of God, they entered not in. And there seems to be a *μειωσις* in the words also. It was so far from benefiting of them, that occasionally it became their ruin. As if he had said, Consider what befel them, how they perished in the wilderness under the indignation of God, and you will see how far they were from having any advantage by the word which they heard. And such will be the issue with all that shall neglect the word in like manner.

The account of this event closeth the words: *Μη συγκραμενός τη πίστει τοὺς ἀκουσάσι*. I observed before, that there is some difference, though only in one letter in some copies, about these words. The Complutensian, with the editions that follow it, read *συγκραμενούς*, the most *συγκραμενός*, which is followed by our translation. And this, translators and expositors do now generally embrace, though Chrysostome, Theophylact, and Oecumenius are on the other side.

The Vulgar Latin renders the last words, ‘*fidei ex iis quas audiverunt*,’ as though its author had read *τοὺς ἀκουσθεῖσιν*, ‘the things that were heard.’ It did not profit them, because they believed not the

things which were heard. This, though it much change the words, yet it makes no great alteration in the sense. I shall consider what proper sense the words will bear, take them either way according to the difference of the reading, and then show that which is most proper according to the mind of the Holy Ghost.

If we read *συγκεκριμενους*, it refers to *εκεινους*, and is regulated thereby; 'those who were not mixed with the faith of them that heard.' And this seems to exclude the interpretation of Chrysostome, which Theophylact, who not only follows him almost constantly, but also transcribes from him, professeth that he could not understand. For he would have 'those who were not mixed,' (for he refers it to the persons of men, and not the word preached,) to be Caleb and Joshua; who, saith he, mixed not themselves with the company of the rebellious and disobedient upon the return of the spies. And this, he saith, they did by faith; they kept themselves from the company of them who heard the word and were disobedient. But this interpretation overthrows itself. Because if *συγκεκριμενους* be regulated by *εκεινους*, it is evident that those who did not so mix themselves had no profit by the word. For the word preached did not profit them who were not mixed; which could not be spoken of Joshua and Caleb. But it may not be amiss to consider the words themselves of these authors, which yet I do not usually. Thus therefore treats Chrysostome on the place. Ηκουσαν κἀκεινοι, φησιν, ὡσπερ ἡμεῖς ακουομεν, ἀλλ' οὐδεν ὀφελος αυτοις γεγρονε' μη τοινυν νομισατε ὅτι ἀπο του ακουειν του κηρυγματος ὠφεληθησεσθε' ἐπει κἀκεινοι ηκουσαν ἀλλ' οὐδεν ἀπω- ναντο, ἐπειδη μη ἐπιστευσαν' οἱ οὖν περὶ Χαλεβ και Ἰησουν, ἐπειδη μη συνεκραδῃσαν τοις ἀπιστησασι' τουτεστιν, ου συνεφωνησαν, διεφυγον την κατ' ἐκεινων ἐξενεχθεισαν τιμωριαν' και ὅρα τι θαναστον; ουκ ειπεν ου συνεφωνησαν ἀλλ' ου συνεκραδῃσαν; τουτεστιν ἀστασιαστως διστησαν, ἐκεινων παντων μιαν και την αυτην γνωμην εσχηκοτων. 'They also heard even as we hear. But it profited them not; do not therefore also suppose that you shall have any benefit from a mere hearing of preaching: for they also heard, but it profited them not, because they believed not. But Caleb and Joshua, because they consented not unto them who believed not, escaped the punishment, which was inflicted on them. And this is admirable: he says not, they did not consent, but they were not mixed; that is, without sedition, they separated themselves from them who were of one and the same mind,' It is evident that he refers *mixed* to persons, not things, and so seems to have read *συγκεκριμενους*. But those who were not so mixed he makes to be Caleb and Joshua: when it is plain that the word profited not them who were not so mixed, if that term be to be applied to persons. Hence was the modest censure of Theophylact on this passage; for having repeated it, he adds, τουτο δε κατα την μεγαλην αυτου, και βαθε- ιαν σοφίαν ὁ ἅγιος οὗτος ειπεν μοι' γουν ἀναξιω ουκ ἐδωκε νοησαι, πως αυτο ειπεν. 'Thus speaks that holy man, according to his great and deep wisdom; but to me unworthy, it is not given to understand in what sense he spake it.' His own sense he otherwise expresseth; saith he, Μη συγκεκριμενους τη πιστει τοις ακουσασι, τουτ' εστι, μη ἐνωθεντας, μη συμφρονησαντας περὶ της πιστεως τοις ακουσασιν, ἀλλ' ἀπορρῳγεντας

αὐτῶν ‘That is, they were not united, they agreed not in faith with them which heard, but were divided from them.’ Sundry others follow this interpretation. And according to it, τοῖς ἀκουσασι, denotes the ‘obedient hearers.’ Those who so heard the word of promise as to believe it, and to yield obedience to God on that account. According to which construction this must be the import of the words. ‘The word preached profited them not, because they did not associate or join themselves to, or mix themselves with, those who hearing the word, believed and obeyed the voice of God.’

If this be the sense of the words, the whole congregation is blamed for a wicked separation from two single persons, who abode constant in the faith of the promise of God. They sinned in that they would not join themselves to them, nor unite with them, in that profession of faith and obedience which they made. Neither their number, nor their agreement among themselves, could free them from schism, sin, and punishment. They would not unite themselves to those two persons who abode in the truth, and so perished under the indignation of God thereon.

And these things are true, but I judge them not to be directly intended in this place. For the reading before mentioned of συγκεκραμενος, which must refer to ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς, ‘the word preached,’ and not to any person or persons, is confirmed by most ancient copies, and followed by most ancient translations. Besides the sense of the words, which in the other way is dark and involved, in this is full, clear, and proper. For,

1. The other sense binds up the intention of the words to that particular time, season, and action, when the people murmured on the return of the spies that went to search the land. This indeed was a signal instance of their unbelief, yet the whole of it in refusing the promise is not to be restrained to that instance. For our apostle is declaring that in their whole course, they did totally and finally reject the promise.

2. If the persons spoken of be to be understood, the text doth not say they were not mixed with them that believed, were not united to them, or conjoined with them, but not mixed τῇ πίστει, ‘to the faith.’ Now there are two difficulties not easily removeable, that do attend this sense and construction of the words. 1. How men can be said to be ‘mixed with the faith of others.’ Camero answers, that it may be understood to be joined with them in the communion of the same faith. I acknowledge this is a good and fair sense; but such as plainly makes the persons and not their faith, to be the immediate object of this conjunction, which the words will not allow. 2. How harsh is this construction, συγκεκραμενους τῇ πίστει, τοῖς ἀκουσασι. Two dative cases joined in apposition without the intervention of any preposition, the one denoting the act, the other the persons. ‘Joined to the faith to them that heard it.’ But as we shall see in the other more usual and approved reading, referring the word *mixed* to the principal subject of the whole proposition or the word preached, the sense will appear full and satisfactory.

Μὴ συγκεκραμενος, the word ‘not being mixed.’ Συγκεραννυμι, is



sometimes taken in a natural sense, for to mix or mingle one thing with another, as water and wine, or to mix compositions in cordials, or in poisons, Herod. l. I. *εμβαλουσα εις κυλικά του φαρμακου οινω τε κερασασα ευωδει διδωσι* 'gave him poison mixed with most savory wine.' So *Plutarch. Sympos.* *ομου μεταλλικα και βοτανικα, — εις το αυτο συγκεραννυντας.* This mixture, which was properly of a cup to drink, was sometimes so made to give it strength and efficacy, to inebriate, or give it any pernicious event. Hence a cup of mixture is expressed as an aggravation, Ps. lxxv. 8. 'For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red, *מלא מוס*, full of mixture.' A cup sometimes signifies divine vengeance, as Jer. li. 7, and wine often. The vengeance here threatened being to arise from the utmost severity, it is called 'cup,' and that of 'wine,' of 'red wine,' that 'full of mixtures,' with all ingredients of wrath and indignation. Sometimes the mixture was made to temperate and alleviate, as water mixed with strong inebriating wine. Hence a 'cup without mixture,' is an expression of great indignation, Rev. xiv. 10, nothing being added to the 'wine of fury' and astonishment to take off its fierceness. Amongst physicians, *συγκραμα*, is 'a mixed potion.' The word therefore signifies to mix two or more things together, so as they may inseparably incorporate, for some certain ends, acts, or operations, as wine and water to drink, or several ingredients to make an useful cordial.

This being the import of the word, expositors illustrate the whole sense by various allusions, whence they suppose the expression to arise. Some to the mixture of things to be eaten and drunk, that they may be made suitable and useful to the nourishment of the body. For so are the promises made by faith to the nourishment of the soul. Some to the mixture of the natural ferment of the stomach, with meat and drink, causing digestion and nourishment thereby. And this last allusion seems well to represent the nature of faith in this matter. The word of God, especially the word of promise, is the food of the souls of men; so is it often called, and thereunto frequently compared. Our apostle distributes the whole word with respect to them that hear it, or receive it, into strong meat and milk, ch. v. 13, 14. The whole is food, and in the whole, is suited to the various conditions of believers in this world, whether strong and increased in spiritual light and experience, or whether young and weak. And so the same word is by Peter called the 'sincere milk,' which those who are 'born again' ought to desire and make use of as their principal food, 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. And with respect hereunto is faith sometimes expressed by tasting, which is the sense exercised about our food, which manifests, it may be, that more of experience is included in it, than some will allow, 1 Pet. ii. 3, 'If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' And wherein do we *taste* of the grace of God? In his word, as the Psalmist declares, Ps. cxix. 103, 'How sweet are thy words unto my taste!' And in pursuit of the same metaphor, the word is said to be sweet, 'sweet as honey, or the honey-comb,' Ps. xix. 10, cxix. 103. And frequently it is expressed by eating, wherein consists the life of the sacramental notion, of 'eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ,' whereby the especial actings of faith on

that peculiar subject of the promise, Christ crucified for us, is expressed. The sum is, spiritual truths, being savingly believed, are united with that faith which receives them : so incorporated with it, as that they come to be realized in the soul, and to be turned into the principle of that new nature, whereby we live to God. Want hereof is charged on the people to whom the gospel was declared in the wilderness. The word which they heard, was not so really and savingly received by faith as to be incorporated therewith, and to become in them a living principle, enabling and strengthening them to obedience. It is not the intention of the words to declare barely and nakedly that they did not believe in any sort or sense ; but that these hearers did not receive and improve the word of promise in such a way and manner, as to obtain the full benefit and advantage of it. They had, as we find, an apprehension of the truth of the promise, which did so far prevail on them, that sometimes they professed that they would place their confidence in it, and regulate their obedience accordingly. But they were not steadfast herein, because, notwithstanding all their profession, their faith and the word of God were never solidly united, mixed, and incorporated in their souls. They tasted sometimes a little sweetness in it, but took it not down to digest it, that it might have a subsistence, power, and efficacy in them. This caused the word to fail of its end towards them, 'it did not profit them;' and them to fail of their end by it, 'they entered not into the rest of God.' And with the consideration hereof, doth the apostle press the Hebrews, and *us* with them. And it is of great weight. The same promise being left to us as to them, and this being the way whereby they 'came short of it,' we have reason to be watchful against the like miscarriages in ourselves. The truths doctrinally declared in this latter part of the verse may be comprised in the ensuing observations.

Obs. IV. God hath graciously ordered the word of the gospel to be preached to men, whereon depends their welfare or their ruin.—To them and to us was the word preached. And this is the great effect of the love, care, grace, and goodness of God, towards them and us. The word is like the sun in the firmament. Thereunto is it compared at large, Ps. xix. It hath virtually in it all spiritual light and heat. But the preaching of the word is as the motion and beams of the sun, which actually and effectually communicate to all creatures that light and heat which is virtually in the sun itself.

The explanation of this similitude is expressly insisted on by our apostle, Rom. x. 18. And because of this application doth the apostle make that alteration in the expression. For whereas in the Psalm it is said קוֹם, 'their line is gone forth into all the earth,' with respect, in the first place and literally, to the line or orderly course of the sun and other celestial bodies ; he renders that word by φωνος, 'their sound,' voice or speaking, respecting the mystical sense of the place, and application of the words to the preaching of the gospel, which was principally intended in them. And this is the true reason of that variety which many critics have troubled themselves and others about to little purpose. What, then, the motion and beams of the sun are to the world natural, that is the preaching of the gospel to the spiritual world,

to all who intend to live to God here, or to enjoy him hereafter. Of old the preaching of the gospel was by many wise men, or those that thought or boasted themselves so to be, esteemed folly, 1 Cor. i. that is, a thing needless and useless. And the wiser any one would have himself esteemed to be, the more vehemently would he condemn preaching, for folly. But notwithstanding all their pride, scorn, and opposition, it proved the 'foolishness of God which was wiser than all their wisdom;' that is, what God chose to compass his end by, which seemed to them foolishness, but was indeed the 'wisdom and power of God.' And it is that which the eternal welfare or ruin of men depends on: as the apostle in this place declares, and as the Scriptures testify every-where. And this may direct us to make a right judgment both of that contempt and neglect of it, which are found amongst many who ought to have other thoughts about it; the whole work is by some despised and decried, and few there are who labour in it with diligence as they ought. But they shall all bear their own judgment.

Obs. V. The sole cause of the promise being ineffectual to salvation in and towards them to whom it is preached, is in themselves and their own unbelief. This the apostle expressly asserts. It is granted that 'the word did not profit them.' But what was the reason of it? was it weak or insufficient of itself? was it like the law, that made nothing perfect? that could not take away sin, nor justify the souls of men? No, but the sole cause hereof was, that it was not 'mixed with faith.' God hath not appointed it to save men whether they will or not; nor is the word of promise a mean suited to any such end or purpose. It is enough, that it is every way sufficient to the end whereunto of God it is designed. If men believe it not,—if they refuse the application of it to themselves, no wonder if they perish in their sins.

Obs. VI. There is a failing, temporary faith, with respect to the promises of God, which will not advantage them in whom it is.—It is known how often the people of old professed that they did believe, and that they would obey accordingly; but, saith the apostle, notwithstanding all their pretensions and professions, notwithstanding all the convictions they had of the truth of the word, and the resolutions they had of yielding obedience, wherein their temporary faith did consist, yet they perished in their sins, because the 'word was not mixed with faith in them,' that is, truly and really believed.

Obs. VII. The great mystery of useful and profitable believing, consists in the mixing or incorporating of truth and faith in the souls or minds of believers. This being a truth of much importance, I shall a little insist on the explanation and improvement of it; and that in the ensuing observations.

1. There is a great respect, relation, and union, between the faculties of the soul, and their proper objects, as they act themselves. Thus truth, as truth, is the proper object of the understanding. Hence, as it can assent unto nothing but under the notion and apprehension of truth, so what is indeed true, being duly proposed unto it, it embraceth and cleaveth unto necessarily and unavoidably. For truth and the understanding are, as it were, of the same nature, and being orderly

brought together do absolutely incorporate. Truth being received into the understanding, doth no way affect it, nor alter it, but only strengthen, improve, enlarge, direct, and confirm it in its proper actings. Only it implants a type and figure of itself upon the mind. And hence those things or adjuncts that belong unto one of these, are often ascribed unto the other. So we say, such a doctrine or proposition is certain, from that certainty which is an affection of the mind; and our apprehension of any thing to be true, from the truth of that which we do apprehend. This is that which we call knowledge, which is the relation, or rather the union that is between the mind and truth, or the things that the mind apprehends as true. And where this is not, when men have only fluctuating conceptions about things, their minds are filled with opinions, they have no true knowledge of any thing.

2. The truth of the gospel, of the promise now under especial consideration, is peculiar, divine, supernatural; and, therefore, for the receiving of it, God requireth in us, and bestoweth upon us, a peculiar, divine, supernatural habit, by which our minds may be enabled to receive it. This is FAITH, which is 'not of ourselves; it is the gift of God.' As the mind acts naturally by its reason to receive truths that are natural and suited to its capacity; so it acts spiritually and supernaturally by faith, to receive truths spiritual and supernatural. Herewith are these truths to be mixed and incorporated. Believing doth not consist in a mere assent to the truth of the things proposed to be believed, but in such a reception of them, as gives them a real subsistence and inbeing in the soul by faith. We shall make things more fully to appear, and the better explain it, if we show, 1. How this is expressed in the Scripture, with respect to the nature, acts, and effects of faith. By what means it comes to pass, that faith and the promise do so incorporate.

First. For faith itself; it is by our apostle said to be *ἐλπιζομένων ὑποστασις*, ch. xi. 1, 'the substance of things hoped for.' Now, the *ἐλπιζόμενα* here, 'the things hoped for,' are so termed with respect unto their goodness, and their futurity, in which respects they are the objects of hope. But they are proposed unto faith, and respected by it, as true and real. And as such it is the *ὑποστασις*, or substance of them. Not absolutely and physically, but morally, and in respect of use. It brings them into, makes them present with, and gives them a subsistence, as to their use, efficacy, and comfort in the soul. This effect of faith is so far of the nature of it, that the apostle makes use of it principally in that description which he gives us of it. Now, this giving a subsistence in the mind to the things believed, that they shall really operate and produce their immediate effects therein, of love, joy, and obedience, is that spiritual mixture and incorporation whereof we speak. And here lies the main difference between saving faith, and the temporary persuasion of convinced persons. This latter gives no such subsistence unto the things believed in the minds of men, as that they should produce their proper effects therein. Those in whom it is, believe the promise, yet not so, as that thereby the things promised should have such an existence in their minds, as to produce in them,



and upon them their proper effects. It may be said of them, as it is of the law in another sense, 'they have the shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the things.' There is not a real reflection of the things they profess to believe, made upon their minds. For instance, the death of Christ, or Christ crucified, is proposed unto our faith in the gospel. The genuine proper effect hereof, is to destroy, to crucify, or mortify sin in us. But where this is apprehended by a temporary faith only, this effect will not at all be produced in the soul. Sin will not be mortified, but rather secretly encouraged; for it is natural unto men of corrupt minds to conclude, that they may 'continue in sin, because grace doth abound.' On the other side, where faith gives the subsistence mentioned unto the death of Christ in the soul, it will undoubtedly be the death of sin, Rom. vi. 3—14.

Secondly. Faith in its acting towards, and on the promise, is also said to receive it. By it we receive the word, that is, it takes it into the soul and incorporates it with itself. There is more herein than a mere assent to the truth of what is proposed and apprehended. And sometimes we are said by it to receive the word itself, and sometimes to receive the things themselves which are the subject matter of it. So are we in the first way said to 'receive the ingrafted word' with meekness, James i. 21, to 'receive the promises,' Heb. xi. 13. 'Having received the word,' 1 Thess. i. 6, ii. 13. In the latter way, to 'receive Christ himself,' John i. 12, and the atonement made by him, Rom. v. 11, which are the principal subjects of the gospel. And herein lies the life of faith; so that it is the proper description of an unbeliever, that he doth 'not receive the things of the Spirit of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 14. And unbelief is, the not 'receiving of Christ,' John i. 11. There may be a tender made of a thing, which is not received. A man may think well of that which is tendered unto him, and yet not receive it. But what a man doth receive duly, and for himself, it becomes properly his own. This work of faith, then, in receiving the word of promise with Christ, and the atonement made by him therein, consists in its giving unto them a real admittance into the soul, to abide there as in their proper place; which is the mixture here intended by the apostle.

Thirdly. Hence and hereon the word becomes an ingrafted word, James i. 21. 'Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.' The exhortation is unto reality and growth in believing. To this end the word is proposed, as that which is to be brought into the soul. And to that purpose room is to be made for it, by the casting out of such things as are apt to possess the mind, and leave no admittance for the word. Now the *ρυπαρια* and *περισσεια κακίας*, 'filth and superfluity of evil,' here intended, are those corrupt carnal lusts which by nature possess the minds of men, and render them enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7. These are so fixed in the mind, so incorporated with it, that from them it is denominated fleshly and carnal. And they are to be put away, cast out, separated from the mind, unrooted and rejected, that the word may be brought in and received. And how is that to be received? As a word that is to

be *εμφυτος*, implanted or ingrafted into the mind. Now, we all know that by ingrafting there becomes an incorporation, a mixture of the natures of the stock and graft into one common principle of fruit-bearing. So is the word received by faith, that being mixed with faith, both of them become one common principle of our obedience. And on this account doth our Saviour compare the word of the gospel unto seed, Matt. xiii. Now, seed brings forth no fruit or increase, unless, falling into the earth, it incorporate with the fructifying virtue thereof. And with respect hereunto is it said, that God writes his law in our hearts,' Jer. xxxi. 32. As our apostle expounds it, 2 Cor. iii. 3. 'The word of the gospel is by the Spirit of the living God, written not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart.' So is it ingrafted, when it is as really by the help of faith communicated unto, and implanted on the heart, as written words are in their engraving on tables of stone.

Fourthly. The effect of this ingrafting of the word, which belongs also to this spiritual incorporation, is the casting of the soul into the mould, type, image, or figure of the doctrine of it, as our apostle expresseth it, Rom. vi. 17, 'Ye have obeyed from the heart, *εις ὃν παρεδοθητε τυπον διδαχης*, that form of doctrine that you have been delivered up unto,'—that you have been cast into. This is that transformation of mind, which we are exhorted to look after, in the renovation that it receives by believing, Rom. xii. 2. As the scion, being grafted or inoculated into the stock, turns and changes the natural juice of the stock into another kind of fructifying nutriment than it had before; so the word being by its mixture with faith ingrafted into the soul, it changeth the natural operation of it, to the production of spiritual effects, which before it had no virtue for. And it transforms also the whole mind, according to the illusion, Rom. vi. 17, into a new shape, as wax is changed by the impression of a seal into the likeness of it.

Fifthly. The expression of faith by eating and drinking, which is frequent in Scripture, as before intimated, gives farther light into the spiritual incorporation that we inquire after. Thus, the word is said to be food, strong meat, and milk, suited to the respective ages and constitutions of believers. And the Lord Christ, the principal subject of the word of the gospel, says of himself, that he is 'the bread that came down from heaven,' that his 'flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed.' Faith is the eating of this food, this milk, this meat, this flesh. Now, in eating, when food is prepared, it is received, and by a due digestion turned into the very substance of the body of him that eats. Supplies proceed from thence unto the flesh, blood, and spirits of the eater, according as the principles of nature require and direct. So also must it be in this matter spiritually. This the men of Capernaum not understanding of old, but taking the words of our Saviour in a carnal manner, thinking he would have them eat his flesh with their teeth, and pour his blood down their throats, were offended at him, and perished in their unbelief, John vi. 52, 59. But he lets his disciples know, that the whole mistake lay in the carnal imagination of those men. He meant no more but the spiritual union of himself unto the souls of believers by faith, which is no less real and sure, than the

union that is between the body and the meat it receives, when duly digested, ver. 56, that the flesh, in the carnal sense, was of no use or profit, but that his words were spirit and life, ver. 63. It is from an ignorance of this spiritual incorporation of Christ in the promise, and faith, that the church of Rome also hath feigned their monstrous carnal eating with their teeth of the FLESH or body of Christ, though he had foretold them that it should profit them nothing. Wherefore, the word being prepared as spiritual food for the soul, faith receives it, and by a spiritual eating and digestion of it, turns it into an increase and strengthening of the vital principles of spiritual obedience; and then doth the word profit them that hear it.

Hence is the word of Christ said to dwell or inhabit in us, Col. iii. 16, 'Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom.' This inhabitation of the word, whereby it makes its residence and abode in the souls of men, is from this spiritual incorporation or mixing with faith. Without this, it may have various effects upon the mind and conscience, but it comes to no abiding habitation. With some it casts its beams and rays for a season into their minds, *φαίνει*, but is not received nor comprehended, John i. 5, and therefore, *οὐκ αὐγαζει*, it doth not enlighten them, though it shines into them, 2 Cor. iv. 4. It comes and departs almost like lightning, which rather amazeth than guideth. With some it makes a transient impression upon the affections, so that they hear it, and admit of its dispensation with joy and some present satisfaction, Matt. xiii. 20. But it is but like the stroke of a skilful hand upon the strings of a musical instrument, that makes a pleasant sound for the present, which insensibly sinks and decays until a new stroke be given; it hath no abode nor residence in itself or the strings. No more hath the word that strikes on the affections only, and causing a various motion and sound in joy, or sorrow, or delight, vanisheth and departeth. With some it lays hold on their consciences, and presseth them to a reformation of their conversation, or course in this world, until they 'do many things gladly,' Mark vi. 20. But this is by an efficacious impression from without. The word doth not abide, inhabit, or dwell in any, but where it hath a subsistence given unto it in the soul by its incorporation with faith, in the manner described.

This then is savingly and profitably to believe. And thus is it with very few of the many that make profession so to do. It is but in one sort of ground, where the seed incorporates so with the earth, as to take root and to bring forth fruit. Many pretend to believe; few believe indeed, few mix the word preached with faith, which should give us all a godly jealousy over our hearts in this matter, that we be not deceived.

It is therefore worth our inquiry how, or by what means, faith is assisted and strengthened in this work of mixing the word with itself, that it may be useful and profitable unto them that hear it. For although it is in and of the nature of faith thus to do; yet of itself it doth but begin this work, or lay the foundation of it. There are certain ways and means, whereby it is carried on and increased. And among these,

1. Is constant meditation, wherein faith is exercised, and its acts



multiplied. Constantly fixing the mind by spiritual meditation on its proper object, is a principal means whereby faith mixeth it with itself. This is *κατοπτρίζεσθαι*, to behold steadfastly the glory of God in Jesus Christ, expressed in the gospel as in a glass, 2 Cor. iii. 18. For the meditation of faith is an intuition into the things that are believed, which works the assimilation mentioned, or our being changed into the same image, which is but another expression for the incorporation insisted on. As when a man hath an idea or projection of any thing in his mind, that he will produce or effect, he casteth the image framed in his mind upon his work, that it shall exactly answer it in all things; so, on the other side, when a man doth diligently contemplate on that which is without him, it begets an idea of it in his mind, or casts it into the same image. And this meditation by which faith worketh, to complete the mixture or composition intended, must be fixed, intuitive, constant, looking into the nature of the things believed. James tells us, that he who is a mere hearer of the word, is like a man considering his 'natural face in a glass, who goeth away and immediately forgetteth what manner of man he was,' ch. i. 24. It is so with a man that takes but a slight view of himself; so is it with men that use a slight and perfunctory consideration of the word. But, saith he, *ὁ παρακνύας εἰς νομον τελειον*, 'he that diligently bows down, and inquires into the law of liberty,' or the word, that is, by the meditation and inquiry mentioned, that 'man is blessed in all his ways.' So doth that word signify, 1 Pet. i. 12, where alone again it is used in this moral sense, of diligent inquiry; it signifying properly 'to bow down.' This is that which we aim at. The soul by faith meditating on the word of promise, and the subject-matter of Christ and his righteousness, Christ is thereby formed in it, Gal. iv. 19, and the word itself is inseparably mixed with faith, so as to subsist with it in the soul, and to produce therein its proper effects. This is to be spiritually minded; and *φρονεῖν τα ἀνω*, Col. iii. 2, to mind the things that are above, as those which yield the best relish and savour to the soul, which being constant will assert a mixture, incorporation, and mutual conformity between the mind and the object of it.

2. Faith sets love at work upon the objects proposed to be believed. There is in the gospel, and the promises of it, not only the truth to be considered which we are to believe and assent unto, but also the goodness, excellency, desirableness, and suitableness, unto our condition, of the things themselves which are comprised in them. Under this consideration of them, they are proper objects for love to fix on, and to be exercised about. And faith worketh by love, not only in acts and duties of mercy, righteousness, and charity towards men, but also in adhesion unto, and delight in the things of God which are revealed to be lovely. Faith makes the soul in love with spiritual things. Love engages all other affections into their proper exercise about them, and fills the mind continually with thoughtfulness about them, and desires after them. And this mightily helps on the spiritual mixture of faith and the word. It is known that love is greatly effectual to work an assimilation between the mind and its proper object. It will introduce its idea into the mind, which will never depart from it. So



will carnal love, or the impetuous workings of men's lusts by that affection. Hence Peter tells us that some men have *οφθαλμούς μεστους μοιχαλιδος και ακαταπανστους αμαρτιας*, 2 Pet. ii. 14, 'Eyes full of an adulteress.' Their lust hath so wrought by their imagination, as to introduce a constant idea of the object into their minds, as if there were an image of a thing in their eye, which continually represented itself unto them as seen, whatever they looked on. Therefore are they constantly unquiet, and cannot cease to sin. There is such a mixture of lust and its object in their minds, that they continually commit lewdness in themselves. Spiritual love set on work by faith, will also produce its effect. It will bring in that idea of the beloved object into the mind, until the eye be full of it, and the soul is continually conversant with it. Our apostle, expressing his great love unto Christ above himself and all the world, as a fruit of his faith in him, Phil. ii. 8, 9, professeth that this was that which he aimed at: namely, that 'he might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death,' ver. 10. The resurrection, with the sufferings and death of Christ which preceded it, he knew before, and believed. But he aims at more; he would have a further inward experience of the power of his resurrection; that is, he would so mix it with faith working by love to Christ, as that it might produce in him its proper effects, in an increase of his spiritual life, and the quickening of him unto all holiness and obedience. He would also be yet further acquainted with the fellowship of his sufferings; or obtain communion with him in them; that the sufferings of Christ subsisting in his spirit by faith, might cause sin to suffer in him, and crucify the world unto him, and him unto the world. By all which he aimed at being made completely conformable unto his death; that is, that whole Christ, with his life, sufferings, and death, might so abide in him, that his whole soul might be cast into his image and likeness. I shall add no more concerning this truth; but only that it is best manifested, declared, and confirmed, in the minds and consciences of them who know what it is really to believe, and to walk with God thereon.

VER. 3.—*Εισερχομεθα γαρ εις την καταπανσιν οι πιστευσαντες, καθως ειρηκεν. Ως ωμοσα εν τη οργη μου, ει εισελουσονται εις την καταπανσιν μου καιτοι των εργων απο καταβολης κοσμου γεννηθεντων.*

Many have variously reasoned and conjectured about the coherence of this part of the apostle's discourse, with that which immediately goeth before. It is not my way to propose the interpretations or analyses of others; much less to contend about them, unless necessity for the vindication of some important truth do require it of me. In the words and design of the apostle, I shall, therefore, only explain and confirm that which seems to be most natural and genuine, as to the coherence of his discourse.

The work here engaged in, is evidently to explain and improve the testimony cited out of David in the foregoing chapter. His purpose also is to draw out of it, whatever by the wisdom of the Holy Ghost,

was enwrapped in it for the instruction of these Hebrews, which could not be clearly understood by them under the Old Testament, as being designed for their peculiar use and direction now under the dispensation of the gospel. Having therefore declared unto them the danger of unbelief, by laying down graphically before them the sin and punishment of others, in and from the words of the Psalm, he proceeds, from the same words and example, to give them encouragements unto faith and obedience. But withal, foreseeing that an objection might be raised against the very foundation of his arguments and exhortation, he diverts to the removal of it, and therein wonderfully strengthens, carrieth on, and confirmeth his whole purpose and design. The foundation of the whole ensuing discourse lies in this, that there 'is a promise left to us of entering into the rest of God,' ver. 1. This, therefore, we ought to take heed that we come not short of by unbelief. Hereunto the Hebrews might object (as was before observed) 'that they were not now any way concerned in that promise. For, consider whatever is said of the rest of God in the Scripture, and it will appear that it doth not belong unto us, especially not what is said of it in the Psalm insisted on. The rest of the land of Canaan, and the rest of the Sabbath, are so called, but these are already past, or we are in the present enjoyment of them, so that it is to no purpose to press us to enter into rest.' The removal of this objection the apostle here designs from the words of David, and therein the establishment of his present exhortation. He manifests, therefore, that besides those mentioned, there was yet another rest remaining for the people of God, and that directed unto in the words of the Psalmist. This he proves and evinceth at large; namely, that there was a spiritual rest yet abiding for believers, which we are called and obliged to seek an entrance into. This in general is the design and method of the apostle's discourse in this place.

In this third verse, three things are laid down.

First. An assertion, comprising the whole intendment of the apostle, in those words, 'For we which have believed do enter into rest.'

Secondly. A proof of that assertion from the words of the Psalmist, 'As he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest.'

Thirdly. An elliptical entrance into a full confirmation of his assertion, and the due application of his proof produced unto what he had designed it. 'Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.'

The words need little explication. *Εισερχομεθα γαρ*. One old manuscript reads *εισερχομεθα ουν*, of which afterwards. Vulg. Lat. Ar. *ingrediemur*. Rhemist. 'shall enter.' Eras. Beza, Syr. *ingredimur*, *introimus*, 'do enter.' The word is in the present tense; and though in that form it may sometimes be rendered by the future, yet here there is no necessity why it should so be. 'Do enter.'

*Οι πιστευσαντες*, Vulg. Lat. *qui credidimus*. Arias, *credentes*. Syr. *qui credimus*, 'who do believe, who have believed.'

Of the following words, see ch. iii. 11, 18.

*Καιτοι*, et quidem, 'and truly.' Beza, *quamvis*, 'although.' Eras. *quanquam*, so the Syriac.

Ἀπο καταβολῆς κόσμου. Ar. a fundatione mundi, ‘from the foundation of the world.’ Syr. ‘from the beginning of the world.’ Beza, a jacto mundi fundamento, properly; which we can no way render but by ‘from the foundation of the world.’

Γενηθεντων, genitis, factis, perfectis, ‘made, finished, perfected.’

VER. 3.—*For we do enter into rest who have believed, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath; if they shall enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

The assertion laid down in the entrance of the verse is first to be considered, and therein,

First. The causal connection, γαρ, ‘for.’ Now, this, as we have shown, doth not refer precisely to any particular passage foregoing. Only it makes way to the farther improvement of the whole design of the apostle, which use of that particle we have before observed. The promise, threatening, example, duty treated of, belong unto us; and this appears from hence, that we are entered into rest, who have believed.

Secondly. The subject of the proposition or persons spoken of, are, οἱ πιστευσαντες, ‘who have believed.’ The persons included in the verb εισερχομεθα, regulating also this participle, are transferred over unto it in the translation, ‘we who have believed.’ Believing in general is only mentioned; the object of it, or what we believe, is implied, and it is to be taken from the subject-matter treated of. Now this is the gospel, or Christ in the gospel. This is that which he proposeth unto them, and which he encourageth them in, from his own example. With respect hereunto, men in the New Testament are every-where termed, πιστευοντες, πιστοι, or απιστοι, ‘believers,’ or ‘unbelievers.’ ‘We who have believed in Jesus Christ through the preaching of the gospel.’

Εισερχομεθα. We observed before, that one old manuscript reads εισερχομεθα ουν, ‘let us therefore enter;’ making it answer unto φωβησωμεν ουν, ver. 1, ‘Let us fear therefore:’ and σπουδασωμεν ουν, ver. 11, ‘Let us therefore labour.’ But the sense in this place will not admit of this reading, because of the addition of οἱ πιστευσαντες, ‘who have believed.’ The Vulg. Lat. renders it ingrediemur in the future tense, which sense is allowed by most expositors. But that which induced them to embrace it, was a mistake of the rest here intended. The word expresseth a present act, as a fruit, effect, or consequent of believing. That it is which in a spiritual way answers unto the Israelites entering into the land of Canaan under the conduct of Joshua. Wherefore, this entering, this going in, is an allusion taken both in general from an entrance which a man makes into his land or use to take possession of it; and in particular, unto the entrance of the Israelites who were not rebellious or disobedient into the land of Canaan.

Εἰς την καταπαυσιν, ‘into that rest,’ the promised rest. What the rest here intended is, hath been declared on the first verse of this chap-

ter. But, because the right stating hereof is the basis on which the whole ensuing exposition of the apostle's discourse is founded, and the hinge on which it turns, I shall farther confirm the interpretation of it before laid down, principally with such reasons as the present text doth suggest. This rest, then, we say, first and principally, is that spiritual rest of God, which believers obtain an entrance into by Jesus Christ, in the faith and worship of the gospel; and is not to be restrained unto their eternal rest in heaven. Supposing then what had been argued on the first verse, I add,

First. That the express words here used do assign a present entrance into rest, unto them that do believe, or have believed: *εἰσερχομεθα* we 'do enter in.' It may be said, and it is confessed that the present tense doth sometimes express that which is instantly future, as some think it may be proved from Luke xxii. 20, 'This cup is the New Testament in my blood, *το ὑπερ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννομενον*, which is shed for you.' So also is the same word used, Matt. xxvi. 28. The Vulg. Lat. renders the word in each place *effundetur*, 'shall be shed,' or poured out for you, with respect unto the death of Christ which was shortly to ensue. I will not deny, as was said, but that the present tense is sometimes put for the future when the thing intended is immediately to ensue; but yet it is not proved from this place. For our Saviour speaks of the virtue of his blood, and not of the time of shedding it. It was unto them in the participation of that ordinance, as if it had been then shed, as to the virtue and efficacy of it. But *ερχεται* seems to be put for *ελευσεται*, John iv. 21, is come, for shall come speedily; and *ὁ ἐρχομενος* is sometimes he that is to come. But whenever there is such an enallage of tenses, the instant accomplishment of the thing supposed future is intended, which cannot be said with respect unto eternal rest in heaven. So this change is not to be supposed or allowed, but where the nature of the thing spoken of doth necessarily require it. This sense is not to be imposed on passages, where the proper signification of a word so timed, is natural and genuine, as it is in this place. It is here then plainly affirmed, that believers do here in this world, enter into rest in their gospel-state.

Secondly. The apostle is not primarily in this place exhorting sincere believers unto perseverance, that so at last they may be saved or enter into eternal rest; but professors, and all to whom the word did come, that they would be sincere and sound in believing. He considers them in the same state with the people in the wilderness, when the promise was proposed unto them. Their faith in it, when they were tried, would have given them immediate entrance into the land of Canaan. Together with the promise, there was a rest to be on their believing instantly enjoyed. Accordingly, considering the Hebrews in the like condition, he exhorts them to close with the promise, whereby they may enter into the rest that is proposed unto them. And unto perseverance he exhorts them as an evidence of that faith which will give them an assured entrance into this rest of God; as ch. iii. 14, 'We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.'



Thirdly. The rest here intended is that whereof the land of Canaan was a type. But there were no types of heaven absolutely as a future state of glory. But both the land and all the institutions to be observed in it were types of Christ, with the rest and worship of believers in and by him. They 'were shadows of things to come, the body whereof was CHRIST,' Col. ii. 17. The whole substance of what was intended in them and represented by them was in Christ mystical, and that in this world, before his giving up the kingdom unto the Father at the end, that God may be all in all. Our apostle indeed declares, that the most holy place in the tabernacle and temple did represent and figure out heaven itself, or the holy places not made with hands, as we shall see at large afterwards, Heb. ix. 8—10. But then, heaven is not considered as the place of eternal rest and glory to them that die in the Lord, but as the place wherein the gospel-worship of believers is celebrated and accepted under the conduct and ministration of our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ; which office ceaseth when his saints are brought into glory. The rest, therefore, here intended, being that which was typified and represented by the land of Canaan, is not the rest of heaven, but of that gospel-state whereunto we are admitted by Jesus Christ. Hereof, and not of heaven itself, was the whole Mosaic economy as shall elsewhere be at large demonstrated.

This, therefore, is the sense and import of the apostle's assertion in this verse; 'we who have believed in Jesus Christ, through the gospel, have thereby an admittance and entrance given unto us, into that blessed state of rest in the worship of God, which of old was promised,' Luke i. 69—73. It remains only that we inquire into the nature of this rest, what it is, and wherein it doth consist. Now this we have done also already on the first verse; but the whole matter may be farther explained, especially with respect unto the principal consideration of it. And this is, on what account this gospel-state is called God's rest, for so it is in this verse, 'If they shall enter into my rest.'

First. It is the rest of God upon the account of the author of it, in whom his soul doth rest. This is Jesus Christ his Son. Isa. xlii. 1, 'Behold,' saith God the Father of him, 'my servant whom I uphold, בְּחִירִי רְצֵחָה נִפְשִׁי, mine elect, my soul delighteth,' resteth in him, Matt. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son,' *ἐν ᾧ εὐδοκῆσα, בֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הִפְצִי בוֹ*: both the words contain more than we can well express in our language. The full satisfaction of the mind of God, with that delight and rest which answers the propensity of the affections towards a most suitable object, is intended in them. The same with that of Prov. viii. 30, 'I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.' In which words the infinite, intimate affection and mutual satisfaction between the Father and the Son are expressed. Now God is said to rest in Christ on a twofold account.

First. Because in him, in the glorious mystery of his person as GOD and MAN, he hath satisfied and glorified all the holy properties of his nature in the execution and manifestation of them. For all the effects of his wisdom, righteousness, holiness, grace, and goodness do

centre in him, and are in him fully expressed. This is termed by our apostle, ἡ δόξα του Θεου εν προσωπω Ιησου Χριστου, 2 Cor. iv. 6, 'The glory of God in the face or person of Jesus Christ;' that is, a glorious representation of the holy properties of the nature of God, is made in him unto angels and men. For so it 'pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell,' Col. i. 19, that he might have the preeminence in all things, ver. 18, especially in the perfect representation of God unto the creation. Yea, the 'fulness of the God-head dwelt in him bodily,' Col. ii. 9, in the union of his person, the highest and most mysterious effect of divine wisdom and grace, 1 Tim. iii. 16; 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. In this sense is he said to be the 'image of the invisible God,' Col. i. 15, which, though it principally respects his divine nature, yet doth not so absolutely, but as he was incarnate. For an image must be in a sort aspectable, and represent that which in itself is not seen, which the divine nature of the Son, essentially the same with the Father's, doth not do. God doth, maketh, worketh all things for himself, Prov. xvi. 4; that is, the satisfaction of the holy perfection of his nature in acts suitable unto them, and the manifestation of his glory thereon. Hence in them all, God in some sense doth rest. So when he had finished his works in the creation of the world, he saw that they were good; that is, that they answered his greatness, wisdom, and power, and he rested from them, Gen. ii. 2. Which rest, as it doth not include an antecedent lassitude or weariness, as rest doth in poor finite creatures, so it includes more than a mere cessation from operation; namely, complacency and satisfaction in the works themselves. So it is said, Exod. xxxi. 17, 'that on the seventh day God rested and was refreshed,' which expresseth the complacency he had in his works. But this rest was but partial, not absolute and complete. For God, in the works of nature, had but partially acted and manifested his divine properties, and some of them, as his grace, patience, and love, not at all. But now, in the person of Christ, the author of the gospel, who is the 'brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,' God doth absolutely and ultimately rest, and that in the manifestation of all his glorious properties, as hath been declared. Hence, in the sacrifices that were typical of him, it is said וירח ירחו את ריח הניחח, Gen. viii. 21, 'God smelt a savour of rest;' as prefiguring that, and foregoing it, wherein he would always rest: For,

Secondly. As in the person, so also in the work of Christ, doth God perfectly rest; namely, in the work of his mediation. He so rests in it, that as it needeth not, so he will never admit of any addition to be made unto it, any help or assistance to be joined with it, for any ends of his glory. This is the design of our apostle to prove, Heb. x. 5—7. God had designed the sacrifices of the law for the great ends of his glory in the typical expiation of sin. But he manifested by various means, that he did never absolutely rest in them. Ofttimes he preferred his moral worship before them; ofttimes he rebuked the people for their carnal trust in them, and declared that he had appointed a time when he would utterly take them away, Heb. ix. 10. But as to the mediation and sacrifice of Christ, things are absolutely otherwise.

Nothing is once named in competition with it; nay, the adding of any thing unto it, the using of any thing with it to the same end and purposes, is, or would be, ruinous to the souls of men. And as for those who will not take up their rest herein, that accept not of the work that he hath wrought, and the atonement that he hath made, by faith, there remains no more sacrifice for their sin, but perish they must, and that for ever. Two ways there are whereby God manifesteth his absolute rest in the person and mediation of Christ.

1. By giving unto him all power in heaven and earth upon his exaltation. Of this power and the collation of it, we have discoursed on the first chapter. It was as if God had said unto him, 'My work is done, my will perfectly accomplished, my name fully manifested, I have no more to do in the world, take now then possession of all my glory, sit at my right hand, for in thee is my soul well pleased.'

2. In the command that he hath given unto angels and men, to worship, honour, and adore him, even as they honour the Father, whereof we have elsewhere treated. By these ways, I say, doth God declare his plenary rest and soul-satisfaction in Jesus Christ, the author of this gospel-rest, and as he is so.

Secondly. It is God's rest, because he will never institute any new kind or sort of worship amongst men, but only what is already ordained and appointed by him in the gospel. God dwells among men in and by his solemn worship, *Exod. xxv. 8*, 'Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell amongst them.' God dwells in the place of his worship, by it. Hence, when he fixed his worship amongst the people for a season in the land of Canaan, he called it his rest. Thence was that prayer on the motions of the ark, 'Arise, O Lord, into thy rest, thou and the ark of thy strength, *Ps. cxxxii. 8*; *2 Chron. vi. 41*, which was the principal thing aimed at in all God's dealings with that people, the end of all his mighty works, *Exod. xv. 17*. And in this worship of the gospel, the tabernacle which he hath made for himself to dwell in, the sanctuary which his hands have established, is again with men, *Rev. xxi. 3*. He hath in it set up again the tabernacle of David, that it shall fall no more, *Acts xv. 16*. This worship he will neither add to, nor alter, nor take from; but this is his rest, and his habitation amongst men for ever. He is pleased and satisfied with it by Christ.

Thirdly. God also is at peace with the worshippers, and rests in them. He sets up his tabernacle amongst men, that he may dwell 'amongst them, and be their God, and that they may be his people,' *Rev. xxi. 3*, and herein he rejoiceth over them with joy, and 'resteth in his love,' *Zeph. iii. 17*. Thus the whole work of God's grace in Christ being accomplished, he ceaseth from his labour, and entereth into his rest.

I have added these things to show, that it is God's rest which believers do enter into, as it is here declared. For the nature of the rest itself, as it is by them enjoyed, it hath fully been opened on the first verse, and need not here to be again insisted on. And this is that rest which is principally intended both here and in the whole chapter. It is not indeed absolutely intended, or exclusively unto all

other spiritual rests, or to an increase and progress in the same kind; but it is principally so. For this rest itself is not absolute, ultimate, and complete, but it is initial and suited to the state of believers in this world. And because it hath its fulness and perfection in eternal rest, in the immediate enjoyment of God, that also may seem to be included therein, but consequentially only.

There remains for the full explication of this assertion of the apostle, only that we show what it is to enter into this rest. And these two things may be observed to that purpose. 1. That it is an entrance which is asserted. 2. That it is but an entrance.

1. It is an entrance, which denotes a right executed. There was a right proposed in the promise, and served therein for believers indefinitely. But it is not executed, nor is possession given but by believing. A rest remains for the people of God, that is, in the promise, and we who have believed do enter into it. It is faith which gives us *jus in re*, a right in possession, an actual, personal interest, both in the promises, and in the rest contained in them, with all the privileges wherewith it is attended.

2. It is but an entrance into rest. 1. Because the rest itself is not absolute and complete, as we have declared. Look to what is past, what we are delivered and secured from, and it is a glorious rest. Look unto what is to come, and it is itself but a passage into a more glorious rest. It is an 'abundant ministration of an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' 2 Pet. i. 11. 2. Because we meet with contests and oppositions in this state. As the Israelites after they had passed over Jordan, and according to the promise, had entered into the rest of God, yet had great work to do, in securing and preserving the possession which they had taken by faith. Yea they had great enemies to contend withal and to subdue. Much diligence and wisdom was yet to be used for their settlement. And it is not otherwise with us as to our entrance into the rest of God in this world. We have yet spiritual adversaries to conflict withal; and the utmost of our spiritual endeavours are required to secure our possession, and to carry us on to perfection.

Obs. I. The state of believers under the gospel is a state of blessed rest.—It is God's rest and theirs. So much was necessary to be spoken concerning the nature of this rest in the opening of the words, that I shall treat but briefly on this observation, though the matter of it be of great importance. God created man in a state of present rest. This belonged unto that goodness and perfection of all the works of his hands which God saw in them, and blessed them thereon. And as a token of this rest, did God institute the rest of the seventh day, that man, by his example and command, might use and improve the state of rest wherein he was made, as we shall see afterwards. Now this rest consisted in three things. 1. Peace with God. 2. Satisfaction and acquiescency in God. 3. Means of communion with God. All these were lost by the entrance of sin, and all mankind was brought thereby into an estate of trouble and disquietment. In the restoration of these, and that in a better and more secure way and manner, doth this gospel-state of believers consist.



First. Without it our moral state in respect of God, is an estate of ENMITY and trouble. There is no peace between God and sinners. They exercise an enmity against God by sin, Rom. viii. 7. And God executeth an enmity against them by the curse of the law, John iii. 36. Hence nothing ensues but trouble, fear, disquietment, and anguish of mind. The relief that any find, or seem to find, or pretend to find, in darkness, ignorance, superstition, security, self-righteousness, false hopes, will prove a refuge of lies, a covering too short and narrow to hide them from the wrath of God, which is the principal cause of all trouble to the souls of men. All this is removed by the gospel : for, ‘ being justified by faith, we have peace with God,’ Rom. v. 1. Jesus Christ therein is our peace, who hath ‘ reconciled us unto God by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby,’ Eph. ii. 14—16. And as for the law, which is the means and instrument whereby God gives in trouble to the souls of men, the power and curse whereof constitutes them in a state of unrest and trouble, he hath undergone the curse of it, Gal. iii. 13, and fulfilled the righteousness of it, Rom. viii. 3. Whence the covenant of it is abolished, Heb. viii. 12, 13, and the condemning power of it is taken away, 1 Cor. xv. 58, 59. The benefit of all which grace being communicated to believers in and by the gospel, they are instated in peace with God, which is the foundation and first part of our rest, or our interest in this rest of God.

Secondly. There is in all men before the coming of the gospel, a want of an acquiescency and satisfaction in God. This is produced by the corrupt principle and power of sin, which having turned off the soul from God, causeth it to wander in endless vanities, and to pursue various lusts and pleasures, seeking after rest which always flies from it. This is the great real active principle of unrest or disquietment unto the souls of men. This makes them like a troubled sea which cannot rest: The ignorance that is in them ‘ alienates them from the life of God,’ Eph. iv. 18. And their fleshliness or sensuality fills them with a dislike and hatred of God ; for ‘ the carnal mind is enmity against God,’ Rom. viii. 7, 8. And the vanity of their minds leads them up and down the world after ‘ divers lusts and pleasures,’ Eph. iv. 17. And is there, can there be any peace in such a condition ? But this also is removed by the gospel. For its work is to destroy and ruin that power of sin which hath thus turned off the soul from God, and so again to renew the image of God in it, that it may make him its rest. This is the effect of the gospel, to take men off from their principle of alienation from God ; to turn their minds and affections to him as their rest, satisfaction, and reward ; and other way for these ends under heaven there is none.

Thirdly. Unto peace with God, and acquiescency in him, a way of intercourse and communion with him is required, to complete a state of spiritual rest. And this also, as it was lost by sin, so it is restored unto us in and by the gospel. This our apostle discourseth at large in the ninth and tenth chapters of this Epistle, whither we refer the consideration of it.

But yet I must acknowledge that the truth insisted on, is liable to some important objections, which seem to have strength communi-

cated unto them both from the Scriptures, and from the experience of them that do believe. Some of the principal therefore of them, as instances of the rest, must be removed out of the way. And it will be said,

1. That the description given us of the state of believers in this world, lies in direct contradiction to our assertion. For doth not our Saviour himself foretel all his disciples that in this world they should have trouble; that they should be hated and persecuted and slain? See John xv. 19—21, xvi. 33. And did not the apostles assure their hearers, that ‘through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God?’ Acts xiv. 22. Hence it is the notation of believers, ‘them that are troubled,’ to whom future rest is promised, 2 Thess. i. 7. And when they come to heaven, they are said to ‘come out of great tribulation, Rev. vii. 14; yea, they are warned not to think strange of fiery trials, the greatest, the highest imaginable, as that which is the common lot and portion of all that believe in Jesus, 1 Pet. iv. 18. And do not, have not, believers in all ages found this in their own experience to be their state and condition? And is it not the very first lesson of the gospel, for men to take up the cross, and to deny themselves in all their desires and enjoyments? And how can this be esteemed a state of rest, which being denominated from the greater part of its concerns and occurrences, may be called a state of trouble, or tribulation, which is directly contrary to a state of rest.

It is not difficult to remove this objection. Our Lord Jesus Christ hath done it for us in those words of his to his disciples, ‘In the world you shall have trouble, but in me you shall have peace,’ John xvi. 33. The rest we treat of is spiritual; God’s rest, and our rest in God. Now, spiritual and inward rest, in and with God, is not inconsistent with outward temporal trouble in the world. We might go over all those things wherein we have manifested this gospel to consist, and easily evince that not one of them can be impeached by all the troubles that may befall us in this world. But our apostle hath summarily gone through with this work for us, Rom. viii. 35—39, ‘Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us: for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ The sum of all is this, that no outward thing, no possible opposition shall prevail to cast us out of that rest, which we have obtained an entrance into, or impede our future entrance into eternal rest with God.

2. Moreover, one part of this rest whereinto we are entered consists in that persuasion and assurance which it gives us of eternal rest, wherewith believers may support their souls under their troubles, and balance all the persecutions and afflictions that they meet withal in this world. And this also our apostle directs us unto, 2 Cor. iv. 16—

8. 'For which cause,' saith he, 'we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day; for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things that are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.' That persuasion which we have in this gospel-state, of an assured enjoyment of eternal invisible things, an eternal weight of glory, casts out of consideration all the momentary sufferings, which in this world we may be exposed unto. As our peace with God by Christ, our interest in him, our communion with him, and acceptance in our worship through the blood of Jesus, the spiritual freedom and liberty of spirit which we have through the Holy Ghost in all that we have to do with him, and the like spiritual mercies wherein this rest doth consist, can neither be weakened nor impaired by outward troubles; so it supplies us with such present joys, and infallible future expectations, as enables us both to glory in them, and triumph over them, Rom. v. 3—5. Yea,

3. Farther, God is pleased so to order and dispose of things, that this rest is never more assured, more glorious and conspicuous, than when those who are entered into it, are under reproach, trouble, and sufferings upon the account of their profession of it. So saith the apostle, 1 Pet. iv. 14. 'If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.' Whatever may befall us of evil and trouble upon the account of the gospel, it adds unto that blessed state of rest whereinto we are entered; for therein the Spirit and glory of God resteth upon us. There is more in the words, than that one expression should serve merely to explain the other. As if he had said, the Spirit of glory, that is, of God. Nor is it a mere Hebraism for the glorious Spirit of God. But the especial work of the Spirit of God in and upon believers in such a season is intended. He shall work gloriously in them and by them; supporting, comforting, and powerfully enabling them to maintain and preserve their souls in that rest whereunto they are called. This state of rest therefore, cannot be impeached by any outward troubles.

But it seems not inwardly and spiritually to answer the description that hath been given of it. For, 1. There are many true believers who all their days never come to any abiding sense of peace with God; but are filled with trouble, and exercised with fears and perplexities, so that they go mourning and heavily all their days. These find it not a place of rest. 2. There are no believers, but are exercised with continual troubles with the remainders of sin yet abiding in them. These keep them in a continual conflict, and make their lives a warfare, and causing them to cry out and complain because of their trouble, Rom. vii. 24. And it may be said, How can these things consist with a state of rest?

Some few distinctions will clear our way also from the encumbrance of this objection. As,

1. It is one thing to be in a state of rest; another to know that a man is so. Believers are by faith instated in rest, and have every one



of them peace with God, being reconciled unto him by the blood of the cross; but as to what shall be the measure of their own understanding of their interest therein, this is left to the sovereign grace and pleasure of God.

