WRITINGS OF JOHN GILL - VOLUME 1

by John Gill

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by John Gill (Volume 1), compiled for study and devotional reading.

100 Chapters

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BAPTISM: A PROFESSION OF THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL by John Gill Baptism, A Divine Command to be Observed.

Baptism, A Public Ordinance of Divine Worship. The Ancient Mode of Baptizing by Immersion, Plunging, or Dipping into Water, Maintained and Vindicated. A Defence of a Book entitled, The Ancient Mode of Baptizing by Immersion, Plunging, or Dipping into Water, &c. The Argument From Apostolic Tradition, In Favor of Infant-Baptism, Considered. An Essay on Scripture Baptism . . . Infant-Baptism is Destitute of Proof . . . To which is prefixed an address to Micaiah Towgood. An Answer To A Welsh Clergyman's Twenty Arguments in Favor of Infant-Baptism.

Antipedobaptism; or Infant-Baptism, an Innovation. A Reply to a Book, entitled, A Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-Baptism.

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Infant Baptism: A Part and Pillar of Popery

Chapter 3

01.01. Baptism, A Divine Command to be Observed.

Baptism: A Divine Commandment To Be Observed Being A Sermon Preached At Barbican, October 9, 1765 At The Baptism Of The Reverend Mr. Robert Carmichael, Minister Of The Gospel In Edinburgh. The Preface The following discourse was not designed for the press; had it, the subject of it would have been a little more enlarged upon; and, perhaps, might have appeared in a little better dress; but as the publication of it is become necessary, I chose to let it go just as it was delivered, as nearly in the very words and expressions, as my memory could assist me; the sense, I am sure, is no where departed from; that it might not be said, that any thing that was spoken is concealed, changed, or altered. The warmest solicitations of my friends would never have prevailed upon me to have made it public, being unwilling to renew the controversy about baptism unnecessarily; and being determined only to write in self-defense, when attacked, or whenever the controversy is renewed by others; for I am very sensible, that the argument on both sides is greatly exhausted, and scarce any thing new can be expected, that is serious and pertinent: but the rude attack upon the sermon in two letters in a news-paper, determined me at once to send it out into the world, as being a sufficient confutation of itself, without any remarks at all, of the lies and falsehoods, calumnies, cavils and impertinencies, with which the letters abound; whereby it will appear to every reader, how fairly that writer charges me with railing against my brethren, and the whole Christian world; and how injuriously he represents me, as treating all that differ from me as fools, unlearned, ignorant of the scriptures, and unclean. It is hard we cannot practice what we believe, and speak in vindication of our practice, without being abused, vilified and insulted in a public news-paper; is this treating us as brethren, as the writer of the letters, in a canting way, affects to call us? And how does this answer to the false character of Candidus, he assumes? I shall not let myself down so low, nor do I think it fitting and decent to go into, and carry on a religious controversy in a newspaper, and especially with so worthless a writer, and without a name. This base and cowardly way of writing, is like the Indians' manner of fighting; who set up an hideous yell, pop off their guns behind bushes and hedges, and then run away and hide themselves in the thickets. However, if the publication of this discourse should be of any service to relieve or strengthen the minds of any, with respect to their duty in the observance of the ordinance of baptism, I am content to bear the indignities of men, and shall reckon it an over-balance to all their reproaches and insults. J. G.

Baptism A Divine Commandment Being about to administer the Ordinance of Baptism, before we enter upon the administration of it, I shall drop a few words on the occasion, from a passage of scripture you will find in 1 John 5:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.

What I shall say in the following discourse, will much depend upon the sense of the word commandments; by which are meant, not the ten commandments, or the commandments of the moral law delivered by Moses to the children of Israel; which, though they are the commands of

God, and to be observed by Christians under the present dispensation; since we are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21); and are to be kept from a principle of love to God, for the end of the commandment is charity, or love, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned (1 Timothy 1:5); yet there commands are not easy of observation, through the weakness of the flesh, or corruption of nature; nor can they be perfectly kept by any of Adam's fallen race; for there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not (Ecclesiastes 7:20); and he that offends in one point is guilty of all (James 2:10); and is exposed to the curse and condemnation of the law, which runs in this tenor, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them (Galatians 3:10); hence this law in general is called a fiery law, the letter which kills, and the ministration of condemnation and death, which make it terrible to offenders; however, it may be delighted in by believers in Christ after the inward man: nor are the commandments of the ceremonial law intended, which being many and numerous, were burdensome; especially to carnal men, who were frequently ready to say concerning them, What a weariness is it? One of its precepts, circumcision, is called a yoke, which, says the apostle Peter, neither our fathers nor we were able to bear (Acts 15:10); because it bound persons to keep the whole law, which they could not do; and the whole is said to be a yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1), and consequently its commandments grievous; besides this law was abrogated before the apostle John wrote this epistle, and its commandments were not to be kept; Christ had abolished this law of commandments contained in ordinances; and there is now a disannulling of the whole of it, because of its weakness and unprofitableness (Ephesians 2:15; Hebrews 7:18); rather the commandments of faith and love the apostle speaks of in 1 John 3:23 may be designed; And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment: there were exhortations, injunctions and commands of Christ to his disciples, which were to be kept by them, and were not grievous. Ye believe in God, says he (John 14:1), believe also in me; and again, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you (John 8:34); but inasmuch as Christ, as lawgiver in his church, has appointed some special and peculiar laws and ordinances to be observed, and which he calls his commandments, he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me (John 14:21); very agreeably to our text; and after he had given his apostles a commission to preach and baptize, he adds, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you (Matthew 28:20); and whereas, among these commandments and ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper are the chief and principal, I choose to understand the text of them;[1] and since we are about to administer the first of these at this time, I shall confine my discourse chiefly to that, and shall attempt the following things.

I. To shew that baptism, water-baptism, is a command of God and Christ, or a divine command.

II. That being a divine command, it ought to be kept and observed.

III. The encouragement to keep it; it is the love of God, and it is a commandment not grievous.

I. The ordinance of water-baptism is a divine command. John, the forerunner of our Lord, was the first administrator of it, and from thence was called the Baptist; and he did not administer it of his own mind and will, but had a mission and commission from God to do it; There was a man sent from God, whole name was John; and he was sent by him, not to preach the gospel only, but to

baptize; for so he himself says, he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, etc. (John 1:6; John 1:33). Hence Christ put this question to the chief priests and elders of the Jews, the baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or of men? (Matthew 21:25-26), this brought them into such a dilemma, that they knew not what answer to give, and chose to give none; our Lord's design by the question was to shew that John's baptism was of divine institution, and not human; wherefore he charges the Pharisees and Lawyers with rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him (Luke 7:30), that is, of John; and he elsewhere (Matthew 3:15), speaks of his baptism as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled, and was fulfilled by him. Now John's baptism and Christ's were, as to the substance of them, the same; John's baptism was allowed of and approved of by Christ, as appears from his submission to it; and the ordinance was confirmed by the order he gave to his apostles to administer it: one of John's disciples said to his master, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him (John 3:26); though, as is said afterwards, Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples (John 4:2); that is, they baptized by his orders; and which were renewed after his resurrection from the dead, saying, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc. (Matthew 28:19), and which orders were obeyed by his apostles, as many instances in the Acts of the Apostles shew; and that it was water baptism they administered, according to Christ's instructions and directions. In matters of worship there ought to be a command for what is done; as this ordinance of baptism is a solemn act of worship, being performed in the name of the Father, and of the San, and of the holy Ghost. God is a jealous God, and especially with respect to the worship of him; nor should any thing be introduced into it but what he has commanded; and careful should we be hereof, left he should say unto us, who hath required this at your hands? (Isaiah 1:12), it is not enough that such and such things are not forbidden; for on this footing a thousand fooleries may be brought into the worship of God, which will be relented by him. When Nadab and Abibu offered strange fire to the Lord, which he commanded not, fire came down from heaven and destroyed them: we should have a precept for what we do, and that not from men, but from God; lest we incur the charge of worshipping God in vain, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15:9), and involve ourselves in the guilt of superstition, and will-worship.

Wherefore, the baptism of infants must be wrong; since there is no command of God and Christ for it; if there was any, it might be expected in the New Testament, and in that only; it is absurd to send us to the Old Testament for a command to observe a New Testament-ordinance; it is a groin absurdity to send us so far back as to Genesis 17:1-27 [2] for a warrant for the ordinance of baptism; we might as well be lent to the first chapter of that book; for there is no more relating to that ordinance in the one than in the other. Was there a like precept for the baptism of infants under the New Testament, as there was for the circumcision of infants under the Old Testament, there could be no objection to it; but it is an absurdity of absurdities to affirm, that baptism comes in the room of circumcision; since baptism was in force and use long before circumcision was abolished; circumcision was not abolished until the death of Christ, when that, with other ceremonies, had an end in him; but baptism was administered many years before to multitudes, by John, by the order of Christ, and by his apostles; now where is the good sense of saying, and with what propriety can it be laid, that one thing succeeds another, as baptism circumcision, when the one, said to succeed, was in use and force long before the other teared, it is pretended it succeeded?