2. There is a difference between a state of rest in general, and actual rest in all particulars. A state of rest, denominated from all the principal concerns of it, may admit of much actual disquietment; whereby the state itself is not overthrown or changed, nor the interests of any in it disannulled. And the contests of indwelling sin against our spiritual rest are no other.

3. There is a difference between a state itself, and men's participations in that state. This gospel-state in and of itself, is an estate of complete peace and rest, but our participation of it is various and gradual. Rest in it is provided, prepared, and exhibited; this we receive according to our several measures and attainments.

4. Let it be remembered that our whole interest in this rest, is called our entrance; we do enter, and we do but enter: we are so possessed as that we are continually entering into it; and this will admit of the difficulties before insisted on, without the least impeachment of this state of rest.

Obs. II. It is faith alone which is the only way and means of entering into this blessed state of rest. 'We who have believed do enter.' This that which all along the apostle both asserteth and proveth. His whole design indeed is to manifest by testimonies and examples, that unbelief cuts off from, and faith gives an entrance into, the rest of God. Only whereas it is evident that the unbelief which cut them off of old, did produce and was attended with disobedience, whence, as we observed, the apostle expresseth their sin by a word that may signify either the one or the other, the cause or the effect, unbelief or disobedience, so the faith which gives us this admission into the rest of God, is such as produceth, and is accompanied with the obedience that the gospel requireth. But yet neither doth this obedience belong to the formal nature of faith, nor is it in the condition of our entrance, but only the due manner of our behaviour in our entering. The entrance itself depends on faith alone; and that both negatively so that without it no entrance is to be obtained, whatever else men may plead to obtain it by; and positively, in that it alone effects it, without a contribution of aid or strength in its so doing, from any other grace or duty whatever. This is not a purchase to be obtained by silver and gold, as men may buy a rest from purgatory; works of the law, or supererogation, if they might be found, will not open this way unto us: it is faith alone that gives this entrance; we which have believed do enter into rest; which is the apostle's assertion in this place.

The second thing in these words is the proof produced by the apostle in the confirmation of the foregoing assertion. And this lies in the next part of the verse. As he said, 'As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest.' The exposition of these words, absolutely considered, we have passed through on the former chapter. Our present inquiry is only into their use in this place. And it is evident that they are intended by the apostle for a confirmation of what he had before affirmed. But yet it is certain, that this at the first view



they do not seem to do. For how is it proved that we who believe do enter into rest; because God swore concerning others, that they should not so do? This difficulty we must remove by a due application of these words unto the apostle's purpose.

The words may be considered two ways. 1. Logically, merely as to the rational and artificial form of the argument in them. 2. Theologically as to their force and intention according to the analogy of faith. And both ways we shall find the apostle's intention and assertion evinced by them.

For the first, the apostle's argument depends on a known rule; namely, that unto immediate contraries, or things immediately contrary one to another, contrary attributes may certainly be ascribed: so that he who affirms the one, at the same time denies the other; and on the contrary, he that denies the one, affirms the other. He that says, it is day, doth as really say it is not night, as if he had used those formal words. Now the proposition laid down by the apostle in proof of his assertion, is this; they who believed not, did not enter into God's rest; for God swore that they should not, and that because they believed not. Hence it follows inevitably in a just ratiocination, that they who do believe do enter into that rest. Supposing what he hath already proved and intends farther to confirm, namely, that the promise belongs unto us, as well as unto them; the promise is the same, only the rest is changed; and supposing also what he hath already fully proved, namely, that the enjoying of the promise or entering into rest, depends on mixing of it with faith or believing; and his proof that those who do believe do enter into rest, because God hath sworn that those who believe not shall not enter, is plain and manifest. For the promise being the same, if unbelief exclude, faith gives entrance: for what is denied of the one, is therein affirmed of the other. Some expositors of the Roman church do greatly perplex themselves and their readers in answering an objection which they raise to themselves in this place. For say they, by the rule and reason of contraries, if *unbelief* alone exclude from the rest of God, that is, the glory of God in heaven, then *faith* alone gives admission into glory; this they cannot bear, for fear they should lose the advantage of their own merits. And they are incompetent to salve their own objection. For the rule they respect will inevitably carry it, that in what sense soever unbelief excludes, faith gives admission. But the truth is, that both their objections and their answers are in this place importune and unseasonable. For it is not the rest of glory that is here intended: and that faith alone gives us admission into a gospel-state of rest, they will not deny.

And here by the way we may take notice of the use of reason, or logical deductions in the proposing, handling, and confirming of sacred supernatural truths, or articles of faith. For the validity of the apostle's proof in this place depends on the certainty of the logical maxim before mentioned, the consideration of which removes its whole difficulty. And to deny this liberty of deducting consequences, or one thing from another, according to the just rules of due ratiocination, is quite to take away the use of the Scripture, and banish reason from those things wherein it ought to be principally employed.

Secondly. The words may be considered theologically ; that is, by other rules of Scripture, according to the analogy of faith. And thus the force of the apostle's proof springs out of another root ; or there lies a reason in the testimony used by him, taken from another consideration. And this is from the nature of God's covenant with us, and the end thereof. For whereas the covenant of God is administered unto us in promises and threatenings, they have all of them the same end allotted to them, and the same grace to make them effectual. Hence every threatening includes a promise in it, and every promise hath also the nature of a threatening in its proposal. There is a natural inbeing of promises and threatenings in reference unto the ends of the covenant. God expressing his mind in various ways, hath still the same end in them all. The first covenant was given out in a mere word of threatening ; ' the day thou eatest thou shalt die.' But yet none doubteth but that there was a promise of life upon obedience included in that threatening, yea and principally intended. So there is a threatening in every promise of the gospel. Whereas therefore there is a great threatening, confirmed with the oath of God, in these words that those who believed not, should not enter into his rest ; there is a promise included in the same words, no less solemnly confirmed ; that those who do believe should enter into rest : and thence doth the apostle confirm the truth of his assertion. From what hath been discoursed, we may observe, that,

Obs. III. There is a mutual inbeing of the promises and threatenings of the covenant, so that in our faith and consideration of them, they ought not utterly to be separated.—Wherever there is a promise, there a threatening in reference unto the same matter is tacitly understood. And wherever there is a threatening, that is no more than a threatening ; be it never so severe, there is a gracious promise included in it. Yea, sometimes God gives out an express threatening, for no other end but that men may lay hold of the promise tacitly included. The threatening that Nineveh should perish, was given out that it might not perish. And John Baptist's preaching that the axe was laid to the root of the tree, was a call to repentance, that none might be cut down and cast into the fire. And the reasons hereof are,

1. Because they have both of them the same rise and spring. Both promises and threatenings do flow from, and are expressive of the holy gracious nature of God, with respect unto his actings towards men in covenant with himself. Now, though there are distinct properties in the nature of God, which operate, act, and express themselves distinctly, yet they are all of them essential properties of one and the same nature : and what proceeds from them hath the same fountain. So, declaring his nature by his name, he ascribes that unto his one Being, which will produce contrary effects, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, that he ' is gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin,' he expresseth in and by his promises ; that he will by no means clear the guilty, but visit sin and iniquity,' he expresseth by his threatenings. They do both of them but declare the actings of the one holy God according to the distinct properties of his nature

upon distinct objects. This is the foundation of that mutual inbeing of promises and threatenings whereof we discourse.

2. Both of them, as annexed to the covenant, or as the covenant is administered by them, have the same end. God doth not design one end by a promise, and another by a threatening; but only different ways of compassing or effecting the same end. The end of both is, to increase in us faith and obedience. Now this is variously effected according to the variety of those faculties and affections of our souls which are affected by them, and according to the great variety of occasions that we are to pass through in the world. Faith and obedience are principally in our minds and wills. But they are excited to act by our affections. Now these are differently wrought upon by promises and threatenings; yet all directing to the same end. The use of divine threatenings is to make such a representation of divine holiness and righteousness to men, as that being moved by fear, an affection suited to be wrought upon by the effects of them, they may be stirred up unto faith and obedience. So Noah, upon God's warning, that is, his threatening the world with destruction, being moved by fear, prepared an ark, Heb. xi. 7, which our apostle instanceth in, as an effect of his faith, and evidence of his obedience. The threatenings of God, then, are not assigned unto any other end, but what the promises are assigned unto; only they work and operate another way. Hereon faith coming unto the consideration of them, finds the same love and grace in them as in the promise, because they lead to the same end.

3. Again. Threatenings are conditional; and the nature of such conditions is, not only somewhat is affirmed upon their supposal, and denied upon their denial; but the contrary unto it, is affirmed upon their denial; and that because the denial of them doth assert a contrary condition. For instance, the threatening is, that 'he who believeth not, shall not enter into the rest of God.' Upon a supposition of unbelief, it is affirmed herein, that there shall be no entrance into rest. Upon the denial of that supposal, not only it is not averred that there shall be no such entrance, but it is also affirmed that men shall enter into it. And this because the denial of unbelief doth include and assert faith itself, which plainly gives the threatening the nature of a promise; and as such may it be used and improved.

4. The same grace is administered in the covenant, to make the one and the other effectual. Men are apt to think that the promises of the gospel are accompanied towards the elect with a supply of effectual grace to render them useful, to enable them to believe and obey. This makes them hear them willingly, and attend unto them gladly. They think they can never enough consider or meditate upon them; but as for the threatenings of the gospel, they suppose that they have no other end but to make them afraid. And so they may be freed from the evil which they portend, they care not how little they converse with them. As for any assistance in their obedience to be communicated by them, they do not expect it. But this is a great mistake. Threatenings are no less sanctified of God for the ends mentioned than promises are; nor are they when duly used and improved, less effectual to that purpose. God leaves no part of his word,

in its proper place, unaccompanied with his Spirit and grace; especially not that which is of so near a concernment unto his glory. Hence many have had grace administered unto them by threatenings, on whom the promises have made no impression. And this not only persons before conversion for their conviction and humiliation; but even believers themselves, for their awakening, recovery from backsliding, awe, and reverence of God in secret duties, encouragements in sufferings, and the like. Now from what hath been spoken it follows, that faith being duly exercised about and towards gospel-threatenings, yea the most severe of them, may find the same love and the same grace in them as in the most sweet and gracious promises. And there can be no reason why men should dislike the preaching and consideration of them, but because they too well like the sins and evils, that are the condition of their execution.

We shall now proceed to the opening of the last clause of this verse, wherein the apostle illustrates and confirms the truth of the proof he had produced, by evincing that he had made a right application of the testimony used to that purpose. For proving that those who believe under the gospel do enter into rest, from those words of the Psalmist, 'if they shall enter into my rest;' it was incumbent on him to manifest, that the rest intended in those words, had respect unto the rest of the gospel, which was now preached unto all the Hebrews, and entered into by all that believed. Whereas therefore a rest of God is mentioned in that testimony, he proceeds to consider the various rests that on several accounts are so called in the Scripture; the rests of God. From the consideration of them he concludes, that after all other rests formerly enjoyed by the people of God were past, there yet remained a rest for them under the Messiah, which was principally intended in the prophetic words of David. This is the design of his ensuing discourse, which here he makes an entrance into with some seeming abruptness, or at least with an elliptical phrase of speech, in these words, 'Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.'

*Kai*τοι. Some render it, *et quidem*, 'and truly,' some, *quamvis*, and *quanquam*, 'although,'—some, *sed*, 'but.' The Syriac, ܩܕܝܫܐ, *quia ecce*, or *et ecce*, 'and behold.' The addition of the particle *τοι* to the conjunction, causeth this variety. And *kai*τοι is variously used, and variously rendered, out of other authors, which I should not mention, as seeming too light a matter here to be insisted on, but that various interpretations do often depend on the different acceptation of these particles. The common use of it is, *quamvis*; so it is here rendered by Erasmus and Beza, who are followed by ours, 'although.' So Demosthenes, *καιτοι τογε ασχρον ομους*, *quamvis et id similiter turpe*, 'although that be dishonest in like manner.' What this exception intends, shall be afterwards declared.

*Των εργαων*, 'the works;' that is, of God's creation: the works of the creation. So the Syriac, ܥܒܕܘܗܝ ܕܐܠܗܐ, 'the works of God himself,' that is, ܐܫܪ ܒܪܐ ܐܠܗܝܡ ܠܥܫܘܬ, 'all his work that God created and made;' or, that he designed to make in that first creation.

*Γενηθεντων*, *perfectis*, 'were perfected,' or 'finished.' Syr. ܕܗܘ,



fuerunt, or facta sunt, 'were,' or 'were made,' genitis, 'being born,' from אלה חולדות, Gen. ii. 4, or created, finished, perfected, from ויכלו, Gen. ii. 1, 'were finished.' The end of עשה, 'he made.' There was, in the creation, God's design לעשות to make all things; according thereunto ברא or עשה, he 'created' or 'made:' the end whereof was, ויכלו, they 'were finished.' For the apostle, in these words, applies the three first verses of the second chapter of Genesis, to his own purpose.

The season of the whole is added, απο καταβολης κοσμου, 'à jacto mundi fundamento, à jactis mundi fundamentis, ab institutione mundi, à constitutione mundi, 'from the foundation of the world.' Syr. מן שורית דעלמא, 'from the beginning of the world.' Καταβολη is properly, 'jactus ex loco superiore, 'a casting of any thing from above, thither where it may abide.' Hence Chrysostome, on Ephes. i. 3, on the same word; ὡς απο τινος ὑψους καταβελημενον μεγαλου αυτου δεικνυς, 'the founding of the world comes from above, from the power of God over all.' The word is but once in the New Testament applied unto any other purpose, Heb. xi. 11. But frequently in that construction here used, καταβολη κοσμου. See Matt. xiii. 35, xxv. 34; Luke xi. 50; John xvii. 24; Eph. i. 4; Heb. ix. 26; 1 Pet. i. 20; Rev. xiii. 8, xvii. 8. Twice with προ, that is, 'before,' Eph. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 20, 'before the foundation of the world;' else with απο, 'from it,' denoting the beginning of time, as the other doth eternity.

*Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

I do acknowledge that these words, as they relate to the preceding and ensuing discourses of the apostle, are attended with great difficulties. For the manner of the ratiocination, or arguing here used, seems to be exceedingly perplexed. But we have a relief against the consideration of the obscurity of this and the like passages of holy writ. For the things delivered obscurely in them, as far as they are needful for us to know or practise, are more fully and clearly explained in other places. Nor is there the least semblance that any thing contained in this place, should have an inconsistency with what is elsewhere declared. The principal difficulties lie in the discovery of the especial design of the apostle, with the force of the arguments, reasons, and testimonies whereby he confirmeth his purpose; that is, that we may clearly discern, both what it is which he intends to prove, and how he proves it. For the sense of the words is obvious. These are the things that we are to inquire into, with what spiritual skill and diligence God is pleased to impart. And here, because the words under consideration do give an entrance into the whole ensuing discourse, I shall on them, lay down the general principles of it, which I would desire the reader a little to attend unto, and afterwards to consider how they are severally educed from the particular passages of it.

First. It is evident that the apostle here engageth into the confirmation of what he had laid down and positively asserted in the foregoing verses. Now this is, That there is yet under the gospel, a promise of entering into the rest of God left or remaining unto believers, and that they do enter into that rest, by mixing the promise

of it with faith. This he declares, and the declaration of it was useful unto and necessary for these Hebrews. For he lets them know, as hath been shown, that notwithstanding their enjoyment of the rest of Canaan, with the worship and rest of God therein, which their forefathers fell short of by their unbelief, they were now under a new trial; a new rest being proposed unto them in the promise. This he proves by a testimony out of the ninety-fifth Psalm. But the application of that testimony unto his purpose, is obnoxious unto a great objection. For the rest mentioned in that Psalm seems to be a rest long since past and enjoyed, either by themselves or others; so that they could have no concern in it, nor be in any danger of coming short of it. And if this were so, all the arguments and exhortations of the apostle in this place, might be rejected as groundless and in cogent, as drawn from a mistaken and misapplied testimony. To remove this objection, and thereby confirm his former assertion and exhortation, is the present design of the apostle.

Secondly. To the end mentioned, he proceeds unto the exposition and vindication of the testimony which he had cited out of the Psalm. And herein he shows from the proper signification of the words, from the time when they were spoken, and the persons to whom, that no other rest is intended in them, but what was now by him proposed unto them, or the rest of God and of his people in the gospel. This he proves by various arguments, laying singular weight upon this matter. For if there was a new rest promised and now proposed unto them, if they mixed not the promise of it with faith during the time of their day, or continuance of God's patience towards them, they must perish, and that eternally.

Thirdly. The general argument to his purpose which he insists on, consists in an enumeration of all the several rests of God and his people, which are mentioned in the Scripture. For from the consideration of them all, he proves that no other rest could be principally intended in the words of David, but only the rest of the gospel whereinto they enter who do believe.

Fourthly. From that respect which the words of the Psalmist have unto the other foregoing rests, he manifests that those also were representations of that spiritual rest, which was now brought in and established. These things comprise the design of the apostle in general.

In pursuit hereof, he declares in particular, 1. That the rest mentioned in the Psalm, is not that which ensued immediately on the creation. This he evinceth, because it is spoken of afterwards, a long time after, and that to another purpose, ver. 4, 5. 2. That it is not the rest of the land of Canaan, because that was not entered into by them unto whom it was promised, for they came short of it by their unbelief, and perished in the wilderness. But now this rest is offered afresh, ver. 6, 7. 3. Whereas it may be objected, that although the wilderness-generation entered not in, yet their posterity did under the conduct of Joshua, ver. 8; he answers, that this rest in the Psalm being promised and proposed by David so long a time (above 400 years) after the people had quietly possessed the land, whereunto they were conducted by Joshua, it must needs be, that another rest yet to

come was intended in those words of the Psalmist, ver. 9. And, 4. To conclude his arguments, he declareth that this new rest hath a new peculiar foundation, that the other had no interest or concern in; namely, his ceasing from his own work, and entering into his rest, who is the Author of it, ver. 10. This is the way and manner of the apostle's arguing, for the proof of what he had said before in the beginning of the chapter, and which he issueth in the conclusion, expressed ver. 9.

But we are yet further to inquire into the nature of the several rests here discoursed of by the apostle, with their relation one to another, and the especial concerns of that rest which he exhorts them to enter into, wherein the principal difficulties of the place do lie. And some light into the whole may be given in the ensuing propositions.

1. The rest of God is the foundation and principal cause of our rest: so it is still called God's rest; 'if they shall enter into my rest.' It is, on some account or other, God's rest before it is ours.

2. God's rest is not spoken of absolutely with respect unto himself only, but with reference to the rest that ensued thereon, for the church to rest with him in. Hence it follows that the rests here mentioned are, as it were, double; namely, the rest of God, and the rest that ensued thereon for us to enter into. For instance, at the finishing of the works of creation, which is first proposed, 'God ceased from his work and rested;' this was his own rest. He 'rested on the seventh day.' But that was not all; he blessed it for the rest of man; a rest for us, ensuing on his rest; that is, an expressive representation of it, and a figure or means of our entering into, or being taken into a participation of the rest of God. For the sum of all that is proposed unto us, is an entrance into the rest of God.

3. The apostle proposeth the threefold state of the church of God, unto consideration. 1. The state under the law of nature or creation. 2. The state of it under the law of institution and carnal ordinances. 3. That now introducing under the gospel. To each of these he assigns a distinct rest of God, a rest of the church entering into God's rest; and a day of rest as a means and pledge thereof. And withal, he manifests that the former two were ordered to be previous representations of the latter, though not equally, nor on the same account.

First. He considers the church and the state of it under the law of nature, before the entrance of sin. And herein he shows first, that there was a rest of God. 'For the works,' saith he, 'were finished from the foundation of the world,' and God did rest from all his works, ver. 3, 4. This was God's own rest, and was the foundation of the church's rest. For, 1. It was the duty of man hereon, to enter into the rest of God, that is, to make God his rest here, in faith and obedience, and hereafter, in immediate fruition; for which end also he was made. 2. A day of rest, namely, the seventh day, was blessed and sanctified for the present means of entering into that rest of God, in the performance of his worship, and a pledge of the eternal fulness and continuance thereof, ver. 3, 4. So that in this state of the church there were three things considerable. 1. God's rest. 2. Men's entering into God's rest by faith and obedience. 3. A day of rest, or a

remembrance of the one, and a pledge of the other. And in all this, there was a type of our rest under the gospel (for which end it is mentioned) wherein he who is God doth cease from his work, and therein lay the foundation of the rests that ensued, as we shall see.

Secondly. He considers the church under the law of institutions. And herein he representeth the rest of Canaan; wherein also the three distinct rests before mentioned do occur. 1. There was in it a rest of God; this gave denomination to the whole; for he still calls it 'my rest.' For God wrought about it works great and mighty, and ceased from them when they were finished. And this work of his, answered in its greatness unto the work of creation, whereunto it is compared by himself, Isa. li. 15, 16. 'I am the Lord thy God that divided the sea, whose waves roared; the Lord of hosts is his name; and have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.' The dividing of the sea whose waves roared, is put by a synecdoche for the whole work of God preparing a way for the church-state of the people in the land of Canaan; the whole being expressed in one signal instance: and this he compares unto the works of creation in 'planting the heavens and laying the foundations of the earth.' For although those words are but a metaphorical expression of the church and political state of the people, yet there is an evident allusion in them to the original creation of all things. This was the work of God, on the finishing whereof he entered into his rest. For after the erection of his worship in the land of Canaan, he said of it, 'This is my rest, and here will I dwell.' 2. God having thus entered into his rest, in like manner as formerly, two things ensued thereon. 1. That the people are invited and encouraged to enter into his rest. And thus their entrance into rest, was their coming by faith and obedience into a participation of his worship wherein he rested; which though some came short of by unbelief, yet others entered into under the conduct of Joshua. 2. Both these God expressed by appointing a day of rest; for he did so both that it might be a token, sign, and pledge of his own rest in his instituted worship, and be a means in the solemn observance of that worship to further their entrance into the rest of God. These were the ends of God's instituting a day of rest amongst his people, whereby it became a peculiar sign or token that he was their God, and that they were his people. It is true, this day was the same in order of the days, with that before observed from the foundation of the world; namely, the seventh day from the beginning of the creation. But yet it was now re-established on new considerations and to new ends and purposes. The time of the change and alteration of the day itself was not come. For this work was but preparatory for a greater. And so whereas both these rests, that of old from the foundation of the world, and this newly instituted in the land of Canaan, were designed to represent the rest of the gospel, it was meet they should agree in the common pledge and token of them. Besides, the covenant whereunto the seventh day was originally annexed, was not yet abolished, nor yet to be abolished, and so that day was not yet



to be changed. Hence the seventh day came to fall under a double consideration. First. As it was such a proportion of time as was requisite for the worship of God, and appointed as a pledge of his rest under the law of creation, wherein it had respect to God's rest from the works of creation alone. Secondly. As it received a new institution, with superadded ends and significations, as a token and pledge of God's rest under the law of institutions. But materially the day was to be the same, until that work was done, and that rest was brought in, which both of them did signify. Thus both these states of the church had these three things distinctly in them. A rest of God for their foundation; a rest in obedience and worship for the people to enter into; and a day of rest, as a pledge and token of both the other.

Thirdly. The apostle proves from the words of the Psalmist, that yet there was to be a third state of the church, an especial state under the Messiah, or of the gospel, whereof the other were applied to be types and future shadows. And thence he likewise manifests, that there is yet remaining also another state of rest belonging to it, which is yet to be entered into. Now to the constitution of this rest, as before, three things are required.

First. That there be some signal work of God, which he must have completed and finished, and thereon entered into his rest. This must be the foundation of the whole new church state to be introduced, and of the rest to be obtained therein.

Secondly. That there be a spiritual rest ensuing thereon, and arising thence, for them that believe to enter into.

Thirdly. That there be a new or a renewed day of rest, to express the rest of God to us, and to be a means and pledge of our entering into it.

And that all these do concur in this new state of the church, it is the apostle's design to demonstrate, which also he doth. For he sheweth, 1. That there is a great work of God, and that finished, for the foundation of the whole. This he had made way for, ch. iii. 4, where he both expressly asserts Christ to be 'God who made all things,' and shows the analogy and correspondence that is between the creation of all things, and the building of the church. As God then wrought in the creation of all, so Christ who is God, wrought in the setting up of this new church state; and on his finishing of it entered into his rest, ceasing from his works, as God also did, on the creation, from his, ver. 10. For that the words of that verse contain the foundation of the gospel church state in the work and rest of Christ that ensued thereon, shall be declared in its proper place. 2. That there hence arises a 'rest for the people of God,' or believers to enter into. To prove this is his main design, and he doth it invincibly from the testimony of the Psalmist. 3. It remains that there must be a new day of rest united and accommodated to this new church state. And this new day must arise from the rest that the Lord Christ entered into, when he had finished the work whereby that new church state was founded. This is the Sabbath-keeping, which the apostle concludes that he had evinced from his former discourse, ver. 9.

And concerning this day, we may observe, 1. That it hath this in common with the former days, that it is a Sabbatism, or one day in seven; for this portion of time to be dedicated unto rest, having its foundation in the light and law of nature, was equally to pass through all estates of the church. 2. That although both the former states of the church had one and the same day, though varied as to some ends of it in the latter institution, now the day itself is changed; because it now respects as its foundation, a work quite of another nature from that to which the day which went before related. And therefore is the day now changed which before could not be so. 3. That the observance of it is suited unto the spiritual state of the church under the gospel, delivered from the bondage frame of spirit, wherewith it was observed under the law. These are the rests of the apostle here discoursed of, or a threefold rest, under a threefold state of the church; and if any of these be left out of our consideration, the whole structure of the discourse is loosened and dissolved.

The involvedness of this context, with the importance of the matter treated of in it, with the consideration of the very little light which hath been given unto it, by any expositors whom I could as yet attain to the sight of, hath caused me to insist thus long in the investigation of the true analysis of it. And if the reader obtain any guidance of it into an understanding of the mind of the Holy Ghost, he will not think it tedious, nor yet the repetition of sundry things which must necessarily be called over again, in the exposition of the several passages of the context, whereby the whole will be farther opened and confirmed.

Having taken a prospect into the whole design of this place, I shall now return to the consideration of those particular passages and testimonies, by which the whole of what we have observed from the context is cleared and established. And first, we must view again the preface, or entrance into the discourse, as it is expressed in the close of the third verse.

VER. 3.—*Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

In these words, the apostle begins his answer unto such objections, as his former assertion concerning the entrance of believers into God's rest now under the gospel, seems to be liable unto. And therein he clears it by a farther exposition of the testimony produced out of the Psalmist unto that purpose, compared with other places of Scripture, wherein mention is made of the rest of God in like manner. Now all rest supposeth work and labour. The first notion of it, is a cessation from labour, with the trouble or weariness thereof. Wherefore every rest of God must have some work of God preceding it. That labour and rest are not properly ascribed unto God, is evident. They include that lassitude, or weariness upon pains in labour, that ease and quiet upon a cessation from labour, whereof the divine nature is not capable. But the effects of God's power in the operation of outward works, and an end of temporary operations, with the satisfaction of his wis-

dom in them, are the things that are intended in God's working and resting. Here the first is mentioned, *τα εργα*, מַעֲשֵׂה, 'the work,' that is, of God. So he calls the effect of his creating power, his work, yea the work of his hands and fingers, Ps. viii. 3, in allusion to the way and manner whereby we effect our works. And the works here intended, are expressed summarily, Gen. ii. 1. 'The heavens and the earth, and all the host of them;' that is, the whole creation distributed into its various kinds, with reference unto the season or distinct days of their production, as Gen. i.

Of these works, it is said, they were finished. The works were finished; so effected and perfected, as that God would work no more in the same kind. The continuation of things made, belongs unto God's effective providence; from the making more things, kinds of things, new things, in *rerum natura*, God now ceased. So are the words usually interpreted, namely, that God now so finished and perfected all kinds of things, as that he would never more create any new kind, race, or species of them, but only continue and increase those now made, by an ordinary work upon them, and concurrence with them, in his providence. It may be this is so; it may be no instance can be given of any absolutely new kind of creature made by God, since the finishing of his work at the foundation of the world. But it cannot be proved from these words; for no more is expressed or intended in them, but that, at the end of the sixth day, God finished and put an end unto that whole work of creating heaven and earth, and all the host of them, which he then designed, made, and blessed. These works therefore, the works of the first creation were finished, completed, perfected; and this,

'From the foundation of the world.'—The words are a periphrasis of those six original days, wherein time, and all things measured by it, and extant with it, had their beginning. It is sometimes absolutely called the beginning, Gen. i. 1; John i. 1; that is, when a beginning was given unto all creatures, by him who is without beginning. And both these expressions are put together, Heb. i. 10, *κατ' αρχας* so the apostle renders לְפָנֶיךָ, Ps. cii. 25. 'In the beginning, thou hast laid the foundation.' By the foundation then, is not intended absolutely the first beginning or foundation of the work, as we call that the foundation of a building, which is first laid, and on which the fabric is raised. But the word is to be taken, *εν πλατει*, for the whole building itself; or formally for the building which extends itself to the whole equally, and not materially to any part of it, first or last. For it is said, that from this laying of the foundation, the works were finished. *Καταβολη κοσμου*, is the erecting of the whole building of the creation, on the stable foundation of the power of God put forth therein.

This is the first thing that the apostle fixeth as a foundation unto his ensuing discourse; namely that in the first erection of the church in the state of nature, or under the law of creation, the beginning of it was in the work of God, which he first finished, and then entered into his rest; as he proves in the next verse. But we may here rest, and interpose some doctrinal observations: as,

Obs. IV. God hath shown us in his own example, that work and

labour is to precede our rest.—The first appearance of God to any of his rational creatures, was working, or upon his works. Had any of them been awakened out of their nothing, and no representation of God been made unto them, but of his essence and being in his own eternal rest and self-satisfaction, they could have had no such apprehensions of him, as might prepare them for that subjection and obedience which he required of them. But now, in the very first instance of their existence, they found God gloriously displaying the properties of his nature, his wisdom, goodness, and power, in the works of his hands. This instructed them into faith, fear, and subjection of soul. When the angels were first created, those creatures of light, they found God as it were laying the foundations of the heavens and earth, whereon all those sons of God shouted for joy, Job. xxxviii. 7. They rejoiced in the manifestation that was made of the power and wisdom of God, in the works which they beheld. Hence it is justly supposed that they were made the first day, when only the foundations of this glorious fabric were laid, Gen. i. 2, wherein they were able to discern the impressions of his wisdom and power. Man was not created, until more express representations were made of them in all other creatures, suited unto his institution. After God had done that which might satisfy them and men in the contemplation of his works, he enters into his rest; returns as it were into his own eternal rest, and directs them to seek rest in himself.

And herein the design of God was to set us an example of that course, which, according to the counsel of his will, he intended by his command to guide us unto; namely, that a course of work and labour might precede our full enjoyment of rest. This he plainly declares in the fourth commandment, where the reason he gives why we ought, in a returning course, to attend unto six days of labour before we sanctify a day of rest, is, because he wrought himself six days, and then entered into his rest, Exod. xx. 9—11. The command instructs us in, and gives us the force and use of the example he sets us. Thus he dealt with Adam: he set him to work as soon as he was made. ‘He took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it,’ Gen. ii. 15. And this he was to do antecedently unto the day of rest which was given him, for it was upon the sixth day, yea, before the creation of the woman, that he was designed unto, and put into his employment; and the rest was not sanctified for him until the day following. And this day of rest was given unto him, as a pledge of eternal rest with God. So both the whole course of his obedience, and his final rest after it, were represented by his days of work and rest.

But here now there is an alteration under the gospel. The day of rest under the law, as a pledge of final rest with God, was the last day of the seven—the seventh day; but under the gospel, it is the first day of the seven. Then the week of labour went before: now it follows after. And the reason hereof seems to be taken from the different state of the church. For of old, under the covenant of works, men were absolutely to labour and work without any alteration or improvement of their condition, before they entered into rest. They



should have had only a continuance of their state wherein they first set out, but no rest until they had wrought for it. The six days of labour went before; and the day of rest, the seventh day, followed them. But now it is otherwise. The first thing that belongs unto our present state, is an entering into rest initially, for we enter in by faith. And then our working doth ensue; that is, the obedience of faith. Rest is given us to set us on work; and our works are such, as, for the manner of their performance, are consistent with a state of rest. Hence our day of rest goes before our days of labour: it is now the first of the week, of the seven, which before was the last. And those who contend now for the observance of the seventh day, do endeavour to bring us again under the covenant of works, that we should do all our work before we enter into any rest at all. But it will be objected, that this is contrary to our observation before laid down; namely, that after the example of God, we must work before we enter into rest; for now it is said that we enter into rest, antecedently unto our works of obedience.

Ans. 1. The rest intended in the proposition, is absolute, complete, and perfect; the rest which is to be enjoyed with God for ever. Now antecedently unto the enjoyment hereof, all our works performed in a state of initial rest, must be wrought. 2. There are works also which must precede our entering into this initial or gospel-rest, though they belong not to our state, and so go before that Sabbatical rest, which precedes our course of working. Neither are these works such as are absolutely sinful in themselves and their own nature; which sort of works must be necessarily excluded from this whole discourse. Thus our Saviour calling sinners unto him, with this encouragement, that in him they should find rest, and enter into it, as hath been declared; he calls them that 'labour and are heavy laden,' Matt. xi. 28, 29. It is required that men labour under a sense of their sins, that they be burdened by them and made weary, before they enter into this initial rest. So that in every condition, both from the example of God, and the nature of the thing itself, work and labour is to precede rest. And although we are now here in a state of rest, in comparison of what went before, yet this also is a state of working and labour, with respect to that fulness of everlasting rest which shall ensue thereon. This is the condition, that from the example and command of God himself all are to accept of. Our works and labours are to precede our rest. And whereas the divine nature is no way capable of lassitude, weariness, sense of pain, or trouble in operation; it is otherwise with us, all these things are in us attended with trouble, weariness, and manifold perplexities. We are not only to do, but to suffer also. This way is marked out for us; let us pursue it patiently, that we may answer the example, and be like to our heavenly Father. Again,

Obs. V. All the works of God are perfect.—He finished them, and said that they were good. He is the rock, and 'his work is perfect,' Deut. xxxii. 4. His infinite wisdom and power require that it should be so, and make it impossible that it should be otherwise. The conception of them is perfect, in the infinite counsel of his will, and the

operation of them is perfect, through his infinite power. Nothing can proceed from him but what is so in its own kind and measure, and the whole of his works are so absolutely. See Isa. xl. 27, 28. As when he undertook the work of creation, he finished it, or perfected it, so that it was in his own eyes 'exceeding good.' So the works of grace and providence, which are yet upon the wheels, shall in like manner be accomplished. And this may teach us at all times to trust him with his own work, and all our concerns in them; whether they be the works of his grace in our hearts, or the works of his providence in the world. He will perfect that which concerneth us, because his mercy endureth for ever, and will not forsake the 'work of his own hands,' Ps. cxxxviii. 8.

Obs. VI. All the works of God in the creation, were wrought and ordered in a subserviency to his worship and glory thereby.—This we have cleared in our passage.

VER. 4.—THE next verse gives the reason of the preceding mention of the works of God, and the finishing of them. Now this was not for their own sakes, but because of a rest that ensued thereon: the rest of God, and a day of rest, as a token of it, and a pledge of our interest therein, or entrance into it. That such a rest did ensue, he proves by a testimony taken from Gen. ii. 2, 3, 'And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his works which God created and made.' The rest of God himself is intended solely, neither in this place of Genesis, nor by our apostle, although he repeats only those words, 'and God did rest the seventh day from all his works.' But the blessing and sanctifying of the seventh day, that is, the institution of it to be a day of rest to man, and a pledge or means of his entering into the rest of God, is that which is also aimed at in both places. For this is that wherein the apostle is at present concerned.

VER. 4.—Εἰρηκε γὰρ πού περὶ τῆς ἑβδόμης οὕτω· Καὶ κατεπαύσεν ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἀπο πάντων τῶν ἐργῶν αὐτοῦ

Εἰρηκε, dixit, 'said,' the nominative case is not expressed. The Scripture hath said. This is an usual form of speech in the New Testament, John vii. 38, καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, ver. 42. But most frequently the 'speaking' of the Scripture is expressed by λέγει, John xix. 37; Rom. iv. 3, ix. 17, x. 11, xi. 2; Gal. iv. 30; Jam. iv. 5; sometimes by λαλεῖ, Rom. iii. 19; here by εἰρηκε: all the words in the New Testament to express 'speaking' by. For the Scripture is not dead and mute, but living and vocal, even the voice of God to them who have ears to hear. And speaking is applied to it, both in the preterperfect tense, 'hath said,' 'hath spoken,' as John vii. 38, 42, to denote its original record, and in the present tense to signify its continuing authority. Or, it may be, that τις should be here supplied, a 'certain man' said, for our apostle hath already used that

form of speech in his quotation, ch. ii. 6, *διεμαρτυρατο δε που τις*, 'one testifieth in a certain place.' Or 'he hath said,' that is, God himself, the Holy Ghost, on whose authority in the Scripture, in all this discourse and debate, we rely. Or it is taken impersonally; for dicitur, 'it is said.' Που, alicubi; in quodam loco, somewhere, in a certain place. The Syriac omits this *που*. Arab. in a 'certain section.' *Περι της εβδομης*. Translators generally, *de die septimo*, of the 'seventh day,' the Syriac *על שבתא*, 'concerning the Sabbath, *οὕτω* or *οὕτως*, 'so, after this manner.' But there is little of difficulty in, or difference about, the translation of these words.

VER. 4.—*For he spake in a certain place (somewhere) of the seventh day on this manner, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.*

The verse hath two parts: the one expressing the manner of the introduction of an intended testimony, the other containing the testimony itself. The first in those words—'For he spake in a certain place concerning the seventh day.'

Γαρ, 'for,' a note of illation, showing, that in the ensuing words the apostle designed the proof of what he had elliptically expressed in the verse foregoing; the importance whereof we have before declared. The sum is, that there was a rest of God and his people, and a day of rest from the foundation of the world, which was not the rest here mentioned by the Psalmist. 'For, he saith,'

Ειρηκε, 'he spake or said.' Who or what this refers unto, hath been shown already.

Που, 'somewhere, in a certain place.' As he allegeth not his author expressly, no more doth he the particular place where the words are recorded. He only refers the Hebrews to the Scripture, which was the common acknowledged principle of truth between them, which he and they would acquiesce in, and wherein they were expert. Especially were they so in the books of Moses, and particularly in the history of the creation of the world, whence these words are taken. For this was their glory, that from thence they were in the clear light respecting the original of the universe, which was hidden in darkness from all the world besides.

Περι της εβδομης. This is the subject concerning which the ensuing testimony is produced. Generally the words are rendered, *de die septimo*, or *de septimo*, 'of the seventh day.' Only the Syriac, as was observed, renders it, 'of the Sabbath day.' And this not unduly, as expressing the intention of the place. For *εβδομη*, 'the seventh,' may be used either naturally and absolutely for the seventh day, *ἡ ἡμερα ἡ εβδομη*, as it is expressed in the words following, 'the seventh day,' that is, from the beginning of the creation, wherein the first complete returning course of time was finished; after which, a return is made to the first day again; or, it may be used, *τεχνητως*, artificially, as a notation of a certain day peculiarly so called; or, as the name of one day, as most nations have given names to the weekly course of days. For at that time, *ἡ εβδομη*, 'the seventh,' was the

name whereby the Hellenists called the Sabbath day. So it is always termed by Philo, as others have observed ; which also gives evidence unto the writing of this Epistle originally in the Greek tongue. So in the gospel, *μία σαββατων*, ‘one,’ or the first of the week, is the notation of the Lord’s day. And it is the Sabbath which the apostle is speaking of. And this respects both the rest of God, and the rest appointed for us thereon. For the proof hereof, is that which he now in these words designs. He proves, that under the law of creation, God did rest when he had finished his work, made way for his creatures to enter into his rest, and gave them a day as a pledge thereof.

*Οὕτω*, ‘on this wise,’ or ‘to this purpose.’ So it may be rendered, either as precisely denoting the words reported, or as respecting the substance and design of them, ‘thus,’ or ‘to this purpose.’

Secondly. The testimony itself ensues. ‘And God rested the seventh day from all his works.’ The words, as was observed, are taken from Gen. ii. 2. But the apostle intends not only to use the words by him cited, but in them he directs us to the whole passage, whereof they are a part. For it would not answer his purpose, to show merely that God rested from his works, which these words affirm ; but his aim is to manifest, as hath been now often observed, that thereon there was a rest provided for us to enter into, and a day of rest appointed as a pledge thereof. And this is fully expressed in the place directed unto ; for God upon his own rest blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it. We shall open the words as far as is needful, and then consider what is confirmed by them.

*Κατεπαυσεν ὁ Θεός*, ‘God rested.’ The apostle adds, *ὁ Θεός*, ‘God,’ from the beginning of the verse, *ויכל אלהים* : ‘and God finished,’ for afterwards it is only, ‘he rested :’ *וישבת*, et requievit. A cessation from work, and not a refreshment upon weariness, is intended. God is not weary : he was no more so in the works of creation, than he is in the works of Providence, Isa. xl. 20, ‘The Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, nor is weary.’ He laboureth not in working ; and therefore nothing is intended in this word, but a cessation from operation. And this fully satisfies the sense of the words. But yet, Exod. xx. 11, it is said, *וינוח* : which signifies such a rest, or resting, as brings refreshment with it unto one that is weary. There may, therefore, an anthropopathy be allowed in the word, and rest here be spoken of God, with allusion unto what we find in ourselves as to our refreshment after labour. This is thus expressed for our instruction and example, though in God nothing be intended but the cessation from exerting his creating power to the production of more creatures, with his satisfaction in what he had already done. And in this word *וישבת*, lies the foundation of the Sabbath, both name and thing. For as the name *שבת*, is from this *וישבת*, here first used ; so herein also lay both the occasion and foundation of the thing itself. So in the command, ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to sanctify it : six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work ;’ the reason of the command ensues, *ויזכור השבועי שבת ליהוה אלהיך* : ‘for the seventh day, the Sabbath to the Lord thy God.’ That is, ‘his rest,’ was on that day,



on the account whereof he commands us to keep a day of rest. Hence our apostle in this place expresseth our rest, or day of rest under the gospel, by σαββατισμος, 'a Sabbatism,' of which afterwards.

God rested, εν τη ἡμέρᾳ ἔξδομῃ, 'on that seventh day,' ביום השביעי. The translation of the LXX. hath a notable corruption in it, about the beginning of this verse in Genesis. For whereas it is said, that God finished his work on the seventh day, it saith that God did so, εν τη ἡμέρᾳ τη ἕκτῃ, 'on the sixth day.' And the mistake is ancient, and general in all copies, as also followed by some ancient translations, as the Samaritan and the Syriac. The occasion of this corruption was to avoid a pretended difficulty in the text, seeming to assert that God rested on the seventh day, and yet that he finished his work on that day. Besides the story of the creation doth confine it to six days, and no more. But this expression, 'he finished his work on the seventh day,' seems to denote the continuance of his operation on that day. And, indeed, the Jews have many odd evasions, from an apprehension of a difficulty in this place. And Hierome thinks, though very unduly, that from this expression in the original, they may be pressed with an argument against their Sabbatical rest. But there is a double resolution of this difficulty, either of them sufficient for its removal, and both consistent with each other. The first is, that the Hebrew word, by the converse prefix, having a sense of what is past given unto it, may be well rendered by the preterpluperfect tense. And so it is by Junius: Cum autem perfecisset Deus die septimo opus suum quod fecerat, quievit: 'And when God had perfected his work on the seventh day, he rested.' Thus the seventh day is not expressed as a time wherein any work was done, but as the time immediately present after it was finished. And, finis operis non est ipsum opus, the term, end, or complement of a work, is not the work itself. Again, the word here used, כלה, doth not properly signify 'to work or effect,' but 'to complete, perfect, or accomplish.' ריכל מלאכתו, אשר עשה 'had perfected his work that he had made.' So that on the seventh day there was no more work to do.

By this discourse the apostle seems only to have proved, that the works were finished, and that God rested, or ceased from his work on the seventh day. But this seemeth not to answer his intention, for he treats not absolutely about the rest of God, (for that would not have been to his present purpose) but such a rest as his obedient creatures might enter into, whereof that rest of God was the foundation, such as the rests were which he afterwards mentions in the land of Canaan, and under the gospel. Wherefore, in this quotation, he includes the sense of the whole words before laid down, namely, that upon, and because of the rest of God, on the seventh day, he sanctified and blessed that day to be a day of rest unto them that worship him, and a pledge of their entering into rest with him. Here, therefore, the command and appointment of the seventh day, to be a Sabbath, or a day of rest unto men from the foundation of the world, is asserted; as hath been proved elsewhere.

This then is the sum of what is here laid down; namely, that from the beginning, from the foundation of the world, there was a work of

God, and a rest ensuing thereon; and an entrance proposed unto men into that rest, and a day of rest as a pledge thereof given unto them; which yet was not the rest intended by the Psalmist, which is mentioned afterwards, as in the next verse.

Before we proceed, according to our designed method, we may take notice of the ensuing observations.

Obs. I. Whatever the Scripture saith in any place, being rightly understood and applied, is a firm foundation for faith to rest upon; and for arguments or proofs in matter of God's worship to be deduced from.—Thus the apostle here confirms his own purpose and intention. His aim is to settle the judgment of these Hebrews, in things pertaining to the worship of God; and to supply them with a sufficient authority, which their faith might be resolved into. This he doth, by referring them to a certain place of Scripture, where the truth he urgeth is confirmed. For, as I have shown before, he designed to deal with these Hebrews, not merely upon his apostolical authority, and the revelations that he had received from Jesus Christ, as he dealt with the churches of the Gentiles, but on the common principles of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which were mutually acknowledged by him and them. And a great work it was that he had undertaken, namely, to prove the abolishing of the worship of the Old Testament, and the introduction of a new kind of worship in the room of it, from testimonies of the Old Testament itself. This was a matter of great apparent difficulties in itself, and exceedingly suited to the conviction of the Jews, as utterly depriving them of all pretences for continuance in their Judaism. And this, through the especial wisdom given unto him, and skill in holy writ, he hath so performed, as to leave a blessed warrant unto the church of Christ, for the relinquishment of the whole system of Mosaic worship, and a rock for the obstinate Jews to break themselves upon in all ages. And this should encourage us, 1. To be diligent in searching the Scriptures, whereby we may have in readiness wherewith at all times to confirm the truth, and to stop the mouths of gainsayers; and without which we shall be easily tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. 2. Not to fear any kind of opposition, unto what we profess in the ways and worship of God, if we have a word of truth to secure us; namely, such a word of prophecy as is more firm than a voice from heaven. It is utterly impossible, that in things concerning religion and the worship of God, we can ever be engaged in a cause attended with more difficulties, and liable to more specious opposition, than that was which our apostle was now in the management of. He had the practice and profession of the church, continued from the first foundation of it, resolved into the authority of God himself, as to its institution, and attended with his acceptance of the worshippers in all ages, with other seeming disadvantages and prejudices innumerable to contend withal; yet this he undertakes on the sole authority of the Scriptures, and testimonies to his purpose thence taken, and gloriously accomplisheth his design. Certainly whilst we have the same warrant of the word for what we avow and profess, we need not despond for those mean artifices and pretences wherewith we are opposed, which

bear no proportion to those difficulties which, by the same word of truth, have been conquered and removed. For instance, what force is there in the pretence of the Roman church, in their possession of things found out, appointed, and commanded by themselves, in comparison of that of the Hebrews for theirs, begun and continued by the authority of God himself? And if this hath been removed and taken away by the light and authority of the Scriptures, how can the other, hay and stubble, stand before it?

Obs. II. It is to no purpose to press any thing in the worship of God, without producing the authority of God for it in his word.—Our apostle takes no such course, but still reminds the Hebrews what is spoken in this and that place to his purpose. And to what end serves any thing else in this matter? Is there any thing else that we can resolve our faith into? or that can influence our consciences into a religious obedience? And are not these things the life and soul of all worship, without which it is but a dead carcase, and abomination to God and them that are his?

Obs. III. What the Scripture puts an especial remark upon, is especially by us to be regarded and inquired into. Here the apostle refers to what was in a peculiar manner spoken concerning the seventh day; and what blessed mysteries he thence educeth, we shall endeavour to manifest, in our exposition of that part of his discourse where-in it is handled.

These things being thus fixed, we may with much brevity pass through the remaining verses, wherein the apostle treats of the same subject. Unto what therefore he had affirmed of God's entering into his rest, upon the finishing of the works from the foundation of the world, he adds,

VER. 5.—*Και εν τούτω παλιν, ει εισελουσονται εις την καταπαυσιν μου.*

VER. 5.—*And in this again, if they shall enter into my rest.*

*Και εν τούτω*, 'and in this,' or 'here:' *εν τούτω τω ψαλμω*, 'in this Psalm;' or *τοπω*, 'in this place.' That is, in the place of Scripture under consideration and exposition; namely, the ninety-fifth Psalm, or the words of the Holy Ghost by David therein. The expression is elliptical, and the sense is to be supplied from the beginning of the fourth verse. 'For he spake in a certain place, and again he speaks in this place.'

*Παλιν*, 'again;' that is, after he had said before, that upon the finishing of his works, God rested on the seventh day, and blessed it for a day of rest unto his creatures. He that is the same Holy Ghost says yet again, upon another occasion, 'if they shall enter into my rest.'

'If they shall enter into my rest.' We have shown before that from these words, not absolutely considered, but as used and applied in the discourse of the Psalmist, he proveth that there is yet a promise of entering into rest remaining to the people of God. This is included in them, as they are taken from their historical record in

Moses; and prophetically applied in David. And this he takes here for granted; namely, that an entrance into the rest of God for some, is intended in those very words whereby others were excluded. His present argument is from the time and place when and where these words were spoken, which include a rest of God to be entered into. Now this was in the time of Moses, and in the wilderness, so that they cannot intend the Sabbatical rest from the foundation of the world. For the works, saith he, 'were finished in six days, and the seventh day was blessed and sanctified for a day of rest,' as Moses testifieth, Gen. ii. 1—3. This rest was tendered unto, and entered into by some, from the foundation of the world. It must therefore, of necessity, be another rest, that is spoken of by the Psalmist, and which the people were afresh invited to enter into, as afterwards he more clearly asserts and proves. And they who deny a Sabbatical rest from the beginning, do leave no foundation for, nor occasion unto the apostle's arguments and discourse. For if there were no such rest from the foundation of the world, what need he prove that this in David was not that, which on this supposition, was not at all. This, therefore, is his purpose in the repetition of this testimony; namely, that the rest mentioned therein, was not that which was appointed from the beginning of the world; but another whose proposal yet remained. So then there was another rest of God besides that upon the creation of all, as is evident from this place, which he farther confirms in the next verse. And we may hence learn, that,

Obs. I. Many important truths are not clearly delivered in any one single testimony or proposition in the Scripture, but the mind of God concerning them is to be gathered and learned by comparing of several Scriptures, their order and respect unto one another. Considering, as the apostle here doth, what is said *σου*, and what again *εν τω αυτω*, what in 'one place,' and what 'in another,' then comparing them together, with their mutual respect, with the due use of other means, we shall, under the conduct of his Spirit and grace, come to an acquaintance with his mind and will. The heathens saw and acknowledged that all truth lies deep. And the wise man adviseth us to dig and search after it, as after gold and silver, and precious stones. Now, the deep mine of all spiritual truth is in the word of God; here must we search for it, if we intend to find it. And one principal way and means of our search is, the comparing together of divers places treating concerning the same matter or truth. This by some is despised, by the most neglected, which causeth them to know little and mistake much in the holy things of God.

VER. 6.—Having thus removed an objection, that might arise against the new proposal of a rest of God, distinct from the Sabbatical rest which was appointed from the foundation of the world, and manifested that although there was in the state of nature, or under the law of our creation, a working and rest of God, and a rest for men to enter into, and a day set apart as a pledge of that rest; yet this was not the rest which he now inquired after; the apostle in this and the following verses, proceedeth to improve his testimonies already



produced, to a farther end ; namely, to prove, that although after the original rest now mentioned, there was a second rest promised and proposed unto the people of God. yet neither was that it which is proposed in this place of the Psalm ; but a third that yet remained for them, and was now proposed unto them ; and that under the same promises and threatenings with the former, whence the carriage and issue of things with that people, with respect thereunto, is greatly by us to be considered.

VER. 6.—*Επει ουν απολειπεται τινας εισελθειν εις αυτην, και οι προτερον ευαγγελισθεντες ουκ εισελθον δι' απειθειαν.*

*Επει ουν*, quoniam igitur, 'seeing therefore : whereas therefore ;' or as Beza, quia igitur, 'therefore because.' The words are the notes or signs of an inference to be made from what was spoken before, or a conclusion to be evinced from what follows after.

*Απολειπεται*, superest, reliquum est, impersonally, 'it remaineth.' The word may have respect unto the form of the argument, or to the matter of it. In the first way, it denoteth what he hath evinced by his former reasonings and testimonies ; namely this, that some must enter into rest, which way the words look, as expressed in our translation ; in the latter, it intendeth no more but that there are some yet to enter into that rest : or this work of entering into the rest of God yet remaineth. Neither is this difference so great, as that we need precisely to determine the sense either way.

*Τινας εισελθειν εις αυτην*, quosdam introire in eam ; ut aliqui introeant in eam, 'that some enter into it.' The Syriac changeth both the words and sense in this place, *מטל כחיל דאית קווא אחרא דאנש אנש אנש לך*, 'seeing therefore there was a place, into which any man might enter,' or every man ; 'a man, man.' It seemeth precisely to respect the land of Canaan, as that rest whereunto some may, do, or must enter ; whereas the apostle is proving that it was not that, but another. Arab. 'seeing some remain that must enter into it.'

*Και οι προτερον ευαγγελισθεντες*, Vulg. Lat. quibus prioribus annuntiatum est ; that is, *πρωτοις* ; it refers the word to the persons, and not to the thing or the preaching itself. Rhem. 'and they to whom first it was preached ;' instead of, 'they to whom it was first preached.' *Προτερον*, prius, 'first,' not absolutely, but with respect unto what follows.

The remainder of the words have been opened before.

VER. 6.—*Whereas therefore, it remaineth that some enter into it, and those to whom it was first preached (who were first evangelized) entered not in because of unbelief, or disobedience.*

The words contain an assertion, and a particular assumption from it.

First. The assertion is, that some must or shall enter into the rest of God. This he concludes as evinced and proved by his former arguments and testimonies ; and this rest is not the rest of God, and the Sabbath from the foundation of the world. For express mention

is made afterwards, and on another occasion, of another rest of God, whereunto an entrance was to be obtained. This he proves from those words of the Psalmist, as cited out of Moses, 'if they shall enter into my rest.' For although he cites the words immediately out of the Psalm, yet he argues from them as first recorded in Moses. For he proves in the next verse, that David intends another rest than that which was before spoken of, although typically included in the former. So the words prove that there is yet a remaining entrance into the rest of God. Not as if these particles  $\alpha\kappa$  and  $\epsilon\iota$  used here, had in the same place a contrary signification, and might be interpreted negatively or affirmatively, 'if they shall,' that is, they shall not. For that was the intention of the words, towards them concerning whom they were first spoken, 'and they shall enter,' some shall, as the apostle applies them; but that a promise is included in every conditional threatening, as we have before declared. The sense of these words then is, that from what hath been spoken, it is evident that some must yet enter into another rest of God, besides that which was in the Sabbath appointed from the foundation of the world.