If there is any precept for Infant-baptism, it must be in the New Testament; there only it can be expected, but there it cannot be found; not in Matthew 19:14, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; which is no precept, but a permission, or grant, that little children might come, or be brought unto him; but for what? not for baptism; but for that for which they were brought, and which is mentioned by the evangelist in the preceding verse, that he should put his hands on them, and pray, or give them his blessing; as it reams it was usual in those times, and with those people, as formerly, to bring their children to persons venerable for religion and piety, to be blessed by them in this way; and such an one they might take Jesus to be, though they might not know he was the Messiah. Two other evangelists say, they were brought unto him that he should touch them; as he sometimes touched diseased persons when he healed them; and these children might be diseased, and brought to him to be cured of their diseases; however, not to be baptized by thrill, for he baptized none; they would rather have brought them to the disciples, had it been for such a purpose; and had it been the practice of the apostles to baptize infants, they would not have refused them; and our Lord's entire silence about Infant-baptism at this time, when there was so fair an opportunity to speak of it, and enjoin it, had it been his will, has no favorable aspect on that practice. The reason given by thus for the permission of infants to come to him, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, is figurative and metaphorical; and not to be understood of the infants themselves, but of such as they; of such who are comparable to them for their humble deportment, and harmless lives; or to use our Lord's words elsewhere, such who are converted, and become at little children (Matthew 18:2).[3] Nor is a command for Infant-baptism contained in the commission to baptize (Matthew 28:19), Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost.

It is argued, that "since all nations are to be baptized, and infants are a part of them, then, according to the command of Christ, they are to be baptized." But it should be observed, that the commission is indeed to teach all nations, but not to baptize all nations; the antecedent to the relative them, is not all nations; the words pagta ta eqnh, all nations,are of the neuter gender; but autouv, them, is of the masculine, and do not agree; the antecedent is maqhtav, disciples, which is understood, and supposed, and contained in the word maqhteusate, teach, or make disciples; and the sense is, teach all nations, and baptize them that are taught, or are made disciples by teaching. If the above argument proves any thing, it would prove too much; and what proves too much, proves nothing: it would prove, that not only the infants of Christians, but the infants of Turks, Jews, and Pagans, should be baptized, since they are part of all nations; yea, that every individual person in the world should be baptized, heathens, as well as Christians, and even the molt profligate and abandoned of mankind, since they are part of all nations.[4] And as there is no precept for the baptism of infants, so no precedent for it in the word of God. Though there was no clear and express command for it, which yet we think is necessary, and is required in such a case; yet, if there was a precedent of any one infant being baptized, we should think ourselves obliged to pay a regard unto it; but among the many thousands baptized by John, by Christ, or, however, by his order, and by his apostles, not one single instance of an infant being baptized can be found. We read, indeed, of households being baptized; from whence it is argued, that there might be, and it is probable there were, infants in them, who might be baptized; but it lies upon those who are of a different mind, to prove there were any in those households. To put us upon proving a negative, that there were none there, is unfair. However, as far as a negative can be proved, we are capable

of it.[5] There are but three families usually observed, if so many; Lydia's, the Jailor's, and that of Stephanas, if not the fame with the Jailor's, as some think. As for Lydia's household, or those in her house, they were brethren; whom, afterwards, the apostles went to see, and whom they comforted; and so not infants. As for the Jailor's household, they were such as were capable of hearing the word preached to them, and of believing it; for it is said, he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house (Acts 16:40; Acts 16:34): and if any man can find any other in his house, besides all that were in it, he must be reckoned a very sagacious person. As for the household of Stephanas, (if different from the Jailor's) it is said, that they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints (1 Corinthians 1:16; 1 Corinthians 16:15): and whether this be understood of the ministry of the word to the saints, or of the ministration of their substance to the poor, they must be adult persons, and not infants. Seeing then there is neither precept nor precedent for Infant-baptism in the word of God, of which I defy the whole world to give one tingle precedent, we cannot but condemn it as unscriptural, and unwarrantable.[6] I proceed,

II. To shew that the ordinance of water-baptism, being a divine command, it ought to be kept, and observed, as directed to in the word of God.

First, I shall shew, by whom it is to be kept and observed. 1. By sensible, repenting sinners. John's baptism was called the baptism of repentance (Mark 1:4); because repentance was previous to it; and the very first persons that were baptized by him, were such who were sensible of their sins, repented of them, and ingenuously confessed them; for it is said, they were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins; and whereas others applied to him for baptism, of whom he had no good opinion, he required of them, that they would first bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and not to think with themselves, we have Abraham to our father (Matthew 3:6-9); since such a plea would be of no avail with him; and the very first persons that were baptized after our Lord had given to his apostles the commission to baptize, were penitent ones; for under the first sermon after this, three thousand were pricked in their heart, and cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? To whom the apostle Peter gave this instruction and direction: Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38); and accordingly, on their repentance, they were baptized. 2. This command is to be kept and observed by believers in Christ; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved (Mark 16:16). Faith goes before baptism, and is a pre-requisite to it; as the various instances of baptism recorded in the scriptures shew. Philip went down to Samaria, and preached Christ there to the inhabitants of it; and when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women (Acts 8:12). The same minister of the word was bid to join himself to the chariot of an Eunuch, returning from Jerusalem, where he had been to worship, and whom he found reading a prophecy in Isaiah; and said unto him, Understandest thou what thou readest? To which he answered, How can I, except some man should guide me? And being taken up into the chariot with him: from that scripture, Philip preached Jesus to him, his word, and ordinances, as the sequel shews; for when they came to a certain water, the Eunuch laid, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. Otherwise not, it seems; for notwithstanding his religion and devotion, without faith in Christ, he had no right to that ordinance; He answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:36-37); upon which profession of his faith, he was baptized. The apostle Paul preached the gospel at Corinth with success; and it is observed by the historian, that many of the

Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized (Acts 18:8). First they heard the word, then they believed in Christ, the sum and substance of the word, and upon the profession of their faith, were baptized. 3. The ordinance of water-baptism is to be attended to, and observed by such who are the disciples of Christ; it is said that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (John 4:1). First made them disciples, and then baptized them; that is, ordered his apostles to baptize them; with which his commission to them agrees, Teach all nations, baptizing them; make disciples, and baptize them that are so made. Now, what is it to be disciples of Christ? Such may be said to be so, who have learned to know Christ, and believe in him; who are taught to deny sinful self, righteous self, and civil self, for his sake, and to take up the cross and follow him, in the exercise of grace and in the discharge of duty: and, 4. Such as have received the Spirit of God, are proper persons to observe the ordinance of baptism, and submit unto it: Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the holy Ghost as well as we? (Acts 10:47); as a Spirit of illumination and conviction, as a Spirit of sanctification, faith and consolation, and as a Spirit of adoption.

2dly, Next let us consider in what manner the ordinance of baptism is to be kept and observed: and,

1. It should be kept in faith; for without faith it is impossible to please God; and whatsoever is not of faith, is sin (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23).

2. In love, and from a principle of love to Christ, and which is the end of every commandment, and of this; If ye love me, says Christ's, keep my commandments (John 14:15). It should be kept as it was at first delivered and observed: the manner in which it is to be performed and submitted to, is immersion, or covering the whole body in water; and which agrees with the primary sense of the word baptizw, which signifies to dip or plunge, as all learned men know;[7] and he must be a novice in the Greek language, that will take upon him to contradict what has been ingenuously owned by so many men of learning. Had our translators thought fit to have translated the word, which they have not in those places where the ordinance of baptism is made mention of, for reasons easily to be guessed at, but have adopted the Greek word baptize in all such places; had they truly translated it, the eyes of the people would have been opened, and the controversy at once would have been at an end, with respect to this part of it, the mode of baptism; however we have proof sufficient that it was performed, and ought to be performed by immersion, as appears,

1. By the places where it was administered, as the river Jordan, where John baptized many, and where our Lord himself was baptized; and AEnon, near Salim, which he chose for this reason, because there was much water there (Matthew 3:6; Matthew 3:13); now if the ordinance was administered in any other way than by immersion, what need was there to make choice of rivers and places abounding with water to baptize in?

2. By the instances of persons baptized, and the circumstances attending their baptism, as that of our Lord, of whom it is said, When he was baptized, he went up straightway out of the water (Matthew 3:16); which manifestly implies that he had been in it, of which there would have been no need, had the ordinance been administered to him in any other way than by immersion; as by sprinkling or pouring a little water on his head, as the painter ridiculously describes it. The baptism of the Eunuch is another instance proving baptism by immersion; when he and Philip were come to a certain water, and it was agreed to baptize him, it is said, they went down both into the waters

both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip (Acts 8:38-39). The circumstances of going down into the water, and coming up out of it, manifestly shew in what manner the Eunuch was baptized, namely, by immersion; for what reason can be given why they should go into the water, had it been performed in any other way?

3.[8] The end of baptism, which is to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, cannot be answered any other way than by immersion; that it is an emblem of the burial and resurrection of Christ, and of the burial and resurrection of believers in him, is clear from Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12 buried with him by baptism, and in baptism. Now only an immersion or covering of the whole body in water, and not pouring or sprinkling a little water on the face, can be a representation of a burial; will any man in his senses say, that a corpse is buried, when only a little dust or earth is sprinkled or poured on its face?

4. The figurative baptisms, or the allusions made to baptism in scripture, shew in what manner it was administered; the passage of the Israelites under the cloud, and through the sea, is called a being baptized in the cloud and in the sea (1 Corinthians 10:1-2); and with great propriety may it be called a baptism, as that is by immersion; for the waters standing up as a wall on each fide of them, through which, and the cloud over their heads, under which they passed, they were like persons immersed in water:[9] likewise the overwhelming sufferings of Christ are fitly called a baptism, in allusion to baptism by immersion.[10] I have a baptism to be baptized with, says he; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished? (Luke 12:50); and which sufferings of Christ, in prophetic language, agreeable to baptism by immersion, are thus described; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me (Psalms 119:1-2). Once more; the extraordinary donation of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, is called a being baptized with the holy Ghost (Acts 1:5); the emblem of which was a rushing mighty wind, which filled all the house where they were sitting (Acts 2:2); so that they were as if immersed into it, and covered with it, and therefore very properly called a baptism, in allusion to baptism by immersion. I go on, III. To observe the encouragement, motives, and reasons given to keep this ordinance, as well as others,