Secondly. He assumes, that those to whom that rest was first preached, 'entered not in,' because of their disobedience. It is manifest whom the apostle intends in these words, namely, those who came out of Egypt under the conduct of Moses, whose sin and punishment he had so fully expressed in the foregoing chapter. Now to these was the rest of God first declared, they were first evangelized with it. And hereby the apostle shows what rest it is that he intends, namely, not absolutely the spiritual rest of the promise, for this was preached and declared to believers from the foundation of the world; but it was the church-rest of the land of Canaan that was first preached to them, that is, the accomplishment of the promise on their faith and obedience was first proposed to them. For otherwise the promise itself was first given to Abraham, but the actual accomplishment of it was never proposed to him on any condition. Into this rest they entered not by reason of their unbelief and disobedience, as hath been at large declared on the third chapter, which the apostle here refers to.

This therefore is the substance of this verse. Besides the rest of God from the foundation of the world, and the institution of the seventh day Sabbath as a pledge thereof; there was another rest for men to enter into, namely, the rest of God and his worship in the land of Canaan. This being proposed to the people of old, they entered not into it by reason of their unbelief.

And in proportion to what was declared before, concerning the rest of God after the finishing of his works from the foundation of the world, we may briefly consider what this rest was, which those to whom it was first proposed entered not into. For it is not observed, that they entered not into it, to manifest that the same rest which they entered not into, did still remain for those that now would enter into it by faith, for the apostle plainly proves afterwards, that it is another rest that he treats of, and that although some did enter into that rest under the conduct of Joshua, yet there was still another rest besides

that prophesied of in the Psalm; but this is called over in the pursuit of his former exhortation, that we should take heed lest we come short of the rest proposed to us as they came short of that which was then proposed to them. We may therefore here consider what was that rest which God calls his rest, and which he invited them to enter into, and what did concur in the constitution of it. And these things, although they have been mentioned before, must here be laid down in their proper place.

First. This being a rest of God, there must be some work of God preceding it, with respect whereunto it is so called. Now this was the mighty work of God in erecting the church-state of the Israelites, compared to his work in the creation of heaven and earth, whereby he made way for the first state of rest, before mentioned, Isa. li. 15, 16. And this it every way answered to. And this work of God had two parts, or two sorts of works concurred thereunto. 1. Such as were preparatory to it, namely, the works that he wrought for the deliverance of the people out of Egypt. These were effected by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by 'a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terror,' Deut. iv. 34. These things of dread and terror answer the creation of the first matter, which was void and without form. 2. Perfective of it, in the giving of the law, with all its statutes and ordinances, and the whole worship of God to be observed among that people. This was the especial and particular forming the church into such a state as wherein God might rest, Ezek. xvi. 8—13, answering the six days work, wherein God created and formed all kinds of creatures, out of the first created unformed mass. For as on their finishing, God looked on them and saw that they were good, and declared them so to be, Gen. i. so on the erection of this church-state and disposition of the people, he saw that it was good, and declared it so to be, Ezek. xvi. 14, 'Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was perfect through my honour that I put upon thee.' So was the work of the creation of that church-state, the generation of these heavens and earth, and all the host of them, finished.

Secondly. This thing done, God rests, or enters into his own rest. 'He and the ark of his strength arose, and entered into his rest,' in answer to this rest after his finishing of the works of the first creation, Ps. cxxxii. 8. The settlement of his worship, and the typical representation of his presence among the people therein, shadowing out his glorious presence in him in whom the fulness of the Godhead was to dwell bodily, he calls it his 'rest,' and his 'own rest.' And hereon ensued a double rest proposed to the people. One a spiritual rest in God, as having entered into a special covenant with them. On God's rest on the creation, men were invited to enter into God's rest as the God of nature, on the terms and according to the law of creation. But by sin this rest was rendered useless and unprofitable to all mankind, and the covenant itself lost all its power of bringing men to God. But now in this erection of a new church-state among the posterity of Abraham, the foundation of it was the promise made to Abraham, which contained in it the substance of another covenant, whereinto God through Jesus Christ would enter and rest therein, whereon he

invites them by faith and obedience to enter into it also, 'into the rest of God.' Secondly. There was a pledge of this spiritual rest proposed to the people; and this was the land of Canaan, and the quiet possession thereof, and exercise of the worship of God therein. By this, and their respect to it, God tried their faith and obedience, as to that spiritual rest, which as it were lay hid under it. And herein it was that they failed, whose example is proposed and considered in this chapter.

Thirdly. God's rest after the creation of the work at first, was on the first seventh day, which he therefore blessed and sanctified, that it might be a pledge and token both of his own acquiescence in his works, and in the law of obedience that he had assigned to them all; as also a pledge and token to men of that eternal rest which was in himself prepared for them, on the observance of that law whose institution he himself rested in; and also that they might have an especial time and season solemnly to express their faith and obedience. And this day he again for the same ends renewed to the people of Israel, and that without any change of it, both because the time was not yet come wherein the great reformation of all things was to be wrought, and because the first covenant whereunto that day's rest was annexed, was materially revived and represented anew to that people. And this day of rest, or the institution of the seventh-day Sabbath in the church of the Jews, is necessarily included in this verse; for without the consideration of it, this rest doth not answer the rest of God before insisted on, and which is the rule and measure of all that follows; for therein there was a day of rest, which is mentioned synecdochically, for the whole rest of God, in those words, 'for one speaking of the seventh day;' and therefore our apostle, in his next review of this testimony, doth not say there was another rest, but only that another day was determined, which extends both to the general season wherein the rest of God is proposed to any, as also to the especial day, which was the visible pledge of the rest of God, and whereby the people might enter into it, as in the ensuing words will be made manifest.

This then is that which the apostle hath proved, or entered upon the proof of, towards his main design in these verses; namely, that there being a rest of God for men to enter into, and this not the rest of the land of Canaan, seeing they who had it proposed and offered first unto them, did not enter into it, there must be yet that other rest remaining which he provokes the Hebrews to labour for an entrance into. And the ground of his argument lies herein: in that the rest of Canaan, although it was a distinct rest of itself, yet it was typical of that other rest which he is inquiring after. And the good things of this new rest were obscurely represented unto the people therein; so that by rejecting that rest, they rejected the virtue and benefits of this also. And we may hence observe, that,

Obs. I. The faithfulness of God in his promises, is not to be measured by the faith or obedience of men, at any one season, in any one generation, nor by their sins whereby they come short of them, nor by



any providential dispensations towards them. The people in the wilderness having a promise proposed unto them of entering into the rest of God, when they all failed and came short of, it there was an appearance of the failure of the promise itself. So they seem themselves to have tacitly charged God, when he denounced the irrevocable sentence against their entering into the land of promise. 'For after the declaration of it, he adds, 'and ye shall know my breach of promise,' Num. xiv. 34, which is a severe and ironical reproof of them. They seem to have argued, that if they entered not, God failed in his promise, and so reflected on his truth and veracity. That, saith God, shall be known when you are utterly destroyed; for then it was that it should be accomplished. You shall know that it is your sin, unbelief, and rebellion, and not any failure on my part.

Our apostle manageth a great argument on this subject, in another place. Upon the preaching of the gospel, it was thought that the Gentiles being called, the generality of the Jews were rejected, and not taken into a participation of the benefits thereof. Hence there was an appearance that the promise of God unto the seed of Abraham, and the faithfulness of God therein had failed. This objection he proposeth to himself, by way of anticipation, Rom. ix. 6, 'Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.' The word of God intended, is the word of promise, as is declared, ver. 8. This seemed to fail in that the seed of Abraham were not universally, or at least generally made partakers of it. It is not so, saith he; the promise is firm and stable, and hath its effect, notwithstanding this apparent failure. Thereon he proceeds at large in the removal of that objection, by manifesting that in the fleshly seed of Abraham, the promise was effectual according to the eternal counsel of God, and his purpose of election.

And thus it frequently falls out among the people of God. Having, it may be, made some undue applications of promises unto themselves, it may be, misinterpreted, or misunderstood them; or it may be supposed that they were in a greater forwardness towards their accomplishment, than indeed they were: upon their own personal trouble, or calamities of the whole church, they have been ready at least to expostulate with God about the truth and stability of his promises. See Ps. cxvi. 11; 1 Sam. xxvii. 1; Jer. xii. 1; Hab. i. 2, 3, 4, 12. The greatness of their troubles, and the urgency of their temptations, cast them on such expressions. The Psalmist gives one corrective to all such failings, Ps. lxxvii. 10, 'I said this is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.' All my troublesome apprehensions of God's dispensations, and of the accomplishment of his promises, are fruits and effects of my own weakness. To relieve me against them for the future, I will consider the eternity and power and sovereignty of God, which will secure me from such weak apprehensions. And to help us in the discharge of our duty herein, we may take the help of the ensuing observations and rules.

Obs. II. The promises of God, are such as belong only to the grace of the covenant, or such as respect also the outward administration

of it in this world.—Those of the first sort are always, at all times, actually fulfilled and made good unto all believers, by virtue of their union unto Christ, whether they have the sense and comfort of that accomplishment in their own souls at all times or not. But of this sort of promises, we do not now treat peculiarly. Besides these, there are promises which respect the outward administration of the covenant, under the providence of God in this world. Such are all those which concern the peace and prosperity of the church, its deliverance out of trouble, the increase of light and truth in the world, the joy and comfort of believers therein, with others innumerable of the like importance; and it is those of this kind concerning which we speak.

Obs. III. 2. Some, yea many promises of God, may have a full accomplishment when very few, or it may be, none at all, know or take notice that so they are accomplished.—And this falls out on sundry reasons. For, 1. Such things may, in the providence of God, fall out in, and with the accomplishment of them, as may keep men from discerning and acknowledging of it. Great wisdom and understanding were ever required to apprehend aright the accomplishment of such promises, as is mixed with God's dispensations in the affairs of this world, Rev. xiii. 18, nor was this wisdom ever attained in any age by the generality of professors. Thus when God came to fulfil his promise in the deliverance of his people from Egypt, he suffered at the same time their bondage and misery to be so increased, that they could not believe it, Exod. v. 21—23; see ch. iv. 31, compared with ch. vi. 9. Believers, according to their duty, pray for the accomplishment of the promise of God, it may be, in their great distress. God answers their desires; but how? By 'terrible things in righteousness,' Ps. lxxv. 5. It is in righteousness that he answers them; that is, the righteousness of fidelity and veracity in the accomplishment of his promises. But withal he sees it necessary in his holiness and wisdom, to mix it with such terrible things in the works of his providence, as make their hearts to tremble, so that at the present they take little notice of the love, grace, and mercy of the promise. There are many wonderful promises and predictions in the Revelations, that are unquestionably fulfilled. Such are those which concern the destruction of the Pagan-Roman empire, under the opening of the six seals, ch. vi. Yet the accomplishment thereof was accompanied with such terrible things in the ruin of nations and families, that very few, if any one individual person took notice of it, at the time when it was accomplishing. 2. It so falls out from the prejudicate opinions that men may, and oftentimes do conceive concerning the sense and meaning of the promises, or the nature of the things promised. They apprehend them to be one thing, and in the event they prove another, which makes them either utterly reject them, or not to see their accomplishment. So was it in the exhibition of the coming of the Lord Christ in the flesh according to the promise. The Jews looked for it, and longed after it continually, Mal. iii. 1, 2. But they had framed a notion of the promise, and the thing promised, unto themselves, which was no way answered thereby. They expected he

should come in worldly honour, power, and glory, to satisfy them with peace, dominion, wealth, and prosperity. But he comes quite in another manner, and for other ends. Hence they received him not, nor would at all believe the promise to be fulfilled, when it had its exact and complete accomplishment. It may be so with others. They may misunderstand the promises, and look for such things by them, as are not indeed intended in them. So many men miscarry, when they overlook the true spiritual import and intention of prophetic promises, to take up with the carnal things which in the letter they are shadowed out by. 3. Unbelief itself hides the accomplishment of promises from the eyes of men. So our Lord Christ, speaking of his coming to avenge his elect, adds unto it, 'Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' Luke xviii. 8. Men will not apprehend, nor understand his work, through unbelief.

And this one consideration should teach us great moderation in our judgments concerning the application of promises, prophecies, and predictions, unto their seasons. I am persuaded that many have contended, thereby troubling themselves and others, about the season and times wherein some prophecies are to be fulfilled, which have long since received their principal accomplishment, in such a way as those who now contend about them think not of. Such are many of those which are by some applied unto a future estate of the kingdom of Christ in this world, which were fulfilled in his coming and erection of his church. And whereas many of that nature do yet doubtless remain upon record, which shall be accomplished in their proper season, yet, when that is come, it may possibly very little answer the notions which some have conceived of their sense and importance. Experience also hath sufficiently taught us, that those computations and conjectures, at the times of fulfilling some promises, which seem to have been most sedate and sober, have hitherto constantly disappointed men in their expectations. That God is faithful in all his promises and predictions; that they shall every one of them be accomplished in their proper season; that the things contained in them, and intended by them, are all of them fruits of his love and care towards his church; that they all tend unto the advancement of that glory which he hath designed unto himself by Jesus Christ, are things that ought to be certain and fixed with us. Beyond these, we ought to be careful, 1st. That we affix no sense unto any promise which we conceive as yet unaccomplished, that is, 1. In any thing unsuited to the analogy of faith; like those who dreamed of old, of such a promised kingdom of Christ, as wherein all the Mosaic worship and rites should be restored. 2. That debaseth spiritual promises unto carnal lusts and interests; like them who in the foregoing under a pretence of filling up Christ's promised kingdom, gave countenance thereby unto their own violence, rapine, and filthiness. 2d. That we be not peremptory, troubling our own faith and others, about the future accomplishment of such promises as probably are fulfilled already, and that in a sense suited to the analogy of faith, and tenor of the new covenant. 3d. That in such as wherein we have a well-grounded

assurance that they are yet to be fulfilled, we wait quietly and patiently for the salvation of God; not making our understanding of them the rule of any actions for which we have not a plain warrant in the prescription of our duty in other places of Scripture.

Obs. IV. Some promises of God, as to their full accomplishment, may be confined unto some certain time or season, although they may have, and indeed have, their use and benefit in all seasons; and until this is come, there can be no failure charged, though they be not fulfilled.—Thus was it with the great promise of the coming of Christ before mentioned. It was given out from the foundation of the world, Gen. iii. 15, and in the counsel of God confined to a certain period of time; determined afterwards in the prophecies of Jacob, Daniel, Haggai and otherways. This all the saints of God were in expectation of, from the first giving of the promise itself. Some think that Eve, upon the birth of Cain, concerning whom she used these words, ‘I have obtained a man from the Lord,’ which they contend should be rendered, ‘the man the Lord,’ did suppose, and hope, that the promise of the exhibiting the blessing Seed was accomplished. And, if they looked for him on the nativity of the first man that was born in the world, it is very probable that their hearts were frequently made sick, when their hopes were deferred for four thousand years; see Gen. v. 29, xlix. 18, compared with Luke ii. 30; Exod. iv. 13. And many a time, no doubt, they were ready to call the truth of the promise, and therein the faithfulness of God, into question. Great desires they had, and great expectations, which were frustrated. Hence our Saviour tells his disciples, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things that they saw, and saw them not, Matt. xiii. 17. They desired, hoped, prayed, that the promise might be fulfilled in their days, which yet it was not. Hence our apostle tells us, that they all died in faith, not having received the promise, Heb. xi. 13, that is, not the accomplishment of it. Yet this their disappointment did not in the least shake the stability of the promise; for although it was not yet actually fulfilled, yet they had benefit from it, yea, life and salvation by it. And this God hath provided in reference unto those promises whose actual accomplishment is confined unto a certain season, which a present generation shall not be made partakers of. There is that grace and consolation in them for, and unto, them that do believe, that they have the full benefit of the merciful and spiritual part of them, when they are utterly useless to them who have only a carnal expectation of their outward accomplishment. Thus that other promise made unto Abraham for the deliverance of his posterity out of thralldom, was limited to the space of four hundred years, Gen. xv. 13, 14. Very probable it is that the Israelites, during their bondage in Egypt, were unacquainted with the computation of this time, although they knew that there was a promise of deliverance. For, as it is most likely they had lost the tradition of the revelation itself, or at least knew not how to state and compute the times; so did God order things, that they should depend on his absolute sovereignty, and neither make haste, nor despond. And yet doubtless through the delay they apprehended in the accomplishment



of the promise, some of them fell into one of these extremes, and some of them into the other. The first way the children of Ephraim seem to have offended, whom the men of Gath who were born in the land slew, when they came down to take away their cattle, 1 Chron. vii. 21. Probably these sons of Ephraim would have been entering upon Canaan, and spoiling of the Amorites, before the appointed and full time came, and they perished in their undertaking. Others again, no doubt, in their great distresses and anguish of soul, were exercised with many fears, lest the promise had utterly failed. But there was no alteration in God or his word all this while. This made the holy men afterwards have a great respect unto the set time of the fulfilling of promises, when by any means it was infallibly discovered, and then to fix themselves to such duties as might be meet for their season. So the Psalmist prays that God would 'arise and have mercy upon Zion, because the time to favour her, yea the set time, (the time fore-designed and appointed,) was come,' Ps. cii. 13. And when Daniel understood by the books of Jeremiah the prophet, that the time of the fulfilling of the promise for returning the captivity of Judah was at hand, he set himself to prayer, that it might be done accordingly, Dan. ix. 2, 17, 27. But what shall men do in reference unto such promises, when they know not by any means the set time of their accomplishment?

*Ans.* Believe, and pray; and then take the encouragement given, Isa. lx. 22, 'I the Lord will hasten it in its time.' It hath its appointed time, which cannot be changed. But if you will consider the oppositions that lie against it, the unlikelihood and improbability of its accomplishment, the want of all outward means for it, upon faith and prayer it shall be hastened. Thus, in the days of the gospel, there are signal promises remaining concerning the calling of the Jews, the destruction of antichrist, the peace and glory of the churches of Christ. We know how men have miscarried in these things: some have precipitately antedated them, some unwarrantably stated the times of them. The disappointments of these men, and their own unbelief and carnal wisdom, have brought the generality of men to look no more after them; and either to think that the promises of them have failed, or that indeed such promises were never made, wherein unbelief hath found very learned advocates. But it is certain that there are periods of time affixed unto these things. The vision of them is yet for an appointed time; but at the end, it shall speak, and not lie. Though it tarry, and be delayed beyond the computation of some, and the expectation of all, yet wait for it, because it will surely come: it will not tarry one moment beyond the time of old prefixed unto it; as Hab. ii. 3. In the meantime, God hath given us certain directions, in general computations of the times to come, from whence yet the most diligent inquirers have been able to learn nothing stable and certain, but that the time must needs be long from the first prediction, and that it is certainly stated for its accomplishment in the counsel of God. The rule therefore confirmed by these instances duly considered, may evidence the stability of God's promises, notwithstanding the intervening of cross providential dispensations.

Obs. V. There are many promises, whose signal accomplishment God hath not limited unto any special season ; but keeps it in his own will to act according to them towards his church, as is best suited to his wisdom and love.. Only there is no such promise made, but God will at one time or other verify his word in it, by acting according to it, or fulfilling of it.

God hath thus disposed of things : 1. That he may always have in a readiness wherewith to manifest his displeasure against the sins of his own people. 2. That he may have wherewith to exercise their faith. And, 3. To encourage them to prayer, expectation, and crying unto him in their distresses. Thus, setting aside the promises that are limited unto a certain period of time, there are enough of these promises at all times to satisfy the desires and prayers of the church. When God hath limited his promises to a certain season and time, let the men of that age, time, and season be what they will, the decree will bring forth, and the faithfulness of God requires the exact accomplishment of such determinate promises. Thus the promise of the coming of Christ being limited and determined, he was to come, and he did come accordingly, whatever was the state with the church, which was as bad as almost it could be in this world ; so that one of themselves confessed, that if not long after the Romans had not destroyed them, he thought God would have sent fire upon them from heaven, as he did on Sodom and Gomorrah. But then was Christ to come according to the time fore-appointed, and then he did come amongst those murderers. So God had limited the time of the bondage of Abraham's posterity unto four hundred and thirty years. When that time was expired, the people were wicked, unbelieving, murmuring, and no way prepared for such a mercy ; yet in the very same night whereunto the promise was limited, they were delivered. But now, as to their entrance into Canaan, God left the promise at a greater latitude. Hence they are brought to the very door, and turned back again by reason of their sins and unbelief ; and yet the promise of God failed not, as it would have done, had they not been delivered from the Egyptians at the end of four hundred and thirty years, whatever their sins or unbelief were. And of this sort, as was said, there are innumerable promises recorded in the Scripture. And there is not one of them but shall at one time or other be accomplished. For although as to their actual accomplishment at this or that season, they depend much upon the faith, repentance, and obedience of the church, yet they have not absolutely a respect unto that condition that shall, or may never be performed, that so they should come to be utterly frustrated. God therefore doth by them try and exercise the faith of his people in this or that age, as he did those in the wilderness, by the promise of entering into rest ; but yet he will take care, in the administrations of his grace, that his church, at one season or another, shall be made partaker of them, that his word do not fall to the ground.

Obs. VI. Some concerns of the glory of God in the world, may suspend the full and outward accomplishment of some promises for a season.—Thus there are many promises made to the church of deliver-

ance out of afflictions and persecutions, and of the destruction of its adversaries. When such occasions do befall the church, it may and ought to plead these promises of God ; for they are given and left unto it for that purpose. But yet it often falls out, that the fulfilling of them is for a long time suspended. God hath other ends to accomplish by their sufferings, than are yet brought about or effected. It is needful, it may be, that his grace should be glorified in their patience, and the truth of the gospel be confirmed by their sufferings, and a testimony be given to and against the world. It may be also, that God hath so ordered things, that the straits and persecutions of the church shall tend more to the furtherance of the gospel and the interest of Christ, than its peace and tranquillity would do. And in such a season God hath furnished his people with other promises, which they ought to mix with faith ; and which shall be accomplished. Such are those of his presence with them, abiding by them, owning and supporting of them, comforting them in their distresses, and of ordering all things to their good and satisfaction. Besides, they have relief and consolation in the goodness, faithfulness, and tenderness of God, in those other promises, whose fulfilling and performance he hath reserved unto his own sovereignty. Herein in all their tribulation do they rejoice, as Abraham did in his foresight of the day of Christ, then so many generations distant. And the consideration of these rules will evidence, that neither the sins of men, nor any other troubling interventions of providence, can any way shake the truth and stability of the promises of God. And we may hence learn,

In any condition wherein we judge ourselves to be called to plead any promises of God, and to have an expectation of their accomplishment, not to make haste. This is the great rule given the church, in reference unto the greatest promise that ever was given unto it ; ' He that believeth, shall not make haste,' Isa. xxviii. 16. A promise of the sending of Christ is given in the words foregoing : ' Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation.' This might well raise up a great expectation in the hearts of the people, in their distressed and troublous condition. But alas, this was not actually fulfilled until many generations after. Here patience is required ; he that believeth will not make haste ; that is, impatiently press after the future accomplishment of the promise, unto the neglect of present duties. So are we all apt to do. When our condition is grievous and burdensome, and there are promises on record of better things for them that fear God, we are apt to give place to impatient desires after them, unto the neglect of present duties. The same advice is given us, in reference unto any providences of God wherein his church is concerned, that fall under any promises ; such are those before mentioned about antichrist and his destruction ; with respect unto them also we are to wait and not make haste, Hab. ii. 3. We see how many occasions there may be of retarding the actual accomplishment of promises. Our wisdom and duty therefore is, to leave that unto his sovereign pleasure, and to live upon his truth, goodness, and faithfulness in them. They shall all be hastened in their appointed time. I could easily instance in evils great and fatal, that would

ensue on our miscarriage in this thing. I shall name that only which is the greatest amongst them : This is that which puts men upon irregular ways to partake of the promise, in which when they fail, as God will blast such ways, they begin to question, yea to disbelieve the promise itself.

Obs. VII. Again, When the accomplishment of promises seemeth to be deferred, we are not to faint in our duty. The benefit and advantage which we have in and by the accomplishment of promises, is not the sole end why they are given unto us of God. But he intends in and by their proposal unto us, to try and exercise all our graces ; our faith, patience, obedience, and submission unto him. So he dealt with these Israelites in the wilderness ; proposing unto them the promise of entering into rest, he tried them how they would trust him, and cleave unto him and fully follow after him. Failing herein, they also came short of the promise. So God deals with us ; he will exercise, and prove us, while we are waiting for the actual performance of the promise. Now if we find this deferred beyond our hopes, and it may be our fears, and we do begin to faint, as though the promise itself did fail, it is the readiest way to cause us to come short of it. Something of this nature befel the father of the faithful himself. He had received the great promise, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Many years after this he was childless, until his own body was in a manner dead, and so was Sarah's womb also. The hope he had remaining was above hope, or all rational apparent grounds of it. This once put him so to it, as that he cried, ' Lord, what wilt thou do for me, seeing I go childless ? ' All this while God was bringing him to his foot, training him up to obedience, submission, and dependence upon himself. When therefore we consider any promises of God, and do not find that we are actually in possession of the things promised, nor do know when we shall be so ; our duty is to apply ourselves unto what in our present station is required of us. We may see and learn the love and goodness that is in every promise ; what grace and kindness it proceeds from, what faithfulness it is accompanied withal ; which is the sum of what the saints under the Old Testament had respect unto, in the promise of the Messiah. Moreover what God requires at our hands, what patience, waiting, submission, we must be searching into. These, I say, and the like, are our duties in this case ; and not to faint or charge the Lord unjustly, all whose ways are mercy and truth, and all whose promises are firm and steadfast,

VER. 7.—*Πάλιν τινα ὀρίζει ἡμέραν, σημερον εν Δαβιδ, λεγων μετα τοσουτον χρονον, καθως ειρηται. Σημερον εαν της φωνης αυτου ακουσητε, μη σκληρυνητε τας καρδιας υμων.*

M. S. for *ειρηται*, 'said' or 'spoken,' reads *προειρηται*, 'forespoken,' or 'foretold ;' *μετα τοσουτον χρονον* ; post tantum tempus, or temporis, as the Vulg. Lat., that is, tantum temporis spatium elapsum, 'after so great a space of time passed.' Syr. 'from after so much time ;' and adds, 'as it is said above,' 'that David said.'

*Πάλιν*, 'again.' It may denote either the repetition of an old act,



or the introduction of a new testimony. Our apostle often useth this word on this latter occasion. So he doth several times, ch. i. And here it may seem to be so applied. 'Again,' to confirm farther what hath been spoken. But it doth rather express in this place the repetition of the thing spoken of, and is to be joined in construction with 'he limiteth.' After the determination, limiting, or appointing the day before mentioned, the day of rest, that is, the rest itself, and a certain day, for the representation of it and entering into it, with all that concerned it, and fell out about it, both at the beginning of the world, and also at the entrance of the people into Canaan; 'again he limiteth;' or, he 'limiteth again.'

Ὁριζέι, 'he limiteth;' that is, absolutely God doth so; whose authority alone in these things is the rule of our faith and obedience; particularly the Holy Ghost, this limitation being made in the Scriptures which were given by his immediate and peculiar inspiration, 2 Pet. i. 21. 'Limiteth,' that is, either describes, or defineth it in a prophetic prediction; or determineth and appoints it, by an authoritative institution. He describes it in itself, and appoints it unto us. The word may comprise both; and we have no ground to exclude either.

Τινὰ ἡμέραν, 'a certain day;' that is, another determinate day, in answer to the days forementioned, and whose season was now elapsed and passed. It is certain that the apostle doth principally intend to evince the new rest of God under the gospel, and to persuade the Hebrews to secure their entrance into it, and possession of it. But he here changeth his terms, and calls it not a rest, but proposeth it from the Psalmist under the notion of a day. And this he doth, because he had before proved and illustrated the rest of God, from the day that was set apart as a pledge and means of it; as also, because he designs to manifest that there is another day determined, as a pledge and representation of this new rest, or as an especial season for the enjoyment of the privileges thereof.

Σήμερον. The day he intends is that which in the Psalmist is called הַיּוֹם, or σήμερον, 'to-day.' The former day he called, ἑβδομήκοντα, 'the seventh day.' This was the day of rest from the foundation of the world, unto the giving of the law, as also under the law itself. But now there is to be another day expressive of the other rest promised. The seventh day from the beginning of the creation was separated to this purpose, with respect unto the rest proposed to man in the state of innocency, and the typical rest promised to the people under the law. But this new spiritual rest in Christ by the gospel, is to have another day to express and declare it. Thus is σήμερον, to-day, in the Psalmist, left at liberty to be any day, in the prophecy, but limited to the first by the resurrection of Christ. Again he limiteth a certain day, called σήμερον, 'to-day.'

Ἀγων ἐν Δαβὶδ, 'speaking in David;' who was the person by whom this matter was revealed to the church, in a Psalm that he composed by divine inspiration, for that purpose. David may be here taken properly for the person of David himself; and so this expression declares the way and manner whereby he came to reveal this thing. It

was from the speaking of the Holy Ghost in him, whereby he was *ὑπο πνευματος ἁγίου φερομενος*, 2 Pet. i. 21, acted by him, to receive and deliver his inspirations. So the apostle by *εν* renders the intention of the Hebrew *ב*; he spake in them; as David of himself; *רוח ידוה דבר בי*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 'The Spirit of the Lord spake in me.' And so our apostle in the beginning of this Epistle, 'God spake,' *εν τοις προφηταις*, and *εν υἱω*, 'in the prophets,' and 'in the Son.' So, as was said, the words not only express the revelation itself, but the manner of it also. The Holy Ghost spake in them, whom he employed as his instruments, using their minds, tongues, and pens, for the receiving and declaring his sense and words, without leaving any thing unto their own inventions and memories. So David adds in the foregoing place, *ומלתי על לשוני*, 'he spake in me, and his word was upon my tongue.' Or, secondly, the name David, may be taken by a metonymy for the Psalm itself, whereof he was the penman; speaks in the Psalm which David wrote. Thus, not his inspiration of David is intended, or his speaking in his person, but the continued speaking of the Holy Ghost unto the church in that Psalm, as in and by all other Scriptures. For the Scripture is the voice of God, and he always speaks unto us thereby; and itself is said to speak, because of God's speaking in it.

*Μετα τοσούτον χρόνον*, 'after so long a time;' namely, spent and bygone. The date of this time is to be taken from the coming of the Israelites out of Egypt, or from the second year after, when the spies were sent to search the land, and all that ensued thereon, which our apostle hath so considered and improved. From thence to the times of David, was about five hundred years. So that our apostle might well call it *τοσούτον χρόνον*, 'so long a time,' or so great a space of time.

The remaining words of this verse have been opened before.

VER. 7.—*He limiteth a certain day again, saying in David, to-day, after so long a time, as it is said, to-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*

The design of the apostle in these words, is to confirm what he had before asserted about a new rest, and a new day of rest, now remaining for the people of God to enter into, and to possess. And there are three things considerable in them. First. The proposition of his argument wherein its strength lies. Secondly. An enforcement of it from a considerable circumstance. Thirdly. The confirmation of it, by an introduction of the divine testimony from whence it is taken.

1. His argument lies in this,—that after the constitution of the Sabbatical rest from the beginning of the world, and the proposition of the rest of Canaan to the people in the wilderness; God, besides them, hath limited, determined, designed another certain day, which was neither of the former. This must needs, therefore, be another day, and that can be no other but the day of the gospel. And as we observed before, he calls it not merely a rest, but a day, that it may fully, and in all particulars, answer the rests before insisted on, that were types and shadows of it.

2. His enforcement of this argument is taken from the circumstance of time when this day was limited and determined. Had the words here recorded, been spoken at or near the time, when the people's entering into the other typical rest of Canaan was under consideration, they might have been thought to have pertained thereunto; and to have contained an exhortation unto them to make use of their season. But now, whereas God speaks these words, wherein a day of rest is limited, so long a space of time after, viz. five hundred years or thereabouts, it cannot be but that another day of rest must be intended in them. And, therefore, there is still a promise remaining of entering into the rest of God, which we must take heed that we come not short of by unbelief and disobedience.

3. He confirms his proposition, by repeating the divine testimony which it is built upon; 'as it is said, To-day if you will hear his voice.' Much use hath the apostle made of these words in these chapters. It is only one word of them that he now builds on, namely, to-day, whence he educeth the great mysteries of a gospel rest, and the answering of it, both to the rests under the Old Testament, and to the day whereby it was expressed. Sundry doctrinal observations may be hence taken; namely, from the manner of the expressions here used; the matter hath been spoken unto already.

Obs. 1. In reading and hearing the Scripture, we ought to consider God speaking in it, and by it unto us. 'He saith,' that is, God saith; or more especially the Holy Ghost. He both spake *in* David in the inspiration of that Psalm; and *by* David, or in the Psalm, he speaks unto us. This alone will give us that reverence and subjection of soul and conscience unto the word of God, which are required of us, and which are necessary, that we may have benefit and advantage thereby. In that kind of careless and way-side deportment, whereby men enjoy or hear the word, and immediately lose it, this is not the least evil, that they do not sufficiently consider whose word it is, and who speaks immediately unto them. Our apostle commends the Thessalonians, that they 'received the word, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God,' 1 Thess. ii. 13. They considered whose word it was, and whilst the apostle spake to their outward ears, they attended unto God speaking to their hearts, which made them receive it in a due manner with faith and obedience. So God promiseth to look graciously unto him that 'trembleth at his word,' Isa. lxvi. 2, which frame of heart proceedeth alone from a due consideration of its being *his*. Customariness, negligence, and sloth, are apt to spoil us of this frame, of this grace, and so to deprive us of the benefit of the word. And to prevent this, God doth not only preface what he speaks with 'thus saith the Lord;' but oftentimes adjoins such of his attributes and excellencies, as are suited to beget an awe and reverence in our hearts, both of him that speaketh, and of that which is spoken. See Isa. xxx. 15, lvii. 15. Let a man but consider that it is God, the Great and Holy One, that speaketh unto him in his word, and it cannot but excite in him faith, attention, and readiness unto obedience; as also work in him that awe, reverence, and trembling, which God delighteth in, and which brings the mind into a profiting frame.

And this concerns the word preached as well as read. Provided that, 1. Those that preach it are sent of God. 2. That what is preached be according to the analogy of faith. 3. That it be drawn from the written word. 4. That it be delivered in the name and authority of God.

Obs. II. Divine inspiration, or the authority of God speaking in and by the penmen of the Scripture, is the ground and foundation of our faith, and is that which gives them authority over our consciences and efficacy in them. This hath been argued elsewhere.

Obs. III. The Holy Scripture is an inexhaustible treasury or repository of spiritual mysteries, and sacred truths. And,

Obs. IV. Many important truths lie deep and secret in the Scripture, and stand in need of a very diligent search and hard digging in their investigation, and for their finding out.

These propositions are nearly related; and do both arise from the same consideration of the text. How many deep and mysterious truths, and those of great importance, and of signal use, hath our apostle found out in the words of the Psalm produced by him; and how doth he here, by stating aright the true intention of one single word or expression, and that gathered from the consideration of all its circumstances, as, by whom it was spoken, when it was spoken, and to what purpose, make the eminent conclusion we have insisted on! And these things are for our instruction.

First. It is hence collected, that the Holy Scripture is an inexhaustible treasury or repository of spiritual mysteries, and sacred truths. We had never known what had been in the Old Testament had it not been for the New, and the spirit of it, Luke xxiv. 45; and we should never know fully what is in the New Testament were it not for heaven and glory, where we shall know as we are known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. It may be some will say, they can see none of these stores, can find little or nothing of the riches pretended here to be laid up. It may be so; for this treasure is such as men can see little of it, if they have not a guide and a light. Let a treasury that is made deep, or closely immured, be filled never so full with gold and precious things, yet if you turn a man into into it in the dark, he can see nothing that is desirable, but rather feel a horror and a fear come upon him. The Jews have at this day the Old Testament, wherein a great part of this treasure is contained. And they have a general faith that it is full of mysteries and truths. But being utterly destitute of the Spirit, and of all heavenly light, they see nothing of it, but search for I know not what ridiculous fancies, rather than sacred mysteries, in the words and letters of the book. This account our apostle gives, 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15. 'Their minds are blinded, for until this day remaineth the vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which vail is done away in Christ. But even to this day when Moses is read, the vail is upon their hearts.' Poor creatures, they put a vail when they read the Scriptures, upon their hats or their heads; but there is one indeed upon their hearts; whence their minds are blinded, that they can discern no part of the mysterious treasures that are laid up therein. It is by the Spirit of Christ, and light of the gospel, that this vail of



darkness and blindness is taken away. Wherefore, to make the truth of what we have asserted the more evident, we may consider that the whole counsel of God concerning all his ways and works that are outwardly of him, is contained in this book, Acts xx. 27. If a wise man, and a man of great experience in the world, should commit,—if Solomon had committed all his counsels, all the effects of his wisdom unto writing, it would be, it would have been justly valued, and much inquired into. But here we have all the counsel of the infinitely wise God himself concerning his ways and works. To give some instances hereof:

1. Here is expressed and contained the mystery of his love, grace, wisdom, righteousness, and holiness in Christ Jesus. Now, what heart can search into the bottom of these things, what mind can fully receive or comprehend them, what tongue can express them?—the things which God himself delighteth in, and which the angels desire to bow down and look into. This he calls the ‘riches of his grace’ wherein he hath abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence,’ Eph. i. 7, 8; the ‘mystery of his will,’ ver. 9; the ‘riches of glory,’ ver. 18; the ‘exceeding riches of his grace,’ ch. ii. 7; ‘the mystery which from the beginning of the world was hid in him, but by the gospel is manifested unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, even the manifold wisdom of God,’ ch. iii. 9, 10. These riches, these treasures, these mysterious truths, are rather by us to be admired and adored, than fully comprehended in this life; yet, here are they deposited, revealed, declared, and laid up safe, for the use, instruction, and edification of the church in all ages. Some men pass by the door of this treasury, and scarce deign to look aside towards it. There is nothing that they do more despise. Some look into it superficially and cursorily, and see nothing in it that they can much delight in, or desire to know more of. But humble believing souls, whom God by his Spirit leads into the secret stores of divine truth, they behold the riches of God, admire his bounty, and take out for their own use continually. While the mystery of this love and grace is contained in the Scripture, it may well be esteemed a treasure, rich, and absolutely inexhaustible. And our beholding of it, our acquaintance with it, make us partakers of it, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

2. There is in it, the whole counsel of God, concerning his own worship and the whole of that obedience which he requires of us, that we may come to be accepted with him here, and to the eternal enjoyment of him in glory. For ‘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,’ 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Here is all say some, here is enough say most, and I am sure that whoever walketh according to this rule, mercy and peace shall be on him, as on the whole Israel of God. This increaseth the riches of this treasury. Here we may find all that God would have us do, that we may please him; all that he requires of us in this world, our whole duty with reference unto eternity. Here is our guide, our rule, ready to direct us in all stated duties, on all occasions and emergencies, so that nothing

can befall us, nothing can be required of us in the worship of God, in the course, ways, and actions of our lives, but what we may have here light, guidance, and direction for. It is the word of his wisdom, will, and grace, who made us these souls, and who foreknows every thought that would be in them to eternity, and hath secretly laid up in his word, that which shall suit, and answer unto every occasion of all that believe in him. Whence one cried out of old, *Adoro plenitudinem Scripturarum*, 'I adore the fulness of the Scripture;' in which posture of holy admiration I desire my mind may be found, whilst I am in this world.

3. There is in it, a glorious discovery of the external being or nature of God, with its glorious essential excellencies, so far as we are capable of an encouraging contemplation of them in this world. It is true that the being, nature, and properties of God, may be known by the light of nature, and from the consideration of those works which are the certain product of his power and goodness. But how dark, weak, obscure, and imperfect is that discovery, in comparison of that which is made unto us in the word? Of many things indispensably necessary to be known of God, it knows nothing at all; as of the eternal existence of the one individual nature of God in three persons; and what it doth teach, it doth so marvellously unevenly, unsteadily, and darkly. Consult the writings of them who have most improved the light of nature in their disquisitions after the being and nature of God; who have most industriously and curiously traced the footsteps of nature towards its eternal spring and fountain. Men they were, wise, learned, sagacious, contemplative almost to a miracle, and wonderfully skilful to express the conceptions of their minds in words suited to intimate their senses, and to affect the readers. But when and where they are in the highest improvement of their reason, their fancies most raised, their expressions most reaching, generous, and noble, bring it all to one leaf of divine revelation, expressed by a poor illiterate shepherd or a fisherman, and you shall quickly find their candle before this sun, first to lose its rays and lustre, then its light, and lastly utterly to expire as useless. Hence our apostle fears not to declare, that even in their disquisitions after God, they 'waxed vain in their imaginations, and that their foolish hearts were darkened,' Rom. i. But in his word it is, that God hath made that revelation of himself, wherein the souls of men may fully acquiesce; upon it hath he left an impression of all his excellencies, that we might learn to glorify him as God. And what stores of truth are needful to this purpose, who can express?

4. The souls of them that believe, are carried by it out of this world, and have future eternal glories presented unto them. Here are they instructed in the hidden things of immortality, which is darkness itself unto them who are destitute of this guide. It is true, we have but a very low and obscure comprehension of the things of the other world. But this is from our weakness and imperfection, and not out of any defect in their scriptural revelation. There we are told, that we shall be ever with the Lord, like unto him, seeing him as he is, beholding his glory, in mansions of rest and blessedness, receiving a reward in a

crown of glory that fadeth not. If we know but little of what is in these things, as we do but very little, if we cannot comprehend them, nor fill our minds steadfastly with them, it is, as was said, from our own weakness and imperfection ; the truth and excellency of them are stored in this sacred treasury. Now, how large, how extensive, and unsearchable must that repository of mysterious truths be, wherein all these things, with all the particulars whereinto they branch themselves, all the whole intercourse between God and man in all ages, and always, are laid up and stored. O heavenly, O blessed depositum of divine grace and goodness !

I confess, some think it strange, that this one book, and that whereof so great a part is taken up in genealogies, histories, and laws, antiquated as to their original use, should contain all sacred spiritual truth ; and therefore they have endeavoured to help it, with a supply of their own traditions and inventions. But they do not consider the hand whereby these things are stored. They are laid up in God's method, wrapped up in his words, which in infinite wisdom he hath given a capacity unto, to receive and contain them all. Those 'secrets of wisdom are double unto what can be comprehended,' Job. xi. 6. Hence although every humble soul may learn and receive from it, what is absolutely sufficient for itself on all occasions, with respect to its own duty and eternal welfare, yet the whole church of God, neither jointly nor severally, from the beginning to the end of the world, have been, are, or shall be, able to examine these stores to the bottom, and to find out perfectly all the truths in all their dimensions, concerns, and extent, that are contained herein.

From hence the truth of our second proposition is evident ; namely, That many important truths lie deep and secret in the Scripture, standing in need of very diligent search in their investigation, and for their finding out.—And the reason why in this place, I insist on these things, is not so much to explain the sense of it, as to vindicate the way of our apostle's arguing, and citing of testimonies out of the Scripture, with his exposition and application of them ; which some in our days are not afraid nor ashamed to charge with obscurity and perplexity, not understanding what the nature of these things doth require.

And thus shall we find it in this place. And many instances of the like nature may we meet withal in this Epistle, wherein the obscurity of the apostle is not to be blamed, but his wisdom admired. Hence is the direction and command of our Saviour, John v. 39, *ερευνάτε τας γραφας*, 'Search the Scriptures ;' dig into them, accomplish a diligent search ; as 1 Pet. i. 11 ; Acts xvii. 11, as men seek after rubies, silver, and gold, as the wise man expresseth it, Prov. ii. 3—5, and iii. 14, 15. The sum of these words is : without humility, industry, prayer, and diligence proceeding from desires, it is in vain to think of obtaining divine wisdom. They that search for silver and hid treasures, go about it with inflamed desires, pursue it with unconquerable and unwearied industry, and rejoice in them when they are found, Matt. xiii. 44. And David described his blessed man to be one that 'delighteth in the law of the Lord, and meditateth in it day and

night,' Ps. i. 2. So God expressly commanded Joshua. The 'book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night,' ch. i. 8: that is, constantly and diligently; making it manifest, that great and sedulous inquiry is to be made after the mind and will of God therein. And this carried David to pray, that God would 'open his eyes, that he might behold wondrous things out of his law,' Ps. cxix. 18. It must be when men take a transient view of the Scripture in their own light and strength, they can see no great nor excellent thing in it, Hos. viii. 12. But he who in the light of God, his eyes being opened thereby, searcheth deeply and attentively into it, shall find wondrous, or marvellous things in it; excellent and glorious things, that others are not acquainted withal, and be made wiser than others thereby.

That which we are therefore to inquire into for our own advantage, is the ways and means, whereby a due search may be made into the Scriptures, and what is necessarily required thereunto, so that we may not fail of light and instruction. And they are amongst others these that follow.

Obs. V. First. A peculiarly humble and teachable frame of spirit. As there is no grace that is either more useful unto our own souls, or more acceptable with God than humility, 1 Pet. iii. 4; so it is in an especial manner required as a qualification in them who would be instructed in the mind of God out of his word. So the promise is, Ps. xxv. 9, 'The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek he will teach his way.' עָנִי, that is, the humble and contrite ones. And it is the same that is twice expressed in that Psalm by fear, ver. 12, 'What man is he that feareth the Lord, him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose;' and ver. 14, 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant.' Now these promises of instruction in judgments, or the ordinances of God, in his way, his covenant, and the communication of his secret counsel, that is, סֵדֶר יְהוָה, the secret counsel of the Lord, are not given merely unto such as are personally meek and humble, but unto such as bring meekness and humility, self-diffidence, and submission of soul unto the word in their studying of it, Isa. xxviii. 9, with Ps. cxxxi. 2; Job xxviii, there is a great inquiry made after wisdom; it is sought for amongst men in the land of the living; by mutual converse and instruction, ver. 13, and in the depths of the sea, ver. 14, among the secret works of nature; but it is hid close from all living; what then shall a man do? lie down and utterly despair? No, saith he, ver. 28, 'Unto man,' he saith, 'behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;' this is the only way to attain it; for such only God will teach. Thence are we enjoined to receive the ingrafted word with meekness, James i. 21. When men come to the reading and studying of the Scriptures in the confidence of their own skill, wisdom, parts, learning, and understanding, God scorneth to teach them, he beholds them afar off. The fruits and effects of this state of things, in the pride of men, and the severity of God in giving them up to darkness and blindness, we may behold every day. Hence that came to pass of old which is yet observable, mentioned by our apostle, 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. And some-



times none presume more in this kind, than those who have as little reason as any to trust to themselves. Many an illiterate person, hath an arrogance proportionable unto his ignorance, 2 Pet. iii. 16. And thence sundry from whom it was expected on the account of their condition, that they should be very humble and lowly in mind, in their reading of the word, have been discovered in the issue, by their being given up to foolish and corrupt errors, to have had their minds filled with pride and self-conceit, without which they would have not been so.

This is the great preparation for the soul's admittance into the treasury of sacred truths. Go to the reading, hearing, studying of the Scripture, with hearts sensible of your own unworthiness to be taught, and of your disability to learn; go with hearts ready to receive, embrace, and submit unto what shall be made known unto you; this is the way to be taught of God. And in this way, if you learn not so much as others, yet that which you do learn shall be of as much use, benefit, and advantage unto you as theirs shall be who attain unto the greatest degrees of spiritual light and knowledge. The word thus inquired unto, will be as manna to them that gathered it, Exod. xvi. 18.

Obs. VI. Secondly. Earnest prayer for the guidance, direction, assistance, and illumination of the Holy Ghost, to enable us to find out, discern, and understand the deep things of God.—Where this is neglected, whatever we know, we know it not as we ought. David's prayer was, as we observed before, 'Open my eyes, and I shall see wonderful things out of thy law,' Ps. cxix. 18. This opening of our eyes is the immediate work of the Holy Ghost. Without this we shall never be able to discern the wondrous mysterious things that are in the word of God, 2 Cor. iii. 18, ch. iv. 6. The Lord Christ promiseth that the 'Comforter shall teach us all things,' John xiv. 26, and as the Spirit of truth, 'guide us into all truth,' ch. xvi. 13. And although in these promises, there may be somewhat peculiar to the apostles, namely, to guide them by extraordinary inspiration and revelation; yet also there is grace promised in them to all his disciples, that they also shall be guided into the truth by the word through his instruction. For, as he tells all believers, that 'his Father will give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask him of him:' so John tells them, that they have 'an unction from the Holy One, 1 John ii. 20, which abideth in them and teacheth them all things,' ver. 27, that is, all things which God would have them know in their stations, and which are needful for them. That this is the only way whereby we may come to know the things of God, the great and wondrous things of God laid up in the word, our apostle discourseth at large, 1 Cor. ii. 'The natural man,' he tells us, that is, such an one as hath not the help and assistance of the Spirit of God, 'cannot receive the things that are of God,' ver. 14. He can neither find them out himself, nor own them when they are discovered by others. But the Spirit 'searcheth the deep things of God,' ver. 10. Many of the things of God in the Scripture are very deep, so that they cannot be discovered but by the help of the Spirit of God; as he shows that they are manifested to believers, ver. 11—16. And to this purpose are we directed to pray

by the example of our apostle, Ephes. i. 16—20, ch. iii. 16—19; Col. ii. 2. Now what the work of the Holy Spirit is in this matter, by what way and means he leads us to the knowledge and acknowledgment of sacred truths, how he guides and directs us, into the discovery of the sense and meaning of God in his word, shall, if God will, and I live, be handled apart in another discourse, and shall not therefore be now insisted on. But this is the great and principal rule, which is to be given unto those who would find out the mind of God in the Scripture, who would search out the mysterious truths that are contained in it, and would be kept from errors in their so doing, and that both to understand things aright for their own advantage, and to interpret the word aright for the advantage and edification of others. Let them be earnest, diligent, constant, fervent in their supplications and prayers, that God, according to his promise, would graciously send his Holy Spirit, to guide, lead, instruct, and teach them, to open their understandings, that they may understand the Scriptures, as our Lord Jesus did for the disciples by the way, and to preserve them from mistakes and errors. Unless we have his guidance we shall labour to little purpose in this matter. Yea, woe be to him who leans to his own understanding herein.\* And these prayers ought to be, 1. A constant part of our daily supplications; 2. Brief elevations of soul unto God, whenever occasionally or statedly we read the word of God; 3. At solemn or appointed seasons.

Obs. VII. Thirdly. Endeavour in all inquirings into the word, to mind and aim at the same ends which God hath in the giving and granting of it unto us.—Then do we comply with the will of God in what we do, and may comfortably expect his gracious assistance. Now in general God had a fivefold end, in granting this inestimable privilege of the Scripture unto the church.

1. That it might be such a revelation of himself, and of his mind and will unto us, as that we might so know him, as to believe in him, fear him, love him, trust in him, and obey him in all things. This is the great and principal end of the Scripture, Deut. xxix. 29. Without this, all things concerning God and our duty since the entrance of sin, are wrapt up in darkness and confusion; as is manifest at this day in all nations and places left destitute of it. And this therefore is to be our principal aim in our study of the Scripture. That we may know God, as he hath revealed, and declared himself; that we may come to an acquaintance with him by an infallible rule and light given us by himself for that purpose, that so in all things we may glorify him as God, and live unto him; is the first thing which in this matter we ought to aim at. And a due consideration hereof, will be exceedingly useful and effectual to curb the vanity and curiosity of our minds, which are apt to turn us aside towards corrupt, unprofitable, and sinister ends.

2. Another end of God was, that we might have a safe rule and infallible guide for the due performance of all the duties towards himself and one another, which he requires of us in the whole course of our obedience, 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. God hath in infinite wisdom trea-

\* See note, p. 785.

sured up in this book every thing, that either for the matter or manner of its performance, is any way necessary for us to know or do, that we may be wise unto salvation, and thoroughly furnished for every duty, that he requireth at our hands. And here lies our next end. We come to the Scripture to learn these things, and nowhere else can we so learn them, as to attain either assurance and peace in our souls, or so perform them as that they should be acceptable unto God. This mind therefore ought to be in us, in all wherein we have to do with the Scriptures. We go to them, or ought so to do, to learn our own duty, to be instructed in the whole course of our obedience, in what God requires of us in particular. With this design we may go on and prosper.

3. God hath given us his word to guide and direct us in our ways under all dispensations of his providence, that we sin not against him, nor hurt or damage ourselves, Ps. cxix. 24. The providences of God towards us as to our course in this world, do oftentimes bring us into great straits and difficulties; so that we know not well how to steer our course, so as neither to sin against God, nor to prejudice or ruin ourselves without just and cogent reasons. God hath given us his word to counsel us in this matter, and by a diligent attendance unto it, we shall not fail of blessed guidance and directions. Here we ought to seek it, and here we may find it if we seek it in a due manner.

4. The Scriptures are given us of God, to administer unto us consolations and hope in all our distresses and tribulations, Rom. xv. 4; Ps. cxix. 92. In them hath God graciously treasured up whatever is useful or needful to this purpose. Whatever be our distresses, fear, disconsolations, as to what hath befallen, or doth, or may befall us in this world, God hath designed a relief under it and against it in his word. That we may be always furnished with this blessed and precious provision, ought to be one end also that we aim at in our considerations of it.

5. God hath done this, that he might give us infallible assurance of eternal life, when we shall be here no more, with some prospect into the glories of it, and foretastes of its sweetness, 2 Tim. i. 10. As we stand in need of this, so the constant fixing of our eye upon it, as our utmost end, will be a safe and blessed guidance unto us in our whole course. These are the ends of God, in giving us his word, and these ought to be continually our ends in our search into it. And the want hereof, whilst some have indulged their fancies in the pursuit of unuseful notions and speculations, hath caused them to err from the truth.

Obs. VIII. Fourthly. They that would search the Scriptures to find out the sacred truths that lie hid in them, ought to take care that they entertain no corrupt lusts in their hearts or minds, which will certainly refuse to give admittance unto spiritual truth when it is tendered unto them. Hence is that advice of the apostle, James i. 21. They that will receive the word, so as to have it an ingrafted word, to effect in them the work and end whereunto it is designed, must cast out all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness. Fleshly and corrupt

lusts indulged in the hearts and minds of men, will make their most industrious search into the Scripture, of no advantage to themselves. Love of sin will make all study of the Scripture to be mere lost labour. Hearts pure and undefiled, minds serene and heavenly, so far as by the grace of God we can attain them, are required to this work. And it ought to be one great motive unto an endeavour after them, that we may be the more able to discern the mind of God in his word.

Obs. IX. Fifthly. Sedulity and constancy in this duty, are great helps to a profitable discharge of it. When men read the word but seldom, so that the things of it are strange to them or not familiar with them, they will be continually at a loss in what they are about. This is that which the wise man directs us unto, Prov. vii. 1—4. Constant reading and meditation on the word will create a familiarity between our minds and it, when occasional diversions only unto it, will make an estrangedness between them. Hence our apostle commends it in his Timothy, that of a child he had known the Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15; whereby being made familiar unto him, he was much assisted in the right understanding and use of them. And there is not any thing in our walking before God that is more acceptable unto him. For this expresseth somewhat of that reverence which we ought to have of the greatness and holiness of him with whom we have to do. The Jews' frontispiece to their great Bible is that saying of Jacob upon the vision of God that he had at Bethel, 'How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' So ought we to look upon the word with a holy awe and reverence of the presence of God in it. Our faith and dependence on him, with our valuation of the knowledge of his mind and will, are hereby expressed; and hereby also do we give glory to him\*.

Obs. X. Sixthly. In our search after truth, our minds are greatly to be influenced and guided by the analogy of faith.—'He that prophesieth,' that is, interpreteth Scripture, must do it *κατα την αναλογίαν της πίστεως*, Rom. xii. 6, 'according,' say we, 'to the proportion of faith.' There is a harmony, an answerableness, and a proportion in the whole system of faith, or things to be believed. Particular places are so to be interpreted, as that they do not break or disturb their order, or fall in upon their due relation to one another. This our apostle calls *ὑποτυπωσιν ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων*, 2 Tim. i. 13, a fixed, and as it were an engraved form of sound, wholesome, or healing words or doctrines; or a summary of fundamental truths; *ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία*, the sound doctrine of the gospel, 2 Tim. iv. 3. And this probably is that which he intends by his *μορφώσις εὐσεβείας*, ch. iii. 5, a form or delineation of godliness, in the doctrines of it, which many may have, who, as we say, are orthodox and sound in the faith, who yet in their hearts and lives deny the power of it. This proportion of faith, this form of sound words, is continually to be remembered, in our inquiry after the mind of God in any particular place of

\* The three next lines in the original edition, will be found in p. 783 of this edition, beginning at line 20. They had, by some mistake, been printed under this ninth Observation, but they evidently were intended to form a part of Observation sixth.



the Scripture. For all the Scripture is from the same spring of divine inspiration, and is in all things perfectly consistent with itself. And the things that are of greatest importance, are delivered in it plainly, clearly, and frequently. Unto these the sense of every particular place is to be reduced; none is to be assigned unto it, none to be pretended from it, that falls in upon any of the truths elsewhere clearly and fully confirmed. For men to come to a place of Scripture, it may be dark and obscure in itself, and, through I know not what pretences, draw a sense from it which is inconsistent with other doctrines of faith elsewhere plainly revealed, is openly to corrupt the word of God. And as indeed there is no place which doth not afford a sense fairly reconcileable unto the analogy of faith; so, if it do not appear unto us, we must sit down in the acknowledgment of our own darkness and ignorance, and not admit of any such sense as riseth up in contradiction thereunto. Want of a due attention unto this rule, is that which hath produced the most pestilent heresies in the church. Thus the Papists, taking up those words, 'This is my body,' without a due consideration of the analogy of faith about the human nature of Christ, the spirituality of the union and communion of believers with him, the nature of sacramental expressions and actions, which are elsewhere evidently declared, by which the interpretation, according to the apostle's rule, is to be regulated and squared, have from them fancied the monstrous figment of their transubstantiation, absolutely destructive of them all. It is the known way of the Quakers amongst ourselves; if they can get any one single text of Scripture, which, in the sound of the words, or on any other account, seems to favour some fancy they have a mind unto, instantly they take it up, not once considering whether it do not dissolve the whole proportion of faith, and overthrow the most fundamental articles of Christianity. Thus, from the outward sound of that one text, John i. 9, 'That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;' they fear not to take up a pretended sense of them, destructive to what is taught about the nature of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, of faith, grace, conversion to God, plainly and evidently in a thousand other places. Our apostle doth not so. But although he deduce great and mysterious truths out of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, yet they are such as answer the whole system of divine revelations, and have a due place and order in the form of sound words.

Obs. XI. Seventhly. A due consideration of the nature of the discourse wherein any words are used, tends much to give light into their sense and importance. And the discourses in the Scripture may be referred materially to four general heads. For they are either historical, or prophetic, or dogmatical, or hortatory. And for the way or form of writing used in them, it is in general either proper and literal; or figurative and allegorical, as is the whole book of Canticles, and many other parts or passages in the Scripture. Now these things are duly to be weighed by them who intend to dig deep into this mine of sacred truth. But particular directions in reference unto them, are too many here to be insisted on.

Obs. XII. Eighthly. The proper grammatical sense of the words themselves is duly to be inquired into and pondered. This principally respects them who are able to pursue this search after truth in the original languages. Others also may have much help by comparing parallel places, even in translations, whence the proper sense or usual acceptation of any words may be learned. And of this nature many other particular rules might be added, which are by others commonly insisted on, and therefore may be here omitted.

This that hath been spoken may serve, as for the reproof of some, so for the direction of others. Whence is it that some receive so little benefit by their studying of the Scriptures, at least in their pretending so to do? Alas! their manifold miscarriages are manifest unto all. Without diligence, without humility, without watching unto prayer, they go on in the confidence of their own strength and abilities to search and expound it; which is to attempt the opening of brazen doors without a key, and the digging of mines for hidden treasures with men's nails and fingers. It is true that as the Scripture is a writing consisting of propositions and reasonings, there are sundry things which are common to it with all other writings. An apprehension and understanding of many of these, lieth obvious to every superficial reader. But to come to a clear understanding of the secrets of the mind of God, and mysteries of his will, this is not to be attained without the sedulous diligent use of the means before mentioned. And what guidance lies in them and other particular rules to the same purpose is, though in great weakness, looked after in this exposition.

VER. 8.—IN this verse, the apostle gives a farther confirmation unto his argument, by a particular application of it unto the especial matter in hand. Herewithal he removeth or preventeth an objection, that might probably be raised against one part of his discourse. And the preventing of those objections to which what we affirm and teach, is at first view liable, is as needful, as the raising of objections, which possibly would never come into the minds of our hearers, or readers, is needless and foolish.

VER. 8.—*Εἰ γὰρ αὐτοὺς Ἰησοὺς κατέπαυσεν, οὐκ ἂν περὶ ἀλλῆς ἐλάλει μετὰ ταῦτα ἡμέρας.*

*Εἰ γὰρ*, 'for if;' *αὐτοὺς*, that is, the 'people of old,' those of whom he hath treated, particularly the new generation that entered Canaan.

*Κατέπαυσεν*. The apostle in this chapter useth this word both in a neutral and active signification. Ver. 4. *κατέπαυσεν ὁ Θεός*, 'God rested;' here, 'caused them to rest,' had given them rest. Beza, 'in requiem collocasset.' Arias, 'requiem præstitisset.' The word properly, and usually in other authors, signifies finem imponere, cessare facere, 'to put an end,' or 'to make to cease;' as rest puts an end to labour. So the word is used, ver. 10, *κατέπαυσεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐργῶν*, 'hath ceased from his works.' *Ἰησοὺς*, 'Jesus,' that is Joshua; and by so calling him, the apostle also declares what was the true Hebrew name of

Jesus Christ, which the Greeks express by Jesus. His name was originally הוֹשֵׁעַ, Hoshea, the same with that of Hosea the prophet, Hos. i. 1. Thence, when he went to espy out the land, his name was changed by Moses into יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, 'Jehoshua,' Num. xiii. 16. It is true, in the writing over the history of those times, he is called Jehoshua before, as Exod. xvii. 9. But it is most probable, that Moses now by divine direction changed his name, when he went to view that land, whither he was to conduct the people; and writing the story of things afterwards, he used the name whereby he was then called. Some of those who had most imbibed the Chaldee dialect or tongue during the captivity, changed this name into יֵשׁוּעַ, 'Jeshua,' Ezra ii. 2; Nehem. iii. 19; though the prophets Haggai and Zechariah retain the name of Jehoshua, Hag. i. 1, ii. 2, 4; Zech. iii. 1. Now all these names are from the same root, and of the same signification. From הוֹשֵׁעַ in Hiphil, (for in Kal the verb is not found), is יֵשׁוּעַ, Jesha, salus, health, help, salvation. Thence are הוֹשֵׁעַ Hoshea, יְהוֹשֻׁעַ Jehoshua, and יֵשׁוּעַ Jeshua; that is σωτήρ, 'salvator, sospitator, liberator;' though Cicero affirms, that the Greek word cannot be expressed by any one proper Latin word. Salvator, is coined for that purpose; 'a saviour.' Now as persons on great occasions had their names as to their signification wholly changed, as when in the Old Testament Jacob was called Israel, and Solomon, Jedediah; and in the New Testament Simon was called Peter, and Saul was called Paul; as divers had double names occasionally given them; as Esther and Hadassa, Daniel and Belteshazzar; so God was pleased sometimes to change one letter in a name, not without a mystical signification; so the name of Abram was changed unto Abraham, by the interposition of one letter of the name of God; and that of Sarai into Sarah, by an addition of the same, Gen. xvii. 5, 15. So here the name of Hoshea, is changed into Jehoshua, by the addition of one of the letters of the name of God, increasing the signification; and this name was given him, as he was a type of Christ, and the typical saviour or deliverer of the people.

The name יֵשׁוּעַ, Jeshua, from the Chaldee dialect, prevailed at length in common use, being of the same signification with the other, namely, a saviour, one that saveth. Hence, when they came to converse with the Greeks, came the name of Ἰησοῦς, or Jesus. For the Greeks called Hoshea, Ausis, and Nun his father Naue, greatly corrupting the original names; but Hoshea and Jehoshua and Jeshua they called Jesus. In יֵשׁוּעַ, Jeshua, they rejected the guttural י, as not knowing its right pronunciation, whereon יֵשׁ, Jesu, remained; and then in their accustomed way they added the terminative *sigma*, and so framed Ἰησοῦς; as of מִשִּׁיחַ, Messiach, by the rejection of ח, and the supplement of ס they made Μεσσίας, Messias. Hence the name Jeshua being in common use for and of the same signification with Jehoshua, and that in the Greek pronunciation being turned into Jesus, that was the name whereby the Lord Christ was called, Matt. i. 21. Καλεσεις το ονομα αυτου Ιησουν, αυτος γαρ σωσει τον λαον αυτου απο των αμαρτιων αυτων, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.' It is plain, that the reason of the name is

taken from its signification of saving, 'he shall save,' be the Saviour; so that all the attempts that some have made, to derive it from other words, are vain and frivolous; and so also are theirs, who would deduce the Greek name *Ιησους*, from *ιαω*, *ιασω*, 'to heal.' For *Ιησους* is of no signification at all in the Greek tongue; it being only their manner of pronounciation of *ישו*, Jeshua, which is a Saviour; which name was given to the Lord Christ because of the work he had to do. So also was it to this Jesus, the son of Nun. The wickedness of the perfidious Jews in writing his name *ישו*, and the horrible abuse they made thereof, are known to the learned; and there is no need to acquaint others with them.

*Περί αλλης ημερας*, 'concerning another day.' The apostle having described the rest he discourseth of, by the especial day of rest, that was in several estates of the church peculiarly to be observed, now by a synecdoche expresseth the whole rest itself, and all the concerns of it by the name of a day.

*Ουκ αν ελαλει*, 'he would not have spoken;' that is, either God absolutely; or the Holy Ghost, whose immediate work the inspiration of the Psalmist was, whose words these are.

*Μετα ταυτα*, 'after these things,' the things which befel the people in the wilderness, and what they afterwards attained under the conduct of Joshua.

VER. 8.—*For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not, after these things, have spoken concerning another day.*

The confirmation of his principal assertion from the words of David, concerning the rest prepared and proposed in the gospel unto believers, is that which our apostle still insists on, as was declared. Hereon was his whole exhortation of the Hebrews founded, and hereinto was it resolved. And on the same truth depended all the reasonings and motives whereby he enforced his exhortation. This therefore was fully to be established, and clearly vindicated. And that which last of all remained to that purpose, was the removal of an objection, which it was evidently among the Jews, liable and obnoxious unto; and this he doth by the due stating of the time when these words were spoken, which he had pleaded in evidence of his assertion. The objection laid down by way of anticipation, is plain in the words. And it is this, 'Although the people which came out of Egypt entered not into the rest of God that was promised, by reason of their unbelief and disobedience, as you have proved; yet the next generation under the conduct of Joshua went into and enjoyed the rest, which they were excluded from. This therefore was the rest intended, which we being in the enjoyment of, what ground have you to propose another rest unto us.' This is the force of the objection. And two things are comprised in the apostle's answer unto it. First. A denial of the supposition on which the objection is founded; this is done virtually in the manner of the proposal of the objection itself. 'For if Jesus had given them rest.' That is whatever be pretended and pleaded, he did not do so; that is not that full and ultimate rest which in all these things God aimed at. Secondly. He gives the reason of this his de-



nial ; which is this, That five hundred years after, God in David, and by him, proposeth another rest, or another day of rest, and invites the people unto an entrance, after they were so long fully possessed of all that Joshua conducted them into. And whereas there was no new rest for the people to enter into in the days of David, and the Psalm wherein these words are recorded, is acknowledged to be prophetic of the days of the Mesiah, it unavoidably follows, that there is yet a rest, and a day of rest, remaining for the people of God, which he lays down as his conclusion in the verse ensuing.

This interpretation of the words, perfectly satisfieth the argument in hand ; but yet I judge there is more in them, than a mere answer to the objections mentioned, though expositors look no farther. And this is, that the apostle also designs to teach the Hebrews, that all those things which were spoken about the rest of God in the land of Canaan, and Mosaic institutions, had not the reality or substance of the things themselves in them, Heb. x. 1 ; so that absolutely neither did God rest, nor were the people to look for rest in them. They had no other end nor use, but only to teach them to look out after, and to prepare for, that rest which was promised from of old ; so that Joshua did not give them real rest, but only that which was a typical instruction for that season, in what was to come. And therefore in David the same matter is carried still on, and direction is still given to look out after the rest to come. And we may learn hence principally, that,

Obs. I. There is no true rest for the souls of men, but only in Jesus Christ by the gospel.—Notwithstanding all that was done to and for the Israelites by Joshua, yet he gave them not rest ; he brought them not into the full and complete rest of God ; God ‘having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.’ And the reasons hereof are. First. Because God himself resteth not in any thing else. And in his rest alone it is that we can find rest. It is in vain for us to seek for rest, in that wherein God resteth not. We have seen that at the beginning, when he had created man, he entered into his rest ; in that satisfaction which he took in the effects of his own power, wisdom, and goodness, Exod. xxxi. 17. He provided likewise rest in himself for man ; and gave him a day as a pledge of his entrance into it. Gen. ii. 2. In this condition, trouble and disquietment entered into the whole creation, by the sin and apostasy of Adam. God no more rested in the works of his hands, ‘but cursed the earth,’ Gen. iii. 17—19, made the whole creation subject to vanity, Rom. viii. 20, and ‘revealed his wrath from heaven against the ungodliness of men,’ Rom. i. 18 ; and hereof he hath in all ages since given signal instances : as in the flood of waters wherewith he drowned the old world, and the fire from heaven wherewith he consumed Sodom and Gomorrah. And of the same kind are those severe judgments by pestilences, famines, earthquakes, inundations, eruptions of subterraneous vapours, conflagrations, and the like ; all testifying the indignation of God against the works of his own hands because of the sin of man, to whom he had given them for a possession, and put them in subjection. For God had decreed from eternity to permit a disturbance by sin, in the first order of things, that he might ‘gather

all things unto an head,' with durable rest and peace, in Jesus Christ, Isai. xlii. 1; Eph. i. 10. Man hath also utterly lost his rest in that first rest of God; and though he several ways seeks after it, yet, like the unclean spirit cast out of his habitation, he can find none. Some seek it in the world, the pleasures and profits of it; some in the satisfaction of their sensual lusts; some in themselves, their own goodness and righteousness, some in superstition and vain ways of religious worship invented by themselves, some of them horrid and dreadful, Micah v. 6, 7. All in vain. Man hath lost his rest by falling off from God, and nothing will afford him the least quietness but what brings him to him again, which none of these ways will do. It is in and by Christ alone that our lost rest may be recovered.

Obs. II. For, Secondly. Other things will not give rest to the souls of men. An higher instance hereof we cannot have than in these Israelites. They had been for sundry ages in bondage to cruel oppressors, who ruled over them with unparalleled severity and rage. Such, besides their hard and continual labour in the furnace, was that of their having their tender infants, the comfort of their lives, and hope of the continuance of their name and race on the earth, taken from the womb, and cruelly murdered. This they were now delivered from, and all their enemies subdued under them, until they set their feet upon the necks of kings. Who would not now think that this would give them rest? And so it did, outward rest and peace, until it was said that God gave them 'rest on every hand.' And many yet in the like condition of bondage, shut up in the hands of hard and cruel rulers, are apt to think that a deliverance from that condition, would give them perfect rest and satisfaction. But yet the Holy Ghost tells us, that this did not give them rest; not that rest wherein they might ultimately acquiesce. Besides; whereas neither they nor their forefathers, for four hundred and thirty years, had ever had either house, or land, or possession, but wandered up and down, in those places wherein they were strangers, and had not one foot's breadth that they might call their own, but only a cave or two to bury them when they were dead; they had now a whole plentiful country given unto them to inhabit and possess, a fruitful country, a land flowing with milk and honey; and therein cities which they had not walled, houses which they had not built, vineyards which they did not plant, with all sorts of riches and substance unspeakable. This might add unto their former satisfaction, especially being suddenly given, and flowing in upon them. And where there is wealth in abundance, and absolute liberty, what can be desired more to give men rest: but yet it did not so. Yet farther; whereas before they lived in a loose scattered condition, without law or rule of their own, or amongst them, God had now gathered them into a firm, well compacted political body, and given them a great and righteous law for the rule and instrument of their government, which all nations did admire, Deut. iv. 5, 6. This, as it gave them glory and honour in the world, so it was a means of securing that wealth and liberty which they enjoyed. And where these three things are, there a people may be supposed to be at perfect rest. For liberty, wealth, and rule make up a state of rest in this world. But

it was not so with them. Joshua gave them not rest. More than all this, God had established his glorious worship amongst them, entrusted them with his oracles and ordinances, and that whole system of religious honour which he would then accept in the world, Rom. ix. 4. All these things with other mercies innumerable, they were made partakers of, by and under the conduct of Joshua. And yet it is here plainly affirmed and proved, that he did not give them rest, that is the ultimate and chief rest which God had provided for his church and people in this world. Why, what was wanting hereunto? what was yet behind? That the apostle declares in this plan. The promise was not yet fulfilled, the Messiah was not yet come, nor had finished his work, nor were the glorious liberty and rest of the gospel as yet exhibited and given to them. It were easy to demonstrate how all these things singly and jointly do come short of true rest. For notwithstanding all these, and in particular the best and highest of them, namely, the law and ordinances of worship, they had not spiritual liberty, rest, and peace, but were kept in a bondage-frame of spirit, and laid up all their hopes and expectations in that which was not yet granted to them. So our apostle tells us, that the 'law made nothing perfect,' and that their sacrifices could never completely pacify their consciences, and therefore were continually renewed with a remembrance of sin. It is Christ then alone, as declared in the gospel, in whom God doth rest, and in whom our souls may find rest. The reasons hereof may be taken from that description which we have given before, of this gospel rest which the apostle insisteth on.

It is surely therefore our wisdom, in our inquest after rest, which, whether we take notice of it or not, is the main design of our lives, in all that we project or execute, not to take up in anything beneath him or without him. All those things, the enjoyments of the world, the righteousness of the law, the outward ordinances of divine worship, say openly and plainly to us, that rest is not in them. If all those in conjunction had been satisfactory to that end, then had Joshua given the people rest, and there had been no mention of another day. Yea, whatever lawfully used, they may have of rest in them, it is no rest in comparison of that which is to be obtained in Christ Jesus. Hence he invites us to him under the very notion of 'giving rest unto our souls,' Matt. xi. 28. And here, in him there is no want, no defect, no disappointment, no fadingness, nothing that hinders those other things from giving complete rest to men. He that rests in the world, or rests in himself, or rests in his own righteousness, or rests even in God's ordinances, will never come to rest, until he be deprived of all expectation from them, and confidence in them.

Obs. III. The gospel church state is a state of spiritual rest in Christ.—This, for the substance of it, hath been handled at large before. I mention it now only for two ends. First. To show what we ought to look after in this gospel church state, and under the enjoyment of gospel privileges. And then, Secondly. To discover a little how men deceive themselves in this matter. For, First. This is that which distinguisheth our present church state, from that of theirs under the Old Testament. Joshua gave them all other things, only



he gave them not rest, the rest of God. This is now the portion of them that believe. This all the children of the church are to look after. What is it then that men do seek after, or join themselves to the church of Christ on the account of? What do they look for in the worship, in the ordinances, in the ways of the church? If it be any thing but only to enter into the rest of God through Christ, they do but deceive themselves; whatever they take up in, short hereof, they frustrate the whole counsel of God towards themselves in the gospel. Secondly. How many pretend to an interest in this gospel church state, who plainly, openly, and visibly, seek after their rest in other things! Many in their own duties, most in their lusts and the pleasures of the world. Where is the privilege of such persons as these, above that of the Israelites under the conduct of Joshua? Can they say, that although in and under all the enjoyments before mentioned, they obtained not rest, yet the Lord Christ hath given rest to their souls in the gospel? Alas, they have no rest at all; and that which they do pursue is such as the gospel hath no concern in. Did Christ come, think you, to give you rest in your lusts, in your sins, in your pleasures? God forbid; he came to give you rest from these things, in himself, which alone is the rest here preached to you.

Obs. IV. It is a great mercy and privilege to have a day of rest and worship given to us.—The apostle doth not say here, that after these things he speaks of another rest, but of another day. For from the foundation of the world, we were taught our rest in God by a day of rest given to us. When by sin, we forfeited our interest in that rest of God, God might justly have deprived all the world of the knowledge of the day of rest first appointed. And indeed while he left his law standing as a testimony of his holiness, and a rule of his future judgment, but did not by any outward means press it on the consciences and practices of men, all knowledge of a day of rest was lost from amongst mankind, some few excepted, whom God took into his special care. For to what purpose should they look after a day of rest, who had utterly lost all desires after, and all interest in the rest of God itself? But when God would revive in men a hope and expectation of returning to rest in and with himself, he recalls to their remembrance the day of rest which was at first appointed. But as he then led men into rest only typically, and in order to the representation of a future rest to be brought in; so he renewed to them the remembrance of the day of rest typically also; that it might be a sign between him and them. But now, the rest of God being again established, he hath appointed to us ‘another day,’ as it is in the text, a day of rest, for the ends which have been often mentioned. And this is a great mercy and privilege; for,

1. It is a pledge of our rest in God, which is the life, happiness, and blessedness of our souls. It is given us to this end and purpose, that so it might be; which was the end of a day of rest from the foundation of the world, as hath been declared.

2. It is a pledge of the recovery of this rest for us, and that it is not absolutely the same rest in God whereunto we were made, but another rest, a better and more sure. And therefore it is, ‘another



day,' that is given to us, and not the same day as of old. God kept the people under the law, in an intermediate state, between the duties of the old covenant and the promises of the new. This kept them to the precise day of the old covenant. For although virtually they were made partakers of the rest of God which is in Christ Jesus, yet the foundation and cause of it being not as yet laid and wrought, they were to content themselves with pledges of it, as a thing to come; such as were their sacrifices and ordinances of worship, with the old day typically renewed. But to have another day, which could not be established but with respect to the works of Christ already wrought, and so to be a pledge of what was done before, this they could not have. This God hath reserved for us; and the day we now have, being another day, is a pledge of rest already wrought out, and actually prepared.

3. It is given us as a means of entering into the rest of God. For hereon hath God ordained, that the solemn declaration of his mind and will concerning his rest, and our entrance into it, should be made to us. Hereon do we celebrate all that solemn worship of God, whereby we express our faith concerning our rest in him, and by which, as means appointed for that end, we are admitted into that rest, and carried on gradually towards its full and eternal enjoyment. And these things the apostle further confirms.

VER. 9.—HAVING passed through his testimonies and arguments, the apostle in this and the following verse, lays down both what he hath evinced in his whole disputation, as also the general foundation of it, in answer to the principles of his preceding discourse.

VER. 9.—*Αρα απολειπεται σαββατισμος τη λαω του Θεου.*

*Αρα*, itaque, igitur; the common note of inferring a conclusion from any argument, whether inartificial or artificial, of both which sorts the apostle makes use in this place. Hereby therefore, he would mind the Hebrews to attend both to what he was about to assert, and to the dependence of it on the former testimonies and arguments that he had pleaded and vindicated.

*Απολειπεται*, relinquitur, superest; 'it is left,' 'it remains,' 'it is evinced.' For this word may refer to *αρα*, 'therefore,' and be a part of the induction of the conclusion following. So the verb is to be taken impersonally, 'It remaineth therefore,' or this is that which we have proved. In thence, *απολειπεται* is the modification of the conclusion, and is not of the substance of it, or one of the terms of the proposition. And this exposition the Syriac version follows, reading the whole words, *מדן כים הו למשבחו לעמה דאלהא*: 'Wherefore it is certain that the people of God ought to sabbatize, or keep a Sabbath.' This is certain, a truth that is proved and vindicated; so that the people of God may know their privilege and their duty. The Ethiopic version renders the words somewhat strangely, 'Is the priesthood of the people of God abrogated?' that is, it is not; so that standing still in

the same peculiar relation to God, as they did of old when they were a royal priesthood, they ought still to attend to his worship, and celebrate his ordinances, the great work of the day of their rest. Or, *απολείπεται*, may refer to *σαββατισμος* following, and be of a neutral signification. A sabbatism, or day of rest remaineth. There is yet another rest remaining and abiding for the people of God to enter into, besides those before mentioned and discoursed of. 'It remaineth,' that is, God hath prepared it, promised it, and invites us to enter into it.

*Σαββατισμος*. This word is framed by our apostle from a Hebrew original, by the addition of a Greek termination, and so becomes comprehensive of the whole sense to be expressed, which no other single word in either would do. The original of it is in the Hebrew *שבת*, which signifies 'to rest.' And it is, 1. Used to express the rest of God after his works of the creation, Gen. ii. 2, *וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי*: 'and he rested, or sabbatized on the seventh day.' And this being so of old, the word is used by our apostle to show, that the rest which he now asserts for the people of God, is founded in the rest of God himself. If this it had not been, it might have been *αναπαυσις*, a rest in general, it could not have been *σαββατισμος*, 'a sabbatism,' a sabbatizing rest; for there is no foundation for any such name or thing but in the rest of God. 2. From the 'rest of God,' this word came to give name to the day of rest appointed for men, Exod. xx. 10—12. Because God *שבת*, *shabbath*, 'rested from his works,' he blessed *יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת*, *iom hashabbath*, 'the day of rest,' the sabbath, which he would have us remember to keep. Now our apostle having proved, that the consideration of that original rest of God, as to its first ends and purposes, is removed, and consequently the day itself founded thereon, and another rest introduced to be expressed in and by another day, he calls it a sabbatism, to express both the rest itself, and the observance of another day likewise, as a pledge and token of that other rest of God, and of our spiritual interest therein. The word then doth not precisely intend either a day of rest, or a spiritual rest; but the whole of our rest in God with respect unto his, and that day that is the token thereof, comprised therein. And hereby the apostle completes the due analogy that is between the several rests of God and his people, which he hath discoursed of in this chapter. For as at the beginning of the world, there was first the work of God, and his rest thereon, which made way for a rest for his people in himself, and in his worship, by the contemplation of his works which he had made, and on whose finishing he rested; and a day designed, determined, blest, and sanctified to express that rest of God; whence mention is made of those works in the command for the observance of that day, seeing the worship of God in and on that day consisted principally in the glorifying of God by and for those works of his, as also to be a means to further men in their entrance into his eternal rest, whereunto all these things do tend. This was the *σαββατισμος* of the people of God from the foundation of the world. And as at the giving of the law, there was a great work of God, and his rest thereon in the finishing of his work, and the establishing of his worship in the land of Canaan, which

made way for the people's entering into his rest, in that worship and country, and had a day assigned them to express the one and the other, and to help them to enter finally into the rest of God; all which were types and shadows of the rest mentioned by David, and this was their *σαββατισμος*, or sabbatizing rest. So now under the gospel, there is a sabbatism comprehensive of all these. For there was, as we shall see, a great work of God, and a rest of his own that ensued thereon. On this is founded the promise of rest spiritual and eternal to them that do believe; and the determination of a new day, expressive of the one and the other, that is, the rest of God, and our rest in him; which is the sabbatism that our apostle here affirms to remain for the people of God. And what day this is, hath been declared, namely, the first day of the week.

Now, besides the evidence that ariseth from the consideration of the whole context, there are two things which make it undeniably manifest, that the apostle here proves and asserts the granting of an evangelical Sabbath or day of rest, for the worship of God to be constantly observed. This, I say, he doth, though he doth not this only, nor separately; which, whilst some have aimed to prove, they have failed of their aim, not being able to maintain a Sabbath rest exclusively, in opposition either to a spiritual or eternal rest. For so it is not here considered, but only in the manner and order before laid down.

Now these are, first, the introduction of the seventh day's rest into this discourse; and the mentioning of our gospel rest by the name of a day. Unless the apostle had designed the declaration of a day of rest now under the gospel, as well as a real spiritual rest by believing, there is no tolerable reason to be given of his mentioning the works of God and his rest, and his appointment of the old Sabbath, which without respect unto another day, doth greatly obscure and involve his whole discourse. Again, his use of this word, framed, and as it were, coined to this purpose, that it might both comprise the spiritual rest aimed at, and also express a Sabbath-keeping or observance. When he speaks of our rest in general, he still doth it by *καταπαυσις*; adding there was an especial day for its enjoyment. Here he introduceth *σαββατισμος*, which his way of arguing would not have allowed had he not designed to express the Christian Sabbath.

Secondly. He shows who they are to whom this Sabbatism doth belong, who are to enter into this rest, to enjoy it with all the privileges that do attend it; and these are *ὁ λαός του Θεου*, 'the people of God.' Those of old to whom the rest of Canaan was proposed, were the people of God; and God hath a people still; and wherever he hath so, rest is promised to them, and prepared for them. These he had before described by their own grace and obedience, ver. 3, 'We who have believed do enter into rest.' Here he doth it by their relation unto God and the privilege that depended thereon; they are the people of God that are interested in this Sabbatism. And the apostle makes use of this description of them upon a double account.

1. Because their being the people of God, that is, in covenant, (for

where a people is God's people, he is their God, Hos. ii. 23,) was the greatest and most comprehensive privilege that the Hebrews had to boast of, or to trust in. This was their glory, and that which exalted them above all nations in the world. So their church pleads with respect unto all others, Isa. lxiii. 19, 'We are thine, thou never barest rule over them, thy name was not called on them.' That is, they were never called the people of Jehovah, because never taken into covenant with him. This privilege wherein they trusted, the apostle lets them know, belongs as well to them that believe under the New Testament, as it did to them under the Old. Abram was now become Abraham, a father of many nations. And as those who were his carnal seed of old were the people of God, so God had now a people in and of all those who were his children according to the faith. They may see, therefore, that they shall lose nothing, no privilege, by coming over to the gospel state by faith in Christ Jesus. Upon a new account they become the people of God, which interests them and their children in the covenant, with the seals and all the ordinances of it, even as formerly. For this name, people, doth not first respect individuals, but a collective body of men, with and in all their relations. Believers, not singly considered, but they and their seed, or their children, are this people; and where they are excluded from the initial ordinance of the covenant, I know not how believers can be called the people of God.

2. He proceeds farther and shows them that indeed this privilege is now transferred from the old estate and Canaan rest, unto them that shall and do enter into this rest of God under the gospel. Hence, instead of losing the privilege of being the people of God by faith in Christ, he lets them know that they could no longer retain it without it. If they failed herein, they would be no longer the people of God; and as a signification thereof, they would become no people at all. And so hath it fallen out with them. For ever since they ceased to be God's people, they have been no people, or enjoy no political rule and society in the world. Thus then there remaineth a rest or Sabbath-keeping for the people of God. But yet there is a considerable difficulty that ariseth against the whole design of the apostle; and this is, that this Sabbatism of the people of God wanteth a due foundation, in an especial work and rest of God. For, as, if God had not done a new work, and rested in it at the giving of the law and establishment of his worship, whereby a new world, as it were, was erected, there could have been no new rest for his people to enter into, but all must have regarded the rest that was from the foundation of the world; so if there be not a new work and rest of God now wrought and entered into by him, there cannot be a new rest, and a new day of rest for the people of God. This objection, therefore, the apostle removes, and manifests that there is a new blessed foundation of that rest which he now proposeth to the Hebrews, ver. 10, as we shall see. For the present we may observe, that,

Obs. I. Believers under the New Testament have lost nothing, no privilege that was enjoyed by them under the old. Many things they have gained, and those of unspeakable excellence, but they have lost



nothing at all. Whatever they had of privilege in any ordinance, that is continued; and whatever is of burden or bondage, that is taken away. All that they had of old was on this account, that they were the people of God. To them, as such, did all the advantages and privileges belong. But they were yet so the people of God, as to be kept like servants under the severe discipline of the law, Gal. iv. 1. Into this great fountain-privilege, believers under the gospel have now succeeded. And what was of servitude in reference unto the law, is removed and taken away; but whatever is of advantage is continued unto them as the people of God. This, I suppose, is unquestionable; that God making them to be his people who were not a people, would not cut them short of any privilege which belonged before to his people as such, Rom. ix. 25, 26. Besides, the state of the gospel is an estate of more grace and favour from God, than that under the law, John i. 17, 18. The whole gospel is an ampliation of divine spiritual grace and favour to God's people. So is it a better estate than that which went before, accompanied with better promises, more liberty, grace, and privileges than it. Nothing, then, of this nature can be lost therein or thereby to believers, but all privileges at any time granted unto the people of God are made over to them, that under the gospel are so. Let men but give one instance to this purpose, and not beg the matter in question, and it shall suffice. Moreover, God hath ordered all things in the dispensation of his grace, and institution of his worship, that Jesus Christ should have the preeminence in all. All things are gathered up unto a head in him. And is it possible that any man should be a loser by the coming of Christ, or by his own coming unto Christ? It is against the whole gospel once to imagine it in the least instance. Let it now be inquired whether it were not a great privilege of the people of God of old, that their infant seed were taken into covenant with them, and were made partakers of the initial seal thereof? Doubtless it was the greatest they enjoyed, next to the grace they received for the saving of their own souls. That it was so granted to them, so esteemed by them, may be easily proved. And without this, whatever they were, they were not a people. Believers under the gospel are, as we have spoken, the people of God; and that with all sorts of advantages annexed unto that condition, above what were enjoyed by them who of old were so. How is it then that this people of God, made so by Jesus Christ in the gospel, should have their charter upon its renewal razed, with a deprivation of one of their choicest rights and privileges? Assuredly it is not so. And therefore, if believers are now, as the apostle says they are, the people of God, their children have a right to the initial seal of the covenant. Again,

Obs. II. It is the people of God alone who have a right unto all the privileges of the gospel; and who in a due manner can perform all the duties of it. The rest of the gospel, and all that is comprised in it, is for them, and for them only. All others who lay hand on them, or use them, are *agri alieni invasores*, 'wrongful invaders of the rights and inclosures of others,' and *malæ fidei possessores*, or do but 'unjustly possess what they have injuriously seized on.' And the

reason hereof is, because all gospel-privileges are but adjuncts of the covenant of grace, and annexed unto the administration of it. Without an interest in that covenant, none can attain the least right unto them. And this they alone have who are the people of God, for by that interest they become so. There is therefore great rapine and spoil committed upon the gospel and its ordinances in the world. Every one thinks he is born with a right to the chief of them, and cannot be excluded from them without the highest injustice. But ask some whether they are the children of God or not, and they will be ready to deride both name and thing. Custom and an opinion received by tradition, hath put an esteem and valuation upon the enjoyment of the ordinances of the gospel. These, therefore, or their pretended right to them, men will by no means forego, nor suffer themselves to be divested of them; but for the true, real, spiritual foundation and use of them, they are generally despised. But all may know that this is the method of the gospel. First become the people of God, by entering into covenant with him in Jesus Christ, and all other spiritual mercies will be added unto you.

Obs. III. The people of God as such, have work to do, and labour incumbent on them. Rest and labour are correlates; the one supposeth the other. Affirming therefore, that there is a rest for them, it includes in like manner that they have work to do. What this is, cannot here be declared in particular: none that knows in any measure, what is their condition in themselves, what their station in the world, what enemies they have to conflict withal, what duties are continually incumbent on them, but knows there is work and labour required of them. Thus our Saviour commends the church of Ephesus, by saying, 'I know thy works and thy labour,' Rev. ii. 2. The people of God dwell not as Laish, in security; nor are Sybarites, spending their time in sloth, luxury, and riot. But they are an industrious working people; and I wish that those who profess themselves to be so, were less industrious in earthly things, and more in heavenly. Although I must say that those who are industrious heavenwards, will not be negligent or slothful in their stations in this world. But Christ calls men to work; and that our portion in this world is intermixed withal.

Obs. IV. God hath graciously given his people an entrance into rest, during their state of work and labour, to sweeten it unto them, and to enable them for it. The state of sin under the law, is a state of all labour and no rest. For there is no peace or rest to the wicked, saith God, Isa. lvii. 21. The future state of glory is all of rest, all rest. The present state of believing and obedience is a mixed state, partly of labour, partly of rest, of labour in ourselves in the world, against sin, under affliction and persecution; of rest in Christ, in his love, in his worship, and grace. And these things have a great mutual respect unto one another. Our labour makes our rest sweet, and our rest makes our labour easy. So is God pleased to fill us, and exercise us, all to prepare us duly for eternal rest with himself.

Obs. V. Believers may and do find assured rest, in a due attendance unto, and performance of the duties of the gospel. This is that which the apostle asserts and proves.

Obs. VI. There is a weekly sacred day of rest appointed for believers under the gospel, as will appear from the next verse.

VER. 10.—‘Ο γὰρ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν καταπαυσὶν αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸς κατέπαυσεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐργῶν αὐτοῦ, ὥσπερ ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων ὁ Θεός.

There is no difficulty in these words, nor difference in the translation of them.

VER. 10.—*For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his works, as God from his own.*

So are the words to be read; speaking of the works of God, he calls them his, *ἰδια*, ‘his own;’ *ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων*, ‘from his own.’ And of the other compared with him, he says only, *τὰ ἐργα αὐτοῦ*, ‘his works;’ somewhat otherwise than they are rendered in our version.

Expositors generally apply these words unto believers, and their entering into the rest of God, whether satisfactorily to themselves or others, either as to their design, coherence, scope, or signification of particular expressions, I know not. Nor is it my way to oppose or confute the expositions of others; unless they are of such as wrest the Scripture to the confirmation of errors and heresies: or pervert the testimonies which in any text or places are given unto important and fundamental truths of the gospel; such as we have met with many, in our passage. But where things spoken or delivered are true with respect unto the analogy of faith, though they may not be rightly or regularly deduced from this or that text in particular, yet they may have their use unto edification, through their conformity unto what is taught in other places. In such cases I shall not contend with any, but with all humility propose my own thoughts and reasons to the consideration of them who are wise, learned, and godly. I am not then satisfied with the exposition mentioned of this place; but look upon it as that which neither suits the design of the apostle, nor can bear a tolerable sense in its particular application. For, first, supposing believers to be here intended, what are the works they are said to rest from? Their sins, say some, their labours, sorrows, and sufferings, say others; from these they rest in heaven. But how can they be said to rest from these works, as God rested from his own? For God so rested from his, as to take the greatest delight and satisfaction in them, to be refreshed by them. ‘In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed,’ Exod. xxxi. 17. He so rested from them, as that he rested in them, and blessed them, and blessed and sanctified the time wherein they were finished. Indeed, God’s rest from and upon his works, besides a mere cessation of working, consisted principally in the satisfaction and complacency that he had in them. But now if those mentioned be the works here intended, men cannot so rest from them as God did from his. But they cease from them with a detestation of them as far as they are sinful; and joy for their deliverance from them as far as they are sorrowful. Now this is not to rest as God rested.

Again, When are men supposed to rest from these works? It cannot be in this world: for here we rest not at all from temptations, sufferings, and sorrows; and in that mortification of sin, which we attain unto, we are to fight continually, resisting even unto blood. It must therefore be in heaven that they so rest, and this is affirmed accordingly. But this utterly excludes the rest in and of the gospel from the apostle's discourse, and enervates it; so as that his whole present argument is nothing to his purpose, as we have shown before.

It appears, therefore, that it is the rest of another that is here intended; even the rest of Christ from his works, which is compared with the rest of God from his at the foundation of the world.—  
For,

First. The conjunction *γὰρ*, 'for,' which introduceth this assertion, manifests that the apostle in these words gives an account, whence it is that there is a new Sabbatism remaining for the people of God. He had proved before, that there could be no such rest, but what was founded in the works of God, and his rest that ensued thereon. Such a foundation, therefore, he saith, this new rest must have, and it hath it. Now this is, and must be, in the works and rest of him by whom the church was built, that is Christ, who is God, as it is expressly argued, ch. iii. 3, 4. For as that rest, which all the world was to observe, was founded in the works and rest of him who built or made the world, and all things in it; so the rest of the church of the gospel is to be founded in the works and rest of him, by whom the church itself was built, that is Jesus Christ. For he, on the account of his works and rest, is also Lord of the Sabbath, to abrogate one day of rest, and to institute another.

Secondly. The apostle here changeth the manner of his expression; from the plural absolutely, 'we who believe,' or virtually in the name of a multitude, the 'people of God,' into that which is absolutely singular: *ὁ εἰσελθὼν*, 'he that is entered.' A single person is here expressed, one on whose account the things mentioned are asserted. And of this change of phrase there can no reason be given, but only to signify the introduction of a singular person.

Thirdly. The rest which he is said to enter into, is called his rest, absolutely; as God, speaking of the former rest, calls it my rest. So this is the my rest of another; his rest, namely, the rest of Christ. When the entering of believers into rest is mentioned, it is called either God's rest, 'they shall not enter into my rest;' or rest absolutely, 'We that believe do enter into rest.' But not their rest, or our rest; for it is not our own, but God's rest, whereinto we enter, and wherein we rest. The rest here, is the rest of him whose it is, who is the author of it; that is, it is the rest of Christ.

Fourthly. There is a direct parallel in the whole verse, between the works of the old creation, and those of the new, which the apostle is openly comparing together. 1. For the authors of them. Of the one it is said to be God; as God did from his, that is, the Creator; of the other, He, *αὐτός*; who is that He of whom we speak, saith our apostle, ver. 13. For in these words he makes also a transition to the person of Christ, allowing only the interposition of an applicatory exhortation.



tation, ver. 11. 2. The works of the one and the other are expressed. The works of the Creator are *idia erga*, 'his proper works,' his own works, the works of the old creation. And there are the works of him, of whom he speaks *ta erga autou*, 'his works;' those which he wrought in like manner as God did his own at the beginning; that is, the work of building the church. For these works must answer each other, and have the same respect unto their authors or workers. They must be good and complete in their kind, and such as rest and refreshment may be taken in, as well as upon. To compare the sins or the sufferings of men with the works of God, our apostle did not intend. 3. There is the rest of the one and the other. And these must also have their proportion to one another. Now, God rested from his own works of creation. 1. By ceasing from creating, only continuing all things by his power in their order, and propagating them to his glory. 2. By his respect unto them, or refreshment in them, as those which set forth his praise, and satisfy his glorious design. And so also must He rest, who is here spoken of. 1. He must cease from working in the like kind. He must suffer no more, die no more, but only continue the work of his grace, in the preservation of the new creature, and orderly increase and propagation of it by the Spirit. 2. In his delight and satisfaction which he taketh in his works, which Jesus Christ hath to the utmost. He sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied, and is in possession of that glory which was set before him, while he was at his work.

From what hath been spoken, I suppose it will appear plainly to unprejudiced and impartial minds, that it is the person of Jesus Christ that is the subject here spoken of; and we shall confidently allow a supposition thereof, to regulate our exposition of this verse. As there is considerable in it.

First. The person spoken of, *ὁ εἰσελθὼν*, 'He that is entered into his rest;' that is the Lord Jesus Christ, the builder of the church, the author of the new creation. And this gives an account of the causal connexion, for; there remaineth a Sabbatism now for the people of God; for Christ is entered into his rest.

Secondly. There are the works that this rest of his respects; which it is said he hath ceased or rested from, *ἀπο τῶν ἐργῶν αὐτοῦ*. These works have been fully opened and declared on the third and fourth verses of the third chapter, whither we refer the reader. All that he did and suffered from his incarnation to his resurrection, as the Mediator of the covenant, with all the fruits, effects, and consequents of what he so did and suffered, belong to these works.

Thirdly. There is the rest that he entered into to be considered, *εἰς τὴν καταπαύσιν αὐτοῦ*. Hereof we have seen before in general, that there are two parts. 1. A cessation from his work. He hungered no more, was tempted no more, in a word, died no more. 2. A satisfaction in his works, and the product of them. This Christ had in his; whence he says upon a view of their effects, the 'lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage,' Ps. xvi. 7.

Fourthly.—His entrance into his rest is in like manner proposed

unto us. Now, this was not his lying down in the grave. His body indeed there rested for a while ; but that was no part of his mediatory rest, as the founder and builder of the church. For, 1. It was a part of his humiliation ; not only his death, but his abode or continuance in the state of death was so ; and that a principal part of it. For after the whole human nature was personally united unto the Son of God, to have it brought into a state of dissolution, to have the body and soul separated from each other, was a great humiliation. And every thing of this sort belonged to his works, not his rest. 2. This separation of body and soul under the power of death, was penal, part of the sentence of the law which he underwent. And therefore, Peter declares that the pains of death were not loosed but in his resurrection, Acts ii. 24, ‘Whom God,’ saith he, ‘hath raised up, loosing the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.’ Whilst he was held of it, he was under it penally. This therefore could not be his rest, nor any part of it, nor did he in it enter into his rest, but continued his work. Nor, secondly, did he first enter into his rest at his ascension. Then indeed he took actual possession of his glory, as to the full public manifestation of it. But to enter into rest is one thing, and to take possession of glory another. And it is placed by our apostle as a remote consequent of the Lord Christ’s being justified in the Spirit, when he entered into his rest, 1 Tim. iii. 16. But this his entrance into rest, was in, by, and at his resurrection from the dead. For, 1. Therein, and then, was he freed from the sentence, power, and stroke of the law, and discharged of all the debt of our sin, which he had undertaken to make satisfaction for, Acts ii. 24. 2. Then, and therein, were all types, all prophecies and predictions fulfilled, that concerned the work of our redemption. 3. Then indeed his work was done, I mean that which answereth God’s creating work, though he still continueth that which answers his work of preservation. Then was the law fully satisfied, Satan absolutely subdued, peace with God made, the price of our redemption paid, and the whole foundation of the church gloriously laid in and upon his own person. Then the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. 4. Then, and therein, was he ‘declared to be the Son of God with power,’ Rom. i. 4 ; God manifesting to all that this was he, concerning and to whom he said, ‘Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.’ Acts xiii. 33. This might be farther confirmed, but that, as I know, it is not much questioned. Therefore did the Lord Christ enter into his rest, after he had finished, and ceased from his works, on the morning of the first day of the week, when he arose from the dead, the foundation of the new creation being laid and perfected.

Here lieth the foundation of our Sabbatizing, of the Sabbatism that remains for the people of God. This reason doth the apostle give of it. He had before asserted it ; and there remained no more for him to do, but to manifest, that as those other rests which were passed, the one at the beginning of the world, the other at the giving of the law, had their foundation in the works and rests of God whence a day of rest was given out to the church ; so had this new rest a foundation in

the works and rests of Christ, who built all these things and is God, determining a day for our use, in and by that whereon himself entered into his rest, that is, the first day of the week. See hence, that,

Obs. I. The whole church, all the duties, worship, and privileges of of it, are founded in the person, authority, and actions of Jesus Christ.

Obs. II. The first day of the week, the day of the resurrection of Christ, when he rested from his works, is appointed and determined for a day of rest, or Sabbath unto the church, to be constantly observed in the room of the seventh day, appointed and observed from the foundation of the world, under the Old Testament.

This proposition, containing a truth of great importance, and greatly opposed by many on various accounts, that the full discussion of it may not too much interrupt the course of our exposition, is handled apart, and at large in Exercitations to that purpose, whereunto the reader in this place is remitted.

VER. 11.—*Σπουδασωμεν ουν εισελθειν εις εκεινην την καταπαυσιν, ινα μη εν τω αυτωτις υποδειγματι πεση της απειδειας.*

In this verse, we have a return made unto the principal exhortation which the apostle had before proposed, and an improvement of it. In the first verse he laid it down in those words, ‘Let us fear, lest a promise being left of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.’ Here he declares, how that fear there recommended, is to exert itself, or how it is to be improved and exercised. It appears therefore hence, as we observed before, that it was not a fear of dread, terror, or doubting, that might weaken, discourage, or dishearten them, which he enjoined on them; but such a reverential respect unto the promises and threatenings of God, as might quicken and stir them up unto all diligence, in seeking to inherit the one and avoid the other. Here therefore the same exhortation is resumed and carried on, and that on sundry suppositions which he had laid down, explained, and confirmed, in his preceding discourse, being all of them effectual enforcements of it. Now these are, 1. That there is a rest promised unto us, and yet remaining for us, which is foretold and described in the 95th Psalm. For he hath shown that the rest mentioned therein, was not a rest that was past, or enjoyed by any that went before us in any state of the church from the foundation of the world, but it is that which is now declared and proposed in the gospel. 2. That others had a rest typical hereof proposed unto them, seeing God never ordained his church in any state without a rest, and a day of rest as a token thereof. 3. That some by sin, or unbelief, and disobedience, fell short of the rest proposed to them, and did not enter into it, but were destroyed in the just indignation of God against them. 4. That in their sin, and God’s displeasure with the event of the one and effects of the other, there was an example set forth of what would be the event with them, and God’s dealings towards them, who through unbelief should neglect the rest now declared and proposed unto them. Unto all these propositions, he subjoins a description of this new rest, in the cause, origin, and nature of it, with

that day of rest wherein it is expressed. Having therefore proved and confirmed these things in his exposition and discourses upon the 95th Psalm, he lays them down as the foundation of his exhorting the Hebrews to faith and perseverance, keeping himself unto the notion of a rest, and of entering into it, which the testimony he had chosen to insist upon led him unto.

Σπουδασωμεν. Vulg. Lat. Festinemus; and the Rhemists, 'Let us hasten;' that is, σπευδωμεν. The words are both from the same original. But σπουδαζω is never used for *to hasten*, nor is σπευδω for a rash, precipitate haste; such as is condemned by the prophet in the things of God, Isa. xxviii. 16, 'He that believeth shall not make haste;' that is, with such a kind of haste as causeth men to miscarry in what they undertake, and gives them disappointment and shame. Hence the apostle renders those words, שְׁכַח לֹא יִמְצָא, 'He that believeth, shall not make haste,' by ὁ πιστευων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῇσεται, Rom. ix. 33, 'Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed,' expressing the cause by the effect. Syr. ܡܫܝܚܢܐ : enitaur, operam demus, 'let us endeavour it, do our endeavour.' Ours, 'Let us labour,' Bez. Studeamus, properly, 'let us study, or studiously endeavour, sedulously apply our minds.'

Εἰσελθεῖν εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν καταπαυσιν. These words have been all opened before, nor do translators vary in the rendering of them.

ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ τις ὑποδείγματι πᾶσι τῆς ἀπειθείας. Vulg. Lat. Ut ne in id ipsum quis incidat incredulitatis exemplum. Rhem. 'That no man fall into the same example of incredulity,' somewhat ambiguously. Beza, Ne quis in idem incidat contumaciæ exemplum, 'That no man fall into the same example of stubborn disobedience,' that is, into the like sin. Eras. Ne quis concidat eodem incredulitatis exemplo, to the same purpose: as ours also, 'Lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.' Syr. 'That we fall not after the manner of them who believed not, like unto them;' Bidmutha; ad similitudinem. And in all these translations it is left somewhat ambiguous, whether it be the sin of the people, or their punishment, that is proposed to consideration.

Μὴ τις πᾶσι, or μὴ τις, 'lest any;' and of what is therein included, we have spoken before. Πᾶσι, cadat, that is, 'into sin,' incidat, 'into punishment;' concidat, 'do fall.'

Τῷ αὐτῷ ὑποδείγματι. Ὑποδειγμα is sometimes as much as παραδειγμα, 'an exemplary punishment;' or an example instructive by the evil which befalls others. Of the sense of the words, afterwards.

VER. 11.—*Let us labour therefore (or diligently endeavour) to enter into that rest; lest any should fall in the same example of unbelief.*

In the words three things may be observed: First. The illative particle, οὖν, 'therefore;' denoting an inference from and dependence upon what was before discoursed. The things he now introduceth, arise from the consideration of what was before alleged and proved, with an especial respect unto that part of the example insisted on, which con-



sisted in the sin and punishment of the people of old, 'therefore.' Secondly. An exhortation unto duty ensues. Thirdly. A motive thereunto is proposed. In the exhortation, there is the duty itself exhorted unto, which is to enter into that rest; and the manner of its performance, it is to be done with labour and diligence, 'Let us labour to enter into that rest.'

The duty exhorted unto is expressed in terms whose use is taken from the example before insisted on, 'entering into rest,' *εἰς ἐκεῖνην τὴν καταπαυσιν*. The things intended may be considered two ways; either as to the act of the duty, or the duty itself; and the effect of it, both included in the words. The duty itself intended is faith and obedience unto the gospel; these were represented of old, by the people's applying themselves to enter into the promised land of Canaan. Here therefore he exhorts them unto their present duty, under these terms. And the effect of this duty, which is a participation of the rest of God, is also included.

And indeed glorious advantages are comprised in all gospel-duties. To know God in Christ is life eternal, John xvii. 3. To believe is to enter into the rest of God. Again, for the farther explication of these words, we may observe, that the apostle changeth his expression from what it was in the preceding verse. He tells us, ver. 9, that there remained *σαββατισμος*, a Sabbatism for the people of God. But here he doth not exhort them to enter, *εἰς ἐκεῖνον τὸν σαββατισμόν*, into that Sabbatism, but changeth it into *καταπαυσιν*, that is *מנוחה*, as the other is *שבתה*. And the reason is, because by that word 'Sabbatism,' he intended to express the rest of the gospel not absolutely, but with respect unto the pledge of it, in the day of rest, which is given and determined unto them that believe, for the worship of God, and other ends before recounted. But the apostle here returns to exhort the Hebrews to endeavour after an interest in, and participation of the whole rest of God in the gospel, with all the privileges and advantages contained in it; and therefore he resumes the word, whereby he had before expressed the rest of God in general.

Secondly. For the manner of the performance of this duty, the word *σπουδασωμεν* doth declare it. Let us diligently study, endeavour, or labour to this purpose. If we suppose labour in our language to be the most proper word (though I would rather use endeavour) such a labouring is to be understood, as wherein the mind and whole soul is very intently exercised: and that upon the account of the difficulties which, in the performance of this duty, we shall meet withal. For the apostle, expressing our faith and gospel-obedience, with the end of them, by entering into the rest of God, a phrase taken from the people's entering into the land of Canaan of old, reminds us of the great opposition which in and unto them we shall be sure to meet withal. It is known what difficulties, storms, and contrary winds, the people met with in their wilderness peregrination. So great were they that the discouragements which arose from them were the principal occasions of their acting that unbelief which proved their ruin. Sometimes their want of water and food, sometimes the weariness and tediousness of the way, sometimes the reports they had of giants and walled towns

stirred up their unbelief to murmurings, and hastened their destruction. That we shall meet with the like oppositions in our faith and profession, the apostle instructs us, by his using this phrase, with respect unto the occasion of it, 'entering into the rest of God.' And we may observe hence,

Obs. I. That great oppositions will and do arise against men in the work of entering into God's rest; that is, as unto gospel-faith and obedience. The very first lessons of the gospel discourage many from looking any farther. So when our Saviour entertained the young man that came to him for instruction with the lesson of self-denial, he had no mind to hear any more, but went away sorrowful, Matt. xix. 22. And the reasons hereof may be taken partly from the nature of the gospel itself and partly from our own natures to whom the gospel is proposed. I shall not instance in that general consideration which alone would bear the weight of this assertion. And this is, that in the gospel there is proposed unto us, a *new* way of entering into the rest of God, of acceptance with him, of righteousness and salvation, which is contrary to our natural principle of self-righteousness, and seeking after it, as it were by the works of the law. For this fills our hearts naturally with an enmity unto it and contempt of it; making us esteem it foolish and weak, no way able to effect what it proposeth and promiseth. But this would be too large a field to enter into at present; and I shall therefore insist only on some particular instances, giving evidence to the proposition as laid down. These I shall take from among the precepts of the gospel, some whereof are very difficult unto our nature as it is weak, and all of them contrary unto it as it is corrupt.