1. The apostle says, this is the love of God; that is, this shews love to God; it is a plain case, that a man loves God, when he keeps his commandments; this is an evidence, that he loves not in word, and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth. Others may say that they love God and Christ; but this is the man that truly loves them, even he that hath my commandments, says Christ (John 14:21), and keepeth them; he it is that loveth me: and it is a clear care, that such a man has a sense of the love of God and Christ; the love of the Father is in him; and the love of Christ constrains him to observe his ordinances, and keep his commands; and such may expect greater manifestations of the love of God and Christ unto them; for of such that keep the commandments of Christ, he says, I will love him, and manifest myself to him; — and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (John 14:23); which is no small inducement and encouragement to an observation of the ordinances and commands of Christ, and among the rest this of baptism.

2. Another encouraging motive and reason is, the commandments of God and Christ are not grievous, hard and difficult to be performed. The Lord’s supper is not; nor is baptism. What is baptism in water, to the baptism of sufferings Christ endured for us? And yet how desirous was he

of accomplishing it? (Luke 12:50). And therefore why should we think it an hardship, or be backward to comply with his will, in submitting to the ordinance of water-baptism? When Naaman was bid by Elisha to dip himself in Jordan, and be clean; which he relented as too little and trifling a thing, and thought he might as well have stayed in his own land, and dipped himself in one of the rivers of Syria; one of his servants took upon him to allay and repress the heat of his passion and resentment, by observing, that if the prophet had bid him do some great thing, which was hard and difficult to be performed, he would have gone about it readily; how much rather then, he argued, should he attend to the direction of the prophet, when he only bid him wash in Jordan, and be clean? (2 Kings 5:13). There are many that will go into baths, and plunge themselves in them for pleasure or profit, to refresh their bodies, or cure them of disorders; but if plunging in water is directed to, as an ordinance of God, then it is a grievous thing; and, indeed, no ordinance is grateful to a carnal mind; but to believers in Christ, wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and her paths of peace. Christ's yoke, if it may be called so, is easy, and his burden light. Now to close with a few words:

1. Let none despise this command of God, the ordinance of baptism; remember it is a command of his; be it at your peril if you do; it is hard kicking against the pricks; it is dangerous to treat with contempt any of the commands of God, and ordinances of Christ; beware, lest that should come upon you, and be fulfilled in you, behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish. (Acts 8:40-41).

2. Let such who see it their duty to be baptized, not tarry, but immediately submit unto it; let them make haste, and delay not, to keep this command; remembering the motives, and encouragement to it.

3. Let those that yield obedience to it, do it in the name and strength of Christ; in the faith of him, from love to him, and with a view to his glory.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Let the commandments be what they may, which are chiefly intended in the text; yet since water-baptism is a commandment of God, and allowed to be such, and the rest of the commandments mentioned are not denied to be, nor excluded from being the commandments of God; there can be no impropriety in treating on the commandment of baptism particularly and singly from this passage of scripture; and it might have escaped, one would have thought, a sneer, though it has not, of a scurrilous writer, in a late newspaper, referred to in the preface.

[2] That we are ever referred to this chap. or, for a proof of Infant-baptism, is denied, and pronounced a willful, is representation, by the above mentioned writer, in his second letter in the newspaper. This man must have read very little in the controversy, to be ignorant of this. The very last writer that wrote in the controversy, that I know of, calls the covenant made with Abraham in that chapter "the grand turning point, on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; and that if Abraham's covenant, which included his infant-children, and gave them a sight to circumcision, was not the covenant of grace; then he freely confesses, that the main ground, on which they assert the right of infants to baptism, is taken away; and consequently, the principal arguments in support of the doctrine, are overturned." Bostwick's Fair and Rational Vindication of the Right of Infants to the Ordinance of Baptism, etc. p. 19.

[3] The above letter-writer, in the news-paper, observes, “that the kingdom of heaven signifies either the kingdom, or church of Christ here, or the kingdom of glory above. If the former, they are declared, by Christ himself, real subjects of his among men; if the latter, if members of the invisible church, why not of the visible?” But, in fact, they themselves are not intended, only such as they; such who are comparable to them for meekness and humility; for freedom from malice, pride, and ambition. But admitting that the words are to be understood of infants literally, the kingdom of heaven cannot design the kingdom, or church of Christ under the gospel dispensation, which is not national, but congregational; consisting of men gathered out of the world, by the grace of God, and who make a public profession of Christ, which infants are not capable of, and so cannot be real subjects of it; and if they were, they mull have an equal right to the Lord’s supper, as to baptism, of which they are equally capable. The kingdom of glory then being recant, it is asked, if members of the invisible church, why not of the visible? They may be, when it appears that they are of the invisible church, which only can be manifest by the grace of God bestowed on them; and it is time enough to talk of their baptism when that is evident; and when it is clear they have both a right unto, and meetness for the kingdom of heaven.