First. Some gospel-precepts are exceedingly difficult unto our nature as it is weak. This our Saviour takes notice of, when exhorting his disciples to watchfulness and prayer in an hour of temptation. He tells them that the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, Matt. xxvi. 41. Where, by the flesh, he intendeth not that corrupt principle which is in us, that is often called by that name, but our nature in its whole composition with respect unto that weakness, whence it is apt to succumb and sink under difficult duties. To fix on one instance among many, of this nature is self-denial, so indispensably required of all in the gospel. The denial of our lusts, and corrupt inclinations, fall under another consideration, and must on other accounts have violence offered unto them, as afterwards. But, in the first place, we may weigh this precept as it extends unto things in themselves lawful, and which have an exceeding suitableness unto our natures as weak and infirm. We are but dust, and God knows that we are but dust, Ps. ciii. 14. And he hath in his providence provided many things, and allowed us the use of them, which are fitted and suited to our refreshment and relief in our pilgrimage. Such are houses, lands, possessions, the comfort of relations and friends, which he hath given us a right unto, and an interest in. And as we are persuaded that through the weakness and frailty of our natures, we do greatly stand in need of these things, so it is known how our hearts are apt to cleave unto them. But here this gospel-precept of self-denial interposeth itself, and requireth two things of us.

1st. It requires an undervaluation of them, or at least introduceth a new affection over them and above them, which shall put the heart into a continual readiness and preparedness, to part with them at the call and upon the occasions of the gospel, Matt. x. 37. Our acceptance of Christ on gospel terms, is like a man's entrance into a marriage relation. It introduceth a new affection, that goes above and regulates all former affections. For a man must forsake both father and mother, to cleave unto his wife. All others are to be steered and regulated hereby. And he that by his acceptance of Christ would enter into rest, must subordinate all former affections to lawful things, unto this new one, which will not abide in any heart but where it is supreme.

2dly. On sundry occasions which the profession of the gospel will present us withal, actually to relinquish and forego them, and to trust our persons, with all their weaknesses and frailties, to the provision that Christ will make for them, Mark viii. 34, 37. This is difficult to our nature, because of its weakness. It is apt to say, Let me be spared in this or that : to make an intercession for a Zoar ; what shall become of me when all is lost and gone ? what shall I do for rest, for ease, for liberty, for society, yea, for food and raiment ? Yet are all these to be conquered by faith, if we intend to enter into the rest of God. We condemn them of old, who were afraid of giants and walled towns, which made them murmur and withdraw from their duty. These are our giants and fenced cities ; and, alas ! how many are hindered by them from inheriting the promise ? The like may be said of that particular branch of the great duty of self-denial, in taking up the cross, or willingness to undergo all sorts of persecutions for the sake of Jesus Christ. Many of these are exceedingly dreadful and terrible to our nature as mortal, weak, and infirm. Peter knew how it was with us all in our natural principle, when he advised his Lord and Master to spare himself, as he was foretelling his own sufferings. Here the weakness of our nature would betake itself to a thousand pretences to be spared. But the gospel requires severely, that they be all discarded, and the cross be cheerfully taken up, whenever by the rule of it we are called thereunto. And they do but deceive themselves who engage into a profession of it, without a readiness and preparation for these things. It is true, God may spare whom he pleaseth, and when he pleaseth, as to the bitterness of them ; and some in his tenderness and compassion are little, it may be, exercised with them all their days. But this is by especial dispensation and extraordinary indulgence. The rule is plain ; we must be all ready in the school of Christ to say this lesson, and he may call forth whom he pleaseth unto its repetition. We are, it may be, loath to come forth, loath to be brought to the trial ; but we must stand to it, or expect to be turned out of doors, and to be denied by the great Master at the last day. We are, for the most part, grown tender and delicate, and unwilling to come (so much as in our minds) to a resolved conversation with these things. Various hopes and contrivances shall relieve our thoughts from them. But the precept is universal, absolute, indispensable, and such as our entrance into the rest of God doth depend on its due observance. By the dread hereof

are multitudes kept in the wilderness of the world, wandering up and down between Egypt and Canaan, and, at length, fall finally under the power of unbelief. These, and the like things, are very difficult unto our nature as it is weak.

Secondly. All the commands of the gospel are opposite and contrary to our nature, as it is corrupt. And this hath so large an interest in all men, as to make those things very difficult to them which are wholly opposite to our corrupt nature. A sense hereof has made some endeavour a composition between the gospel and their lusts; so turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, by seeking countenance from thence unto their sins, which hath no design but to destroy them. From the corruption of our nature it is, that the things which the gospel in its precepts requires us severely to cast off and destroy, have a treble interest in us, that is not easy to be overcome. An interest of love, an interest of usefulness, and an interest of power.

1. An interest of love. Hence we are commanded to pull out right eyes if they offend us, Matt. v. 29. Things that are dear unto us, as our eye, as our right eye. And it is a proverbial expression to set out the high valuation and dear esteem we have of any thing, to say that it is unto us as our eye. As God himself, to express his tender care over his people, says, 'He that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye,' Deut. xxxii. 10; Zech. ii. 8. And such are the lusts of the flesh naturally to men; whence the precept of the gospel, if 'thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee,' immediately subjoined to that doctrine of purity and chastity, 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart,' Matt. v. 28. Now, there cannot but be great difficulty in cutting off, and casting away from us such things, as have so great an interest of love in us, as these lusts have in corrupted nature. Every one is unwilling to part with what he loves; and the more he loves it, the less willing is he to part with it, the longer and more earnestly will he hold it. And there is nothing that men naturally love more than their carnal lusts. They will part with their names, their estates, and venture their lives, all to satisfy them.

2. An interest of usefulness. Nature as corrupt, would persuade a man that he cannot live nor subsist in this world, without the help and advantage of some of those things, which the gospel forbids to all them that will enter into the rest of God. Hence is the command to cut off the right hand, if it offend, Matt. v. 30; that is, things apprehended as useful unto us, as a right hand is to the common services of life. Of this kind is that inordinate love of the world, and all the ways whereby it is pursued, which the gospel doth so condemn. These things are to many, what Micah's gods were unto him; who cried out upon the loss of them, when they were stolen by the Danites, 'You have taken away my gods, and what have I more?' Take away from men their love of this world, and the inordinate pursuit of it, and they think they have no more; they will scarce think it worth while to live in the world any longer. And this interest also is to be overcome, which it cannot be without great difficulty; and a cleaving



unto it, is that which hinders multitudes from entering into the rest of God.

3. An interest of power. Hence, sin is said to have strong holds in us, which are not easily cast down. But hereof I have treated in a peculiar discourse.

Secondly. Another reason of the difficulty of this work, ariseth from the combined opposition that is made unto it. For as the Egyptians, the Canaanites, and the Amorites, did all of them their utmost to hinder the Israelites from entering into Canaan; and what they could not effect really by their opposition, they did morally by occasioning the people's unbelief, through their fighting against them, which proved their ruin; so do our spiritual adversaries deal in this matter. If the work of the gospel go on, if men endeavour by it to enter into God's rest, Satan must lose his subjects, and the world its friends, and sin its life. And there is not one instance wherein they will not try their utmost to retain their interest. All these endeavour to hinder us from entering into the rest of God, which renders it a great and difficult work.

It will be said, that if there be all these difficulties lying before us, they must needs be so many discouragements, and turn men aside from attempting of it. I answer,

1. Of old indeed they did so; the difficulties and discouragements that lay in the way of the people, quite took off their hearts and minds from endeavouring an entrance into the promised land. But what was the event? The apostle declares at large, that on this account the indignation of God came upon them, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness. And no otherwise will it be with them who are afraid to engage in those spiritual difficulties we have now to conflict withal. They will die and perish under the wrath of God, and that unto eternity. He that shall tell men that their entering into the rest of Christ, is plain, easy, suited to nature, as it is weak or corrupt, will but delude and deceive them. To mortify sin, subdue our bodies, and keep them in subjection; to deny ourselves, not only in the crucifying of lusts that have the most secret tendency unto things unlawful, but also in the use of things lawful, and our affections to them, pulling out right eyes, cutting off right hands, taking up the cross in all sorts of afflictions and persecutions, are required of us in this matter; and they are not at present joyous but grievous, not easy and pleasant, but difficult, and attended with many hardships. To lull men asleep with hopes of a rest in Christ, and in their lusts, in the world, in their earthly accommodations, is to deceive them and ruin them. We must not represent the duties of gospel faith and obedience, as the Jesuits preached Christ to the Indians, never letting them know that he was crucified, lest they should be offended at it. But we must tell men the plain truth as it is, and let them know what they are to expect from within and from without, if they intend to enter into rest.

2. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, the promise of God being mixed with faith, will carry us safely through them all. After the unbelieving generation was destroyed in the wilderness, the hardships

and difficulties still remained; yet their children believing the promise, passed through them and entered into rest. The power of God, and his faithfulness amongst them and unto them, conquered them all. And it will infallibly be so with them that shall mix the promise with faith, in reference unto this spiritual rest. God will both supply them with strength, and subdue their enemies, so as that they shall not fail of rest. Whatever therefore may be pretended, it is nothing but unbelief that can cause us to come short of rest, and this will do it effectually. Faith in the promise will engage the power of Christ unto our assistance; and where he will work, none shall let him. To this end we might consider the various ways whereby he will make mountains become plains, dry up rivers, yea, seas of opposition, and make all those things light and easy unto us, which seem so grievous and insupportable unto our nature, either as weak and frail, or as corrupt and sinful. But we must not too far digress into these things. And I say, thirdly, which is a second observation from the words,

Obs. II. That as the utmost of our labours and endeavours are required to our obtaining an entrance into the rest of Christ, so it doth very well deserve that they should be laid out therein.—Let us, saith the apostle, endeavour this matter with all diligence, as the word imports. Men are content to lay out themselves unto the utmost for other things, and to spend their strength for the bread that perisheth, yea, for that which is not bread. Every one may see how busy and industrious the world is in the pursuit of perishing things. And men are so foolish as to think that these deserve their whole time and strength, and more they would expend in the same way, if they were intrusted with it. This their way is their folly. But how easy a thing were it to demonstrate from the nature of it, its procurement and end, with our eternal concernment in it, that this rest deserves the utmost of our diligence and endeavours. To convince men hereof, is one of the chief ends of the preaching of the gospel in general; and so needs not here to be insisted on.

Obs. III. Again, There is a present excellency in gospel faith and obedience, and a present reward attending them. They are an entrance into the rest of Christ; or they give us a present interest therein. They are not only a present means of entering into future eternal rest with God; but they give us a present participation of the rest of Christ; and wherein this doth consist, hath been before declared.

The latter part of this verse yet remains to be explained and applied. Therein unto the precedent exhortation a motive is subjoined; ‘lest any fall after the same example of unbelief.’ These words, as was in part before intimated, do express either the sin to be avoided, or the punishment whereby we should be deterred from it.

The word, ‘to fall,’ is ambiguous, and may be applied to either sense. For men may fall into sin; and they may fall into the punishment due to their sin; when that word is used in a moral sense. Matt. xv. 14, ‘the blind lead the blind,’ *αμφοτεροι εις βυθρον πησονται*, ‘both shall fall into the ditch,’ of sin or trouble. See Rom. xi. 22; James v. 12. For the prime use of the word is in

things natural, and it is only metaphorically translated to express things moral. And ὑποδειγμα is most commonly a teaching example. So ὑποδεικνυμι, is 'to teach,' or 'to instruct,' by showing, Matt. iii. 7, 'O generation of vipers,' τις ὑπεδείξεν ὑμιν, 'who hath warned, taught, instructed you.' Thence ὑποδειγμα, is 'documentum.' Ταῦτα ὑποδείγματα εἰσὶν τῷ Πολοδαμνῇ ὥν δεῖ ἐπιμελεσθῆναι, 'These are instructions for Polodamnes, about the things that are to be provided for.' But it is also often used as παραδειγμα, 'an exemplary punishment;' as ὑποδειγμα ᾧ πληθεὶ ποιῶν αὐτον, 'making him an example to the multitude;' that is, in his punishment. And so among the Latins, 'exemplum' is often put absolutely for punishment, and that of the highest nature. Now if ὑποδειγμα in this place, be taken merely for a 'document' or 'instruction,' which is undoubtedly the most proper and usual signification of the word, then the sense may be, 'Lest any of you should fall into that unbelief, whereof, and of its pernicious consequents, you have an instructive example in them that went before; proposed on purpose unto you, that you might be stirred up to avoid it.' If it be taken for παραδειγμα, as sometimes it is, and so include in its signification an 'exemplary punishment;' then the meaning of the words is, 'Lest any of you, through your unbelief fall into that punishment,' which hath been made exemplary, in the ruin of those other unbelievers who went before you.' And this I take to be the meaning of the words. You have the gospel, and the rest of Christ therein, preached and proposed unto you. Some of you have already taken upon you the profession of it, as the people did of old at Mount Sinai, when they said, 'All that the Lord our God shall command, that we will do.' Your condition is now like unto theirs, and was represented therein. Consider therefore how things fell out with them, and what was the event of their sin, and God's dealing with them. They believed not, they made not good their engagement, they persisted not in their profession, but were disobedient and stubborn, and God destroyed them. They fell in the wilderness and perished, not entering into God's rest, as hath been declared. If now you, or any amongst you, shall be found guilty of their sin, or the like answering unto it, do not think or hope that you shall avoid the like punishment. An example of God's severity is set before you in their destruction. If you would not fall into it, or fall under it, labour, by faith and obedience, to enter into the rest of Christ. And this I take to be the true sense and importance of the words answering their coherence and relation unto them that go before. For those words, 'Let us labour to enter into that rest,' are no more but let us sincerely believe and obey, wherein we shall find, through Jesus Christ, rest to our souls. Hereunto this clause of the verse is a motive, 'Lest any of you fall in the same example of unbelief.' Now, if their sense should be, 'Lest any of you, after their example, should fall into unbelief,' then that of the whole must be, let us labour to believe, that we fall not into unbelief; which is a mere battalogy, and remote from our divine Author. Hence observe,

Obs. IV. Precedent judgments on others, are monitory ordinances unto us.—They are so in general in all things that fall out in the pro-

vidence of God in that kind, whereof we may judge by a certain rule. This is the use that we are to make of God's judgments, without a censorious reflection on them in particular, who fall under them; as our Saviour teacheth us in the instances of the Galileans, whose sacrifices Pilate mingled with their blood, and those men on whom the tower in Siloam fell. But there are many things peculiar in the examples of this kind given us in the Scripture. For, 1. We have an infallible rule therein to judge both of the sins of men, and of the respect that the judgments of God had unto them. Besides, 2. They are designed instances of the love and care of God towards us; as our apostle declares, 1 Cor. x. 11. God suffered their sins to fall out, and recorded his own judgments against them in his word, on purpose for our instruction. So that, as he declared his severity in them towards others, he makes known by them his love and care towards us. This gives them the nature of ordinances, which all proceed from love. To this end, and with a sense hereof, are we to undertake the consideration of them. So are they exceedingly instructive; to which purpose we have treated somewhat on the third chapter, whither we refer the reader. Again,

Obs. V. It is better to have an example, than to be made an example of divine displeasure; yet this will befall us, if we neglect the former. For,

Obs. VI. We ought to have no expectation of escaping vengeance under the guilt of those sins, which others in a like manner guilty of, have not escaped.—We are apt to flatter ourselves, that however it fared with others, it will go well with us, like him who blesseth himself, and says he shall have peace, when he hears the words of the curse. This self-pleasing and security variously insinuates itself into our minds, and tenaciously cleaves unto us. But as we have any care of our eternal welfare, we are to look upon it as our greatest enemy. There is no more certain rule for us to judge of our own condition, than the examples of God's dealings with others in the same. They are all effects of eternal and invariable righteousness; and with God there is no respect of persons. I might here insist on the ways and means, whereby this self-flattery imposeth false hopes and expectations on men; as also on the duties required of us for to obviate and prevent its actings; but must not too often digress from our main purpose and design.

VER. 12, 13.—THESE next verses contain a new enforcement of the preceding exhortation, taken from the consideration of the means of the event threatened in case of unbelief. Two things are apt to arise in the minds of men for their relief, against the fear of such comminations as are proposed to them. 1. That their failing in point of duty, may not be discerned or taken notice of. For they will resolve against such transgressions as are open, gross, and visible to all. For what is partial and secret, in a defect of exactness and accuracy, that may be overlooked, or not be discovered. 2. That threatenings are proposed in terrorem only, to terrify and awe men, but not with a mind or will of putting them into execution. Both these vain pre-



tences, and deceiving reliefs, our apostle in these verses obviates the way of, or deprives men of them, where they have been admitted. For he lets them know that they are to be tried by that, or have to do with him, who both actually discovers all the secret frames of our hearts, and will deal with all men accordingly. Moreover, herein he informs them how, and in what manner, it is necessary for them to attend to his exhortation in the performance of their duty, namely, not in or by a mere outward observance of what is required of them with respect to profession only, but with a holy jealousy and watchfulness over their hearts, and all the intimate recesses of their souls, the most secret actings of their spirits and thoughts of their minds, seeing all these things are open to cognizance, and subject to trial.

VER. 12, 13.—*Ζων γαρ ὁ λόγος του Θεου, και ενεργης, και τομωτερος ὑπερ πασαν μαχαιραν διστομον, και δικνουμενος αχει μερισμου ψυχης τε και πνευματος, ἁρμων τε και μυελων, και κριτικος ενθυμισεων και εννοιων καρδιας. Και ουκ εστι κτισις αφανης ενωπιον αυτου παντα δε γυμνα και τετραχηλισμενα τοις οφθαλμοις αυτου προς ὃν ἡμιν ὁ λόγος.*

*Ζων γαρ*, ‘vividus enim.’ Syr. ܙܝܢܐܬܐ, ‘vivus est,’ it supplies ܙܝܢܐܬܐ est as do all other translations, though there be an emphasis oftentimes in sundry languages, in the omission of the verb substantive. Ours ‘quick,’ improperly, for that word doth more ordinarily signify ‘speedy,’ than ‘living,’ and I doubt not but many are deceived in this place, through the ambiguity of that word.

‘Ὁ λόγος,’ ‘sermo, verbum,’ so is that word promiscuously rendered by translators, though the first using of ‘sermo’ in John i. 1, caused some stir amongst them who had been long used to ‘verbum.’ But these words are promiscuously used both by the ancients, and learned men of latter days. ‘The word.’ Syr. ܡܠܬܐ, the same word that is used John i. 1, where the person of the Son of God is spoken of.

*Και ενεργης*, ‘et efficax,’ so all the Latin translators, ‘efficacious,’ effectual in operation, powerful; but that denotes the habit, this word intends the act. Effectually operative. Syr. ܡܠܬܐ ܥܒܕܐ, et omnino, or ad omnia efficax, ‘altogether efficacious.’ For *ενεργης*, denotes a very intimate, active, powerful operation, or efficacy. Rhem. ‘forcible.’

*Και τομωτερος* Vulg. Lat. Ari. Mon. ‘penetrabilior;’ scarce properly. For participles in *bilis*, are mostly passive, and in our language, ‘penetrable’ is the description of a thing that may be pierced, or is easy to be pierced. Hence the Rhem. render it ‘more piercing,’ properly. Beza, ‘penetrantior;’ as Erasmus. Valla, and from him Erasmus say they would render it ‘incidentior,’ were that a proper Latin word. Ours, ‘sharper,’ not so properly, ‘more cutting,’ or ‘more piercing.’ Syr. ܡܠܬܐ ܬܝܒܐ, et longe penetrantior, and ‘much more cutting, sharp, or piercing.’ It adds *cal* and *tab*, to express the form of the comparative degree, used in the original.

‘Ὑπερ πασαν μαχαιραν διστομον,’ *super omnem gladium ancipitem*, ‘above any two-edged sword.’ *ὑπερ*, being added to the preceding comparative *τομωτερος*, eminently exalts one of the comparates

above the other. Syr. דְּהִרֵן פּוּמִיָּה, 'before a sword with two mouths.' Both the Hebrews and the Greeks call the edge of the sword its mouth, *στομα της μαχαϊρας*, 'the mouth of the sword,' it being that wherewith it devours. Beza, 'quovis gladio ancipiti.' Erasm. 'utrinque incidente.' Arab. 'and in cutting, sharper than a sword of two edges.' Ethiopic, 'than a razor;' than any two-edged sword.

Και δικνουμενος, et pertingens, et pertinget. Syr. וַיֵּאָלֵא, et ingredi-tur 'and entereth, reacheth to, cometh into, pierceth into.'

Ἀχρι μερισμον ψυχης τε και πνευματος, 'Usque ad divisionem animæ et spiritus.' Beza, animæ simul ac spiritus, 'both of soul and spirit,' expressing the particle τε, which yet in some copies is wanting.

Ἀρμων τε και μυελων, Compagumque et medullarum, 'of the joints and marrow.' The Syriac adds וְגִרְמָא, 'and of the bones.' Ethiopic, Et discernit animam ab anima, et quod noctescit a nocte, 'discerneth one soul from another,' 'and that which is dark from night,' that is, the most secret things.

Και κριτικός, et discretor. Vulg. Lat. et judicat, et dijudicat: 'judgeth, discerneth.' Judex, Criticus, 'And is a discerner.' That is, one that discerneth by making a right judgment of things.

Ἐνθυμησεων, Cogitationum. Ethiopic, Cogitationum desiderabilium, 'desirable thoughts,' not without reason as we shall see.

Και εννοιων καρδιας. Vulg. Lat. Ari. Erasm. Intentionum cordis, 'of the intentions of the heart.' Beza, conceptuum; 'conceptions, intents,' a word of a deeper sense. There may be conceptus, where there is not intentio or propositum. Syr. 'the will of the heart.' See Eph. ii. 3.

Και ουκ εστι κτισις. et non est creatura, 'and there is not a creature.' Beza, et nulla est res creata, 'and there is no created thing,' more proper in Latin, but a creature is common with us.

Αφανης. Beza, non manifesta. Ours, 'that is not manifest.' Vulg. Lat. invisibilis. And the Rhem. 'invisible,' improperly: 'not manifestly apparent.' Syr. 'that is hid.'

Παντα δε γυμνα. Beza, imo omnia nuda, 'yea, all things are naked,' 'but all things are naked.'

Και τετραχλησιμενα. Vulg. Lat. aperta, 'open.' Beza, intime patentia, 'inwardly open.' Erasm. resupinata, 'laid on their backs, open.' Syr. וְגִלָּא, 'and manifest,' or revealed.

Προς ον ημιν ο λογος. Beza, quocum nobis est negotium, which ours render, 'with whom we have to do.' Vulg. Lat. ad quem nobis sermo. Rhem. 'to whom our speech is.' Syr. 'to whom they give account.' And the Arabic to the same purpose, 'before whom our trial or excuse must be.' What help we may have in the understanding of the words from these various translations of them, we shall see in our consideration of the particulars of the text. The difficulty of the place hath caused me to inquire the more diligently into the sense of translators on the words themselves.

VER. 12, 13.—*For the word of God is living and powerful, (or effectual,) and sharper (more cutting, or cutting more) than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner (a discerning Judge) of the*

*thoughts and intents (conceptions) of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not (apparently) manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do, (or to whom we must give an account.)*

The whole exposition of these words, depends on the subject spoken of, ver. 12. That therefore we must first diligently inquire into. This being rightly stated, the things spoken must be duly accommodated to it, and in these two things doth the due exposition of these words consist. Now this subject is *ὁ λογος του Θεου* 'the word of God.' It is known that this name sometimes in the Scripture denotes the essential Word of God, sometimes the word spoken by him. Or *λογος Θεου*, is either *ουσιωδης*, that is, 'the eternal Son of God,' or *προφορικος*, his 'enunciative word,' the word of his will, his declared written word. And the confounding of these is that which so entangleth the Quakers amongst us, or rather is that whereby they endeavour to entangle others, and seduce unlearned and unstable souls. But all sorts of expositors are divided in judgment about which of these it is that is here intended. Amongst the ancients, Ambrose, with many others, contend that it is the essential and eternal Word of God which is spoken of. Chrysostome seems rather to incline to the written word. The expositors of the Roman church are here also divided. Lyra, Cajetan, Carthusianus, A Lapide, Ribera, with sundry others, pleaded for the essential Word: Gatenus, Adamus, Hesselius, Estius, for the word written. So do the Rhemists in their annotations, and particularly for the word of threatening. Amongst the Protestants, few judge the essential Word, or Son of God, Jesus Christ, to be intended. Jacobus Capellus and Gomarus I have only met withal, that are positively of that mind. Among the rest, some take it for the word of God preached in general, as Calvin; some for the threatenings of God, with the Rhemists; and some peculiarly for the gospel. Crellius waves all these, and contends that it is the decree of God which is designed, which when he comes to the explanation of, he makes it the same with his threatenings. I shall inquire with what diligence I can, into the true and direct meaning of the Holy Ghost herein.

First. I grant, that the name here used, *ὁ λογος του Θεου*, 'the word of God,' is ascribed sometimes to the essential Word of God, and sometimes to his enunciative word, or the Scripture, as inspired and written. That the Son of God is so called we shall show afterwards. And that the declaration of the will of God by the penmen of the Scripture, is so termed, is obvious and acknowledged by all, but only our Quakers. But testimonies are full, many, and pregnant to this purpose. Luke v. 1, 'The multitude pressed on him to hear *τον λογον του Θεου*, the word of God;' where the word of God is directly distinguished from him that spake it, which was Jesus Christ. Ch. viii. 12, the seed is *ὁ λογος του Θεου*, 'the word of God,' that is, the word preached by Jesus Christ the good sower of that seed as the whole chapter declares. Ch. xi. 28, 'Blessed are those that hear *τον λογον του Θεου*, *και φυλασσουντες αυτον*, the word of God, and keep it,' that is, preserve it in their hearts and obey it being heard. Mark vii. 13,

‘Making void, *τον λογον του Θεου*, the word of God, by your traditions.’ The word of God, that is, in his institutions and commands, is directly opposed to the traditions and commands of men, and so is of the same general nature. Acts iv. 31, ‘They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake out *τον λογον του Θεου*, the word of God,’ the word which they preached, declaring Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. When Philip had preached the gospel at Samaria, and many believed, it is said, Acts viii. 14, that the ‘apostles heard that Samaria had received *τον λογον του Θεου*, the word of God,’ or believed the doctrine of the gospel preached to them. Ch. xii. 24, *ὁ δε λογος του Θεου ηυξανε και επληθυνετο*, ‘But the word of God grew and multiplied;’ that is, on the death of Herod, it was more and more preached and received. 1 Cor. xiv. 36, ‘Did the word of God go out from you, or came it to you alone?’ In like manner is it used in many other places. I have instanced in these to obviate the vain clamours of those men, who will not allow the Scripture, or gospel as preached, to be called the ‘word of God.’ So *ὁ λογος* absolutely, the word, and the word of the gospel, the word preached, the word of Christ, are common notations of this declared word of God.

Secondly. It is granted that the attributes and effects that are there ascribed unto the word of God, may in several senses be applied to the one and the other of the things mentioned. That they are properly ascribed unto the eternal Son of God, shall be afterwards declared. That in some sense also they may be applied unto the written word, other places of the Scripture, where things of the same nature are ascribed unto it, do manifest. Isa. xl. 8, lv. 11, xlix. 2; Ps. xlv. 5, cv. 9, cvii. 20, cxlvii. 15, 18, are cited by Grotius to this purpose, whereof yet more do clearly confirm the assertion. For though the word of God be mentioned in them, yet in some of the places, the essential Word of God, in most of them, his providential word, the word of his power is unquestionably intended. But see Hos. vi. 5; 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

Thirdly. It must be acknowledged, that if the things here mentioned be ascribed unto the written word, yet they do not primarily and absolutely belong unto it upon its own account, but by virtue of its relation unto Jesus Christ, whose word it is, and by reason of the power and efficacy that is by him communicated unto it. And on the other hand, if it be the Son, or the eternal Word of God, that is here intended, it will be granted that the things here ascribed unto him, are such, as for the most part he effects by his word in and upon the hearts and consciences of men. Hence the difference that is between the various interpretations mentioned, in the issue concurs in the same things; though the subject primarily spoken of be variously apprehended. Now that this is the word of God’s will, his enunciative word, his word written, spoken, preached, is by very many contended and pleaded on the ensuing reasons.

First. From the subject; because the Son of God, or Christ is nowhere in the Scripture called *ὁ λογος του Θεου*, ‘the word, or word of God,’ but only in the writings of John the apostle, as in his gospel and the Revelation. By Paul he is everywhere, and in an especial



manner in this Epistle, called the Son, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and nowhere is he termed by him, the Word, or the Word of God. This argument is made use of by all that are of this mind : but that it is not available to evince the conclusion intended, shall immediately be made manifest.

Secondly. From its attributes ; they say the things here spoken of, and attributed unto the word of God, as that it is 'powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit,' are not personal properties, or such things as may properly be ascribed unto a person, as the eternal Word of God is ; but rather belong unto things, or a thing, such as is the word preached. Now this must be particularly examined in our exposition of the words ; wherein it will be made to appear, that the things here ascribed unto the Word of God, taken together, in their order and series, with respect unto the end designed, are such as cannot first and properly belong to any thing but a person, or an intelligent subsistence, though not merely as a person, but as a person acting for a certain end and purpose, such as the Son of God is ; and this will also be evinced in our exposition of the words.

Thirdly. From the context ; it is objected by Estius, that the mentioning or bringing in of Christ the Son of God in this place is abrupt, and such as hath no occasion given unto it. For the apostle in the preceding verses is professedly treating about the gospel, and the danger they were in that should neglect it, or fall away from the profession of it. Hence it naturally follows, that he should confirm his exhortation, by acquainting them with the power and efficacy of that word which they did despise. But neither is there any force in this consideration. For, 1. We shall see, that there is a very just occasion to introduce here the mention of the Lord Christ, and that the series of the apostle's discourse and arguing did require it. 2. It is the way and manner of the apostle in this Epistle, to issue his arguings and exhortations in considerations of the person of Christ, and the respect of what he had insisted on thereunto. This we have already manifested in several instances. Thus, 3. in particular, when he had treated of the word of the law, and of the gospel, he closeth his discourse, by minding them of the punishment that should and would befall them by whom they were neglected. Now, punishing is the act of a person, and not of the word, ch. ii. 1—3. And there is the same reason for the introduction of the person of Christ in this place. 4. Estius himself doth, and all must confess, that it is either God or Christ that is intended, ver. 13, 'with whom we have to do,' and before 'whose eyes all things are open and naked.' And if the order of the discourse admit of the introduction of the person of Christ, ver. 13, no reason can be assigned why it may not do so, ver. 12. Yea, it will be found very difficult, if possible, to preserve any tolerable connexion of speech, and so to separate those verses, that what is spoken of in the one, should not be the subject of the other also.

Fourthly. Camero argues from the connexion of the words, to prove the preaching of the word, and not the person of Christ to be intended.

For, saith he, the conjunction *και*, noteth the reason of the things spoken of before. But that which precedes is a dehortation from the contempt of the Gospel. And the reason hereof, the apostle gives in these verses; in that those who forsake the gospel which they have once embraced, are wont to be vexed in their consciences, as those who have denied the known truth. And although they seem to be quiet for a season, yet it is stupidity and not peace that they are possessed with. Now this judgment is often ascribed unto the word of God.

Ans. These things are somewhat obscurely proposed. The meaning seems to be, that the apostle threatens the Hebrews with the judging and disquieting power of the word, when it is by any rejected. But this is inconsistent with the true design of the words, which we before laid down. Having exhorted them to perseverance, and to take heed that they neglected not the promise of entering into the rest of God through unbelief, he presseth them farther to care, diligence, sincerity, and constancy in the performance of the duty that he had exhorted them unto. And this he doth from the consideration of the person of Christ, the author of the gospel; as his manner is in all his arguings to bring all to that point and centre. And as to his present purpose, suitable unto his exhortation and the duty which he enjoined them, he insists upon his ability to discern and discover all the secret frames and actings of their spirits, with all the ways and means whereby a declension in them, might be begun or carried on.

I do judge, therefore, that it is the eternal Word of God, or the person of Christ, which is the subject here spoken of, and that upon the ensuing reasons.

First. *Ὁ λογος* and *ὁ λογος του Θεου*, 'the Word,' and 'the word of God,' is the proper name of Christ in respect of his divine nature, as the eternal Son of God. So is he called expressly, John i. 1, 2; Rev. xix. 13, *καλεται το ονομα αυτου, ὁ λογος του Θεου*, 'his name is called,' or this is his name, 'the Word of God.' This, therefore, being the name of Christ, where all things that are spoken of it, do agree unto him, that there be no cogent reasons in the context to the contrary, he is presumed to be spoken of, nor will any rule of interpretation give countenance to the embracing of another sense.

It is, as we heard before, excepted against this first reason, that Christ is called *ὁ λογος* the 'Word,' only in the writings of John the Evangelist, and nowhere else in the new Testament; particularly, not by our apostle in any of his epistles.

Ans. 1. This observation can scarcely be made good, I am sure not convincingly. Luke the evangelist tells us, that some were *απ' αρχης αυτοπται και υπηρεται του λογου*, ch. i. 2, 'from the beginning eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word; that is, of the person of Christ. For these words are expounded, 1 John i. 1. 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life.' They were *αυτοπται του λογου*, 'eye-witnesses of the Word.' How they could be said to be eye-witnesses of the word preached, is not evident. Hierome renders the words, *Sicut tradiderunt nobis, qui ab initio viderunt sermonem et*

ministraverunt ei. Præfat. in Evangel. ‘As they delivered unto us, who from the beginning themselves saw the Word, and ministered unto him.’ And ὑπηρεται, must respect a person to whom those so called do minister, and not the word that is administered. In the same sense the word is used again most probably, Acts xx. 32. Παρατιθεμαι ὑμας, ἀδελφοι, τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, τῷ δυναμένῳ ἐποικοδομῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι ὑμῖν κληρονομίαν. ‘I commend you, brethren, to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance.’ To be able to build us up, and give us an inheritance, is the property of a person. Nor can they be ascribed to the word preached, without a forced ‘prosopopœia.’ and as is unusual in Scripture. Therefore this λόγος τῆς χάριτος τοῦ Θεοῦ, is the Son of God. And he is called ‘the Word of his grace,’ either because he was given unto us of his mere grace, as he is elsewhere called the Son of his love; or τῆς χάριτος may be genitivus effecti, ‘the Word that is the author and cause of grace;’ as God himself is called the God of peace and love, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. To him therefore are believers committed and commended by the apostle, as a recommendation is made of one man unto another in or by an epistle; see its sense in Acts xiv. 23; 1 Tim. i. 18; 1 Pet. iv. 19. Now, the word of the gospel is said to be committed, or commended unto us, 2 Tim. ii. 2, so as we cannot, unless it be exceeding abusively, be said to be committed and commended thereunto. And if any will not admit the person of Christ to be here intended by the word of God’s grace, I would supply an ellipsis, and read the text, ‘I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, even to him that is able,’ which I acknowledge the manner of the expression, by the article τῷ δυναμένῳ, will bear.

2. But whatever may be spoken concerning this phraseology in other places, and in other epistles of this apostle, there is peculiar reason for the use of it here. I have observed often before, that in writing of this Epistle to the Hebrews, our apostle accommodates himself to the apprehensions and expressions that were then in use among the Hebrews, so far as they were agreeable unto the truth, rectifying them when under mistakes, and arguing with them from their own concessions and persuasions. Now at this time there was nothing more common or usual among the Hebrews, than to denote the second subsistence in the Deity, by the name of the Word of God. They were now divided into two great parts: First. The inhabitants of Canaan, with the regions adjoining, and many old remnants in the east, who used the Syro-Chaldean language, being but one dialect of the Hebrew. And, Secondly. The dispersions under the Greek empire, who are commonly called Hellenists, who used the Greek tongue. And both these sorts at that time, did usually in their several languages, describe the second person in the Trinity, by the name of the Word of God. For the former sort, or those who used the Syro-Chaldean dialect, we have an eminent proof of it in the translation of the Scripture, which, at least some part of it, was made about this time amongst them, commonly called the Chaldee paraphrase. In the whole whereof, the second person is mentioned under the name of מְמַרְתָּ



יהוה, Memra daiova, or 'the Word of God.' Hereunto are all personal properties, and all divine works in that translation, assigned; which is an illustrious testimony to the faith of the old church, concerning the distinct subsistence of a plurality of persons in the divine nature. And for the Hellenists who wrote, and expressed themselves in the Greek tongue, they used the name of *ὁ λογος του Θεου*, 'the word of God,' to the same purpose, as I have elsewhere manifested out of the writings of Philo, who lived about this time, between the death of our Saviour, and the destruction of Jerusalem. And this one consideration is to me absolutely satisfactory as to the intention of the apostle in the using of this expression; especially seeing that all the things mentioned, may far more properly and regularly be ascribed unto the person of the Son, than unto the word, as written or preached. And whosoever will take the pains to consider what occurs in the Targums, concerning their *במרא*, the word of God, and compare it with what the apostle here speaks, and the manner of its introduction, will, if I greatly mistake not, be of the same mind with myself. But I shall add yet some farther considerations.

3. The introduction of the *ὁ λογος*, 'of the word,' here, is with respect unto a commination or an admonition. For the design of it is, to beget a reverence or fear in the minds of men about their deportment in the profession of the gospel, because of the consequences of disobedience in punishment and revenge. Now the Lord Christ is particularly termed the word of God, with respect to the judgments which he exerciseth with regard unto his church and his gospel, Rev. xix. 13. That administration therefore being here respected, gives occasion unto a peculiar ascription of that name unto him—the Word of God, who will destroy all the opposers and forsakers of the gospel.

4. It cannot be denied, nor is by any, but that it is the person of the Son, or of the Father, that is intended, ver. 13. Indeed it is directly of the Son, as we shall manifest from the close of the words; but all confess God to be intended. Nor can these expressions of 'all things manifest in his sight,' and 'being open and naked unto his eyes,' be applied unto any other, or intend any other but God. And that it is the Son who is especially intended, the close of the verse doth evince, *προς ον ημιν ο λογος*. He speaks of him with whom we have to do. Some take *προς ον* here, for *περι ου*, 'concerning whom,' *ημιν ο λογος*, nostra oratio est, 'our discourse is,' which must needs denote the Son, concerning whom in this whole Epistle he treats with the Hebrews. Ours, 'with whom we have to do;' that is, in this matter, who hath a concernment in us, and our steadfastness or declension in profession. And this also properly and immediately designs the person of the Son. The precise sense of the words is, cui a nobis reddenda ratio est, 'to whom we must give an account' both here, and hereafter; so Chrysostome, and the Syriac translation expressly. Principally this respects the last day's account, called our *λογος*, or ratiocinium, Heb. xiii. 17. 'They watch for our souls, *ως λογον αποδωσουντες*, as those that must give an account.' Luke xvi. 2, *αποδος τον λογον*, 'Give an account of thy stewardship.' Rom. xiv. 12, 'Every one of us, *λογον δωσει*, shall give an account of himself unto



God.' 1 Pet. iv. 5, *οἱ αποδωσουσι λογον*, 'Who shall give an account unto him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead.' And this account is certainly to be given up immediately to Jesus Christ, Acts xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 9. 10. Nor is it in any way obstructive to the embracing of this sense, that *ὁ λογος* should be taken so diversely in the beginning of the twelfth, and the end of the thirteenth verse, during the continuation of the same discourse. For such an anta-naclasis is not only very frequent, but very elegant, *ὁ λογος του Θεου, προς ὃν ἡμιν ὁ λογος*; see Matt. viii. 22; 2 Cor. v. 21; John i. 11. It is therefore the person of Christ which is undeniably intended in the thirteenth verse; even he to whom we must give an account of our profession, of our faith and obedience. And the relative *αυτου* in the first clause of that verse, 'in his sight,' can refer to nothing properly, but the *ὁ λογος*, or 'Word of God,' ver. 12. And its dependence is clear thereon, 'is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight.' So a reason is assigned in the beginning of the thirteenth verse, of what was affirmed in the close of the twelfth. He is a discerner of the thoughts of the heart, because all things are manifest unto him.

5. The attributes here ascribed to the Word, ver. 12, do all of them properly belong unto the person of Christ, and cannot first and directly be ascribed to the gospel. This shall be manifested in the ensuing explication of the words.

First. It is said to be *ζων*, *vivus*, *vivens*, 'living;' which, as was observed, we have translated ambiguously, 'quick.' *Ζων* is applied to God himself, as expressing a property of his nature, Matt. xvi. 16; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Heb. iii. 12. And it is also peculiarly ascribed unto Christ the Mediator, Rev. i. 18. 'And he is *ὁ ζων*, the living one.' And two things are intended in it: 1. That he who is so, hath life in himself. 2. That he is the Lord of life unto others; both which are emphatically spoken of the Son. 1. He hath life in himself, John v. 26. And, 2. He is the prince of life, Acts. iii. 15, or the author of it. He hath the disposal of the life of all, whereon all our concerns, temporal and eternal, do depend; see John i. 4. And it is evident how suitable unto the purpose of the apostle, the mention hereof at this time is. He reminds the Hebrews, that he with whom they have to do in this matter, is the Living One; as in like manner he had before exhorted them to take heed of departing from the living God; and afterwards warns them how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, ch. x. 31. So here to dissuade them from the one, and to awe them with the other, he minds them that the Word of God, with whom in an especial manner they have to do, is living. What is contained in this consideration, hath been declared on ch. iii. 13. Now this cannot properly be ascribed unto the word of the gospel. It is indeed the instrumental means of quickening the souls of men with spiritual life. Or it is the instrument that the Lord Christ maketh use of to that purpose. But in itself, it is not absolutely living: it hath not life in itself, nor in its power. But Christ hath so, 'for in him is life, and the life is the light of men,' John i. 4. And this one property

of him with whom we have to do, contains the two great motives unto obedience, namely, that on the one side he is able to support us in it, and reward us eternally for it : on the other, that he is able to avenge all disobedience. The one will not be unrewarded, nor the other unrevenged, for he is the living One with whom in these things we have to do.

Secondly. Is is ενεργης, 'powerful.' Power, for operation, is an act of life ; and such as is the life of any thing, such is its power and operation. These things, life, power, and operation, answer one another. And this word signifies, actual power, power acted or exerted, actuated power, or power effectual in actual operation. Having therefore first assigned life to the Word of God, that is the principle of all power, life in himself, as being the living One, our apostle adds, that he exerts that power of life in actual operation, when, where, and how he pleaseth. He is ενεργης. Ενεργειω, I confess is a common word, signifying the efficacy of any thing in operation, according to its principle of power. But it is that also whereby our apostle most frequently expresseth the almighty, effectual, operating power of God, in and about spiritual things, 1 Cor. xii. 6, 11 ; Gal. ii. 8, iii. 5 ; Eph. i. 11, 19 ; Phil. ii. 13 ; 1 Thess. ii. 13 ; Col. ii. 12, and elsewhere. And this was necessary to be added to the property of life, to manifest that the Lord Christ, the word of God, would effectually put forth his power in dealing with professors, according to their deportment, which afterwards is expressed in sundry instances. And herein the apostle lets both the Hebrews and us know, that the power that is in Christ lies not idle, is not useless, but is continually exercising itself towards us, as the matter doth require. There is also, I acknowledge, an energy, an operative power in the word of God, as written or preached. But it is not in it primarily, by virtue of a life or principle of power in itself ; but only as a consequent of its being his word, who is the living one, or as it is indeed the word of the living God.

The original of the power of Christ in life, and the efficacy of it in operation, being laid down, he farther declares it, 1. By its properties. 2. By its effects.

The property of the word, with respect unto the exercise of his power, is, that it is τομωτερος ὑπερ πασαν μαχαιραν διστομον ; from τεμνω, 'to cut or divide,' is τομος, scindens, incidens, 'cleaving, cutting,' or that which is vi incisoriâ præditus, endued with a cutting power ; τομωτερος, in the comparative degree. Valla, says he, would render it 'incidentior,' were that word used. So in Phocylides :

Ὅπλον τοι λόγος ἀνδρι τομωτερόν ἐστι σιδηρῷ

Telum ferro penetrantius ; acutior, penetrantior, (see the different translations of the word before,) 'sharper, more piercing.' Ὑπερ πασαν μαχαιραν διστομον. The preposition added to the comparative degree, increaseth the signification. For it might have been said, τομος ὑπερ πασαν, or τομωτερος πασης μαχαιρας ; but the construction used expresseth the greatest distance between the comparates. 'Than any two-edged sword ;' διστομος, that is, ἀμφιστομος, gladius biceps, an-

ceps, utrinque incidens; 'double-edged or mouthed, cutting every way.' פִּי חֶרֶב, 'the mouth of the sword,' is a Hebraism; with such an elegance in the allusion, as most languages have admitted it. The metaphor is doubtless taken from wild beasts, that devoured with their mouths, which mankind first feared; which, when the sword began to be used for destruction, gave them occasion to call its edge by the name of its mouth; διστόμος, 'double-mouthed,' cutting each way, that leaves nothing unpierced whereunto it is applied. Christ, in the exercise of his power, is said to be more piercing than any two-edged sword. For so doth God oftentimes set forth himself and his power, with an allusion to things sensible, thereby to convey a notion and apprehension of them to our understandings. So he is said to be a consuming fire, and that he will be as a lion; things of great terror to men. This of a sword is often mentioned with respect unto the Lord Christ, Isa. xlix. 2; Rev. i. 16, 'Out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.' And it is principally assigned unto him with respect unto the exercise of his power in and by his word, which is called the 'sword of the Spirit,' Eph. vi. 17, the 'sword that is on his thigh,' Ps. xlv. 5, 6, which he hath in readiness when he goeth forth to 'subdue the souls of men to himself; as it is also the rod of his power, Ps. cx. 2. But it is Christ himself who makes the word powerful and sharp; the principal efficiency is in himself, acting in and with it. That then which is here intended, is the spiritual, almighty, penetrating efficacy of the Lord Christ, in his dealing with the souls and consciences of men, by his word and Spirit. And whereas there is a twofold use of a sword, the one natural, to cut or pierce through all opposition, all armour of defence; the other moral, to execute judgment and punishments, whence the sword is taken for the right and authority of punishing, and oftentimes for punishment itself, Rom. xiii. 4; here is an allusion unto it in both senses. The Lord Christ, by his word and Spirit, pierceth into the souls of men, as we shall see in the next clause, and that notwithstanding all the defence of pride, security, obstinacy, and unbelief, which they wrap up themselves in, according to the natural use of the sword. Again, he by them executes judgments on wicked men, hypocrites, false professors, and apostates. He 'smites the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slays the wicked with the breath of his lips,' Isa. xi. 4. He cuts off the life of their carnal hopes, false peace, worldly security, whatever they live upon, by the two-edged sword that proceeds out of his mouth. And the minding of the Hebrews hereof, was exceedingly suited to his present purpose, as hath been declared. And in the pursuit of this double allusion, are the ensuing expressions accommodated to the matter intended.

Secondly. This power of the word is described by its effects: δῆκνουμενος ἀχρὶ μερισμοῦ ψυχῆς τε καὶ πνεύματος, ὀστέων τε καὶ μυελῶν, καὶ κριτικὸς ἐνθυμησέων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας. The act itself intended is in the first word, δῆκνουμενος. The object of that act is doubly expressed: 1. By soul and spirit; 2. Joints and marrow; and, 3. There is the extent of this act with reference unto that object, expressing the effect itself, ἀχρὶ μερισμοῦ, 'to the dividing of them.'

*Διεικνουμενος*, perveniens, penetrans; ‘piercing,’ say we, in answer to the sharpness before expressed. The word, in other authors, is variously rendered by pervado, permeo, pervenio, attingo, ‘to pass through, to reach unto, to attain an end;’ from *ἔκω*, ‘to come.’ It is here, in the pursuit of the former allusion, used elegantly to express the power of Christ, as a sword piercing into the soul. And the meaning of the following expressions is, that it doth pierce into the innermost recesses, and as it were the secret chambers of the mind and heart. And this word is nowhere else used in the Scripture.

2. The object of this piercing, is the soul and spirit, *ψυχης τε και πνευματος*. Some think that by *ψυχη*, the natural and unregenerate part of the soul is intended: and by *πνευμα*, that which is in it renewed and regenerate. And there is some ground for that explication of this distinction. For hence is a man wholly unregenerate called *ψυχικος*, 1 Cor. ii. 14, say we, ‘the natural man.’ And though *ψυχη*, absolutely used, do denote either the being of the rational soul, or life, which is an effect thereof; yet, as it is opposed to the spirit, or distinguished from it, it may denote the unregenerate part, as *σαρξ*, ‘the flesh,’ doth, though absolutely it signifies one part of the material substance of the body. From hence is an unregenerate person denominated *ανθρωπος ψυχικος*; so the spiritual part is frequently called *πνευμα*, ‘the spirit,’ as John iii. 6, and a regenerate person *πνευματικος*, ‘the spiritual man,’ 1 Cor. ii. 15. According to this interpretation, the sense of the words is, that the Word of God, the Lord Christ, by his word and Spirit, pierceth into the state of the soul, to discover who or what is regenerate amongst us, or in us, and who or what is not so. The principles of these things are variously involved in the souls of men, so that they are not oftentimes discernible unto them in whom they are, as to whether of them is predominant. But the Lord Christ makes a *μερισμος*, ‘a division with a distribution,’ referring all things in the soul to their proper source and original. Others judge, that whereas our apostle makes a distinction between soul and spirit, as he doth in other places, he intends by *ψυχη*, ‘the soul, the affections, the appetites, and desires;’ and by *πνευμα*, ‘the spirit, the mind, or understanding;’ the *το ἡγεμονικον*, ‘the conducting part of the soul.’ And it is most probable that he here intends the same. For setting out the penetrating power of the word of God, with reference unto the souls of men, he distributes the soul into, as it were, its principal constituent parts, or faculties of it; that is, the mind that leads, conducts, and guides it, and the passions that steer and balance it, wherein all the most secret recesses and springs of all its actings do lie. And this sense is confirmed from the following words, wherein the same thing is asserted under a different notion, namely of the joints and marrow, *αρμοων τε και μυελων*; that which in the soul answers the joints and marrow in the body, by way of allusion, is that which is intended. Joints and marrow in themselves, are things sensual and fleshly, that have no concern in this matter. But in the body they are doubly considerable.

1. Upon the account of their use; and so they are the ligaments of the whole, the principal and only means of communication to the



members from the head, and among themselves. So this use of them is translated to spiritual things, Eph. iv. 16. And by a luxation or discontinuation of them, the whole body will be dissolved.

2. On the account of their hiddenness and secresy, they are undiscernible unto the eye of men; and it must be a sharp instrument or sword that pierceth into them, so as to divide them one from the other, whereby natural life will be destroyed. As these things are in the body for use and hiddenness, with respect unto their being pierced with a sword, so would the apostle have us to understand what he speaks of in reference unto the soul; the most useful and secret parts whereof, are pierced and divided by the power of Christ, whence, if it be in a way of punishment, spiritual death doth ensue. And this is yet farther confirmed, in the last epistle which the apostle gives us of the word of God from its actings and effects; it is a 'discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;' which yet he more clearly explains in the next verse, as we shall see in the opening of it. That then which in all these expressions is intended, is the absolute power and ability of the Son of God, to judge of the rectitude and crookedness of the ways and walkings of the sons of men, under their profession, from the inward frames of their minds and hearts, unto all their outward duties and performances, either in perseverance or backsliding.

The last expression *κριτικός ενθυμησεων και εννοιων καρδιας*, 'is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,' is plainly declarative of what is elsewhere ascribed unto him: namely, that he is *καρδιογνωστής*, he that knoweth and searcheth the hearts of men. This is a peculiar property of God, and is often affirmed so to be, Jer. xvii. 10; 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Ps. vii. 9. And this in an especial manner is ascribed to the Lord Christ, John ii. 24, 25, xxi. 17; Rev. ii. 23. This is eminently expressed in that confession of Peter; 'Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.' By virtue of thy omniscience whereby thou knowest all things, thou knowest my heart, and the love which I have therein unto thee. *Κριτικός*, 'judex, discretor,' one that upon accurate inspection and consideration, judgeth and giveth sentence concerning persons and things. It differs from *κριτής*, a judge, as adding the act of judging unto the right and power of judgment. And this word alone as it is here used, is sufficient to evince that the person of Christ is here principally intended; seeing it cannot be accommodated to the word, as written or preached, in any tolerable manner.

*Καρδιας*: by the heart, as I have shown before, the whole soul and all the faculties of it, as constituting one rational principle of moral actions is intended; and so includes the soul and spirit before mentioned. Here two things are ascribed unto it.

1. *Ενθυμησεις*; thoughts, cogitations; whatever is inwardly conceived *εν τη θυμω*, 'in the mind,' with a peculiar respect unto the irascible appetite, called *יצר מחשבת לב*, Gen. vi. 5, 'the figment of the cogitations of the heart.' The thoughts which are suggested by the inclinations of the affections, with their commotions and stirrings in the heart or mind.

2. *Εννοιαί*, designs or purposes, inwardly framed *ἐν τῷ νοῷ*, in the understanding. Sometimes this word signifies the moral principles of the mind, by which it is guided in its actings. Hence are the *κοιναι εννοιαι*, or common principles that men are directed by in what they do. And here it denotes the principles that men are guided by in their actings, according to which they frame their actual purposes and intentions. Upon the whole matter, the design of the apostle in these words, is to declare the intimate and absolute acquaintance that the word of God hath with the inmost frames, purposes, desires, resolutions, and actings of the minds of professors, and the sure unerring judgment which he makes of them thereby.

VER. 13.—The thirteenth verse contains a confirmation of what is asserted in that foregoing; There the apostle declared how the word of God pierceth into the hearts, minds, and souls of men, to discern, and judge them. That they to whom he wrote, might not doubt hereof, he confirms it by showing the ground of his assertion, which is the natural omniscience of this word of God. It cannot be otherwise than as I have declared, seeing He of whom we speak, with whom we have to do, to whom we must give an account, this Word of God, seeth and knoweth all things, nor can any thing possibly be hid from him. This is the natural coherence of the words; and upon a supposition of a different subject to be spoken of in this and the foregoing verse, no man can frame a tolerable transition in this contexture of words from the one unto the other. I shall therefore proceed in the explication of them, as words of the same design, and used to the same purpose.

*Και ουκ εστι κτισις αφανης ενωπιον αυτου*. The manner of the expression is by a double negation; the one expressed, *ουκ εστι*, ‘there is not;’ the other included in the privative *α* in *αφανης*. And these expressions do emphatically assert the contrary to what is denied. ‘There is not a creature that is not manifest;’ that is, every creature is eminently, illustriously manifest.

*Ουκ εστι κτισις*, ‘there is not a creature,’ any thing created. That is, every creature whatever, whether they be persons or things; angels, men, devils, professors, persecutors, all men of all sorts, and all things concerning them; their inward frames of mind and heart, their affections, and temptations, their state and condition, their secret actings, their thoughts and inclinations. This confirms and carries on the foregoing attributions to the word of God.

*Αφανης*. *Φαινω* is ‘to appear,’ ‘to shine forth;’ and *αφανης* is opposed to *επιφανης*, ‘illustrious,’ ‘perspicuous,’ ‘eminently manifest.’ So it is hid, obscure, not openly or evidently appearing. It is more than *αφαντος*, which is merely ‘one out of sight,’ Luke xxiv. 31. This negation includes a plain, clear, illustrious appearance, nothing shrouding, hiding, or interposing itself to obscure it.

*Ενωπιον αυτου*, ‘before him;’ in conspectu ejus, ‘in his sight.’ Every creature is continually under his view. *Αυτου*, must refer to *ὁ λόγος του Θεου*, ‘the word of God,’ in the beginning of ver. 12; and

cannot respect *προς ὃν*, in the end of this verse. For the interposition of the adversative particle, *δε*, 'but,' and the introduction of the relative *αυτου*, again, do necessarily refer this *αυτου* to *ὁ λογος*, and proves the same person to be all along intended.

*Παντα δε γυμνα και τετραχληλισμενα*. The unusual application of the word *τραχηλιζομαι* in this place, hath made work more than enough for critics. But the design of the apostle is open and plain, however the use of the word be rare, with some special allusion. All agree that *τετραχληλισμενα* is as much as *πεφανερωμενα*, 'absolutely open or manifest.' Only Œcumenius hath a peculiar conceit about it. It is, saith he, *κατω κυπτοντα, και τον τραχηλον επικλινοντα, δια το μη ισχυειν ατεινισαι τη δοξη εκεινη του κοιτου και Θεου ἡμων Ιησου*; 'bowing down, and declining or turning aside the neck, as not being able to behold the glory of Jesus Christ our Judge and God.' But he gives us another signification of the word himself. *Τραχηλος*, 'the neck,' is a word commonly used in Scripture, and in all authors. Thence *τραχηλιζομαι*, in the sense here used, 'to be manifest,' must receive its signification from some posture of the neck; and as joined here with *γυμνος*, 'naked,' it may have respect unto a double allusion. First. Unto wrestlers and contenders in games. First. They were made naked, or stript of their clothes; whence, as it is known, comes *γυμναζω* and *γυμνασιον*, 'vigorously to exercise, and a place of such exercise.' Then in their contending when one was thrown on his back, when he was resupinatus, he was *τραχηλιζομενος*, 'laid open with his throat and neck upwards.' Hence the word comes to signify things that are open, naked, evident, manifest. The face and neck of a naked person being turned upwards, it is manifest who he is. This is to have 'os resupinatum;' and, as he speaks, 'aulam resupinat amici,' of him who sees what is in it to the bottom. There is yet another allusion that may be intended, and this is taken from beasts that are slain, and being stripped of their skins, are hanged by the neck, that all may see and discern them. This is also mentioned by Œcumenius. And Varinus gives us a farther sense, and says that *τραχηλιζειν* is as much as *διχοτομειν*, 'to divide into parts,' or *δια της ραχews σχιζειν*, 'to cut, cleave, or divide through the backbone, that all may be discovered.' And from these two significations, I suppose, the design of the apostle in this allusion, may most probably be collected. It is evident that he hath great regard unto, and doth much instruct the Hebrews, by and from the customs in use amongst themselves. Unto one of them doth he here seem to have respect; namely, the beasts that were sacrificed. The first thing that was done with the body of it, after it was slain, was its being flayed. This work was done by the priests. Hereby the carcase of the beast was made *γυμνον* 'naked,' laid open to the view of all. Then were all its entrails opened, from the neck down to the belly; after which the body was cut into its pieces through the chin-bone, whereby in both the senses mentioned, both of opening and division, it became *τετραχληλισμενον*, 'opened and divided,' that every part of it was exposed to view. Hence the apostle, having compared the word of God before, in its operations, to a two-edged sword, that pierceth to the dividing asun-

der of the joints and marrow, as did the sharp knife or instrument of the sacrificer; here affirms, that all things whatever, and so consequently the hearts and ways of professors, were evident, open, and naked before him, as the body of the sacrificed beast was to the priests, when flayed, opened, and cut to pieces. This is the most probable account of those expressions, in particular, whose general design is plain and evident. And this appears yet farther from the next words.

Τοις ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ, ‘to the eyes of him.’ He followeth on his former allusion; and having ascribed the evidence of all things unto the omniscience of the Word, by the similitude before opened: in answer thereunto, he mentions his eyes wherewith he beholds the things so naked and open before him. Both expressions are metaphorical, containing a declaration of the omniscience of Christ; whom he farther describes in the last words, by our respect unto him in all these things.

Προς ὃν ἡμιν ὁ λογος. How variously these words are rendered, and thereby what various senses are put upon them, hath been declared. But both the proper signification of them, and the design of the place, direct us to one certain sense, namely, ‘to whom we must give an account.’ Λογος is, ‘an account:’ there is no other word used in the New Testament to express it. Προς ὃν is properly, ‘unto whom,’ and not ‘of whom,’ or ‘concerning whom;’ that is, it expresseth the object of the action here mentioned, and not the subject of the proposition. And the whole is rightly rendered, ‘to whom we must give an account,’ or ‘before whom our account is to be made.’ And this answers the design of the apostle in the place; for, evidencing unto them the efficacy and omniscience of the Word of God, trying all things, and discerning all things, he minds them of their near concern in these matters, in that he and they must all give up their final accounts unto and before him, who is so intimately acquainted with what they are, and with whatsoever they shall do in this world.

There are many things remaining to be observed from these words, which are both of great importance in themselves, and do all serve to the farther explanation of the mind of the Holy Ghost in these words, as to what of our instruction is particularly intended in them. And from the properties that are assigned to the word of God, ver. 12, we may observe that,

Obs. I. It is the way of the Spirit of God, to excite us unto especial duties, by proposing unto us, and reminding us of such properties of God, as the consideration whereof may in an especial manner incline us unto them.—Here the Hebrews are minded, that the Word of God is living; to give unto their hearts that awe and reverence of him, which might deter them from backsliding or falling away from him. Our whole duty in general respects the nature of God: it is our giving glory to him because he is God, and as he is God, glorifying him as God, Exod. xx. 2; Isa. xlii. 8; Deut. xxviii. 58; Rom. i. 21. It is our giving him the honour which is due to his being. That is the formal reason of all divine worship and obedience. And as this



duty in general brancheth itself into many particular duties in the kinds of them, all which in various instances are continually to be attended unto, so God hath not only revealed his being unto us in general, but he hath done it by many distinct properties, all of them suited to promote in our minds our whole duty towards God, and this or that duty in particular. And he often distinctly presseth upon us the consideration of those properties, to stir us up unto those distinct duties which they direct unto. God in his nature exists in one simple essence or being; nor are there any things really different or distinct therein. His nature is all his properties; and every one of his properties is his whole nature. But in the revelation of himself unto us, he proposeth his nature, under the notion of these distinct properties, that we may the better know the nature of the duty which we owe unto him, Hos. iii. 5, 'Fear the Lord and his goodness.' So in places innumerable doth he remind us of his power and greatness, that upon our thoughts and apprehensions of them, we might be stirred up to fear him, to trust in him, to get our hearts filled with a due awe and reverence of him, with many other duties of the like nature with them, or evidently proceeding from them. To 'trust,' Isa. xvi. 4, 'fear,' Jer. x. 6, 7, 'his goodness, grace, bounty, patience,' are all of them distinctly proposed unto us; and they all lead us unto especial duties, as the apostle speaks, Rom. ii. 4, 'the goodness of God leadeth to repentance.' From these, or the efficacy of the consideration of them upon our souls, ought to proceed our love, our gratitude, our delight in God, our praise and thankfulness, and by them ought they to be influenced. So his holiness engenerates terror in the wicked, Ps. xxxiii. 14, 'and holy reverence in others, Heb. xii. 27, 28. The like may be spoken of the rest of the properties of God, with respect unto the remainder of our duties. In like manner, and to the same purpose, did God of old reveal himself by his name. He still ascribed such a name to himself as might be prevalent on the minds of men unto their present duties. So when he called Abraham to walk before him, in the midst of many difficulties, temptations, hardships, and dangers, he revealed himself unto him by the name of God Almighty, thereby to encourage him to sincerity and perseverance, Gen. xvii. 1. Hence, in his great distress, he peculiarly acted his faith on the power of God, Heb. ix. 19. And when he called his posterity to comply in their faith and obedience with his faithfulness in the accomplishment of his promises, he revealed himself unto them by his name Jehovah, which was suited to their especial encouragement and direction, Exod. vi. 3. To the same end are the properties of the word of God here distinctly proposed unto us. We are called to the faith and profession of the gospel. Herein we meet with many difficulties without, and are oftentimes ready to faint in ourselves, or otherwise to faint and miscarry. In this matter, we have to do with the Lord Christ: to him we must one day give an account. Wherefore, to stir us up to carefulness, diligence, and spiritual watchfulness, that we give not place to any decays or declensions in our profession, we are especially minded that he is the living One, and one that continually exerciseth acts of life towards us. And in all duties of obedience, it will be our

wisdom always to mind that respect which the properties of God, or Christ, have unto them. Again, the Word of God is so living, as that also it is powerful, or actually always exercising itself in power, actually efficacious towards the ends mentioned, ενεργης. So that,

Obs. II. The life and power of Christ are continually exercised about the concerns of the souls of professors, are always actually efficacious in them and upon them. And this power he putteth forth by his word and Spirit. For we declared in the opening of the words, that the effects here ascribed unto the essential Word, are such as he exerciseth by the word preached, which is accompanied with, and made effectual by the dispensation of the Spirit, Isa. lix. 21. And the power here intended is wholly clothed with the word, thereby it is conveyed to the souls of men, therein is the hiding of this power, Hab. iii. 4. Though it seem weak, and is despised, yet it is accompanied with the hidden power of Christ, which will not fail of its end, 1 Cor. i. 18. And the word preached is not otherwise to be considered, but as that which is the conveyance of divine power to the souls of men. And every impression that it makes on the heart, is an effect of the power of Christ; and this will teach us how to value it and esteem it, seeing it is the only way and means whereby the Lord Christ exerciseth his mediatory power towards us, on the behalf of God, and effectual it will be unto the ends whereunto he designs it. For he is in it sharper than any two-edged sword. So that,

Obs. III. The power of Christ in his word is irresistible, as to whatever effects he doth design it, Isa. lv. 10, 11. The power of Christ in his word is by many exceedingly despised and slighted. Few there are who seem to have any real effects of it produced in them or upon them. Hence, it is looked on in the world, as a thing of no great efficacy; and those who preach it in sincerity, are ready to cry out, 'Who hath believed our report?' But all this ariseth from a mistake, as though it had but one end designed unto it. Had the Lord Christ no other end to accomplish by his word, but merely that which is the principal, the conversion of the souls of his elect, it might be conceived to fail towards the far greatest number of them to whom it is preached. But it is with him in his word as it was in his own person. He was set for the fall, as well as the rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that should be spoken against, Luke ii. 34. As he was to be brought unto some for a sanctuary, so for a 'stone and rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,' among whom many were to stumble at him, and fall and be broken, Isa. viii. 14, 15. And these things are all effectually accomplished towards them to whom he is preached. They are all of them either raised by him unto God out of their state of sin and misery, and do take sanctuary in him from sin and the law, or they stumble at him through their unbelief, and perish eternally. None can ever have Christ proposed unto them upon indifferent terms, so as to be left in the condition wherein they were before, they must all be saved by his grace, or perish under his wrath. And so is it also with him in his word. The end, whatever it be, that he assigns unto it with respect unto any, shall undoubtedly be accomplished. Now,

these ends are various, 2 Cor. ii. 14, 15. Sometimes he intends by it only the hardening and further blinding of wicked sinners, that they may be the more prepared for deserved destruction. Isa. vi. 9—11, 'Go, tell this people, hear you indeed, but understand not, and see you indeed, but perceive not; make the hearts of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? and he answered, Until the cities be wasted without an inhabitant, and the land be utterly desolate.' The principal accomplishment hereof was in the personal ministry of Christ himself, towards the people of the Jews, Matt. xiii. 14; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 40. But the same is the condition of things in the preaching of the word, to this day. Christ designs in it to harden and blind wicked sinners unto their destruction. And herein it misseth not of its effect. They are so, until they are utterly destroyed. Towards some, he designs it only for their conviction, and this it shall, through his power, unconquerably effect. There is not one whom he aimeth to convince, but he shall be convinced, whatever he intends by those convictions. His 'arrows are sharp in the heart of his enemies, whereby the people fall under him,' Ps. xlv. 5. Let men be never so much his enemies, yet if he intends their conviction, he will so sharpen his word upon their hearts, as that they shall let go their professed enmity, and fall down in the acknowledgment of his power. None whom he will have convinced by his word, shall be able to withstand it. Now, as the first sort of men may reject and despise the word as to any convictions from it which it is not designed to give them, but can never avoid its efficacy to harden them in their sins; so this second sort may resist and reject the word as to any real saving work of conversion, which is not in it, or by it assigned unto them; but they cannot withstand its convictions, which are its proper work towards them. With respect unto others, it is designed for their conversion; and the power of Christ doth in this design so accompany it, as that it shall infallibly accomplish that work. These dead creatures shall hear the voice of the Son of God in it, and live. It is then certainly of high concern unto all men unto whom Christ comes in his word, to consider diligently what is, or is like to be the issue and consequence of it with respect unto themselves. Things are not issued according to outward appearance. If there were no hidden or secret events of the dispensation of the power of Christ in the word, all thoughts of any great matter in it might easily be cast off. For we see that the most live quietly under a neglect of it, without any visible effect upon their hearts or lives. And how then is it 'sharper than any two-edged sword?' Things are indeed quite otherwise, the word hath its work on all. And those who are neither convinced nor converted by it, are hardened, which is in many, evident to a spiritual eye. And surely we may do well to consider how it fareth with our own souls in this state of things. It is to no purpose to think to hide things secretly in our own thoughts, and to please ourselves in our own darkness; the power of Christ in the word will reach and search out all; for it pierceth to the dividing



asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow. So that,

Obs. IV. Though men may close and hide things from themselves and others, yet they cannot exclude the power of Christ in his word from piercing into them. Men are apt strangely to hide, darken, and confound things between their soul and their spirit, that is, their affections and their minds. Herein consists no small part of the deceitfulness of sin; that it confounds and hides things in the soul, that it is not able to make a right judgment of itself. So men labour to deceive themselves, Isa. xxviii. 15. Hence, when a man can countenance himself from any thing in his affections, his soul, against the reflections that are made upon him from the convictions of his mind or spirit, or when he can rest in the light of his understanding, notwithstanding the perverseness and frowardness of his affections, he is very apt to be secure in an ill condition. The first deceiveth the more ignorant, the latter the more knowing professors. The true state of their souls is by this means hid from themselves. But the power of Christ in his word will pierce into these things, and separate between them. He doth so as to his 1. discerning, his 2. discovering or convincing, and his 3. judging power. 1. Let things be never so close and hid, he discerneth all clearly and distinctly; they are not hid from him, Ps. cxxxix. 4; Jer. xxiii. 24; see John ii. 23—25. And where he designs 2. The conviction of men, he makes his word powerful to discover unto them all the secret follies of their minds and affections, the hidden recesses that sin hath in them, their close reserves, and spreads them before their eyes, to their own amazement, Ps. l. 21. So our apostle tells us that by prophesying or expounding the word of Christ, the secrets of men's hearts are discovered; that is, to themselves; they find the word dividing asunder between their souls and spirits, whereon they 'fall down and give glory to God,' 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. And hereby also 3. he exerciseth his judging power in men. Let men arm themselves never so strongly and closely with love of sin and pleasure, carnal security, pride, and hatred of the ways of God, until their brows become as brass, and their neck as a sinew of iron; or let their sins be covered with the fair pretence of a profession, Christ by his word will pierce through all into their very hearts, and having discovered, divided, and scattered all their vain imaginations, he will judge them, and determine of their state and condition, Ps. xlv. 5, cx. 6. Hereby doth he break all their strength and peace, and the communication of supplies in sin and security, that have been between the mind and the affections; and destroys all their hopes. Men are apt to please themselves in their spiritual condition, though built on very sandy foundations. And although all other considerations fail them, yet they will maintain a life of hopes, though ungrounded and unwarrantable, Isa. lvii. 10. This is the condition of most false professors; but when the word of Christ by his power enters into their souls and consciences, it utterly casts down all their confidences, and destroys their hopes and expectations. Nothing now remains but that such a person betake himself wholly to the life which he can make in sin with its lusts and pleasures; or else come



over sincerely to him in whom is life, and who giveth life unto all that come unto him. So he 'slays the wicked with the breath of his mouth,' Isa. xi. 4. And this is the progress that the Lord Christ makes with the souls of men. 1. He discovereth himself their state and condition, what is good or evil in them. 2. He discovereth this unto themselves, or convinceth them of their sins and dangers, which surpriseth them with fears, and sometimes with amazements. He judgeth them by his word, and condemns them by it in their own consciences. This makes them give over their old security and confidences, and betake themselves unto new hopes, and yet things may be better with them. 4. He destroys these hopes also, and shows them how vain they are. And hereon, they betake themselves wholly to their sins, so to free themselves from their convictions and fears; or sincerely give up themselves unto him for relief. To this purpose, again, it is added, that this word of God is a 'discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;' that is, one that so discerns them as to put a difference between them, and to pass judgment upon them.

Obs. V. The Lord Christ discerneth all inward and spiritual things, in order to his present and future judgment of those things, and the persons in whom they are, on their account.—Our discerning, our judging are things distinct and separate. Discerning every thing weakly, imperfectly, and by parts or pieces, we cannot judge speedily, if we intend at all to judge wisely. For we must judge after the sight of our eyes, and reprove after the hearing of our ears; that is, according as we can take in by weak means, an understanding of what we are to make a judgment on. With the Word, or Son of God it is not so. For he, at once discerning all things perfectly and absolutely in all their causes, circumstances, tendencies, and ends, in the same instant he approveth or condemneth them. The end of his knowledge of them, is comprised in his knowledge itself. Hence to know, in the Scripture, when ascribed to God, doth sometimes signify to approve, accept, and justify; sometimes to refuse, reject, and condemn. Wherefore Christ's judging of the thoughts and intents of men's hearts, is inseparable from his discerning of them and the end why he fixeth his eye on them. For this cause is he said to be 'of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord,' so as not to judge after 'the sight of his eyes, nor approve after the hearing of his ears,' that is, according to the outward appearance and representation of things, or the profession that men make, which is seen and heard: but he judgeth with righteousness, and reproveth with equity, according to the true nature of things which lieth hidden from the eyes of men, Isa. xi. 3, 4. He knows to judge, and he judgeth in and by his knowledge; and the most secret things are the especial objects of his knowledge and judgment. Let no men please themselves in their secret reserves. There is not a thought in their hearts, though but transient, never arising to the consistency of a purpose, not a pleasing or seeming desirable imagination in their minds, but it lies continually under the eye of Christ, and at the same instant that very judgment is by him passed on them, which shall be given out concerning them at the last day. Oh that we could always consider with what awe

and reverence, with what care and diligence, we ought continually to walk before this holy all-seeing One. In the description that is given of him when he came to deal with his churches, to judge them with righteousness, and reprove them with equity, not according to the sight of his eyes or the hearing of his ears, that is, the outward profession that they made; it is said that his 'eyes were as a flame of fire,' Rev. i. 14, answerable to that of Job to God, 'Hast thou eyes of flesh, or seest thou as a man seeth?' Job. x. 4. He doth not look on things through such weak and failing mediums, as poor frail creatures do; but sees all things clearly and perfectly according as they are in themselves, by the light of his own eyes, which are as a flame of fire. And when he comes actually to deal with his churches, he prefaceth it with this, 'I know thy works,' which leads the way; and his judgment on them, on the account of those works, immediately followeth after, Rev. ii. iii. And it may be observed, that the judgment that he made concerning them, was not only wholly independent on their outward profession, and oftentimes quite contrary to it; but also that he judged otherwise of them, yea, contrary to that which in the secret of their hearts, they judged of themselves. See ch. iii. 17. So when Judas was in the height of his profession, he judged him a devil, John vi. 70, 71. And when Peter was in the worst of his defection, he judged him a saint, as having prayed for him, that his faith might not fail. So doth he know, that he may judge, and so doth he judge together with his knowledge. And this easily and perfectly, for 'all things are naked and opened before him;' so that

Obs. VI. It is no trouble or labour to the Word of God to discern all creatures, and all that is of them, and in them, seeing there is nothing but is evidently apparent, open, and naked, under his all-seeing eye.—It would be necessary here to open the nature of the knowledge or omniscience of God, but that I have done it at large in another treatise, whereunto I refer the reader. Now after the consideration of all the particulars, we may subjoin an observation that naturally ariseth from the multiplying of the instances here given by the apostle, and it is, that

Obs. VII. It is a great and difficult matter really and practically to convince professors of the practical judging omniscience of Jesus Christ the word of God.—On the account hereof, added to the great importance of the thing itself to our faith and obedience, doth the apostle here so multiply his expressions and instances of it. It is not for nothing, that what might have been expressed in one single plain assertion, is here set out in so many, and with such variety of allusions, suited to convey a practical sense of it to our minds and consciences. All professors are ready enough to close with Peter in the first part of his confession, 'Lord thou knowest all things;' but when they come to the other, 'thou knowest that I love thee,' that is, to make a practical consideration of it with respect to their own hearts and ways, as designing in all things to approve themselves to him as those who are continually under his eye and judgment; this they fail in and are hardly brought to. If their minds were fully possessed with the persuasion hereof, were they continually under the power

hereof, it would certainly influence them to that care, diligence, and watchfulness, which are evidently wanting in many, in the most of them. But love of present things, the deceitfulness of sin, the power of temptations, cares, and businesses of life, vain and uncertain hopes, do effectually divert their minds from a due consideration of it. And we find by experience how difficult it is to leave a lasting impression of it on the souls of men. Yet would nothing be of more use to them in the whole course of their walking before God. And this will farther appear, if after the precedent exposition of the several particular parts of these verses, and brief observations from them, we duly consider the general design of the apostle in the words, and what we are instructed in thereby.

In the foregoing verses, having greatly cautioned the Hebrews against backsliding and declension in their profession, acquainting them with the nature and danger of unbelief, and the deceitfulness of sin, whereby that cursed effect is produced; the apostle in these verses gives an account of the reason of his earnestness with them in this matter. For although they might pretend, that in their profession they gave him no cause to suspect their stability, or to be jealous of them; yet he lets them know that this is not absolutely satisfactory, seeing that not only others may be deceived in the profession of men, and give them a name to live who are really dead; but they also may please themselves in an apprehension of their own stability, when they are under manifold decays and declensions. The principles and causes of this evil, are so close, subtle, and deceitful, that none is able to discern them but the all-seeing eye of Jesus Christ. On the account whereof he minds them fully and largely of his power and omniscience, whereunto they ought to have a continual regard in their faith, obedience, and profession. Hence we are instructed,

1. That the beginnings or entrances into declensions in profession, or backslidings from Christ and the ways of the gospel, are secret, deep, and hardly discoverable, being open and naked only to the all-discerning eye of Christ.

2. That the consideration of the omniscience of Christ, his all-searching and all-seeing eye, is an effectual means to preserve the souls of professors from destructive entrances into backslidings from the gospel.

3. The consideration of the omniscience of Christ duly improved, is a great relief and encouragement to those who are sincere and upright in their obedience. For the apostle intends not merely to terrify those who are under the guilt of the evil cautioned against, but to encourage the meanest and weakest sincere believer, who desireth to commend his conscience to the Lord Jesus in his walking before him. And these things being comprehensive of the design of the apostle, in these weighty words of truth and wisdom, and being greatly our concernment duly to consider, must be distinctly handled and spoken to.

Obs. VIII. For the first of the propositions laid down, it is the design of the apostle to teach it, in all those cautions which he gives to these professing Hebrews against this evil, and concerning the subtleties and surprisals wherewith it is attended. See ch. iii. 13, xii. 15.



Everywhere he requires more than ordinary watchfulness and diligence in this matter. And plainly intimates to them, that such is the deceitfulness of sin, so various and powerful are the temptations that professors are to be exercised withal, that unless they are exceedingly heedful, there will be no preventing of a surprisal or seduction into some degrees at least of declension and backsliding from the gospel. There will be some loss or decay in faith or love or works, one way or other.

The churches of Asia are a sad exemplification of this truth. In a short time the most of them were greatly fallen off from their first gospel engagements; yea so far as some of them are threatened with excision and casting off from Christ. And yet no one of those churches seemed to have had the least sense of their own decays; and those especially who had made the greatest progress in falling away, were yet justified by others with whom they conversed, having amongst them a name to live, and applauded themselves in their condition, as that which was good and in nothing blamable. In this state the Lord Christ comes to make a judgment concerning them, as all things lay open and naked under his eye. In the description that is given of him on his entrance into this work, it is said, as was observed before, that his 'eyes were as a flame of fire,' ch. i. 14. Seeing all things, discerning all things, piercing at one view from the beginning to the end of all. And he declares that he will so deal with them that all the churches shall know that he 'searcheth the hearts and reins of men,' ch. ii. 23. And what work doth he make amongst these secure churches; one is charged with loss of love and faith, another of works, a third with lukewarmness and carnal pride, a fourth with spiritual death as to the generality of them; and most of them with various decays and miscarriages, and those such as themselves took no notice of. But his eye, which stays not on the outside of things, be they never so gay or glorious, but pierceth to the secret embryos and first conceptions of sin and declensions, found them out, and passed judgment on them in righteousness and equity.

First. Now one great reason hereof, is taken from the subtilty of the principal causes of backsliding, and of the means or false reasonings whereby it is brought about. That which is wrought subtilly and deceitfully, is wrought closely, and is therefore secret and hidden. And the first impressions that these subtle and deceitful causes make on the minds of professors, the first entanglements which these deceitful reasonings cast on their affections, if they are not merely transient, but abide on their souls, there is in them an entrance begun into a defection from the gospel. And for these causes of declensions, they are everywhere expressed in the Scripture, and every-where expressly declared to be subtle and deceitful. As,

1. Indwelling sin is fixed on as the next cause of declensions and backslidings. This the apostle in this Epistle chargeth, (under the names of 'a root of bitterness,' of the 'sin that doth so easily beset us,' an 'evil heart of unbelief,' and the like) with the guilt of this evil.' And he himself declares this principle to be deceitful, subtle; that is, close, secret, hidden in its operation and tendency, ch. iii. 13.



To this purpose is seducing, enticing, and craft, assigned to it in the Scripture. And it hath amongst others innumerable, this advantage also, that being within us, dwelling in us, having possessed itself of the principles of our natures, it can insinuate all its corrupt and perverse reasonings, under the specious pretence of natural self-love, which is allowable. This our apostle was aware of, and therefore tells us, that when he was called to preach the gospel, 'he consulted not with flesh and blood,' Gal. i. 16. By flesh and blood, no more is intended but human nature as weak and frail. But in and by them the deceitfulness of sin is so ready to impose on us its own corrupt reasonings, that the apostle thought not meet to entertain a parley with the very principles of his own nature about self-preservation. But this deceitfulness of sin, I have handled at large in another treatise. Here only I observe, that the effects of this deceitful principle are, at least in their beginnings and first entrances, very close and secret, open only to the eye of Christ.

2. Satan also hath a principal hand, in effecting or bringing about the declensions of men from, and in their profession. It is his main work, business, and employment in the world. This is the end of all his temptations and serpentine insinuations into the minds of professors. Whatever be the particular instance wherein he dealeth with them, his general design is to draw them off from their first faith, their first love, their first works, and to loosen their hearts from Christ and the gospel. And I suppose it is not questioned but that he carrieth on his work, subtilly, secretly, craftily. He is not called the old serpent for nothing. It is a composition of craft and malice that hath laid him under that denomination. His methods, his depths, his deceits are we cautioned against. Hereabout treats our apostle with the Corinthians, 2 Cor. xi. 3, 'I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.' It is true Eve was so beguiled, but who should now beguile the Corinthians? even the same old deceiver, as he informs them, ver. 14. 'For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light,' namely, in his fair and plausible pretences for the accomplishment of his wicked and abominable ends. He works in this matter, by deceit beguiling the souls of men; and therefore doth his work secretly, closely; 'for in vain is the net spread before the eyes of any fowl.' But his work also lies under the eye of Christ.

3. The world also hath its share in this design. The cares of it and the deceitfulness of riches, further this pernicious work on the minds and ways of professors, Matt. xiii. 22. By them is the seed of the gospel choked, when they pretend only to grow up with it, and that there is a fair consistency between them and profession. Now, though backsliding from Christ and the gospel be thus distinctly assigned to these causes, and severally to one in one place, to another in another, and that as they are especially or eminently predominant in the particular instances mentioned, and so the effect is denominated from them; this is from indwelling sin, this from Satan, and that from the world: yet indeed there is no apostasy or declension in the minds of any which is not influenced by them all. And they are mutually

assistant to each other in their work. Now where there is a contribution of subtilty and craft from several principles, all deeply depraved with that vicious habit, the work itself must needs be close and hidden, which craft and deceit do principally aim at. As that poison must needs be pernicious which is compounded of many poisonous ingredients, all inciting the venom of one another. But the Lord Christ looks through all this hidden and deceitful work, which no eye of man can pierce into.

Secondly. The conjunct reasonings of these deceitful principles, whereby they prevail with professors to backsliding, are plausible, and thereby the malignity of them, and their secret influencing of their minds, hardly discernible. Many of them may be referred to these heads, wherein they do consist. 1. Extenuations of duties and sins. 2. Aggravations of difficulties and troubles. 3. Suggestions of false rules of profession.

*First.* Profession is our avowed observance of all evangelical duties, on the account of the authority of Christ commanding them; and abstinence from conformity to the world in all evil, on the same forbidding it. The forementioned principles labour by all ways to extenuate these duties, as to their necessity and importance. Granted it shall be that they are duties, it may be, but not of that consideration but that they may be omitted or neglected. Consider the severals, in that which is comprehensive of them all.

This is constancy in profession, in a time of danger and persecution. The hearts of men are often seduced with vain thoughts of holding their faith and love to Christ, which they hope will save them eternally, whilst they omit that profession of them, which would endanger them temporally. A duty that also shall be allowed to be; but not of that necessity or importance, as not to be omitted totally, or at least partially, and gradually, to save our present concerns; especially whilst the substance of faith and love to Christ is in our hearts entirely preserved. This ruined many of the rich and great among the Jews, John xii. 42. 'Among the chief rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.' They went a great way in believing: and considering their places and conditions, who would have required more of them? Would you have men, merely on the account of outward profession, hazard the loss of their places, interests, reputation, and all that is dear to them? I know not well what men think in this case, the censure of the Holy Ghost in this matter concerning them is, 'They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God,' ver. 43, than which, nothing almost can be spoken with more severity. And these Hebrews were influenced into declensions from the same fallacy of sin. They had fallen into days wherein profession was perilous. And therefore, although they would not renounce the faith whereby they hoped to be saved, yet they would let go their profession, for which they feared they should be troubled. So our apostle intimates, ch. x. 25. In this and the like instances do the subtle reasonings of sin and Satan secretly corrupt the minds of men, until they are insensibly, and sometimes irrecoverably, engaged in a course of withdrawing from

Christ and the gospel. The same may be observed as to other duties, and especially as to degrees of constancy and fervency in the performance of them. From these the minds of men are often driven and diverted by the crafty reasonings of sin, whereby they enter into apostasy. Some of the churches in the Revelation are charged not absolutely with the loss of their love, but of their first love; that is, the especial degrees of it in fervency and fruitfulness which they had attained.

*Secondly.* By these reasonings the deceitful principles mentioned, do endeavour an extenuation of the guilt of such evils as lie in a tendency to alienate the heart from Christ and the gospel. An instance hereof we have in the Galatians. The observance of Judaical ceremonies was by false teachers pressed upon them. They did not once attempt to draw them from Christ and the gospel, nor would they have endured the proposal of any such thing. Only they desired, that together with the profession of the gospel and the grace of Christ, they would also take upon them the observance of the Mosaic rites and institutions. Hereunto they propose unto them a double motive. 1. That they should hereby have union with the professing Jews, and so all differences be removed. 2. That they should escape persecution, which was then upon the matter stirred up by the envious Jews alone, Gal. vi. 12. If both these ends may be obtained, and yet faith in Christ and the gospel be retained, what inconvenience or harm would it be, if they should engage into these observances. Accordingly many did so, and took upon them the yoke of Judaical rites. And what was the end of this matter; Our apostle lets them know, that what they thought not of was befallen them; and yet was the genuine effect of what they did. They had forsaken Christ, fallen from grace, and beginning in the spirit were ending in the flesh. For under the specious pretences before mentioned, they had done that which was inconsistent with the faith of the gospel. Yea, but they thought not in the least of any declension from Christ. The matter is not what they thought, but what they did. This they did, and this was the effect of it. The corrupt reasonings of their minds, deceived by the pleas and pretences mentioned, had prevailed with them to look on these things, if not their duties, yet of no ill consequence or importance. So were they deluded by extenuations of the evil proposed unto them, until they justly fell under the censures before mentioned. And the principal mischief in this matter is, that when men are beguiled by false reasonings into unwarrantable practices, their corruptions are variously excited to adhere to, and defend what they have been overtaken withal, which confirms them in their apostasies.

*Thirdly.* Aggravations of difficulties in the way of profession, is made use of to introduce a declension from it. For when thoughts and apprehensions of them are admitted, they insensibly weaken and dishearten men and render them languid and cold in their duties, which tends unto backsliding. The effect of such discouragements our apostle expresseth, ch. xii. 12, 13. 'Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way.' Having laid down the afflictions and persecutions which they were to meet

withal, and also declared the end and use of them in the grace and wisdom of God, he shows how ready men are to despond and grow heartless under them, which deprives them of all life and spirit in their profession, which he warns them to avoid, lest all end in apostasy. For if men begin once to think hard and strange of the trials that may befall them on the account of their religion, and cannot find that in it which will outweigh their sufferings, they will not long retain it. Nor is it advisable for any man to entertain a profession, that will not keep him and maintain him in a dear year; but leave him to sink under those troubles which may befall him on the account thereof. As every thing whose real good doth not out-balance the evil, that for it, and upon its single account we must undergo, is certainly ineligible. Herein, then, lies no small part of the deceitful actings of the subtle principles mentioned. They are ready to fill the mind with dismal apprehensions of the difficulties, dangers, troubles, reproaches, and persecutions that men may undergo on the account of profession. And unless they can make the Lord Christ absolutely to be their end, portion, and measure of all, so as to reckon on all other things not according to their own nature, but according to the respect which they have unto him, and their interest in him, it is impossible but these things will secretly influence them into declensions from their profession. In the meantime, aggravating thoughts of trouble please men's minds; it seems reasonable unto them, yea, their duty, to be terrifying themselves with the apprehensions of the evils that may befall them. And when they come indeed, if liberty, if goods, if life itself be required in the confirmation of our testimony to the gospel, there needs no more to seduce us unto a relinquishment of its profession, but only prevailing with us to value these things out of their place, and more than they deserve, whereby the evils in the loss of them will be thought intolerable. And it is marvellous to think how the minds of men are insensibly and variously affected with these considerations, to the weakening, if not the ruin of that zeal for God, that delight in his ways, that rejoicing in tribulation, which are required to the maintaining of a just and due profession. And against the effect of such impressions, we are frequently warned in the Scripture.

*Fourthly.* These corrupt and fallacious reasonings do cover and conceal the entrances of apostasy, by proposing false rules of walking before God in profession, wherein men are apt to satisfy and deceive themselves. So in particular, they make great use of the examples of other professors, which on very many accounts is apt to deceive them, and draw them into a snare. But this head of the deceit of sin, I have spoken to at large in another discourse.

*Secondly.* The beginnings of declensions from Christ and the gospel, are deep and hidden, because oftentimes they are carried on by very secret and imperceptible degrees. Some men are plunged into apostasy by some notorious crimes and wickednesses, or by the power of some great temptations. In these it is easy to discover the beginning of their fall, as it was with Judas when the devil entered into him, and prevailed with him for money to betray his master. And many such there are in the world, who, for money or the things that end in money



part with their professed interest in Christ and the gospel. And if they get more than Judas did, it is because they meet with better chapmen in the world, than were the priests and pharisees. The fall of such men from their profession, is like the dying of a man by a fever. The first incursion of the disease, with its whole progress, is manifest. It is with others in their spiritual sickness and decays as with those who are in a hectic distemper; which at first is hardly known, and in its progress hardly cured. Small negligences and omissions are admitted, and the soul is habituated unto them, and so a progress is made to greater evils; of which also, as I remember, I have treated elsewhere.

Thirdly. Revolters and backsliders do their utmost endeavour to hide the beginnings of their falls from themselves and others. This makes the discovery and opening of them to be difficult. By the false and corrupt reasonings before mentioned, they labour to blind their own eyes, and to hide their own evils from themselves. For in this case men are not deceived, unless they contribute to their own beguiling. Their own hearts seduce them, before they feed on ashes. And herewith they willingly attend unto the delusions of Satan and the world which they do in not watching against them as they ought. So are they deceived themselves. And when they have made such a progress in their declensions, as that they begin themselves, it may be, to be sensible of it, then do they endeavour by all means to hide them from others, by which means, at length, they again hide them from themselves, and rest satisfied in what they have pleaded and pretended, as if it were really so. They will use pleas, excuses, and pretences until they believe them. Was it not so with the church of Sardis? Even when she was almost dead, yet she had outwardly so demeaned herself, as to have a name, that is, a great reputation, to live, to be in a good thriving state and condition. And Laodicea in the height of her apostasy, yet persuaded herself that she was rich and increased, and wanted nothing; and knew not, as is expressly testified, that she was poor, and fallen under the power of manifold decays. From these and the like causes it is, that the beginnings of men's backslidings from the gospel are so secret and hidden, as that they are open only to the all-seeing eye of Jesus Christ; of which our apostle here reminds these Hebrews to beget in them a watchful jealousy over themselves.

And this effect it should have upon all. This, the nature of the thing itself, and the frequent Scripture admonitions, do direct us unto, namely, that we should be continually watchful over our own hearts, lest any beginnings of backslidings or declensions from the gospel, should have taken place or prevailed in us. Cautions to this purpose the Scripture abounds withal. 'Let him that standeth,' that is, in the profession of the gospel, 'take heed lest he fall;' or beware that he decay not in his faith and love and zeal, and so fall into sin and apostasy. And again, 'Take heed that we lose not the things that we have wrought,' 2 John 8. That profession which is not working, is ever false and to be despised. Faith worketh by love. Hath it been so with us that profession hath been effectual in working? let us look to it carefully lest we discontinue that course, or by apostasy

forfeit all the benefit and advantage of it. And our apostle in this Epistle in an especial manner abounds with admonitions to the same purpose; because the Hebrews, on many accounts, were much exposed to the danger of this sin. And it is the duty of the dispensers of the gospel to apply themselves particularly to the state, condition, and temptations of them with whom in an especial manner they have to do: and let not any man think that the earnest pressing of this duty of constant watchfulness against the first entrances of spiritual declensions, is not of so much use and necessity as is pretended. We see what the neglect of it hath produced. Many who once made a zealous profession of the truth, having strong convictions upon their own souls, and thereby in a way of receiving more grace and mercy from the Lord, have, through a neglect of this duty, fallen from the ways of God, and perished eternally, 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. And many more have exceedingly dishonoured God, and provoked his indignation against the whole generation of professors in the world, which hath caused him to fill all his dispensations with tokens of his displeasure. This hath laid all the virgins, even wise and foolish, asleep, whilst the bridegroom standeth at the door. There is then no greater evidence of an unsound heart, than to be careless about the beginnings of spiritual decays in any kind. When men once lay up all their spiritual interest, in retaining some kind of persuasion, that in the end they may come to heaven, and so they may by any means retain that persuasion, are regardless of exact watchfulness and walking, they are even in a perishing condition. There needs no greater evidence, that self is their utmost end; that they have neither care to please God, nor love to Christ, nor delight in the gospel, but with Balaam desire only to die the death of the righteous. Yet thus it is with them who neglect the first entrances of any cold, careless frame or temper of heart in gospel duties. They little consider either the power or deceitfulness of sin, who are negligent in this matter, and how backsliding will get and firm its ground in the soul after a while, which might with ease have been at first prevented. Let us, therefore, because of the importance of this duty, consider some directions for the preventing of this evil; and some instructions how to discover it in the ways and means of its prevalency.

1. Take heed of weariness in and of those ways of God, wherein you have been engaged according to his mind. A spontaneous lassitude in the body is deemed an ill prognostic: some great distemper usually ensues upon it. So is weariness of any of God's ways: its hidden cause and consequent that will in time appear, is some great spiritual distemper. And this our apostle intimates to be the beginning of most men's apostasy, ch. x. 36—39. Men, through want of patience to continue in well-doing, grow weary, and oftentimes draw back unto perdition. And there are three things that men are apt to grow weary of in the ways of God, and thereby to enter into spiritual decays.

1. Of duties. Many duties are burdensome to flesh and blood, that is, nature as weak and frail: all of them are opposite to flesh and blood, that is, nature as corrupt and sinful. In the one sense,

nature is ready to faint under them ; in the other, to raise up an opposition against them ; and that by a secret aversion in the will, with innumerable corrupt reasonings, excuses, and pretences in the mind. If they prevail to an effectual weariness, that is, such as shall introduce a relinquishment of them in part or in whole, as to the matter of them, or the manner of their performance, those in whom they do so, will have cause to say, 'We were almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly,' Prov. v. 14. Hence is the caution of our apostle, ch. iii. 13, 'And, brethren, be not weary in well-doing,' Gal. vi. 9. A patient continuance in an even constant course of well-doing, in a due observance of all gospel-duties, will be burdensome and grievous unto you ; but faint not, if you intend to come to the blessed end of your course in peace with God. Now, weariness in duty discovers itself by impairing it, in the intenseness of our spirits, or constancy of its performance. Where there is a decay in either of these, weariness is in the root, and after weariness ensues contempt, Mal. i. 13. And whatever interpretation men may put upon this frame, God calls it a being 'weary of himself,' Isa. xliii. 22, which is the next step to forsaking of him. Wherever therefore this begins to discover itself in the soul, nothing can relieve him but a vigorous shaking off of all appearances of it by a warm constant application of the mind to those duties, whose neglect it would introduce.

2. Of waiting to receive any particular good or special mercy from God in his ways. God is a good and gracious master. He entertains none in his service, but he gives them in hand that which is an abundant recompence for all the duties he will require of them. 'In keeping of his commands there is a great reward,' Ps. xix. 11. Every part of his work carries its own wages along with it. Those who serve him, never want enough to make them rejoice when they fall into manifold temptations, and to glory in tribulations, which are the worst things that do or can befall them on his account. But moreover, besides the pledges that he gives them in hand, they have also many great and precious promises, whereby they are justly raised up to the expectation of other and greater things than at present they do enjoy. Whatever mercy or grace, by any or all the promises of God, they have been made partakers of, there is still more in them all, nay in every one of them, than they can here come to the actual enjoyment of. Yet are all these things theirs, and they have a right unto them. This makes waiting on God so excellent a grace, no necessary a duty. Now, sometimes this hath respect unto some mercy, that a man may in any especial manner stand in need of. Here he would have his faith expedited, his expectation satisfied, and his waiting have an end put unto it. If he fail herein, it maketh his heart sick. But here lieth the great trial of faith. He that believeth, that is, truly and sincerely, he will not make haste ; that is, he will abide in his duty, and not limit the Holy One as to times and seasons. If those who are called hereunto grow weary of it, they are in the high road to apostasy. Consolation, light, and joy do not come in through the administration of the ordinances answerably to the measures they have themselves

given unto, or taken of things; strength against a temptation or corruption is not yet received, upon prayer or supplication; they are weary of waiting, and so give over. This will end in absolute apostasy, if not timely prevented. See the cautions of the apostle in this matter, ch. vi. 11, 12, and x. 35, 36.

3. Weariness of troubles and persecutions is of the same tendency. It opens the door to apostasy. They are for the most part the portion of believers in this world. Nor have they cause to complain of their lot. They were told of it before hand. Had they been allured on unto faith and profession with hopes and expectations of peace and prosperity in this world, and were afterwards surprised with the cross, they might have some reason to complain. But the matter is quite otherwise. Our Saviour hath told us all plainly, that if we will not take up the cross, we must let him alone. If, saith he, you will follow me, you must take up the cross; yea, fathers, mothers, houses, lands, and possessions, if called for, and probably they will be called for, must go, or be foregone, for my sake and the gospel. If you like not these terms you may let them and me alone. So our apostle assures us that they who will 'live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,' 2 Tim. iii. 12. There is a kind of profession that may escape well enough in the world, such as men shall have no disadvantage by in this life, nor advantage by in that which is to come. But that profession which causeth men to live godly in Christ Jesus, will, for the most part be attended with persecution. And this are we all forewarned of. But so foolish are we generally, that when these things befall us we are apt to be surprised, as if some strange thing, something foreign to our condition had seized on us, as the apostle Peter intimates, 1 Pet. iv. 12. And if men by their natural, courage, their spirit to sustain infirmities, can hold out the first brunt of them, yet when they begin to return and to be prolonged, to follow one upon another, and no way of deliverance or of ending them be in view, they are apt to be weary, and cast about like men in a storm, how they may give over their intended voyage, and retreat into some harbour, where they may be in peace and safety. Omission of provoking duties, or compliance with pleasing ways in such a condition, begin to be considered as a means of relief. And this with many is an entrance into apostasy, Matt. xiii. 21. And this is confirmed as by testimonies of the Scripture, so by instances and examples in all ages of the church. This therefore the apostle, in an especial manner, treats with these Hebrews about, plainly declaring that if they grew weary of their troubles, they would quickly fail in their profession, ch. vi. 11, 12, and multiplies both reasons and examples to encourage them to the contrary, ch. x. xi. xii. For when men begin to wax weary of troubles and persecutions, and to make their own carnal reasonings, affections, and desires, to be the measure of their suffering, or what it is meet for them to undergo upon the account of the gospel, they will quickly decline from it. Now, because this is the common way and means whereby men are wrought to decays in their profession, and insensibly to apostasy, it may not be amiss to subjoin some few considerations, which may help to relieve our spirits



under their troubles, and to preserve them from fainting or being weary. As,

1. What is it that these troubles do or can deprive us of, whatever their continuance be? Is it of heaven, of everlasting rest, of peace with God, of communion with Christ, of the love and honour of saints and angels? These things are secured utterly out of their reach, and they cannot for one moment interrupt our interest in them. This is Paul's consideration, Rom. viii. 38, 39. And had we a due valuation of these things, what may outwardly befall us in this world on their account, would seem very light unto us, and easy to be borne, 2 Cor. iv. 15—18.

2. What is it that they fall upon and can reach unto? It may be they may deprive us of our riches, our liberty, our outward ease and accommodations, our reputation in the world. But what perishing trifles are these, compared to the eternal concerns of our immortal souls! It may be they may reach this flesh, these carcases that are every day crumbling into dust. And shall we faint or wax weary on their account? Suppose we should, to spare them, turn aside to some crooked paths wherein we suppose we may find security, God can send diseases after us that shall irrecoverably bring on us all those evils, which by our sins we have sought to avoid. He can give a commission to a disease, to make the softest bed a severe prison, and fill our loins and bones with such pains as men cannot inflict on us, and keep us alive under them. And for death itself, the height, complement, and end of temporary trouble, how many ways hath he to cast us into the jaws of it, and that in a more terrible manner than we need fear from the children of men; and shall we, to preserve a perishing life, which it may be, within a few days, a fever or a fever may deprive us of, startle at the troubles which on account of Christ and the gospel we are to undergo, and thereby forfeit all the consolations of God which are able to sweeten every condition unto us? This consideration is proposed unto us by Jesus Christ himself, Matt. x. 28.

3. Whereunto, in the wisdom and grace of God, do these things tend, if managed aright in us, and by us? There is nothing that the Scripture doth more abound in, than in giving us assurance that all the evils which we do, or may undergo, upon the account of Christ and his gospel shall all work effectually towards our unspeakable spiritual advantage; see Rom. v. 1—4.

4. For whom or whose sake do we or are we to undergo the troubles mentioned? A man of honesty and good nature will endure much for a parent, a child, a friend; yea, the apostle tells us, that for 'a good man one would even dare to die,' Rom. v. 7. But who is it whom we are to suffer for? Is it not he who is infinitely more than all these in himself and to us? Consider his own excellency, consider his love to us, consider the effects of the one and the fruits of the other, whereof we are, and hope to be made partakers; and it will be granted that he is worthy of our all, and ten thousand times more, if it were in our power. Besides, he calls us not to any thing but what he went before us in; and went before us in many things

wherein he calls not us to follow him, for he underwent them that we might escape them. He died that we might live, and was made a curse, that the blessing might come upon us. Let us not then be so foolish, so unthankful, so brutish, as to think any trouble too great or too long to be undergone for him. This our apostle at large expresseth, Phil. iii. 7—10.

5. What is the end of these trials and troubles, which we are so ready to faint and despond under? Eternal rest and glory do attend them; see 2 Thess. i. 7; 2 Cor. iv. 17; Rev. vii. 13, 14.

These, and the like considerations, being pleaded in the mind and soul, may be a means to preserve them from fainting under troubles, that do or may befall men on the account of the profession of the gospel, which is apt to dispose them unto backslidings.

There are sundry means that may be improved to prevent the entrancess of the decays insisted on; amongst all which none so proper as that here mentioned by our apostle, and which is comprised in our next proposition. For,

Obs. IX. A due and holy consideration at all times of the all-seeing eye of Jesus Christ, is a great preservative against backslidings or declensions in profession. This is the end for which the mention of it is here introduced by the apostle. It was not in his way, nor was it any part of his design to treat absolutely about the omniscience of Christ. Nothing could be more foreign to his present discourse. But he speaks of it on purpose as an effectual means to awe and preserve their souls from the evil that he dehorted them from, and warned them of. And the consideration of it is so on many accounts. For,

First. If we retain this in remembrance, that all the most secret beginnings of spiritual declensions in us, are continually under his eye, it will influence us unto watchful care and diligence. Some, with Sardis, are ready to please themselves, whilst they keep up such a profession as others with whom they walk do approve of, or cannot blame. Others, with Laodicea, think all is well, whilst they approve themselves, and have no troublesome accusations rising up against their peace in their own consciences, when it may be their consciences themselves are debauched, bribed, or secure. For many regard not lesser things, which others neither observe to their own disreputation, nor themselves are affected with to their disquiet. And hereby are they insensibly betrayed into apostasy, while one neglect follows another, and one evil is added to another, until a breach be made upon them, great like the sea, that cannot be healed. Herein then lies a great preservative against this running danger. Let the soul consider constantly, that the eye of Christ, with whom principally, and upon the matter solely, in these things he hath to do, and to whom an account of all must be one day given, is upon him; and it cannot but keep him jealous over himself, lest there should any defiling root of bitterness spring up in him. To him ought we in all things to approve ourselves, and this we cannot do without a continual jealousy and constant watchfulness over our hearts, that nothing be found there that may displease him; and whatever is there, it is all open and naked unto him. And,

Secondly. The Lord Christ doth not behold or look on the evils that are or may be, in the hearts of professors, as one unconcerned in them, by a mere intuition of them; but as one that is deeply concerned in them, and as it were troubled at them. For by these things is his good Spirit grieved and vexed, and great reproach is cast upon his name. When the miscarriages of professors break out so far as that the world takes notice of them, it rejoiceth in them, and triumpheth over that truth and those ways, which by them are professed. And when other believers or professors observe them, they are grieved and deeply afflicted in their minds. And who knows not, that even the consideration of these things is of great use to prevail with sincere professors, unto watchfulness over their ways and walkings; namely, lest the name of God should be evil spoken of by reason of them, or the spirits of the servants of Christ be grieved by them. How often doth David declare, that he would take heed to his ways because of his enemies or observers, those that watch for his halting, and would improve their observation of it to the dishonour of his profession. And on the other side, he prays that none which feared God might be ashamed on his account, or troubled at his failings; and therefore did he labour in all things to preserve his integrity, and keep himself from sin. Nor have they any respect unto the glory of God, who have not the same sense and affections in such cases. Now, if these things are, or ought to be, of such weight with us, as to what comes under the cognizance of men, or that is open and naked unto men according to their capacity of discerning, what ought our thoughts to be of all things of the same nature, that fall fully and solely under the cognizance of Christ, considering his concern in them, and how he is affected with them. And so it is with respect unto the first most secret and imperceptible spiritual decays that may befall us. Yea, he lays most weight on the things that are known to himself alone; and would have all the churches know and consider, that he searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of men. Neither can we have in anything greater evidence given unto our sincerity, than when we have an especial watchful regard unto those things which lie under the eye of Christ alone, wherein we have to do with him only. This testifieth a pure, unmixed, uncorrupted faith and love, towards him. Where therefore there is anything of sincerity, there will be a continual care about these things, upon the account of the concern of Christ in them. And,

Thirdly. We may do well to remember, that he so sees all our neglects and decays, as in an especial to take notice of their sinfulness and demerit. Many of the churches in the Revelation pleased themselves in their state and condition, when yet, because of their decays, the Lord Christ saw that guilt in them and upon them, as that for it he threatened them with utter rejection, if they prevented it not by repentance, which accordingly befel some of them. We are apt to take a very undue measure of our failings; and so esteem this or that folly, neglect, or decay, to have no great guilt attending them; so that we may well enough spare them, and ourselves in them. And the reason thereof is, because we are apt to consider only acts or omissions themselves, and not the spring from whence they do proceed, nor the circumstances wherewith they are attended, nor the ends whereunto

they tend. But, saith our apostle, all things are open and naked before him, neither is there anything that is hid from his eyes. There is no omission of duty, no neglect of the acting or stirring up of any grace, no sinful miscarriage, or worldly compliance, wherein the beginnings of our decays do or may consist; but that together with all their causes and occasions, their aggravating circumstances, their end and tendency, they are all under the eye of Christ, and so their whole guilt is spread before him. And oftentimes there is a more provoking guilt in some circumstances of things, than in the things themselves. He sees all the unkindness and unthankfulness from whence our decays proceed: all the contempt of him, his love and grace, wherewith they are attended; the advantage of Satan and the world in them, and the great end of final apostasy whereunto they tend, if not by grace prevented. All these things greatly aggravate the guilt of our inward spiritual decays; and the whole provocation that is in them lies continually under his eye. Hence his thoughts of these things are not as our thoughts commonly are. But it is our wisdom to make his the rule and measure of ours.

Fourthly. He so sees all things of this kind, as that he will pass judgment on us and them accordingly: it may be in this world, by sore afflictions and chastisements, but assuredly at the last day. Alas, it is not the world that we are to be judged by: if it were, men might hide their sins from it; nor is it the saints nor angels, who discover not the secret frames of our hearts; but it is He who is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. This our apostle directs us to the consideration of; for, after he hath given the description of the word of God insisted on, he adds, that it is He to whom we must give up our account. And how shall backsliders in heart escape his righteous judgment? Secresy is the relief of most in this world: darkness is their refuge: before him these things have their aggravation of guilt, and will yield no relief.

Again. He so discerns all declensions in the hearts and spirits of professors, as withal to be ready to give them supplies of help and strength against all the causes of them, if sought unto in a due manner. And there can be no greater encouragement to them that are sincere, unto the use of their utmost endeavours, to preserve their faith and profession entire for him. And this will be further improved in our consideration of the last observation, which we drew from the words of the apostle, and the exposition of them; which is, that,

Obs. X. A due, holy consideration of the omniscience of Christ, is a great encouragement unto the meanest and weakest believers, who are upright and sincere in their faith and obedience.—To this purpose are all these properties of Christ proposed unto us, and to be improved by us. They all are suited to give encouragement unto us in our way and course of obedience.

Hence is he able to take care of, and to encourage the least beginnings of grace in the hearts of his disciples. It is his office to take care of the whole seed of God, of all the work of the Spirit of grace. This he could not do, without that all discerning ability, which is here ascribed unto him. By this he takes notice of the beginnings, increase,



growth, and decays of it, from first to last. Hence he says of himself, that he will not 'break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax,' Matt. xii. 20. Be our spiritual strength but like that which is naturally in a bruised reed, which is the next degree to none at all; he will not break it; that is, he will take care that it be not bruised, despised, or discouraged, but will cherish it, and add strength unto it. The smoking of flax also expresseth the least degree imaginable of grace, yet neither under his eye and care shall this be quenched. It is easy with him to discover and blast the hypocrisy of false pretenders. He did so by one word to him who boasted of 'keeping all the commandments from his youth,' Matt. xix. 18—20. So he 'slays the wicked by the breath of his lips,' Isa. xi. 4. Be their profession never so specious or glorious; do they please themselves in it, and deceive others by it; he can come to their consciences under all their pretences, and by his word and Spirit, slay all their false hopes, discover their hypocrisy, and strip them naked of their profession to the contempt of all. And so doth he know, and take care of the least dram of sincerity in the weakest soul that belongs unto him. So he did in the poor woman, when she owned herself to be no better than a dog, Matt. xv. 27, 28. He doth not only bear his lambs in his arms, the weakest of the flock who have an appearance of life and of following him in them; but also gently leads those that are with young, Isa. xl. 11, who as yet have but newly conceived his grace in their hearts.