[4] But our letter-writer says, “When the apostles received their commission, they could not understand it otherwise than to baptize the parents that embraced the faith of Christ; through their preaching, and all their children with them, as was the manner of the ministers of God in preceding ages, by circumcision;” but if they so understood it, and could not other ways understand it, it is strange they should not practice according to it, and baptize children with their parents; of which we have no one instance. By the ministers of God in preceding ages, I suppose, he means the priests and prophets, under the Old Testament-dispensation; but these were not the operators of circumcision, which was done by parents and others: and surely it cannot be said, it was the usual manner of ministers to baptize parents, and their children with them in those ages; and it is pretty unaccountable how they should baptize them by circumcision, as is affirmed; this is something unheard of before, and monstrously ridiculous and absurd.

[5] The above writer affirms, that my manner of “proving the negative, was by barely asserting there were no children in any of the families, mentioned in the scriptures, as baptized.” The falsity of which appears by the following descriptive, characters given of the patrons in the several, families, and the reasonings upon them.

[6] In his turn, the writer in the news-paper, “defies me to produce one scripture precept, or precedent, for delaying the baptism of children of Christian parents; or for baptizing adult persons, born of such parents. On this the controversy hinges.” It is ridiculous to talk of a precept for delaying that which was not in being; and of a precedent for delaying that which had never been practiced. If a warrant is required for baptizing adult persons, believers, it is ready at hand (Mark 16:16), and precedents enough: and we know of no precept to baptize any other, let them be born of whom they may; and as for precedents of the baptism of adult persons, born of Christian parents, it cannot be expected, nor reasonably required of us; since the Acts of the Apostles only give an account of the planting of the first churches; and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; and not of those that in a course of years were added to them. Wherefore, to demand instances of persons, born of Christian parents, and brought up by them, as baptized in adult age, which would require length of time, is unreasonable; and if the controversy hinges on this, it ought to be at an end, and given up by them.

[7] The letter-writer makes me to say, “All the world acknowledge baptizw, signifies to dip or plunge, and never to sprinkle or pour water on any thing,” which is a false representation of my words, and of the manner in which they were delivered; however, this I affirm, that in all the Greek Lexicons I ever few, and I have seen a pretty many, I do not pretend in have fern all that have been published; yet in what my small library furnishes me with, the word is always rendered in the first and primary sense by mergo, immergo, to dip or plunge into; and in a secondary and consequential sense, by abluo, lavo, to wash, because what is dipped is washed; and never by persundo or aspergo, to pour or sprinkle; as the Lexicon published by Constantine, Budaeus, etc. those of Hadrian, Junius, Plantinus, Scapula. Sebreveius, and Stockins, besides a great number of critics that might be mentioned; and if this writer can produce any one Lexicographer of any note, that renders the word to pour or sprinkle, let him name him. This ignorant scribbler puts the following questions, “Did the Jews plunge their whole bodies in water always before they did eat? Did they dip their pots, brazen vessels and beds?” He does not suffer me to answer the questions, but answers for me, “He knows the contrary.” But if I may be allowed to answer for myself, I must say, by the testimonies of the Jews themselves, and of others, I know they did; that is, when they came flora market, having touched the common people, or their clothes, immersed themselves in water; so says Maimonides in Misn. Chagigah. c. e. sect. 7. “If the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people they were defiled, and needed immersion, and were obliged to it.” And Scaliger observes, de Emend. Temp. 1. 6. p. 271. “That the more superstitious part of the Jews, every day before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body; hence the Pharisee’s admiration at Christ (Luke 11:38).” According to the law of Moses (Leviticus 11:32), unclean vessels were washed by putting or dipping them into water; and according to the traditions of the ciders, to which our Lord refers (Mark 7:4), not only brazen vessels and tables, but even beds, bolsters and pillows unclean, in a ceremonial sense, were washed by immersion in water. So the Jews say in their Misnah, or book of traditions, “A bed that is wholly defiled, a man dips it part by part.” Celim, c. 26. sect. 14. See also Mikvaot, c. 7. sect. 7.