And this gives us a stable ground whereon to answer that great objection, which many souls make against their own peace and consolation. They are convinced of the excellency of Christ, and of the suitableness of his grace and righteousness unto their wants. They are also satisfied in the faithfulness of gospel-promises, and the stability of the covenant of grace; with all other principles and grounds of evangelical consolation. But they look on themselves as unconcerned in all these things. As far as they know, they have no grace in them, and therefore have no interest in, or right unto, what is proposed to them. And hereon ensue various entanglements in their minds, keeping them off from sharing in that strong consolation which God is abundantly willing that all the heirs of the promise should receive. The consideration of the properties of the Lord Christ insisted on, is exceedingly suited to the removal of this objection out of the way. To confirm this, I shall consider the whole case a little more largely. We may then observe,

1. That the beginnings of most things are imperceptible. Things at first are rather known by their causes and effects, than from any things discernible in their own beings. As they are gradually increased, they give evidence of themselves. As a little fire is known by the smoke it causeth, when itself cannot be seen.

2. That the beginnings of spiritual things in the souls of men, are moreover very secret and hidden, upon many especial accounts and reasons. Grace in its first communication is a thing new to the soul, which it knows not how to try, examine, or measure. The soul is possibly put by it under some surprise, as was Rebekah when she had conceived twins in her womb. Until such persons seriously consult

with God by his word, they will be at a great loss about their own state and condition. Again, Satan useth all means possible to darken the mind that it may not aright apprehend the work of God in it, and upon it. His first design is to keep us from grace; if he be cast therein, his reserve is to keep us from consolation. His sleights and methods herein are not now to be insisted on. Hence most of the objections we meet with from persons under darkness, as to gospel-comforts and refreshment, may be easily manifested to be his suggestions. Moreover, indwelling corruption doth exceedingly endeavour to cloud and darken the work of God's grace in the soul. And it doth so two ways especially: 1. By a more open discovery of itself in all its evil, than it did before. Grace is come upon it, as its enemy, and that which fights against it, designing its ruin. The very first actings of it, lie in a direct opposition to the former rule of sin in the heart. This, inbred corruption meeting withal, sometimes it is excited unto rage, and presseth for its own satisfaction with more earnestness than formerly, when it was as it were in the full and quiet possession of the soul. This causeth darkness and trouble in the mind, and keeps it off from discerning anything of the work of God in it. 2. By a sensible opposition of gospel-duties. This it will raise against that spiritual manner of their performance, which a gracious soul now aims at; though it was more quiet when only the outward bodily exercise was attended unto. These things surprise beginners in grace; and leave them in the dark as to what is their interest in it.

3. Believers in this state and condition, have in themselves many just grounds of fears and jealousies concerning themselves; from which they know not how to disentangle themselves. The many self-deceivings which they either see the example of in others, or read of in the Scripture, make them jealous, and that justly, over their own hearts. And whereas they find much hypocrisy in their hearts in other things, they are jealous, lest in this also they should deceive themselves. And many other reasonings there are of the same nature whereby they are entangled.

Against all these perplexities much relief may be administered from this consideration, that the Lord Christ, with whom we have to do, sees, knows, and approves, of the least spark of heavenly fire that is kindled in us by his Spirit; the least seed of faith and grace that is planted in us, is under his eye and care, to preserve, water, and cherish it. And this may be pressed in particular instances. As,

1st. He sees and takes notice of the least endeavours of grace in the heart against the power of sin. This the soul wherein it is, may not be acquainted with, by reason of that pressing sense which it hath, from the assaults that sin makes upon it. These so imbitter it, that it cannot find out unto its satisfaction, the secret lustings and warrings of the spirit against the flesh. As one that is deeply sensible of the weight of his burden, which is ready to overbear him, doth not perceive his own strength whereby he standeth under it. But this lies under the eye of Christ distinctly, and that so as to give in suitable help and succour unto it, in a time of need; as is declared in the next verses.

2d. He sees and perceives the principle and actings of grace, in that very sorrow and trouble wherewith the soul is even overwhelmed, in an apprehension of the want of it. He knows that much of many a soul's trouble for want of grace, is from grace. There is in it the search of grace, after an increase and supply. He sees the love that works in trouble for want of faith; and the faith that works in trouble for want of holiness. And these things he takes care of.

3d. He finds grace in those works and duties, wherein they by whom they are performed, it may be, can find none at all. As he will manifest at the last day, that he observed that filth and wickedness, that perverse rebellion in the ways of wicked men, which themselves took no notice of, or at least were not thoroughly convinced of; so he will declare the faith and love which he observed in the duties of his disciples, which they never durst own in themselves. This is fully declared, Matt. xxv. 34, to the end.

4th. How small soever that grace be, which he discovers in the souls of his, he accepts of it, approves it, and takes care for its preservation and increase. The life of it doth not depend on our knowledge, but his. And as these things do really tend to the relief and consolation of believers, so they do justly deserve to be more largely insisted on, and more fully improved, but that the nature of our present design will not admit of it in this place.

VER. 14.—IN the close of this chapter, the apostle gives us a summary improvement of all the foregoing discourses and arguings, contained in it. Especially he insists on a double inference unto the practice of those duties, which by his former reasonings he had evinced to be incumbent on all professors of the gospel. And these are two. The one more general, with respect unto that great end which he aims at in the whole Epistle; the other containing an especial means conducing unto that end. The first is expressed in the 14th verse, the other in those two that do ensue. The first is, that we would hold fast our profession, which is now the third time mentioned, ch. iii. 6, 14, and here, besides sundry other times in terms equivalent. The latter consists in our application of ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest, for help and assistance to enable us so to do. For this is a great and difficult duty, which, without especial supplies of grace, we are not able to discharge.

Unto this twofold duty, there is likewise here proposed a double encouragement. And in these, various motives, reasons, and directions are included respectively. The first of these encouragements is expressed, ver. 14, consisting in sundry particulars, all tending unto our furtherance under the great duty of holding fast our profession unto the end. The other in ver. 15, wherein on many grounds we are assured of the assistance which we do stand in need of; unto the use and due improvement whereof we are exhorted, ver. 16.

Moreover, in these words, the apostle makes a transition from what in general he had discoursed on, unto the handling of that wherein his great design lay; which he had now fully made way for. And this was destructive to the life and soul of Judaism. Having, there-

fore, ch. iii. 1, affirmed that Jesus Christ was the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, he first undertakes the former. Therein he positively declares that he was the Apostle, Legate, and Ambassador of God, to reveal and declare his will unto the church. And because this was the office of Moses of old, with respect unto the church of the Jews, in the giving of the law, he makes a comparison between them: which, as it was necessary in his dealing with the Hebrews, who adhered unto, and extolled, yea, almost deified Moses, so it gave him occasion to express much of the excellency of Christ in that office; as also to declare the true nature of the missive or apostolical office of Moses, that undue apprehensions thereof might not keep them off from believing the gospel, or cause them to backslide after they had professed it. From his discourse to that purpose, he educeth all his arguings, reasonings, and exhortations unto faith, obedience, and permanency in profession, which ensue in that chapter and in this, unto these verses. Having therefore discharged that work, and confirmed the first part of his proposition, namely, that the Lord Christ was the Apostle of our profession, and applied that truth to his present purpose; he returns to the other part of it, namely, his being our High Priest also. And this was the principal thing which he aimed at in the didactical part of the whole epistle. This therefore he pursues from hence unto the end of the 10th chapter. The nature of the priesthood of Christ; his excellency and preference above Aaron, as vested with that office; the nature of the sacrifice that he offered, with the end, use, and efficacy of it; and on occasion hereof, the nature of the typical priesthood, sacrifices, and law of old; are the subjects of his glorious discourses. And this ocean of spiritual truth, and heavenly mysteries, are we now launching into. And therefore do we most humbly implore the guidance and conduct of that good and Holy Spirit, who is promised unto us to lead us into all truth. For who is sufficient for these things?

In these verses then, the apostle makes a transition unto, and an entrance upon his great design. But whereas his direct scope and aim, was to prevail with the Hebrews, and all others in the like condition with them, that is, all professors of the gospel, unto permanency and stability in faith and obedience, he doth here, as elsewhere, fill up his transition with insinuations of duties attended with exhortations and encouragements unto the performance of these. And this is the only useful way of teaching in all practical sciences. The principles of them are to be accompanied with instances, examples, and exhortations unto practice, wherein their end consisteth. And in so doing the apostle plainly declares, what we ought to be intent upon in our learning and consideration of the truth of the gospel. The end of them all is to teach us to live unto God, and to bring us to the enjoyment of him. Therefore, to the furtherance of our faith and obedience are they continually to be applied.

VER. 14.—ΕΧΟΝΤΕΣ ΟΥΝ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΑ ΜΕΓΑΝ ΔΙΕΛΗΛΥΘΟΤΑ ΤΟΥΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΥΣ,  
 ΙΗΣΟΥΝ ΤΟΝ ΥΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ; ΚΡΑΤΩΜΕΝ ΤΗΣ ΟΜΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ.

There being no difficulty in the words in the original, nor much



diversity in translations, we shall cast what is worth observation on their account, into the exposition of the words itself.

ΕΧΟΥΝΤΕΣ οὖν, habentes igitur, 'having therefore.' Or, as ours, 'seeing then that we have.' And so the Syriac, 'whereas therefore we have.' The illative οὖν declares the relation of what is under assertion, unto that which went before. That which the apostle is now instructing us in, directing us unto, is educed from what he had before laid down. It is not a consequence in way of argument that is here inferred, but the consequent in way of duty. 'Seeing we have.'

Αρχιερεα μεγαν, 'pontificem magnum.' Some translations, as the Arabic and Syriac, in this place transpose the words, and place the person of Christ as the immediate object of our having; or that which the word ΕΧΟΥΝΤΕΣ doth firstly and formally respect. 'Having Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to be a High Priest.' And in this way, the person of Jesus Christ should be proposed unto us first, and that described by the adjunct of his office, and his acting therein, 'he passed into heaven.' But in the original it is a High Priest, as formerly considered, which is the object proposed unto us. And he is described,

1. By his quality and condition, 'he is passed through the heavens.'

2. By the particular nomination of his person, he is Jesus the Son of God. In the condition wherein we are, we stand in need of the help and assistance of an high priest. Such a one we have; we have a high priest as they had of old; and this such a one as is passed through the heavens, even Jesus the Son of God. This is the order of the words.

Αρχιερεα μεγαν. Arab. 'the chief prince of the priests;' rightly as to sense, because of the twofold use of the word αρχιερευσ: for it is applied to denote two sorts of persons. First. It signifies him who was eminently and signally so called; the high priest. That is Aaron and the chief of his family, who succeeded him in the office of the high-priesthood. In the Old Testament he is called בֶּן־הַדֹּדֵי, *isreus* ὁ μέγας, 'the great priest.' This is frequently expressed by αρχιερευσ; as the Latins do it by 'pontifex;' and 'pontifex maximus.' Again, the word is often used to denote them who were the principal heads, rulers, or leaders, of any one of the twenty-four orders, which the priests were cast into for the service of the temple, 1 Chron. xxiv. These are those which are intended in those places where some are expressed by name, and it is added, 'they and their brethren,' that is those who being of the same order with them, were yet in dignity not so conspicuous as themselves. And these in the gospel are frequently called αρχιερευσ, as Matt. ii. 4, xvi. 21, xx. 18, and xxi. 15, and in the other evangelists frequently. And when the word is so applied we render it by 'chief priests,' to distinguish them intended, from the high priest properly so called; who was one set over them all, the peculiar successor of Aaron.

If the word αρχιερευσ be here taken in the latter sense, as it may denote 'pontifex minorum gentium,' a high priest of the second rank and order, one of the chief priests, then the adjunct of μέγας, 'great,' is discriminative; showing that it is not they who were merely so, but

he only who was *בֶּן־הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל*, 'the great priest,' pontifex maximus, that is alluded unto. But if *αρχιερεως* do of itself denote the single high priest, Aaron, or his successor, as most frequently it doth; then *μεγας*, 'great,' is added *κατ' εξαιρετον* by way of eminency, and is accumulative with respect unto Aaron. He is a great high priest in comparison of him, exalted above him, more excellent, glorious, powerful, and able than he. And this is that which is intended in the words. For the especial design of the apostle, is to compare him with Aaron, and not with any of the inferior priests, as we shall see in his ensuing discourses. Therefore a great high priest, is one eminently, excellently, gloriously so; and that on the accounts mentioned in his subjoined description.

*Διελθυστα τους ουρανους*, 'that is passed into the heavens.' So our translation. In which expression the thing intended is plain, but the difficulty that is in the words is as plainly concealed; and somewhat of their proper sense and meaning. Syr. 'Who is ascended into heaven;' laying the emphasis upon, and directing our thoughts unto, his ascension, and not to his present abode in heaven, which ours seems to point unto: 'Who is passed into heaven.' Ethiop. 'Who came from heaven into the world;' which kind of mistakes are not infrequent with that interpreter. *Διερχομαι*, is *pertranseo*, 'to pass through;' that is, any one place into another. 1 Cor. xvi. 5, *οταν Μακεδονιαν διελθω, Μακεδονιαν γαρ διερχομαι*, 'When I shall pass through Macedonia, for I pass through Macedonia;' so Acts xv. 41; John iv. 4, and and no other signification can it have in this place. 'Is passed through *τους ουρανους*, the heavens;' *διερχεσθαι τους ουρανους*, is plainly 'to pass through the heavens,' and not 'to pass into them.' Neither the sense nor construction of the words, will allow any such interpretation, nor will anything else but his passing through the heavens, answer the apostle's design. The heavens therefore are taken two ways:

First and most frequently, to denote the place of God's glorious residence, the holy habitation of God, the resting-place of blessed souls, and palace of the great King, where is his throne, and where thousands of his holy ones stand ministering before him. This heaven the Lord Christ did not pass through, but into, when, *ανεληφθη εν δοξη*, he was taken up into glory, 1 Tim. iii. 16. There he sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and these heavens must receive him until the times of restitution shall come, Acts iii. 27.

Secondly. The heavens are taken for the air, as when mention is made of the fowls of heaven, that is, which fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven, Gen. i. 20. As also for the ethereal regions, the orbs of the sun, moon, and stars, which are set for lights in the firmament of heaven, Gen. i. 15. The aspectable heavens above us, which declare the glory of God, and show forth his handy-work, Ps. xix. 1, which he garnished by his Spirit for that end, Job. xxvi. 13, these are the heavens here intended; and concerning them our apostle says again of our high priest, *υψηλοτερος των ουρανων γενομενος*, ch. vii. 26, 'made higher than the heavens:' he passed through them, and was exalted above them. These ethereal regions the disciples looked towards, when he was taken up into glory, Acts i. 9, 10; So Eph. iv. 10. He ascended up far above all heavens, He passed through them,

and ascended above them, in that which is called the third heaven, or the heaven of heavens, where is his blessed residence.

This being the sense of the words, we may next inquire into what the apostle peculiarly designs to instruct us in by them. And this will appear from the consideration of what it is that in this expression he alludes unto. Now it is the high priest, peculiarly so called, that he hath respect unto, and designs an explanation of what was in and by him typically represented unto the church of old. Known it is, that he was the principal officer of the church in things immediately pertaining unto the worship of God. And the chief or most signal part of his duty in the discharge of his office, consisting in his annual entrance into the most holy place, on the day of expiation, with the services thereunto belonging. This is at large described, Lev. xvi. And herein three things were eminent: 1. That he departed out of the sight of the people, yea, and of all the ministering priests also. The people were without in the court; and the priests that ministered in the tabernacle, when he was to open the veil to enter into the holy place, left the tabernacle, that they might not look in after him, Lev. xvi. 17. 'There shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation, when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out and have made an atonement.' 2. In this entrance, he passed through the second veil of the tabernacle, which received him and hid him, by the closing of the curtains from the sight of all. 3. In the place whither he thus went, were the especial pledges of the presence and tokens of the covenant of God, Lev. xvi. 2. How all these things were really, and in a glorious manner, accomplished in and by our high priest, the apostle declares in these words. For, 1. He had a holy place to pass into. He entered into the holy places not made with hands, even heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. ix. 24, that is, the heaven of heavens, the place of the glorious residence of the majesty of God. 2. Hereinto he passed through these aspectable heavens, which the apostle compareth unto the second veil of the temple, because they interpose between us and the holy sanctuary whereinto he entered. Hence, when in Stephen's great trial and testimony, he miraculously enabled him to see into the heavenly place, where he is in glory on the right hand of God, these heavens were opened, Acts vii. 55, 56. The curtains of this veil were turned aside that he might have a view of the glory behind them. 3. By these heavens was he taken and hid out of the sight of all men in his entrance, Acts i. 9, 10. Thus in answer to the type of old, he passed through the veil of these heavens, into the glorious presence of God, to appear there as our intercessor.

Ἰησοῦν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, 'Jesus the Son of God.' Translations do not well express the emphasis which is in these words, by the interposition of the article, Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν, 'the Son eminently,' peculiarly, 'that Son of God;' that is, the natural only begotten Son of the Father. And there is in the words a double designation of the person of our high priest. First. By his name, and then by his relation unto God.

1. By his name, Ἰησοῦν, that is, Jesus: a name given him from the

work he had to do. He was to save his people. 'Jesus, a Saviour,' Matt. i. 21. *Καλεσεις το ονομα αυτου Ιησουν*, saith the angel, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus.' For what cause? saith he, *αυτος γαρ σωσει τον λαον αυτου απο των αμαρτιων αυτων*, 'For (or because) he shall save his people from their sins.' So our apostle calls him *Ιησουν τον ρυομενον*, 'Jesus the Deliverer,' 1 Thess. i. 10. Our high priest is our Saviour; and he is our Saviour, in a great measure, by his being our high priest. And this name was given him, as born of a virgin: 'She shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.' It doth not therefore in this place only, nay, not so much, denote him by his work of saving according to the signification of his name Jesus, but declares his human nature whereof he was made partaker, that he might be a merciful high priest, wherein he was called by that name.

2. He describes him by his relation unto God: *τον υιον του Θεου*, 'that Son of God—the eternal Son of God.' The reason and nature of this sonship of our high priest, hath been elsewhere declared. At present it may suffice to observe, that his divine nature is included in this appellation. For in his own person, as comprising both these natures, is he our high priest, as he is *Θεανθρωπος*, God and man in one. And we are here minded of it, as a great encouragement unto our duty expressed in the next words.

*Κρατωμεν της ομολογιας*, 'Let us hold fast our profession.' Vulg. Lat. in some copies, *spei et fidei nostræ*, 'of our hope and faith;' words taken from ch. iii. 6, which here have no place. 'Hold fast the profession;' that is, which we make, or have made; and so our profession, as we supply the words. Two things are to be inquired into for the opening of these words. 1. What is meant by *ομολογια*, or 'profession.' 2. What is included in *κρατωμεν*, 'let us hold fast.'

For the word *ομολογια*, it hath been opened, and the thing itself intended somewhat spoken unto, on ch. iii. 1, where the Lord Christ is called the Apostle and high priest of our profession. I shall therefore here only so far treat of it, as it contains the duty, which the apostle exhorts us unto, and wherein all the lines of his discourse do meet and centre. This makes it assuredly a matter of singular consideration, as being that about which he doth so greatly labour.

Our *ομολογια* is our professed subjection to the gospel of Christ, 2 Cor. ix. 13, or the subjection of our souls in the acknowledgment of the power and authority of Jesus Christ in the gospel; *υποταγη ομολογιας*. It contains both our sacred subjection unto the gospel, and our solemn declaration of it. The former, which respects the matter of our profession, is *συνειδησεως αγαθης επερωτημα εις Θεον δι' αναστασεως Ιησου Χριστου*, 1 Pet. iii. 21, 'The answer or reply of a good conscience, by virtue of the resurrection of Christ, unto the demands of God in the precepts and promises of the gospel.' And it hath two parts: 1. Faith in Christ. 2. Obedience unto him—the obedience of faith, Rom. i. 5. Faith is the root, and obedience the fruit of our profession. And that faith which constitutes evangelical profession, is distinctly acted on Christ, the Son of God, the Mediator of the covenant, the King, Priest, and Prophet, of his church. This he calls for, John xiv. 1, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me,' ex-



pressly; see John iii. 18, 36, vii. 38. This, I say, makes our profession formally evangelical, distinguishing it from that of believers under the Old Testament. Their faith was directly in God, as one, Deut. vi. 4, consequentially in the Messiah as promised. Ours is express in Christ also, John xvii. 3. And in the Father by him, 1 Pet. i. 21.

Secondly. Unto faith is added obedience, which is indeed inseparable from it. See a full description of it, Rom. vi. 22. It may be considered two ways: 1. As it is internal and absolutely spiritual; or the constant acting of all the graces of the Spirit of God, unto purification and holiness, 2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 Thess. v. 23; Acts xv. 9. This belongs unto our profession, not absolutely as profession, but as sincere and saving; on which account we ought to hold it fast. 2. As it is external also in the diligent observance of all gospel commands in our course and practice. And these are of two sorts: 1. The moral duties of a holy conversation, Phil. i. 27; Tit. ii. 10—13. By a failure herein, our whole profession is overthrown, Phil. iii. 17, 18; Tit. i. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 19. 2. The instituted duties of holy gospel worship, Matt. xxviii. 20. And herein consists that part of our profession, which the apostle in this Epistle doth principally intend, as hath been declared. This is the matter of our profession, herein consists our subjection to the gospel. To complete our profession, yea to constitute our *ὁμολογια*, there is required that we make a solemn declaration of our subjection unto the gospel in these things. And this is made two ways: 1. By works; 2. By words.

1. Our profession by works, is our constant and solemn observance of all Christ's commands, in and concerning gospel worship, Matt. xxviii. 20; John xiv. 15, xv. 14. And the discharge of our duty herein is to be attended, First. With prudence; and that, 1. Not to provoke the world causelessly by any irregularities of misguided zeal, or other disorders, Matt. x. 16; 1 Cor. x. 32; 2 Cor. vi. 3. 2. Not to cast ourselves into dangers or troubles, without just cause, call, or warrant, Matt. x. 23. Secondly. With constancy and confidence, so as, 1. Not to be terrified with any persecution or troubles, which may befall us on the account of the gospel, 1 Pet. iii. 14; Phil. i. 28. 2. Not on any account to decline the constant observance of the duties of worship required of us, Heb. x. 25.

2. By words.—For with the 'mouth confession is made unto salvation,' Rom. x. 10. And this also is twofold: First. With respect unto all times in general, 1 Pet. iii. 15. We are on all occasions to declare whose servants we are, and whom we own as our Lord and Master. Secondly. Unto especial seasons: 1. Of temptation. Such arise from company, which may be so circumstanced as to awe us, or corrupt us, that we shall not own the gospel as we ought. So it befel Peter in the highest instance, Matt. xxvi. 70. And so are others in lesser degrees foiled every day. 2. Of persecution. Then is our profession to be turned into confession, or we lose it. The oral open avowing of the Lord Christ, his ways and worship, in and under persecution, is the touchstone of all profession, Matt. x. 32, 33; 1 Cor. iii. 13. This is the profession we are to hold fast.

Κρατωμεν, 'Let us hold it fast.' So have we rendered *κατασχωμεν*,

ch. iii. 6. But this word is more emphatical than that; and intimates another frame of mind, and a more severe endeavour. *Κρατειν*, is to hold a thing strongly, firmly, totis viribus, 'with all our strength,' by all lawful means, with resolution and contention of mind. For the word is from *κρατος*, that is, 'power, strength, efficacy,' which are to be exercised in the 'holding fast' intended, Rev. ii. 25. 'That which you have, *κρατησατε* *αχρις ου αν ηξω*, hold fast, with all care, against all opposition, until I come.' So Rev. iii. 11, *Κρατει ο εχεις, ινα μηδεις λαβη τον στεφανον σου*. 'Hold fast,' that is, with all thy might, with all diligence and contention of mind, 'what thou hast,' as a man would hold fast his crown, if any should attempt to take it from him, or deprive him of it. And this word is used concerning the pharisees, with respect unto their traditions, which they adhere so firmly and resolutely unto, that nothing could move them, or prevail with them to the contrary, Mark vii. 3, *κρατουντες την παραδοσιν των πρεσβυτερων*, 'holding fast,' or tenaciously, 'the tradition of the fathers.' So also of them who, having entertained false and noxious opinions, are obstinate in their adherence to them, Rev. ii. 15, *ουτως εχεις και συ κρατουντας την διδαχην των Νικολαιτων*: 'So hast thou them, who against light and persuasions, retain the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.' Wherefore the sense of the command here given, is, that we should with our utmost ability and diligence hold fast against all oppositions, and take care that we lose not our profession, after we are once engaged in it.

So then this verse containeth the prescription of a duty, with a motive and encouragement unto the due performance of it. The duty is expressed in these last words, 'Let us hold fast our profession.' And the reason for it, with an encouragement unto it, in those which go before, 'Seeing then we have a great high priest, which is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.' And this is farther amplified by the declaration of his qualifications, ver. 15, and an exhortation to make use of and improve his assistance in this matter, ver. 16, as we shall see afterwards. At present we may take some observations from this verse, according to the exposition of the words already given, which will further direct us to answer in our practice the mind of the Holy Ghost in this matter. Now, there is included in the words,

Obs. I. First. That great opposition is, and always will be, made unto the permanency of believers in their profession.—This the word of exhortation unto it plainly intimates. It is *injectâ manu fortiter retinere*, 'to lay hold of a thing, and to retain it with all our might,' as if it were ready every moment to be taken from us with a violent and strong hand. It is to keep a thing as a man keeps his treasure, when it is ready to be seized on by thieves and robbers. This argues great opposition, and no small hazard thereon ensuing. So our blessed Saviour informs us, Matt. vii. 25. When men hear the word they build a house by profession. This all who make profession do, whether they build upon the rock or upon the sand. And when this house is built, the rains will descend, and the floods will come, and the winds will blow and beat upon it. Profession will be assaulted and pressed by all manner of hazardous and dangerous oppositions;

and if the house be not well secured it will fall, if our profession be not well guarded it will be lost. What our Lord Jesus told Peter, with respect unto this very matter, is even so concerning all professors. When he was led to speak with much confidence, which his present convictions of duty and resolutions for its performance prompted him unto, that he would abide in his profession, and never forsake him, whatever other men might do; he answers, 'Simon, Simon, Satan hath sought to winnow thee,' Luke xxii. 31, 32. He reminds him, that although he had called him Peter, for the unmoveableness of that rock on which his faith was fixed, yet he would appear in himself to be but Simon still; a man exposed to danger and easy to be prevailed against. And therefore he might do well, in the midst of his confidence, to consider his dangers, and the surprisals that he might be overtaken withal. And the same is the condition of all professors, the best and meanest, the strongest and weakest.

From this opposition, our continuance in profession is called enduring, Matt. xxiv. 13, *ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος, οὗτος σωθήσεται*, 'He that patiently tolerateth, beareth opposition, unto the end, shall be saved.' So we render *ὑπομονή*, Rom. ii. 7, 'patient continuance.' And to the same purpose are the words, *προσκαρτερῶ*, Acts ii. 42, and *προσκαρτερήσεις*, Eph. vi. 18, used, and of the same signification, 'constantly to abide and endure against oppositions.' So is the word commonly applied. Men endure hunger, cold, bonds, imprisonment, the pains of death. They are hard things that men endure. 'Durate' is the word of encouragement in difficulties.

*Durate et vosmet rebus servate secundis.*

*Durare, est verbum quod perferendis malis convenit.—DONAT.*

There is then a supposition of a conflict with all sorts of evil where we are enjoined to endure; that is, to continue in our course with patience, courage, and constancy. Hence are the multiplied cautions that are given us, especially in this Epistle, to take heed that we be not prevailed against and cast down from our stability, by these oppositions; see 2 John 8; Rev. ii. 24—26, and iii. 11.

We are exceedingly apt to deceive ourselves in this matter. Desires, false hopes, appearing helps, do insinuate themselves into our minds, and prevail to ingenerate a persuasion that we shall not meet with any great difficulties in our profession. And these self-deceivings do exceedingly unprepare the mind for what we have to encounter; which the apostle warns us against, 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13.

The principles, causes, reasons, and means of the opposition that is made to the profession of believers, are commonly handled. Could we take but one view of that constant preparation which there is amongst principalities and powers, those spiritual wickednesses in high places in the world, and all its fulness, and in the deceitfulness of sin which dwelleth in us, for an opposition unto our profession, we would either constantly stand upon our guard to defend it, or presently give it up as that which is not tenable; see Eph. vi. 10—13.

Obs. II. It is our duty in the midst of all oppositions, to hold our profession firm and steadfast unto the end. This is the substance of

what we are here exhorted and pressed unto; and the great design of the apostle in this whole Epistle, which also we have occasionally insisted on in sundry precedent passages.

What this profession is, hath been declared. The principle of it is faith in God by Christ Jesus. The fruits of it, are the whole obedience of faith, or a conversation in all things becoming the gospel, adorning the doctrine of our Saviour in all holiness and godliness. And it is expressed by a constant observance of all the ordinances and institutions of worship appointed by Christ, or by his authority; with an open confession of him at all times. For by such institutions did God in all ages try and exercise the faith and obedience of the church; whence they were the means of giving glory to himself in the world. And from this expression of them do our faith and obedience take the denomination of profession. And thereby are they proved in this world, and must be tried at the last day.

This profession we are to hold in the manner expressed in the opening of the words; that is, with watchfulness, diligence, constancy, and our utmost endeavour in all of them. And this duty hath respect unto the contrary sins which the apostle dehorts us from. Now these fall under two heads. 1. Apostasy, or a total desertion of our profession. 2. Declension, or going back gradually from our diligence, progress, and attainments in it; which make way for the former evil.

First. Some totally fall off from their profession. These the apostle describes and reflects upon, ch. vi., ch. x. In which places we must take their sin and punishment under consideration. And against this evil, it is our duty to hold fast our profession. None doubt of it until they are under the power of the contrary evil, and are blinded or hardened thereby. And this total desertion from the gospel is twofold. 1. Express, by an open abrenunciation of them. This we hear not much of amongst us, because none is tempted thereunto. The prodigious eruptions of some men's Atheism we consider not. 2. Interpretative; when men really cast off all inward regard unto the authority of Christ in the gospel, and their outward compliance with any thing required in it, is on motives foreign to the gospel itself. And this too much abounds in the world. Our apostle supplies us with considerations of the greatest and highest nature that can be conceived. In brief, 1. The glory of God in Christ, is in the highest manner concerned in it. Every sin tends to the dishonour of God; all sinners dishonour him. But all is nothing, as it were, to the despite that is done to him by this sin. So it is described, Heb. x. 29. It is a treading under foot the Son of God; an act of the highest despite, malice, and contempt that a creature can be capable of. 2. Assured destruction attends it; and that in a peculiar, terrible, and dreadful manner, Heb. x. 29—31; 2 Pet. ii. 1. It is, therefore, undoubtedly our duty and our wisdom to hold fast our profession, so as neither by the blindness of our minds, nor sensuality of life, to lose and forego it.

Secondly. It is so as to the degrees of it. All the parts of our profession have their degrees whereby they are varied. Faith is strong



or weak, stable or infirm. Obedience may be more or less exact, precise, and fruitful in good works. Our observance of instituted ordinances of worship, may be exact and circumspect, or loose and negligent. In holding fast our profession, an endeavour to keep up to the degrees that we have attained, and a pressing forwards in them all towards perfection, is required of us. That which our Lord Jesus Christ blames in his churches, Rev. ii. iii. is the decay in their profession, as to these degrees. Their faith, their love, their diligence were decayed. And they performed not the works they had sometimes been fruitful in; and in all these things are men liable to let go their profession. Again, Growth and progress in all these is required of professors. The kingdom of God is a growing thing, and ought to be so in all them in whom it is by its grace, and who are in it by the observance of its laws. Where growth is not, profession is not held firm. This is in general the nature of the duty we are charged with. The principal intendment of this verse and of those following, is to declare the encouragement and assistance which we have in Christ, for its discharge as he is our high priest, which must further be insisted on, and therein a fuller explication of the things contained in this verse, will be given. And the whole of what is aimed at, may be comprised in this observation.

Obs. III. Believers have great encouragement unto, and assistance in the constancy of their profession, by and from the priesthood of Jesus Christ. So it is expressly laid down in the text; and to that end is it by us to be improved. And to this purpose. First. The priesthood of Christ in itself, and our relation thereunto, is proposed and asserted; 'we have an high priest.' Secondly. Described. 1. By the qualification of our high priest. He is 'a great high priest.' 2. By his actions and his exaltation therein. He is 'passed through the heavens.' 3. By his name and nature, he is 'Jesus the Son of God.' And from every one of these considerations, we have both encouragement and assistance in the great duty of holding fast our profession.

First. The Lord Christ is a high priest, and we have in our obedience and profession, a relation unto him; he is our high priest, the high priest of our profession. He is the high priest over the house of God, not only to direct us in our profession, but also to assist us in it. The difficulty of this duty lies in the opposition that is made unto it, by sin, Satan, and the world, as we have shown. He that hath not found this difficulty, never yet knew what it was to profess the gospel. And the effects of it lie open to view every day; they have done so in all ages. And we can never be jealous enough of our own hearts and ways, lest we should be made an example unto others, as others have been unto us. But herein lies our help and relief. For,

1. While we are in this condition, our high priest pitieth us and hath compassion on us, ch. ii. 17, 18. This is part of his duty and office, ch. v. 2. And there is some help in pity, some relief in compassion. Want hereof our Saviour complained of as a great aggravation of his distresses, Ps. lxxix. 20, 'I am,' saith he, 'full of heaviness, I looked for some to take pity, (or lament with me) but there was

none; and for comforters, but I found none.' Compassion indeed doth not communicate new strength, yet it greatly refresheth the spirits of them that suffer; especially if it be from those whom they greatly value. And this we are assured of in and from our high priest, in all the oppositions and sufferings that we meet withal in the course of our profession. See ch. ii. 17, and the two verses following in this place. He is himself on his throne of glory, on the right hand of the Majesty on high, in eternal rest and blessedness; as having finished his personal works and labour, as hath been shown. But from the habitation of his holiness, he looks on his labouring, suffering, tempted disciples, and is afflicted in all their afflictions, and is full of compassion towards them. So, saith he, was I tempted, so was I opposed. And what thus befalls them is for my sake, and not for their own; and his bowels are moved towards them. Whose heart will not the consideration hereof refresh? whose spirit will it not revive?

2. As our high priest, he gives us actual help and assistance in this case. The ways whereby he doth this, have been partly declared on ch. ii. 18; and must yet be spoken unto, ver. 16, of this chapter. At present I shall only show in general, that the aid which he gives us, is sufficient to secure our profession, and to conquer the opposition that is made against it. For, as hath been observed, there are three parts of it; our faith, our obedience in general, and our especial observance of instituted worship. And there are three especial principles of the opposition made to them.

First. Our faith is opposed chiefly by Satan and his temptations, with a contribution of aid from the world, and our own corruptions. Faith's overthrow is his principal design, Luke xxii. 31, 32. No such irreconcilable enemies as faith and the devil. And this adversary is prevailed against by our high priest. He hath contended with him, 'bruised his head,' conquered him, bound him, spoiled him, triumphed over him, and destroyed him, Gen. iii. 15; Col. ii. 15; Heb. ii. 14, 15. And shall we suffer ourselves to be deprived of our profession, by one thus dealt withal in our behalf? he shall not prevail in his attempt. Secondly. Our obedience is opposed principally by our own corruptions, aided by Satan and the world. These 'fight against our souls,' 1 Pet. ii. 11, and tend to death, Jam. i. 14. Whence our apostle warns us to take heed that these prove not the cause of our apostasy, ch. iii. 13. And against these also there is relief for us in and by our high priest. For as he was 'manifested to destroy the works of the devil,' 1 John iii. 8, or all the effects of his first temptation in our hearts; so whatever evil it intends towards us, there is a remedy provided for it and against it, in his grace, his blood, and by his Spirit. Thirdly. Our profession formally as such, consisting in the diligent observance of the laws and ways of Christ, is continually opposed by the world, not without assistance from Satan, and the treacheries of indwelling sin. But he also hath overcome the world, John xvi. 33. He hath overcome it for us, and he will overcome it in us. And who on this account would not be encouraged to contend earnestly in the preservation of that profession, wherein they are sure they shall be assisted.

Secondly. Professors have an aim and an end in their profession. They do not run in vain, nor fight uncertainly, nor beat the air in what they do. Now their great design is to have their profession and their persons therein accepted with God. Without this they must acknowledge themselves to be of all men most miserable. For what would it avail them to spend their time in fears, hazards, conflicts, sorrows, and troubles in this world, and when they have done all be rejected of God, and have their everlasting portion amongst them who take the full of their sins and satisfactions in this world? And if it be so, why do they yet suffer persecution? And yet there are two things that do vehemently assault their faith and hope in this matter. 1. The sinfulness and unworthiness of their own persons. Whatever be the duties that they perform, yet they find their persons on many accounts so vile, as that both they and their duties may be justly rejected of God. Hence they suppose themselves to defile whatever they touch. The guilt and defilement of their consciences by sin, perplex their thoughts, when they consider what it is to appear before the great and holy God. 2. They find that even the duties themselves wherein their profession doth consist, are so weak, so mixed and imperfect, as it is hard for them to conceive how they should obtain acceptance with God. Their endeavours are weak and faint, their strivings against sin uneven and uncertain, their prayers oft-times languid, and a fading is on all their duties. And say they often in themselves, What ground of hope is there that a profession so made up, will be accepted with God, and rewarded by him? But against all these considerations believers have relief in their relation to this high priest. For in this matter lies the principal part of his office. As such, he hath undertaken to render our persons and duties accepted with God. This he respects both in his oblation and intercession, by which two ways he dischargeth the duties of this office.

1. By them he gives acceptance with God to our persons. For as he hath made 'reconciliation for our sins,' ch. ii. 17, so he hath brought in 'everlasting righteousness,' Dan. ix. 24. Yea he himself is our 'righteousness,' Jer. xxiii. 6, in him have 'we righteousness and strength,' Isa. xlv. 24; he being made 'of God unto us righteousness,' 1 Cor. i. 30, having been made 'a curse for us, that the blessing of faithful Abraham might be ours,' Gal. iii. 14, who believed, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, Gen. xv. 6. So that although we have no such righteousness of our own as on the account whereof our persons may be accepted with God, yet on the account of him and his who is ours, we shall not fail thereof.

2. He dealeth so likewise in reference to our duties. For, as he bears the 'iniquity of our holy things,' Exod. xxviii. 38, that they should not be rejected because of any sinful imperfections cleaving to them, so he adds to them the sweet incense and perfume of his own righteousness, Rev. viii. 3, 4, which causeth them to come up with a grateful and acceptable savour before the Lord.

And these few things have I mentioned as instances of the encouragements that we have to abide in our profession, in the midst of all hazards and against all oppositions, for the consideration of this one

thing, that we have a high priest; the end aimed at in this place by our apostle.

Secondly. There is weight added hereunto from the qualification of the person vested with that office here expressed. He is a 'great high priest.' He is so both comparatively and absolutely. He is so in comparison of others so called, and not so only; for he may be great, in comparison of another, who is but little in himself. But he is so absolutely also, as we shall see afterwards.

First. He is great comparatively with respect to Aaron, which the apostle, as was shown, hath in this assertion regard to. For he is now entering on his great design, of showing his answering to Aaron, and his preeminence above him. The high priest, in his office, sacred garments and administrations, was the principal glory of the Judaical church. If that office ceased, all their solemn worship was to cease. And so excellent was his office, so beautiful were his garments, so glorious was his work and ministry, that these Hebrews, though now in some measure instructed in the doctrine and worship of the gospel, could not be persuaded utterly to relinquish that sacred service of which he had the conduct. And here lay the principal occasion of their obstinate adherence to Mosaic institutions. They had a high priest, whose order and service they were exceedingly pleased withal. The prevalency of these thoughts on their minds our apostle obviates, by letting them know they should undergo no loss or disadvantage by the relinquishment of him: inasmuch as in that profession which they were called unto by the gospel, they had in like manner a high priest, and that a great high priest, that is, one incomparably exalted and preferred above Aaron and his successors, which he afterwards invincibly demonstrates. And hereby he presseth them to constancy in profession, the duty at present proposed to them. For if God had appointed destruction to him, who forsook the worship and service of the law, under the guidance of Aaron and his sons, what must and will their lot and portion be, who shall forsake and desert the worship of the New Testament, when we have a high priest far more excellent and glorious than they.

Secondly. He is absolutely great, and this the apostle proves by a double instance, wherein he gives a further description of him, 1. By his exaltation. 2. By his name and person.

First. He is a great high priest because he is 'passed through the heavens.' The triumphant passage of the Lord Christ into glory, is that which is expressed in these words. But for the right understanding hereof some things must be premised. As 1. That the person of the Lord Christ in all that he did, was still cloathed with all his offices. Yet 2. In sundry things he exerciseth the power and faculty of one office and not of another immediately. Some things he did as a king, and some things as a priest; but he is still both king and priest who doth them all. 3. In some things he puts forth the power of both these offices at the same time, and in the same manner, though with different respects. Thus in this 'passing through the heavens'—as king, it was his triumph over all his enemies, and his glorious ascension to his throne, or 'sitting down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;'



as priest, it was his entrance 'through the veil,' into the holy place not made with hands, to appear in the presence of God for us. This is that which is here principally intended, but I shall explain the whole. Because even his acting as king, though it belongs not to him as a priest, yet it doth to his glory as he is a great high priest. And there are three things which herein set out his greatness and glory.

First. His passage itself, concerning which sundry things are observable; as, 1. His entrance into it, or the time and place when and where he began his triumphant entry into heaven. These are recorded, Acts i. 9—12. 'Forty days after his resurrection, assembling his disciples, he spake unto them of the kingdom of God; and when he had spoken those things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And whilst they looked steadfastly towards heaven as he went up, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey.' The time is expressed, ver. 3. It was forty days after he was alive, after his passion. As he went forty days into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, before he entered on his ministry, so he continued forty days in the world, triumphing over him, after he had finished his ministry. But the chief reason hereof was, that whereas his apostles, who were to be the eye-witnesses of his resurrection, could not bear his continual presence with them; he might have opportunity to show himself unto them by many infallible signs and tokens, Acts i. 3. The place was Mount Olivet, a Sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem, ver. 12. This place was near unto Bethany; for Luke affirms, that he led his disciples as far as Bethany, ch. xxiv. 50, which was a village near that mount, about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, John xi. 18. The Jews constantly affirm, that a Sabbath day's journey was the space of two thousand cubits, which amount not to above seven furlongs of our measure; so that John had respect unto some other measure among the Jews, or Bethany was directly on the east of the mount, which took up the other space. This Mount Olivet, therefore, near Bethany, was about a mile from Jerusalem. It was on the east side of the city, whither our Lord Jesus did often retreat for prayer and rest. It was a hill so high, that from the top of it, a man might look into all the streets of Jerusalem, and into the temple. This was the last of his bodily presence on the earth, and the last that shall be until the time of the restitution of all things. Fabulous superstition hath feigned, that on a stone he left here the impression of his feet. This was the mountain unto which the glory of the Lord went up, when it left the temple and city of Jerusalem, Ezek. xi. 23. And so did he now, who was the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. With him the glory of God utterly departed from the temple and city, or the worship and people. Here he was taken up; and his disciples were *ἀρενίζοντες*, earnestly, carefully, with love, diligence, and delight, looking on whilst these things were doing. Those who had not long

before seen him hanging on the cross between two thieves, bleeding and dying, now saw him gloriously and triumphantly taken up into heaven. From their eyes a cloud received him. Elijah was taken up before alive into heaven, 2 Kings ii. 11, but it was with fire and in a whirlwind, with dread and terror, insomuch as the young prophets much questioned what was become of him. But here, when his disciples were fully instructed, and were now no longer to live by sense, but by faith, whilst they earnestly and steadily looked on him as he ascended, a cloud draws the curtain, placidly interposing between him and their sight, who were not able as yet to look on what was done within that veil.

*Secondly.* This was the time and day of heaven's triumph. Ever since the apostasy of angels and men by sin, there had been an enmity and war between heaven and earth, pleaded by the interest of heaven in the earth here below. God had sent forth his champion, the Captain of salvation, typified of old by Joshua and David, and all those worthies, which were employed to vanquish the enemies of the church in their especial stations. He had now finished his work, having fully conquered the first apostate, the great enemy of God, and spoiled him of his power. And he was now entering into that glory, which he had left for a season, to engage in the difficult and perilous service of subduing all the adversaries of God. And now was all heaven prepared for his triumphant reception. As when a great conqueror of old returned from a far country, where he had subdued the enemies of his people, and brought home the leaders of them captives, all his citizens went forth with applauses and shouts of joy to meet him; to which custom our apostle alludeth in this matter, Col. ii. 15. So was it with the glorious inhabitants of heaven upon the return of this victorious Captain of salvation. So the prophet describeth the fall of the oppressing tyrant of Assyria, Isa. xiv. 9. 'Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth: it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.' He was theirs, they had looked for him, and and was to have a principal share in their condition. How much more was heaven stirred up, when the everlasting gates were opened, and this King of glory entered in. The Psalmist expresseth it, Ps. xlvii. 5, 6. 'God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises.' It is the glorious ascension of the Lord Christ into his kingdom and throne, which is described in that Psalm; and this all are exhorted to rejoice in.

*Thirdly.* His attendants in this his passage through the heavens, are also described unto us, Ps. lxxviii. 17, 18, 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place: thou hast ascended on high.' And this place our apostle applies to the ascension of Christ, Eph. iv. 8. As when he descended of old upon the earth, in the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, he was attended with the heavenly host, who ministerially wrought all those glorious and dreadful effects which were wrought on the Mount, Exod. xix; so now in his ascension he was attended

with the angels of God, who were as the chariots in his triumph, that carried and bore up the human nature, and waited on him, ready to do his will, and to manifest his glory. They had received command from God to worship him, ch. i. 6, and now they appeared eminently in the discharge of their duty. They compassed him about with joyful acclamations, doing their obeisance unto him as to their Head and King. With them then, and by their ministry, he passed through the heavens, a sight too glorious for mortal eyes to behold.

*Fourthly.* The disposal of his enemies is also declared, Ps. lxxviii. 18. 'He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive;' that is, the authors of all bondage, of all captivity in sin and misery. See the phrase explained, Judges v. 12. And this our apostle expresseth, Col. ii. 15. 'He spoiled principalities and powers,' all the fallen apostate angels, 'making a show of them openly in his triumph.' He took them along with him in chains, tied as it were to his chariot wheels, making a show of them to the citizens of heaven. So dealt the old Roman conquerors with their enemies: they led them in chains bound to their triumphant chariots, making them a spectacle to the people, and then returned them to prison, until the time appointed for execution. So dealt he with these implacable enemies of the glory of God, and the salvation of the souls of the elect. He showed them openly as judged, conquered, and fully subdued, remanding them to their prisons, until the time of their final doom should come. Thus did he pass through the heavens; and all the glory of God was laid open for his reception, all his saints and angels coming forth to meet him to congratulate that success, the fruits whereof they had before enjoyed.

*Secondly.* His actual reception into the especial presence of God, as the end of his passage, adds to the manifestation of his greatness and glory. This our apostle declares, 1 Tim. iii. 16, ἀναλφθῆναι ἐν δόξῃ, 'he was received up into glory.' This himself calls his entering into his glory, Luke xxiv. 26. See Heb. xii. 22--24. He was received gloriously into the highest heavens, the habitation of the blessed. Then and there had he his entertainment and refreshment after all the travail of his soul. Then was the time of the espousals of his church, the day of the gladness of his heart. There is joy in heaven upon the returning and repentance of one sinner. And what was there, when he that caused them to return, and saved all that do so, was received into his glory! No heart can conceive, much less can any tongue express, the glorious reception of the human nature of Christ in heaven.

*Thirdly.* His exaltation which ensued upon his reception. And this respects first God himself, and then the creation.

In respect of God the Father, two things are spoken of him. 1. That he sat down in his throne. He overcame and sat down with his Father in his throne, Rev. iii. 21. The throne is the place and ensign of rule and judgment; and the Father did not forego his throne, but he sits down with him in it, inasmuch as the actual administration of all rule and judgment is committed unto him, John v. 22. 2. As he sat down in the throne, so it was on the right hand of God, or at the right

hand of the Majesty on high. This God promised him of old; and now gave him the actual possession of it. Of these things, see our exposition on ch. i. 2—4.

In respect of others. So he had power over the whole creation given into his hand. All power in heaven and earth; concerning which, see also the digression about his kingdom and power, on ch. i. 3.

These things, as they were openly glorious, belonged unto his passing through the heavens, as the King of his church, and the Captain of our salvation. But there was in the thing itself, a respect unto his priestly office, and the exercise thereof. So in his dying, the principal thing intended, was the offering up of himself through the eternal Spirit, an offering for sin, and a sacrifice of atonement as a priest, but yet withal he died as a prophet also, to bear witness unto the truth; for which cause he came into the world, John xviii. 37. So although he thus passed through the heavens triumphantly as a king, he at the same time, and by the same action, passed through as our high priest, as they were the veil through which he entered into the holy place, which shall, God willing, be explained on ch. ix. 23, 24. And these things belong to the greatness of our high priest, upon the account of his exaltation, or his passing through the heavens; and,

The second consideration of our high priest evincing his greatness, is taken from his name and person, or who he is. He is 'Jesus the Son of God.' Sundry things must be observed, to manifest the necessity and usefulness hereof; namely, that our high priest is, and was to be, Jesus the Son of God. First. Absolutely the Son of God, and then Jesus the Son of God. But the things of the priesthood of the Son of God, being handled at large in our Exercitations, I shall only here give a brief summary of them.

First. Before the entrance of sin, there was no need of the office of priesthood between God and man.—Every one in his own name, was to go to God with his worship, which would have been accepted according unto the law of the creation. If man therefore had continued in that state wherein he was made, there would have been no such office in the church of God. For it is the office of a priest to represent them acceptably unto God, who, in their own persons, might not appear before him. This was manifest in the after solemn institution of that office, wherein the nature and work of it was declared. On all occasions, that interdiction is severely repeated and inculcated: 'None shall come near, but he who is of the seed of Aaron;' and if any one doth so, he shall be cut off. And this God afterwards confirmed in sundry instances, especially that of Uzziah the king, who was smitten with leprosy for attempting to approach unto the altar of incense, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21. And, by the way, God will much more sorely revenge the sin of them, who take the priestly office of the Lord Christ out of his hand, as by their false pretended sacrifices and oblations the Papists attempt to do. Now, this was needless before the entrance of sin, and therefore so was the office also. For every one had acceptance with God, upon the account of his own personal interest in the covenant, as hath been shown elsewhere.



Whatever other rule, dignity, or preeminence, there would, or might have been, in that state amongst men, the office of priesthood would have been needless, and should not therefore have been appointed. For it is not natural, but a mere institution. So are things among the angels. There is dignity and preeminence in their order. Hence some of them are called, *שרים ראשונים*, 'the first or chief princes.' And this they seem to retain in their apostasy, one being every-where represented as the head of the rest, the devil and his angels. But every one of them was immediately to perform his service and worship unto God in his own person, without the interposition of any other on their behalf. And so would it have been with Adam and his posterity, in a state of integrity and holiness.

Secondly. Sin having entered into the world, there was no more worship to be performed immediately unto God.—Two cannot walk together unless they be agreed, Amos iii. 3. All our obedience unto God, and worship of him, is our walking before him, Gen. xvii. 1. This we cannot do, unless there be a covenant agreement between him and us. But this now by sin was utterly broken, and rendered useless as unto any such end. The agreement failing, the walking together also ceaseth. None could now obtain acceptance with God, in any of their duties, on their own account; inasmuch as all had sinned and come short of his glory.

Thirdly. That the worship of God might be restored again in the world, it was indispensably necessary that some one should interpose between sinners and the Holy God.—Should they approach unto him immediately in their own names, he would be unto them a consuming fire, Isa. xxvii. 4, 5. And here, because God would not lose the glory of his grace, and other holy excellencies of his nature, but would have a revenue of glory, continued unto him from the worship of his creatures here on earth; and because in his love, he would not have all sinners to perish under the curse of the old covenant that they had broken, he found out and appointed, in the counsel of his will, the office of priesthood, namely, that there should be one to transact the whole worship of sinners, in the presence of God for them, and render what they should do themselves in their own persons, acceptable unto him. This is the rise, reason, and foundation of that office, which was undertaken by the Son of God. For,

Fourthly. In this condition, no creature could undertake the office of being a priest for the church of God, which now consisted all of sinners. This both the nature of the office itself, and the work to be performed by him that should undertake it, do declare.

1. For the office itself, It was to be a gracious interposition between God and sinners. The priest must approach to God, even to his throne, representing the persons and worship of the church to him, rendering them and it acceptable on his account. Who was meet to be entrusted with this honour? who amongst the creatures could undertake this office? The best of them stand in need of goodness and condescension, to obtain and continue their own acceptance with him. For in the strictness of his justice and infinite purity of his holiness, 'the heavens,' that is, the inhabitants of them, 'are not pure in his

sight, and he chargeth his angels with folly,' Job. iv. 18, xv. 15. How then should any of them on his own account, and in his own name, undertake to appear for others, for sinners in the presence of God? They were doubtless utterly unmeet to interpose in this matter.

2. The general work of such a priest, is utterly exclusive of the whole creation from engaging herein. For the first thing that he undertakes must be, to make atonement for sin and sinners. This is his first work, and the only foundation of what else he is to do; namely, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, in whose stead he appeareth before God. That this could not be performed by any creature, I have manifested on the second chapter. Failing in this, no other thing that can be done, is of any value. Wherefore,

Fifthly. The Son of God undertakes to be this Priest for sinners; 'we have a great high Priest, Jesus the Son of God.' The whole enunciation is expressive of his person jointly, and each nature therein is also distinctly signified.

First. The Son of God, (which in the first place we intend and consider,) denotes his divine person and nature. How the second person in the Trinity did undertake to be a Mediator and Priest for all the elect of God, hath been opened in our exposition of the second chapter of the epistle, and it shall not here be again in particular insisted on. This counsel was of old between the Father and the Son; namely, that he the Son should become the 'seed of the woman,' that is, should be made of a woman,' and be thereby made under the law; that he should come to do 'the will of God,' in making atonement by the offering up, or sacrifice of himself for sin; that he should undertake the cause of sinners, pay their debts, and satisfy for their offences. That is, that by his appearance and acting for them, he should procure acceptance for them and their services at the throne of grace. All this the Son of God undertook, and therein both became the high priest of his people, and discharged that office for them. And herein is the mystery of God, his truth, and his grace made conspicuous, as hath been at large declared in our Exercitations. For,

First. Here the sacred truth of the Trinity of persons in the divine nature or essence, openeth itself to the creatures. The nature, the essence, or being of God, is absolutely and numerically one. All the natural and essential properties of that being, are absolutely and essentially the same. And all the operations of this divine essence or being, according to its properties, are undivided, as being the effects of one principle, one power, one wisdom. Hence it could not by any such acts be manifested, that there was more than one person in that one nature or being. But now in these actings of the persons of the Trinity, in such ways as first respect themselves, or their operations *ad intra*, where one person is as it were the object of the other person's acting, the sacred truth of the plurality of persons in the same single undivided essence, is gloriously manifested. The Son undertaking to the Father, to become a high priest for sinners, openly declares the distinction of the Son, or eternal Word, from the person of the Father. And in these distinct and mutual actings of the persons of it, is the doctrine and truth of the holy Trinity most safely contemplated. See concerning this our exercitations at large.

Secondly. It opens the mystery of the fountain of divine grace, the springs of life and salvation which are with God. These things flow from the counsel that was between the Father and the Son, when he undertook to be a high priest for us. Grace and mercy are the way suited to the pursuit and accomplishment of those counsels. Hereon also depends all that religion, and all those institutions of worship, which were of old in the church. On the entrance of sin, there was an end put to all the religion that was in the world, as to any glory of God or advantage to the souls of men. How came it then to be restored, revived, accepted? Wherefore did God appoint a new priesthood, sacrifices, and worship? What was aimed at, attained, or effected hereby? Men were sinners still, obnoxious to the law, and the curse thereof, and what could their service do or signify? Here lay the invisible foundations of this new order of things. The Son of God had made an interposition for sinners, undertaken to be their high priest, to reconcile them to God, and thereon to make their worship acceptable to him. God was not pleased at first to bring this forth to light, but hid the mystery of it in himself from the beginning of the world, till the fulness of time came. In the meantime he appointed the worship mentioned, to be a shadow, and obscure representation, of what was secretly transacted between the Father and Son within the veil. This did the office of the priesthood, among the people of God of old, and all their sacrifices, teach; this gave them life and efficacy, without a respect whereunto they were of no worth nor use. Thus is our high priest the Son of God, and thus ought he so to be.

Secondly. This Son of God is Jesus, 'Jesus the Son of God.' Jesus is the name of a man, 'Thou shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus,' Matt. i. 21. And this our high priest also was to be. 'Every high priest,' saith our apostle, 'is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices to God.' And therefore of necessity, he who would be our high priest, must have somewhat to offer; and that somewhat of his own. And what had the Son of God, absolutely considered, of his own to offer? His divine nature or person are not to be offered. All things necessarily required in the matter and form of an offering, are eternally incompatible with the infinite excellencies of the divine nature. God cannot be a sacrifice, though he who is God was so to be. Shall he then take an offering out of the works of the creation? shall he take the blood of bulls and goats for this purpose, as did Aaron? The offering indeed of these things, might represent the sacrifice that should take away sin: but take away sin itself, it could not do. For what wisdom, righteousness, or equity, is in this, that whereas man had sinned, other brute creatures that were none of his own, (for whatever right he had to any other creatures of God, belonging to his original dominion over them, after his sin he had none at all,) should be accepted a sacrifice in his stead. Besides, what proportion did the blood of bulls and goats bear to the justice of God, that satisfaction for sin should be made to it thereby? Should then the Son of God have taken and appointed any one man, to be a sacrifice for himself and others? Every man being a sinner, the sacrifice of any one, would have been a provocation to God. In the typical

sacrifices, he would not admit of a lamb or a kid that had the least blemish in it, to be offered to him. And shall we suppose that he would allow of a real expiatory sacrifice, by that which was leprous all over? It would have been so far from yielding a sweet savour to God, from being an atonement for all men, for any one man, for the man himself, that should have been offered, that it would have been the highest provocation to the eyes of his glory. Wherefore this Son of God himself became Jesus. That is, he took human nature, the seed of Abraham, into union with himself, that he might have of his own to offer to God. This by its oneness with our nature, the nature that had sinned, being itself not touched with sin, was meet to be offered for us; and by its union with his person was meet and able to make atonement with God for us; and so 'God redeemed his church with his own blood,' Acts xx. 28. Thus our high priest is 'Jesus the Son of God.' And in these things consists his greatness, which the apostle proposeth for our encouragement to steadfastness in profession. And it may do so on sundry accounts, which have been partly before insisted on, and deserve here to be enlarged on, but that we must not draw out these discourses to too great a length.

VER. 15.—BUT his preceding description of our High Priest, may be thought to include a discouragement in it in reference to us, which may take off from all the encouragements which might be apprehended to lie in his office. For if he be in himself so great and glorious, if so exalted above the heavens, how can we apprehend that he hath any concern in us, in our weak, frail, tempted, sinning condition? And how shall we use either boldness or confidence, in our approach to him for help or assistance? If the apostle Peter, on a discovery of his divine power in working one miracle, thought himself altogether unmeet to be in his presence, whilst he was on the earth, in the days of his flesh, and therefore cried out to him, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord,' Luke v. 8; how much more may we be terrified by his present glory, from attempting an access to him? And how shall we conceive that in all this glory, he will entertain compassionate thoughts concerning such poor sinful worms as we are? Yea, saith the apostle, we may on the consideration of him and his office, come boldly to the throne of grace; the especial reason whereof, removing this objection, and adding a new sort of encouragement, he gives us ver. 15.

VER. 15.—Οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ἀρχιερεὰ μὴ δύναμενον συμπάθειν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν, πεπειρασμένον καὶ κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιοτητα, χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας.

Οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν' Syr. לֹא יֵרָאֵה לָנוּ 'for there is not to us,' Hebraism we have not.

Μὴ δύναμενον συμπάθειν' Syr. דְּלֹא מִצָּא דְנָשָׂא: qui non possit compati: qui non possit, ut patiatur: 'who cannot suffer.' Vulg. Lat. qui non possit compati: 'that cannot have compassion, that cannot suffer with.' Beza, qui non possit affici sensu, 'who cannot be



affected with a sense.' Arab. qui non possit deflere,' 'that cannot mourn.'

Ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν Syr. 'with our infirmity,' in the singular number. We follow Beza, 'touched with the feeling of our infirmities,' which well expresseth the sense of the words, as we shall see.

Πεπειρασμενον δε, sed tentatum. Syr. דְּמֻסִּי, 'who was tempted;' one copy reads πεπειρασμενον, of which word we have spoken before.

Κατὰ πάντα Vulg. Lat. per omnia. Rhem. 'in all things,' so Erasm. and Bez. in omnibus, 'in all things.' Syr. בכל מִדָּם, in omni re, 'in every thing.'

Καθ' ὁμοιοτητα Bez. similiter. Vulg. Lat. Erasm. pro similitudine. Rhem. 'by similitude.' Syr. אַכְוֹן, 'even as we.' Ours, 'like as we are,' supplying the verb substantive; secundum similitudinem.

Χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας, Bez. absque tamen peccato, which we follow, in the supply of *tamen*, 'yet without sin.' Vulg. Lat. absque peccato, 'without sin.' Syr. סָמַר מִן הַטֵּוָה: excepto peccato, 'sin being excepted.' Some use we shall find in these varieties.

VER. 15.—*For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling (affected with a sense) of our infirmities, but was every way tempted in like manner (with us) without sin.*

The words contain a further description of our high priest, by such a qualification, as may encourage us to make use of him, and improve his office to our advantage. For whereas, those things which may induce us to put our trust and confidence in any, or to expect benefit or advantage thereby, may be reduced to two heads—1. Greatness and power; 2 Goodness and love; he manifests both sorts of them to be eminently in our high priest. 'The former he declares ver. 14. For he is 'Jesus the Son of God, who is passed through' and exalted above 'the heavens.' The latter sort are ascribed to him in these words.

The causal connexion γὰρ, 'for,' doth not so much regard the connexion of the words, or express an inference of one thing from another, as it is introductive of a new reason, enforcing the purpose and design of the apostle in the whole. He had exhorted them to hold fast their profession, on the account of their high priest, ver. 14. And directs them to make addresses to him for grace and strength enabling them so to do, ver. 16. With regard to both these duties; to show the reasonableness of them, to give encouragement to them, he declares the qualifications of this high priest, expressed in this verse. These things we may, these things we ought to do.

'For,' οὐκ ἔχομεν ἀρχιερεὰ μη δύναμενον, 'we have not a high priest that cannot:' the manner of the expression is known and usual. A double negation doth strongly and vehemently affirm. It is so with our high priest, even the contrary to what is thus denied. He is such a one as can be affected.

'We have a High Priest,' ἔχομεν ἀρχιερεὰ. The apostle introduceth this for another purpose. Yet withal he lets the Hebrews know, that in the gospel-state there is no loss of privilege in any

thing, as to what the church enjoyed under the law of Moses. They had then a high priest; he, and his office were the life and glory of their profession and worship. We also, saith he, have a high priest, and how much in his person and office and usefulness to the church, he excelleth the priest under the law, he hath partly shown already, and doth more fully declare, in the ensuing chapters. The mention of it is introduced for another end, but this also is included in it. The people of God, under the gospel, are not left without a high priest, who is, in like manner, the life and glory of their profession, worship, and obedience. For our apostle takes a diverse course in dealing with the Gentiles and the Jews in this matter. Treating with the Gentiles, he reminds them of their miserable condition, before they were called to the knowledge of Christ by the gospel, as Eph. ii. 11—13. But treating with the Jews, he satisfies them that they lost no advantage thereby, but had all their former privileges unspeakably heightened and increased. And our relation to him, and interest in him, is expressed in this word *εχομεν*, ‘we have him,’ or as the Syriac, ‘there is to us.’ God hath appointed him and given him unto us; and he is ours, as to all the ends of his office, and by us to be made use of, for all spiritual advantages relating unto God. The church never lost any privilege once granted unto it, by any change or alteration that God made in his ordinances of worship, or dispensations towards it; but still keeping what it had before, it was carried on towards that completeness and perfection, which it is capable of in this world, and which it hath received by Jesus Christ. Presently, upon the giving of the first promise, God instituted some kind of worship, as sacrifices, to be a means of intercourse between him and sinners, in and by the grace and truth of that promise. This was the privilege of them that did believe. After this he made sundry additional ordinances of worship, all of them instructive in the nature of that promise, and directive towards the accomplishment of it. And still there was an increase of grace and privilege in them all. They were the mountains of myrrh and hills of frankincense, on which the church waited until the day brake, and the shadows fled away, Cant. iv. 6. All along the church was still a gainer. But when the time came of the actual accomplishment of the promise, then were all former privileges realized unto believers, new ones added, and nothing lost. We have lost neither sacrifice nor high priest, but have them all in a more eminent and excellent manner. And this is enough to secure the application of the initial seal of the covenant, unto the infant seed of believers. For whereas it was granted to the church under the Old Testament, as a signal favour and spiritual privilege, it is derogatory to the glory of Christ, and the honour of the gospel, to suppose that the church is now deprived of it; for in the whole system and frame of worship, God had ordained the better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. And he says not there is a high priest, but we have a high priest, because all our concern in spiritual things, depends absolutely on our personal interest in them. They may do well to consider this, who, 1. Either know not the nature of this priesthood, or do not at all endeavour to improve this office of Christ,

as that in which they have an interest. Some call themselves Christians, and exercise themselves in the outward worship of God, who are ready to despise, yea, and deride, all spiritual improvement and use of this great privilege, that we have a high priest, and scarce take it any more into any real consideration in the worship of God, than if there were no such thing at all. 2. Those who, not contented with it, have invented and appointed unto themselves a priesthood and sacrifice, to the contempt of this of Christ. Had our apostle dealt with these Hebrews on the principles of the present church of Rome, he would have told them, You had under the law a high priest, but we have now a POPE, a pontifex maximus, a 'great high priest,' far richer, braver, and more potent than yours was. You had many bloody sacrifices, but we have one in the host of more use and profit than were all yours whatever. But dealing with the principles of the gospel, he declares and proposeth to them Jesus, the Son of God, as our only priest, sacrifice, and altar, expressly intimating, that others we have none.

'That cannot be touched with a feeling;' who cannot be affected with a sense; who cannot suffer with. The negative expression, *μη δυναμενον*, 'who cannot,' as it includes and asserts a power and ability for the work or acts mentioned, so it doth it in opposition unto, and in exclusion of some other considerations that infer a disability to this purpose. Now, the ability here intended is either moral only, or moral and natural also. If it be moral only, and intend a constant goodness, kindness, tenderness, and benignity, attended with care and watchfulness unto the end proposed, it may be asserted in opposition to the high priests among the Jews; for as the best of them were but men, and sinful men, who did oftentimes indulge their private and carnal affections, to the disadvantage of the people of God, as did Eli, to the ruin of the church's worship, 1 Sam. ii. 17, 22—25, 28—30, &c., and as none of them were able, at any time, to have a due comprehension\* of all the temptations and infirmities of the people; so many of them were evil men, proud, haughty, wrathful, and such as despised their brethren, and relieved them not at all. In opposition hereunto, it is affirmed of our high priest, that he is able to do quite otherwise, that is, with a moral ability of heart, will, and affections. He always can, and constantly doth, concern himself in all the sin, sufferings, sorrows, temptations, and infirmities of his people.

Again, There may not only be a moral, but also a natural ability included in the word. And in this sense, there is a respect had unto the human nature of Christ, and something moreover ascribed unto him than could have been in him, if he had been God only, which is a great encouragement unto us to make our addresses to him for help and assistance. And this seems to be designed from the following words, wherein mention is made of his being tempted like unto us. To understand this ability, we must inquire into the meaning of the next word, expressing that which it is applied unto, or exercised about.

*Συμπαθεσαι*. I have shown how variously this word is translated 'to suffer, to suffer with, to have compassion, to be touched with a

feeling, to be affected with a sense, to condole or bewail.' The word is once more used by our apostle in this Epistle, and nowhere else in the New Testament, ch. x. 34, τοις δεσμοις μου συνεπαθήσατε, where we render it by 'having compassion:' 'Ye had compassion of me in my bonds:' though I should rather say, 'Ye suffered with me in my bonds.' 1 Pet. iii. 8, the noun συμπαθης occurs, where we render it again 'having compassion.' And, indeed, the origin of that word 'compassion,' is comprehensive of its whole sense, but its common use for pity is not. Συμπαθεis is more fully rendered in that place by Beza, Mutuo molestiarum sensu affecti, 'affected with a mutual sense of the troubles of each other.' Συμπαθεω includes,

First. A concern in the troubles, or sufferings, or evils of others, on the account of concernment in any common interest wherein persons are united, as it is in the natural body. Sometimes some part is affected with a disease, which hath seized on it. Another part of the body is affected with it, although nothing of the disease hath really seized on it. That part thereof cannot be absolutely said to be sick or ill-affected, for no part of the disease is in it; but it may be said συμπασχειν; that is, not to be free from being affected, though not upon its own account, Galen de locis affectis, lib. 1. This suffering is by consent, or the harmony that is in the same nature, branched into its individuals. So we have a sense of the suffering of humanity, or of human nature wherein we are interested, in other men, in any man whatever.

Secondly. It includes a propensity to relieve them, in whose troubles or sufferings we are concerned, and that whether we have power to effect that relief or not. So David, in the deep sense that he had of the death of Absalom, wished that he had died for him, or relieved him from suffering, by dying in his stead. And where this is not in some measure, there is no sympathy. We may not be able, in some cases, where we are concerned, to relieve; it may not be lawful for us, in some cases, to give that help and succour which our compassion would incline us unto. But if there be no such inclination, there is no sympathy.

Thirdly. Properly it contains in it a commotion of affections, which we express by 'condolentia;' whence the Arabic renders the word, 'who can mourn with us.' So is the Hebrew נָחָם used, Ps. lxxix. 20. נָחָם לִי: LXX. ὑπεμείνα συλλυπούμενον, 'I looked for any to be grieved with me,' to be affected with sorrow on my behalf; 'to take pity,' say we, 'to lament with me,' by a motion or agitation of their affections, as the word signifies. And those intended are joined with מְנַחֵם, 'comforters.' This belongs to this sympathy, to have a moving of affections in ourselves upon the sufferings of others.

And these things are here ascribed unto our High Priest, on the account of his union with us, both in the participation of our nature, and the communication of a new nature unto us, whereby we become members of his body, one with him. He is deeply concerned in all our infirmities, sorrows, and sufferings. This is attended with an inclination and propensity to relieve us, according to the rule, measure, and tenor of the covenant; and herewithal, during the time of our



trials, he hath a real motion of affections in his holy nature, which he received or took on him for that very end and purpose, ch. ii. 17, 18.

In this sense of the word, *συμπαθεῖναι*, 'to be affected with a sense,' ascribes this ability in a moral and natural sense unto the Lord Christ, our high priest, as he is man, in contradistinction unto God absolutely, whose nature is incapable of the compassion intended. There are indeed in the Scripture, assignations of such kind of affections unto God; as Isa. lxiii. 9, *בכל צרתם לא צר*. For *לא*, 'not,' the reading is *לִי*, 'to him;' and accordingly we translate it, 'In all their afflictions he was afflicted;' or there was straitening, affliction unto him; he was affected with their straits and afflictions. But there is an anthropopathy allowed in these expressions. These things are assigned unto God after the manner of men. And the true reason of such ascriptions, is not merely to assist our weakness and help our understandings in the things themselves, but to show really what God doth and will do in the human nature which he hath assumed, and intended to do so from of old; on which purpose the superstructure of his dealing with us in the Scripture, is founded and built. And thus it is said of our high priest, that he is able to be affected with a sense of our infirmities, because, in his human nature, he is capable of such affections; and, as he is our high priest, he is graciously inclined to act according to them.

*Τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν*; 'our infirmities.' *Ἀσθενεία*, imbecillitas, debilitas, infirmitas, is used both in the Scripture, and all Greck authors, for any debility, weakness, or infirmity of body or mind. Frequently bodily diseases are expressed by it, as by the adjective *ἀσθενής*, and the verb *ἀσθενέω*, 'to be sick, to be diseased with respect unto the weakness or infirmity that is introduced thereby,' Matt. x. 8, xxv. 43; Luke iv. 40; John v. 3, 5. And sometimes it expresseth the weakness of the mind or spirit, not able, or scarcely able, to bear the difficulties and troubles that it is pressed withal, 1 Cor. ii. 3; weakness of judgment, Rom. xiv. 2; spiritual weakness, as to life, grace, and power, Rom. v. 6, viii. 26. So that this word is used to express every kind of imbecility or weakness that doth, or may, befall our natures, with respect to any difficulties, troubles, or perplexities, that we have to conflict withal. And whereas it is here mentioned generally, without a restriction to any special kind of infirmities, it may justly be extended to all weaknesses of all sorts, that we are, or upon any pressures may be, sensible of. But whereas, in the following words, the reason of the ability of Christ our high priest, to be affected with a sense of our infirmities, is placed in his being tempted; it is manifest that the weaknesses here chiefly intended, are such as respect afflictions and temptations, with persecution for the gospel. Our infirmities and weaknesses under these things, to wrestle with them or remove them, and consequently our trouble, sorrow, suffering, and danger, by them and from them, our high priest is intimately affected withal. He takes himself to be concerned in our troubles, as we are members of his mystical body, one with him. He is inclined, from his own heart and affections, to give in unto us help and relief, as our condition doth require; and he is inwardly moved

during our sufferings and trials, with a sense and fellow-feeling of them.

Obs. I. The church of God hath a standing, perpetual advantage, in the union of our nature to the person of the Son of God, as he is our high priest.—We all acknowledge that so it is with us, upon the account of the sacrifice that he was to offer for us. He had thereby somewhat of his own to offer. Thence it was that God redeemed his church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28, and that he laid down his life for us, 1 John iii. 16. But we are apt to think that this work being well over, we have now no more concern in that nature, nor advantage by it; but that what yet remains to be done for us, may be as well discharged by him who is only God, and absolutely so in every respect. For since he dies no more, what profit is there in his flesh? It is true the flesh of Christ, carnally and sensually considered, profiteth not, as he told the men of Capernaum of old, John vi. And they will find his words true, who, in their own imagination, turn bread into his flesh every day. Yea, and our apostle tells us, that though he had known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth he knew him so no more, 2 Cor. v. 16; that is, though he had known Christ in the days of his flesh here in the world, while as a mortal man he conversed with mortal men, yet all the privilege thereof, and advantage thereby, which some in those days boasted of, were past, and of no longer use. He was now to be known after another manner, and under another consideration, as exalted at the right hand of God. Yet doth not all this in the least impeach our assertion, of the greatness of our concern in the continuation of his human nature, in the union of his person. If, when he had finished his sacrifice, and the atonement which he made for sin, by the offering up of himself, he had then left off his human nature which he had for that end taken on him, notwithstanding that offering, we could not have been delivered nor saved. For besides that he himself had not been sufficiently manifested to be the Son of God for us to have believed on him, seeing he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. i. 4; so our apostle declares, that without his resurrection from the dead, we could neither be delivered from our sins, nor be ever raised again unto glory, 1 Cor. xv. 12—21.

It is therefore confessed, that many and great are the advantages of the resurrection of the body of Christ, and therein of his human nature. For this was the way and means of his entrance into glory: he ‘revived, that he might be Lord of the quick and the dead,’ Rom. xiv. 9. And this was the testimony, that he was acquitted and discharged from the penalty of the law, and from the whole debt he had undertaken to make satisfaction of unto God for sinners, Acts ii. 24; Rom. viii. 33, 34, without which, we could have said of him only as the disciples did when they knew not of his resurrection, ‘We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel,’ Luke xxiv. 21. And hereby had he an illustrious and uncontrollable testimony given to his being the Son of God, Rom. i. 4. As also he laid the foundation, and gave an infallible pledge of the future blessed resurrection, which all that believe in him shall by him obtain. But this being also past and

over, what farther concern hath the church in the continuation of the union of his natures? I might mention many, and those of the greatest importance. For there yet remained some parts of his mediatory work to be discharged, which could not be accomplished without this nature; for he had not yet appeared in the holy place with his own blood whereby he had made atonement, that the whole sacrifice might be completed. And the exaltation of our nature in glory, was needful for the support and consolation of the church. But I shall mention that alone which is here proposed by our apostle, namely, his ability from thence to be affected with a sense of our infirmities and sufferings. This, as I have shown, is appropriated unto him on the account of his human nature. And on this account we may consider his compassion four ways.

1. As it is an eminent virtue in human nature as absolutely innocent.—So was the nature of Christ from the beginning. For therein was he holy and undefiled and separate from sinners. Now, though in that blessed estate wherein we were created, there was no actual object for us to exercise compassion upon or towards, seeing every thing was at rest in its proper place and order, yet was there no virtue more inlaid in our rational constitution, as being absolutely inseparable from goodness and benignity, upon a supposition of a suitable object. Hence they are justly esteemed to be fallen into the utmost degeneracy from our first make, frame, and state, and to be most estranged from our common original, who have cast off this virtue, where it may and ought to have its actual exercise. Nor are any more severely in the Scripture reflected on, than those who are unmerciful, and without compassion, fierce, cruel, and implacable. None more evidently deface the image of God than such persons. Now, our nature in Christ was, and is, absolutely pure and holy, free from the least influence by that depravedness which befel the whole mass in Adam. And herein are the natural virtues of goodness, benignity, mercy, and compassion, pure, perfect, and untainted. And he hath objects to exercise these virtues on, which Adam could not have; and those such as are one with himself, by their participation in the same common principles of nature and grace.

2. This compassion is in him as a grace of the Spirit. For besides the spotless innocence and purity of our nature in him, there was a superaddition of all grace unto it, by virtue of its union with the person of the Son of God, and the unction it had from the Spirit of God. Hence there was an all-fulness of created grace communicated unto him, for he 'received not the Spirit and his graces by measure,' John iii. 34. Of this fulness, compassion is a part, and that no mean part. For of this rank and kind, are all the principal fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23. And in and by these, did he make a representation of God's nature unto us, which he hath described as full of pity, compassion, and tender affections; whence he compares himself unto those creatures, and in those relations which have the most intense and merciful affections. And hereby doth the compassion of Christ our high priest in our human nature, receive an eminent exaltation.

2. He was peculiarly furnished with graces, virtues, habits of mind,

and inclinations, suited to the good and useful discharge of his office in our behalf. The Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and peculiarly anointed him to that end, Isa. xi. 2—4, lxi. 1—3. Now unto the office of a high priest it is in especial required that he should be able to have compassion, ch. v. 2. The reasons whereof we shall see afterwards. He had therefore in his human nature an especial provision of compassion inlaid by the Holy Ghost by whom he was anointed, for the due discharge of this office. Thus was he every way framed in his nature unto mercy and compassion. And whereas there seems nothing now wanting but an outward object of weakness, infirmities, and temptations, to excite and occasion the exercise of this virtue and grace; that this might be the more effectual to that purpose,

4. He took an experience of such sufferings in himself, as are the proper objects of compassion when they are in others. This the next words declare, which we shall afterwards consider.

By these means is the nature of our high priest filled with tenderness, compassion, or sympathy; the foundation of the exercise of which towards us, lies in the oneness of his nature, and ours. And these things belonging to the pure constitution of his nature, and receiving their improvement by the unction of the Spirit, are not lessened nor impaired by his present glorification. For they all belonging unto him on the account of his office, continuing still in the exercise of the same office, their continuation also is necessary. And hence it is, namely because of our concern therein, that he gave so many particular instances, of his retaining the same human nature wherein he suffered. For he did not only 'show himself alive to his disciples after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,' Acts i. 2, providing particularly that they should not think or take him now to be a mere spirit, and so to have lost his natural human constitution, saying unto them, 'Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself; handle me and see me; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have,' Luke xxiv. 39. So when he left the world with that body of flesh and bones, the angels witnessed that he should come again in like manner as he then went away, Acts i. 11. For the heavens must in that nature receive him until the time of the restitution of all things, Acts iii. 21. And to confirm our faith in this matter he appeared afterwards in the same nature to Stephen, Acts vii. 56, and to our apostle, telling him that he was Jesus whom he persecuted, Acts ix. 5. All this to assure us that he is such an high priest, as is able to be affected with a sense of our infirmities. And those who by the monstrous figment of transubstantiation, and those others who feign the Lord Christ to have an ubiquitarian body, both of them by just consequence destroying the verity of his human nature, do evert, as far as lies in them, a main pillar of the church's consolation. Much more do they do so, who deny him to retain the same individual body wherein he suffered in any sense. Herein lies a great advantage of the church, a great encouragement and support unto believers under their infirmities, in their trials and temptations.—For,



First. It is some relief to be pitied in distress. The want hereof, Job complained of, and cried out pathetically about it, ch. xix. 21, 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.' It went unto his heart to find, that his friends were not affected with a sense of his sufferings; and it added exceedingly to the weight of them. And such was the complaint of David, as a type of Christ, Ps. lxxix. 20, 'Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.' It is a representation of the state of our Saviour when all his disciples fled and left him, and he was encompassed with fierce and reproaching enemies. This is a high aggravation of the sorrows and sufferings of any that are in distress. And there is relief in compassion. Some going to the stake, have been much refreshed with a compassionate word whispered unto them. And it cannot but be a cause of great refreshment unto believers in all the hardships that befall them, and their weakness under them, that they have the compassion of their high priest accompanying of them. He is in himself exceedingly great and glorious; nearly allied unto us, able to receive us, being far above all those persons and things that occasion our troubles, for they are all under his feet; all which considerations render his compassion, as before described, refreshing and relieving.

Secondly. Herein lies a great encouragement to make our addresses unto him in all our straits and weaknesses. For if he be so concerned in us and our troubles, if he be so affected in himself with a sense of them, and have in his holy nature, and upon the account of his office, such a propensity to relieve us, which also he is so able for, as hath been declared; what should hinder us from making our addresses unto him continually for help and supplies of his assisting grace, according as our necessities do require? But this being the peculiar use that the apostle makes of this doctrine in the next verse, it must be there considered.

Thirdly. There lies no small warning herein, how heedfully we should take care that we miscarry not, that we faint not in our trials. He looks on us with a great concern, and his glory and honour are engaged in our acquitting of ourselves. If we have a due regard to him and his love, it will excite us unto all care and diligence in the discharge of every duty we are called unto, notwithstanding the difficulties that it may be attended withal.

In the next words, an especial reason is assigned of this merciful ability of our high priest, to be affected with a sense of our infirmities. 'But was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin.' The assertion which is the ground of the reason assigned, is that he was tempted; expressly with the extent of it; it was *κατα πάντα*, 'in all things;' and an appropriation unto our concern, 'like as we are;' with a limitation of the extent and appropriation, 'yet without sin.'

The whole substance of what is here intended hath been largely treated on, ch. ii. 17, whither I refer the reader, that we may not repeat the same things again. Some very few words may be added in the explication of what is peculiar to this place.

Πεπειρασμενον δε. The particle δε, ‘but,’ is contradictory to what was before denied. He is not such a one as cannot be affected; but one who was himself tempted. And this plainly shows that what is now introduced, is the principal proof of the former assertion. It is evident that he can be affected with a sense of our infirmities, because he was tempted.

Πεπειρασμενον, ‘tempted;’ that is, tried, exercised, for no more doth the word originally import. Whatever is the moral evil in temptation, it is from the depraved intention of the tempter, or from the weakness and sin of the tempted. In itself, and materially considered, it is but a trial which may have a good or a bad effect. How, whereby, or wherein, our high priest was thus tried and tempted, see the place before mentioned.

Κατα παντα, ‘every way,’ ‘in all things;’ that is, from all means and instruments of temptation, by all ways of it, and in all things, wherein as a man, or as our high priest, he was concerned.

Καθ’ ὁμοιοτητα, secundum similitudinem, ‘in like manner.’ There is a plain allusion or relation unto the temptations of others. For whatever is like, is of necessity like to somewhat else. And what is done in like manner, or according to similitude, hath something that answers unto it. Now this is the trials and temptations of them that do believe. The things that press on them by reason of their weakness. See as above.

Χωρις ἁμαρτίας, ‘without sin.’ Sin with respect unto temptation may be considered two ways. 1. As the principle of it. 2. As its effect.

1. Sin sometimes is the principle of temptation. Men are tempted to sin by sin; to actual sin by habitual sin; to outward sin, by indwelling sin, James i. 14, 15. And this is the greatest spring and source of temptations in us who are sinners.

2. Sin respects temptation as the effect of it; that which it tends and leads unto, which it designs, which it bringeth forth or produceth. And it may be inquired, with respect unto which of these considerations it is, that the exception is here put in on the behalf of our high priest; that he was ‘tempted without sin.’ If the former, then the meaning is, that he was tried and tempted by all ways and means, from all principles and causes, in like manner even as we are, excepting only that he was not tempted by sin, which had no place in him, no part, no interest, so that it had no ground to make suggestions unto him upon. And hereby the apostle preserves in us due apprehensions of the purity and holiness of Christ, that we may not imagine that he was liable unto any such temptations unto sin from within, as we find ourselves liable unto, and which are never free from guilt and defilement. If the latter be intended, then all success of temptation upon our high priest is denied. We are tried and tempted by Satan and the world, and by our own lusts. The aim of all these temptations is sin, to bring us more or less in one degree or other to contract the guilt of it. Ofttimes in this condition, sin actually ensues; temptation hath its effect in us, and upon us. Yea, when any temptation is vigorous and pressing, it is seldom but that more or less, we

are sinfully affected with it. It was quite otherwise with our high priest. Whatever temptation he was exposed unto, or exercised withal, as he was with all of all sorts that can come from without, they had none of them in the least degree any effect in him or upon him; he was still in all things absolutely without sin. Now the exception being absolute, I see no reason why it should not be applied unto sin with both the respects unto temptation mentioned. He neither was tempted by sin, such was the holiness of his nature, nor did his temptation produce any sin, such was the perfection of his obedience. And concerning all these things the reader may consult the place before-mentioned.

VER. 16.—The last verse of this chapter contains an inference from what was discoursed in the two foregoing, as the contexture of the words declares. The exhortation is insisted on, ver. 14, ‘That we would hold fast our profession unto the end.’ The motive and encouragement hereunto is taken from the consideration of the priesthood of Christ, with the several concerns thereof before explained. Here a farther improvement of them in particular is directed unto for the same end. For, it is supposed that we may meet with many difficulties, oppositions, and temptations in the discharge of that duty which in and of ourselves we are not able to conflict withal, and to overcome. Wherefore we are guided and encouraged to seek for help and assistance against them, on the account of what hath been declared concerning the priesthood of the Son of God.

VER. 16.—*Προσερχομεθα ουν μετα παρήσιας τῷ θρονῷ της χάριτος ἵνα λαβωμεν ελεον, και χαριν εὐρωμεν εις ευχαιρον βοηθειαν.*

Ουν, ‘therefore;’ seeing we have a high priest, and he such a one as we have described. The consideration hereof is to encourage, guide, and influence us unto the ensuing duty, and in all the concerns of it. Without this we have no right unto it, no ability for it.

*Προσερχομεθα*, ‘let us come;’ so we. But that is only *ερχομεθα*. There is some addition of sense from the composition. Nor is it by any translators rendered, *veniamus* singly, ‘let us come:’ but *adeamus*, or *accedamus*, or *appropinquemus*, ‘let us come to,’ ‘draw near or approach.’ Syr. *נִתְקַרֵּב*, ‘let us draw near,’ in a sacred manner, or to sacred purposes. So have we rendered the same word, ch. x. 22. And it is used absolutely for to come unto God in his worship, ch. vii. 25, x. 1, xi. 6. It answers *קָרַב* in the Hebrew, which as it is used for to approach or draw nigh in general, so it is peculiarly used to signify the solemn approach that was to be made unto God in his worship or service. Hence also it signifies to offer sacrifices and offerings, which are thence called *קִרְבָּנִים*. The word therefore, hath respect unto the access, either of the people of old with their sacrifices to the altar in the temple, or to the priests’ approach unto the holy place, as the next words will more fully declare. Having asserted the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God to be our high priest, as typified by the high priest among the Jews, he expresseth our ad-

dresses unto God by him, in answer to the way and manner whereby the priests or people of old made their approaches unto God; as that which agreeth therewith in its general nature, though on other accounts it is variously exalted above it. 'Let us draw near;' in a holy sacred manner, according to his appointment; that is, with our prayers and supplications.

Μετὰ παρρησίας, 'with boldness.' This word hath been spoken unto, on ch. iii. 6. Here it is variously rendered. Syr. כְּעֵינָא, 'with an open or revealed eye.' Vulg. Lat. cum fiducia, 'with confidence.' So the Arabic. By the Ethiopic it is wholly omitted. Beza, cum loquendi libertate, 'with liberty of speech or speaking.' It is a principal adjunct of the worship of God, which our apostle expresseth in this word, both here and ch. x. 19. And this somewhat that is peculiar to the worship of the New Testament, in opposition unto that of the Old. This he elsewhere calls ἐλευθερίαν, 'liberty,' 2 Cor. iii. 17. The liberty that is given by the Holy Spirit under the New Testament unto believers, which those who were kept under bondage by the letter of the Old, had no interest in. 'For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' And he calls it προσωπον ἀνακεκαλυμμενον, ver. 18, 'open face;' whence is the oculus revelatus of the Syriac in this place. This; as it hath an especial opposition to the veil that was on the Jews, and is to this day filling them with darkness and fear, so it denotes boldness and confidence of mind in a freedom from fear, shame, and discouragements.

There are therefore two things that the apostle intends to remove, and to have us free, or delivered from, in our drawing near to the throne of grace with our prayers and supplications, on the account of the interposition of our high priest.

First. A bondage-frame of spirit, or a spirit of bondage unto fear, which was upon the people under the Old Testament in the worship of God. This he elsewhere frequently both ascribes unto them, and removes from us, Rom. viii. 14, 15; 2 Cor. iii. 12—18. God in the giving of the law, and the institution of the ordinances of worship, wherein he taught the people how he would be revered by them, had so encompassed himself with fire and terror, that it engendered a great and awful horror in their minds. This made them remove and stand afar off, desiring that God would not approach to them, nor that they might approach unto God, but that all things between them might be transacted at a distance by an 'internuntius,' Exod. xx. 18, 19. This legal diffidence and distrust in our approaches unto God, which shuts up the heart, straitens the spirit, and takes away the liberty of treating with him as a Father, is now by Christ removed and taken away, Gal. iv. 4—6. Christ was made under the law, to deliver us from the dread and bondage of it; whereby also we receive the adoption of children, and therewithal the Spirit of Christ to treat with God, with the liberty, boldness, and ingenuity of children, crying Abba Father, with the genuine actings of faith and love.

Secondly. A disbelief of acceptance arising from a sense of our own unworthiness. From an apprehension of God's greatness and terror there arises a dread in persons under the law. And from the consi-



deration of their own vileness, there arises a distrust in sinners, accompanied with fear and despondency, as though there were no hope for them in him. This also the apostle would remove upon the account of the priesthood of Christ. \* The manner assigned unto us for our approach to God includes all this; we are to do it *μετα παρρησιας*, 'with boldness;' which word imports,

1. Orationis, or orandi libertatem. *Παρρησια* is *πανρησια*, 'a freedom and liberty in speaking;' rendered here by Beza, loquendi libertas. This liberty is internal and spiritual, and is opposed unto the legal diffidence and bondage before described. This *παρρησια* therefore in the first place, is our spiritual liberty and freedom, attended with a holy confidence in our access to God, to make our request known unto him, expressing our conditions, our wants, our desires, freely, and with confidence.

2. Exauditionis fiduciam; or a spiritual confidence of acceptance with God, through the interposition of Jesus Christ. In another place our apostle seems to make this to be a thing distinct from the *παρρησια* here mentioned, Eph. iii. 12. *Εν ᾧ εχομεν την παρρησιαν, και την προσαγωγην εν πεποιθησει, δια της πιστεως αυτου*, 'In whom we have boldness and an access with confidence through the faith that is in him.' Our access with confidence includes a persuasion of acceptance, and is distinguished from the boldness that it is accompanied withal. But yet as this *παρρησια* and *προσαγωγη εν πεποιθησει*, this 'boldness and access with confidence,' are inseparable in and from the same duty; so they may be mentioned the one for both in other places, as here they seem to be. And we thus draw near,

*Τῷ θρονῷ της χαριτος*, 'to the throne of grace.' The proper and immediate object of our access or approach is and must be a person. Who that is, is not here expressed, but is left to be understood in the manner of his being represented unto us. A throne is a seat of majesty; and is ascribed to God and men. To God frequently, as he is *מלך גדול*, 'the great King over all.' Isaiah saw him on a throne, high and exalted, ch. vi. 1. And Ezekiel as on the likeness of a throne, ch. i. 26. So justice and judgment are said to be the habitation of his throne, Ps. lxxxix. 14. There they abide and dwell, when other thrones have but some partial visits from them. In general heaven is said to be God's throne, Matt. v. 34, as the place where principally he manifests his glory and majesty. But the expression being metaphorical, is not to be restrained to any one thing in particular. The Hebrews say that God hath a double throne; *בסא דרין*, 'a throne of judgment;' and *בסא רחמים*, 'a throne of compassion and tender mercy,' that is, *θρονος της χαριτος*, 'a throne of grace.' A throne then is a place where, and from whence judgment is exercised, and mercy administered; and therefore our coming unto God in his worship for grace or mercy, is said to be a coming unto his throne. Or there may be an allusion unto the mercy-seat in the tabernacle, which being laid on the ark with a coronet of gold round about it, and shadowed with the cherubim, was as the throne or seat of God, in that most solemn representation of his presence amongst that people. For that which the apostle here calls our coming to the throne of grace, ch. x. 19, he

expresseth by drawing nigh with boldness into the holiest, the place where the ark and mercy-seat were placed. And it is the love and grace of God in Christ which was thereby represented, as hath been manifested elsewhere.

Our next inquiry is after the person, whom we are distinctly to consider as on this throne in our addresses thereunto. Some say it is the Lord Christ as our Mediator and high Priest that is intended. For concerning him directly is the discourse immediately preceding. He is also in particular here described as our merciful, faithful, and careful high Priest; all which are encouragements to come unto him, which accordingly we are exhorted unto, and that with boldness. And a throne is peculiarly ascribed unto him in this Epistle, ch. i. 8. And he sits in the throne of God, Rev. iii. 21. And at his throne of grace we may be sure of acceptance.

But yet this seems not to be the especial intention of this place. For, 1. A throne, rule, and government, are ascribed unto the Lord Christ with respect unto his kingly and not his priestly office, of which the apostle here discourseth. It is said indeed of him, that he should be a Priest upon his throne, Zech. vi. 13, but that is to intimate concomitancy of his kingly power, as inseparable from his person; he shall be a Priest, though sitting, or while he sits as a King on his throne. 2. Wherever the Lord Christ is spoken of as on his throne, exalted in the glory and majesty of his kingdom, it is always with reference to his power and authority over his church, for to give laws and rules unto it for his worship, or over his enemies for their ruin and destruction. 3. The context requires another sense. For the Lord Christ in his office and interposition on our behalf, is not proposed as the object of our coming, but as the means of it, and a great encouragement unto it. For 'through him we have an access in one Spirit unto the Father,' Eph. ii. 18. On the account of his undertaking for us, his appearance before God on our behalf, the atonement he hath made, we may come in his name with confidence of acceptance unto the throne of God. See Rev. iv. 2, 3, v. 6, 7; Heb. vii. 26.

I cannot omit one argument that is used by Primasius, Haymo, and Ludovicus de Tena on this place, to prove that it is the throne of Christ that is here intended. And this is because it is called a throne of grace, that is, say they, of Christ; for so is he called by our apostle, ch. ii. 9. For following the vulgar translation, and reading the words, ut gratia Dei gustaret mortem pro omnibus, they say gratia is of the nominative and not of the ablative case; that the 'grace of God should taste of death for all;' and herein Tena urgeth the consent of Thomas and the ordinary gloss. Such woeful mistakes do men, otherwise wise and learned, fall into, who undertake to expound the Scriptures, without consulting the original, or an ability so to do. The throne of grace, therefore, is unto us, God as gracious in Christ, as exalted in a way of exercising grace and mercy towards them, that through the Lord Jesus believe in him and come unto him.

This is the duty exhorted unto. The end hereof is twofold. 1. General and immediate. 2. Particular, as an effect and product

thereof. The general end hath two parts; 1. That we may obtain mercy. 2. That we may find grace. The particular and determinate end of all is, seasonable help; help in a time of need.

The first thing designed as a part of the end to be aimed at, in the discharge or performance of this duty is, *ἵνα λαβόμεν ἐλεον*, 'that we may receive mercy;' that we may obtain mercy. *Λαμβανω* doth sometimes signify to 'obtain,' to acquire, and so by most interpreters it is here rendered, *ut obtineamus, ut consequamur*, as by ours, that 'we may obtain.' But the first and most usual signification of the word is only to receive, or to take, that we may receive. And I see no reason why that sense of it may not be not most proper unto this place. For the apostle seems to intimate that mercy is prepared for us; only our access unto God by Christ with boldness, is required to our being made actual partakers thereof. And this answers his prescription of boldness or spiritual confidence, in our approaches to the throne of grace, for the receiving that mercy which in and through Christ is prepared for us.

That we may receive *ἐλεος*. This word is often used to signify that mercy in God from whence we obtain and receive the pardon of our sins. Mercy in pardoning; *חַנּוּן*, so most expound this place; that we may obtain mercy for our sins, that we may be pardoned. But this doth not seem to answer the present purpose of the apostle. For he is not discoursing about sin in the guilt of it, but about temptations, afflictions, and persecutions. Wherefore, the *ἐλεος* or mercy here intended, must be that which is the principle or cause of our support, assistance, and deliverance, namely, in the effects of it. This is *חַסֵּד* in the Hebrew, which the LXX. frequently render by *ἐλεος*, and we by mercy, though it rather signify kindness and benignity, than pardoning grace. Moreover, it is not about the first approach of sinners to God by Christ for mercy and pardon, whereof he treats, but about the daily access of believers unto him, for grace and assistance. To receive mercy, therefore, is to be made partakers of gracious help and support from the kindness and benignity of God in Christ, when we are in straits and distresses, which springs, indeed, from the same root with pardoning grace, and is therefore called mercy.

*Και χάριν εὐρωμεν*, 'and that we may find grace.' This is the next general end of our access unto the throne of grace. *Εὐρωμεν*, 'that we may find,' or rather obtain, for so is this word often used. And there may be a twofold sense of these words.

First. To find or obtain favour, or favourable acceptance with God. When God is pleased *χαριτωσαι*, to make us acceptable unto himself in Christ, as he is said to do, Eph. i. 6, then we find *χάριν*, 'grace,' or favour with him. And this is the foundation of all grace that is communicated unto us. The phrase of speech occurs frequently in the Old Testament. 'Let me find grace in thine eyes;' or favour in thy sight, that is, be accepted with thee, *חַנּוּן*. And to this doth *εὐρειν χάριν* exactly answer; and that is, to be accepted. See Gen. vi. 8, xviii. 3, xxxix. 4; Eph. ii. 15. So is the Greek phrase, Acts vii. 46, *ὃς εὗρε χάριν ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ*, 'who found favour in the sight of God;' and Luke i. 30, *εὗρες γὰρ χάριν παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ*, 'thou hast found favour

with God ;' so we instead of grace ; and thence, ver. 28, she is said to be *κεχαριτωμενη*, 'graciously accepted or highly favoured.'

This sense is pious, and agreeable to the analogy of faith. For our free, gracious acceptance with God, is the foundation and cause of all that grace or assistance that we are made partakers of.

But secondly. The apostle is not treating of the personal acceptance of sinners, or believers in or by Christ in this place, but of that especial assistance, which, upon particular addresses unto him, we do obtain. Now, this may be considered two ways. 1. In respect of the fountain of it, and so it is beneficentia, the 'will of God' to assist us ; or, 2dly. Of the effect itself, the 'beneficium,' the actual assistance and help we do receive. So when our apostle in his strait, upon his temptation, made his address to God for relief, he received that answer, 'My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness,' 2 Cor. xii. 9. Wherein he had an intimation, both of God's gracious care and good will towards him, as also of the actual powerful assistance with which he should be supplied against his temptation. And this sense is determined by the next words.

*Εἰς ευχαριον βοηθειαν*. What kind of help *βοηθεια* is, hath been declared on ch. ii. 18. It is a succour ; that is, aid, yielded unto any upon their cry. *Θειν εἰς βοην*, 'to run in to assist upon the cry of any,' is the original of the word's signification, And this help is,

*Ευχαριος* 'seasonable ; that is, help *בערו*, 'in its time ;' its proper time or season, Prov. xv. 23, *דבר בערו מה טוב*, 'a word in its time, or its season, how good is it !' Help that is fit, suitable, seasonable ; that is, on the part of God that gives it, of the persons that receive it, of the time wherein it is afforded, of the end for which it is bestowed, is *ευχαριος*. This kind of help it becometh the greatness and wisdom of God to give. And it is an impression on the minds of men by nature, that such kind of help is from God. Hence, the proverb, *Θεος απο μηχανης*, for unexpected aid, when all things otherwise would be lost. This the Psalmist excellently expresseth, Ps. xli. 1. *עזרה בצרות נמצא*, *במזד*, 'God is a help wonderfully found in straits.' And so the Syr. version adds in this place, 'help in time of affliction or persecution.' Grace, therefore, effectual for our assistance in every time of need, upon our cry to God in Christ, is that which is here intended. I know not whether I may add an allusion that may be found in the Hebrew words, if respect may be had to that language here. For as *כסא* is a 'throne,' the throne whereunto we approach for help, so *כסא* is as much as *זמן*, 'an appointed time or season.' We come *לכסא* for 'help' *בכסא*.

We have opened the words in their order, as they lie in the text. Our observations from the resolution of the sense, will arise from the last clause and ascend unto the first, and in them the meaning of the words themselves will be yet more fully explained : as,

Obs. I. There is, there will be a season, many a season in the course of our profession and walking before God, wherein we do or shall stand in need of especial aid and assistance. This is included in the last words, 'help in a time of need ; help that is suitable and seasonable, for and unto such a condition, wherein we are found earnestly to cry out for it. This I shall a little enlarge upon. Our condition all



along and in all things, is wanting and indigent. We do live, we must live, if we intend to live, always in a constant dependence on God in Christ for supplies. There is a continual *ἐπιχορηγία τοῦ Πνεύματος*, Phil. i. 19, or 'additional supply of the Spirit' unto what we have received, without which, we cannot well spiritually subsist one moment. And God 'supplies all our wants according to his riches in glory' (that is, his glorious riches in grace) by Christ Jesus, Phil. iv. 19. But, besides that want which always attends our condition in this world, and which God constantly supplies according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, there are especial straits and difficulties, which, in especial seasons we are exposed unto. I need not prove this to them that read; they have found it, they have felt it, and so have I also. I shall, therefore, only call over a few instances of such seasons, some whereof we have already been exercised in, some whereof we cannot escape for the future, and the rest may probably befall us, if they have not done so already.

1. A time of affliction is such a season. God is an help *בצורה*, Ps. xli. 1, in all sorts of straits and afflictions. And the Scripture abounds in instances of believers making their especial application unto God, for especial assistance in such a season, and directions for them so to do. And the rule of the covenant in sending relief, is upon the coming up of the cry of the afflicted unto God, Ps. l. 15; Exod. ii. 23—25. And let men's stock of wisdom, grace, experience, and resolution be what it will, or what they can fancy, they are not able to go through with the least new affliction to the glory of God, without new especial aid and assistance from him.

2. A time of persecution is such a season; yea, it may be the principal season here intended. For, hence arose the great danger of these Hebrews in the course of their profession, as our apostle declares at large, ch. x. And this is the greatest trial that in general God exerciseth his church withal. In such a season, some seed quite decayeth, some stars fall from heaven, some prove fearful and unbelieving, to their eternal ruin. And few there are but that where persecution is urgent, it hath some impression upon them to their disadvantage. Carnal fears, with carnal wisdom and counsels, are apt to be at work in such a season; and all the fruit that comes from those evil roots, is bitter. Hence, many make it their only design in such a season, to creep through it and live; to be strong in the Lord, and the power of his grace, unto the performance of all the duties which the gospel requireth, and as it requires them, they have no design. But by this means, as God hath no revenue of glory from them, nor the church of advantage, so they will scarce find inward peace when outward trouble is over. This then is a season, wherein, if ever, an especial address is needful for especial aid.

3. A time of temptation is such a season. Our apostle found it so, when he had the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him. Thrice did he pray, and cry out for especial assistance against it, or deliverance from it, and he got assurance of them both. This added to the former completed the condition of these Hebrews. With their persecutions they had manifold temptations. These made it a time of need unto them. In reference to this season and the power of it, doth our apostle

give that great caution, 'let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall,' 1 Cor. x. 12. And wherein doth this heedfulness principally consist? in an application to him who is faithful, who will not 'suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it,' ver. 13, that is, who will give out seasonable help; 'help in a time of need.'

4. A time of spiritual desertion is such a season. When God in any way withdraws himself from us, we shall stand in need of special assistance. 'Thou didst hide thy face,' saith David, 'and I was troubled.' Trouble will ensue on God's hiding himself from us. But this is of the mystery of his grace, that when he withdraws himself from any soul as to sense and experience, whereby it is troubled, he can secretly communicate of himself unto it in a way of strength, whereby it shall be sustained.

5. A time wherein we are called unto the performance of any great and signal duty, is such a season also. So was it with Abraham when he was called first to leave his country, and afterwards to sacrifice his son. Such was the call of Joshua to enter into Canaan, proposed to our example, Heb. xiii. 5, and of the apostles to preach the gospel when they were sent out as sheep among wolves. Now, although we may not, perhaps, be called in particular to such duties as these, yet we may be called to duties which have an equal greatness in them, with respect unto us and our condition. Something that is new, that we are yet inexperienced in, something that there is great opposition against, somewhat that may cost us dear, somewhat that as to the state of the inward and outward man, we may seem to be every way unfit for, somewhat that the glory of God is in an especial manner concerned in, we may be called unto. And there is nothing of this nature which doth not render the time of it, a season wherein we stand in need of especial aid and assistance.

6. Times of changes and the difficulties wherewith they are attended introduce such a season. 'Changes and war,' saith Job, 'are against me,' Job x. 17. There is in all changes, a war against us, wherein we may be foiled, if we are not the more watchful, and have not the better assistance. And freedom from changes is in most, the ground of carnal security, Ps. lv. 19. 'Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.' Changes will beget fear, they are trials to all that are subject unto them. And these we are in all instances of life, continually obnoxious unto. No man can enumerate the vicissitudes of our course, yet not one of them can we pass through in a due manner, without renewed especial assistances of grace.

7. The time of death is such a season. To let go all hold of present things and present hopes, to give up a departing soul, entering into the invisible world, and an unchangeable eternity therein, into the hands of a sovereign Lord, is a thing which requires a strength above our own, for the right and comfortable performance of.

Now, it is easy to apprehend how great an influence these things have into our whole course of walking before God, and how much of our lives and ways is taken up with them. Either afflictions or persecutions, or temptations or defections from God, or signal difficult duties or changes,

are continually before us, and the last of them, death, lies still at the door. And that there is none of these, but render their seasons times of need. It may indeed then be said, wherein doth the speciality of the grace and aid mentioned, consist, seeing it is that which we always stand in need of, and always receive? I answer, that indeed all grace is special grace. It proceeds not from any common principle, but from the especial love of God in Christ, and is given out in an especial distinguishing manner, and that for especial ends and purposes, so that no supply of it hath a peculiar speciality in its own nature. But it is here so called, because it is suited unto especial occasions, to be seasonable help in a time of need. And although we may stand in need of it always, yet we do not so always on the same account, which gives it its speciality. Sometimes one thing, sometimes another, makes it needful and suitable. That which presently presseth upon us, be it affliction or persecution, be it duty or change, it makes the grace we seek for, 'help in a time of need.' And God is pleased so to dispose of things, that we shall have occasion at all times, to make our applications unto him for especial assistance. If things should be left unto an ordinary course, without some peculiar concern to excite us, to awaken us: it is inconceivable how formal and secure we should quickly grow. Wherefore, we have in the wisdom of God, always somewhat that in particular presseth upon us to make us intent, earnest, and vigilant in our addresses to him for help. And the especial supplies which we obtain on any particular occasion, affords a contribution of new spiritual strength to the soul, for all its duties. The remaining observations may be briefly represented. For hence it appears,

Obs. II. That there is with God in Christ, God on his throne of grace, a spring of suitable and seasonable help, for all times and occasions of difficulty. He is the God of all grace, and a fountain of living waters is with him for the refreshment of every weary and thirsty soul.

Obs. III. All help, succour, or spiritual assistance in our straits and difficulties, proceeds from mere mercy and grace, or the goodness, kindness, and benignity of God in Christ. That we may receive mercy, and obtain grace to help. Our help is from grace and mercy, and thence must it be, or we must be for ever helpless. And not to exclude that sense of the words,

Obs. IV. When we have through Christ obtained mercy and grace for our persons, we need not fear, but that we shall have suitable and seasonable help for our duties. If we find mercy and obtain grace, we shall have help.

Obs. V. The way to obtain help from God, is by a due gospel-application of our souls for it to the throne of grace. Let us come for it to the throne of grace. How this application is to be made by faith and supplications, and how indispensable it is for the procuring of the aid aimed at, shall be elsewhere declared.

Obs. VI. Great discouragements often interpose themselves in our minds, and against our faith, when we stand in need of especial help from God, and would make our application unto him for relief. It is included in the exhortation, to come with boldness, that is, to cast off and conquer all those discouragements, and to use confidence of acceptance and liberty of speech before him.

Obs. VII. Faith's consideration of the interposition of Christ in our behalf, as our high priest, is the only way to remove discouragements, and to give us boldness in our access unto God. Let us come, therefore, with boldness; that is, on the account of the care, love, and faithfulness of Christ as our high priest, before discoursed on. And we may add,

Obs. VIII. That in all our approaches unto God, we are to consider him as on a throne: though it be a throne of grace, yet it is still a throne, the consideration whereof, should influence our minds with reverence and godly fear, in all things wherein we have to do with him.

These observations are, as included in the text, so of importance in themselves, as concerning the principal parts of the life of faith, and our daily spiritual exercise, in our walking before God: yet I shall forbear any enlargements upon them, that these discourses be not drawn forth unto too great a length.

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