[8] The above letter-writer asks, “How often must I be told, that the particle eiv and ek are in hundreds of places in the New Testament rendered unto and from?” be it so; it follows not, that they mull be so rendered here. Greek particles or prepositions have different significations, according to the words and circumstances with which they are used; nor is it as proper or a more just reading of the words, “they went down unto the water and came up from it;” it is neither proper nor just; for before this, they are expressly said to come to a certain water, to the waterside; wherefore when they went down, they went not unto it, if they were there before, but into it; as it must be allowed the preposition sometimes, at least, signifies; and circumstances require that it should be so rendered here, let it signify what it may elsewhere; and this determines the sense of the other preposition, that it tour and ought to be rendered out of; for as they went down into the water, when they came up, it must be out of it. What he means by the strange question that follows, “What will he make of Christ’s going into a mountain?” I cannot devise, unless he thinks the translation of Luke 6:12 is wrong, or nonsense, or both; but has this wiseacre never heard or read of a cave in a mountain, into which men may go, and properly be said to go into the mountain; and such an one it is highly probable our Lord went into, to pray alone; such as the cave in mount Horeb, into which Elijab went. But his tip-top translation of all is that of John’s baptizing in Jordan, which he supposes might be rendered, by baptizing the people with the river Jordan. This is the man that reproaches me with very freely finding fault with the translators; my complaint is

only of a non-translation, not of a wrong one; but this man finds fault with the translation as wrong, or however thinks it may be corrected or mended, and that in more places than one.

[9] The letter-writer I have often referred to, affirms, that “the learned world universally maintain, that the Israelites were no other ways baptized in the sea, than by being sprinkled with the spray of the tolling waves, agitated by the wind that blew as they passed through the channel.” Who the learned world be, that maintain this whimsical notion, I own, I am quite ignorant of, having never yet met with any learned man that ever asserted it. It is a mere conceit and a wild imagination, and contrary to the sacred scriptures, which represent the waves of the feat through which the Israelites passed, not as agitated and tossed about, but as standing unmoved, as a wall on each side of them, whatever was the care in that part where the Egyptians were; The floods, says the inspired writer, stood uprights as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea (Exodus 15:8). And if there was a continual spray of the tossing waves, as the Israelites passed through the channel, how could they pass through the sea on dry ground? As they are said to do (Exodus 14:16; Exodus 14:22; Exodus 14:29). What this man scoffs at, the celebrated Grotius, who is universally allowed to be a man of learning and sense, expresses in a note on 1 Corinthians 10:2 “were baptized, that is, as if they were baptized; for there was some likeness in it; the cloud was over their heads, and so water is over them that are baptized; the sea encompassed the sides of them, and so water those that are baptized.”

[10] The same writer is pleased to represent this explanation of the baptism of the Spirit as ridiculous; but some of greater learning than he can pretend to, have so explained it, as particularly Dr. Casaubon, famous for his great knowledge of the Greek language; though perhaps this very illiberal man will call the learned doctor a dunce for what he says; his words on Acts 1:5 are these, “though I do not disapprove of the word baptize being retained here, that the antithesis may be full; yet I am of opinion that regard is had in this place to its proper signification, for baptizein is to immerse, so as to tinge or dip; and in this sense the apostles were truly said to be baptized; for the house in which this was done was filled with the holy Ghost, so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it as into a pool.” In confirmation of which, he makes mention on Acts 2:2 of an observation in a Greek commentary on it, “the wind filled the whole house, filling it like a pool; since it was promised to them (the apostles) that they should be baptized, with the Holy Ghost.” It seems to be the same commentary, Erasmus, on the place, says went under the name of Chrysostom, in which are there words, as he gives them, “the whole house was so filled with fire, though invisible, as a pool is filled with water.” — Our scribbler, in order to expose the notion of dipping, as used in the baptism of the spirit, and fire, condescends, for once, to read dip, instead of baptize; “John said I indeed dip you with water, but one, mightier than I, cometh, he shall dip you with the holy Ghost, and with fire.” But not only the word baptize should be read dip, but the preposition “should be rendered in; in water; and in the holy Ghost; and in fire; and the phrase of dipping in fire, is no unusual one, both in Jewish and Greek authors; as I have shewn in my Exposition of the place, and of Acts 2:3.

Chapter 4

01.02. Baptism, A Public Ordinance of Divine

Baptism: A Public Ordinance of Divine Worship As the first covenant, or testament, had ordinances of divine service, which are shaken, removed, and abolished; so the New Testament, or gospel dispensation, has ordinances of divine worship, which cannot be shaken, but will remain until the second coming of Christ: these, as Austin says,[1] are few; and easy to be observed, and of a very expressive signification. Among which, baptism must be reckoned one, and is proper to be treated of in the first place; for though it is not a church ordinance, it is an ordinance of God, and a part and branch of public worship. When I say it is not a church ordinance, I mean it is not an ordinance administered in the church, but out of it, and in order to admission into it, and communion with it; it is preparatory to it, and a qualification for it; it does not make a person a member of a church, or admit him into a visible church; persons must first be baptized, and then added to the church, as the three thousand converts were; a church has nothing to do with the baptism of any, but to be satisfied they are baptized before they are admitted into communion with it. Admission to baptism lies solely in the breast of the administrator, who is the only judge of qualifications for it, and has the sole power of receiving to it, and of rejecting from it; if nor satisfied, he may reject a person thought fit by a church, and admit a person to baptism not thought fit by a church; but a disagreement is not desirable nor advisable: the orderly, regular, scriptural rule of proceeding seems to be this: a person inclined to submit to baptism, and to join in communion with a church, should first apply to an administrator; and upon giving him satisfaction, be baptized by him; and then should propose to the church for communion; when he would be able to answer all proper questions: if asked, to give a reason of the hope that is in him, he is ready to do it; if a testimony of his life and conversation is required, if none present can give it, he can direct where it is to be had; and if the question is put to him, whether he is a baptized person or not, he can answer in the affirmative, and give proof of it, and so the way is clear for his admission into church fellowship. So Saul, when converted, was immediately baptized by Ananias, without any previous knowledge and consent of the church; and, it was many days after this that he proposed to join himself to the disciples, and was received (Acts 9:18-19; Acts 9:23; Acts 9:26-28), and as it is water baptism which is meant, I shall,

I. First, prove that this is peculiar to the gospel dispensation, is a standing ordinance in it, and will be continued to the second coming of Christ. This is opposed to the sentiments of such who say baptism was in use before the times of John, of Christ and his apostles; and of such who restrain water baptism to the interval between the beginning of John’s ministry and the death of Christ, when they supposed this, with other external rites, ceased; and of such, as the Socinians,[2] who think that only the first converts to Christianity in a nation are to be baptized, and their children, but not their after posterity. There were indeed various washings, bathings, or baptisms, under the legal dispensation, for the purification of persons and things unclean, by the ceremonial law; which had a doctrine in them, called the doctrine of baptists, which taught the cleansing of sin by the blood of Christ; but there was nothing similar in them to the ordinance of water baptism, but immersion only. The Jews pretend, their ancestors were received into covenant by baptism, or

dipping, as well as by circumcision and sacrifice; and that proselytes from heathenism were received the same way; and this is greedily grasped at by the advocates for infant baptism; who fancy that John, Christ, and his apostles, took up this custom as they found it, and continued it; and which they imagine accounts for the silence about it in the New Testament, and why there is neither precept for it, nor example of it; but surely if it was in such common use as pretended, though no new precept had been given, there would have been precedents enough of it; but no proof is to be given of any such practice obtaining in those times, neither from the Old nor New Testament; nor from the apocryphal books written by Jews between them; nor from Josephus and Philo the Jew, who wrote a little after the times of John and Christ; nor from the Jewish Misnah, or book of traditions: only from later writings of theirs, too late for the proof of it before those times.[3] John was the first administrator of the ordinance of baptism, and therefore is called "the Baptist" (Matthew 3:1), by way of emphasis; whereas, had it been in common use, there must have been many baptizers before him, who had a like claim to this title; and why should the people be so alarmed with it, as to come from all parts to see it administered, and to hear it preached, when, had it been in frequent use, they must have often seen it? and why should the Jewish Sanhedrim send priests and Levites from Jerusalem to John, to know who he was, whether the Messiah, or his forerunner Elias, or that prophet spoken of and expected? and when he confessed, and denied that he was neither of them, they say to him, "Why baptizest thou then?" by which thing and which they expected it appears it was a new thing, and which they expected when the Messiah came, but not before; and that then it would be performed by some great personage, one or other of the before mentioned; whereas, had it been performed by an ordinary teacher, common Rabbi or doctor, priest or Levite, in ages immemorial, there could have been no room for such a question; and had this been the case, there would have been no difficulty with the Jews to answer the question of our Lord; "The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or of men?" they could have answered, It was a tradition of theirs, a custom in use among them time out of mind, had this been the known case; nor would they have been subject to any dilemma: but John’s baptism was not a device of men; but the "counsel of God", according to his will and wise determination (Luke 7:30). John had a mission and commission from God, he was a man sent of God, and sent to baptize (John 1:6; John 1:33), and his baptism was water baptism, this he affirms, and the places he made use of for that purpose show it, and none will deny it.

Now his baptism, and that of Christ and his apostles, were the same. Christ was baptized by John, and his baptism was surely Christian baptism; of this no one can doubt (Matthew 3:13-17), and his disciples also were baptized by him; for by whom else could they be baptized? not by Christ himself, for he baptized none (John 4:2). And it is observable, that the baptism of John, and the baptism of Christ and his apostles, were at the same time; they were contemporary, and did not the one succeed the other: now it is not reasonable to suppose there should be two sorts of baptism administered at the same time; but one and the same by both (John 3:22-23; John 3:26; John 4:1-2). The baptism of John, and that which was practiced by the apostles of Christ, even after his death and resurrection from the dead, agreed,

1. In the subjects thereof. Those whom John baptized were sensible penitent sinners, who were convinced of their sins, and made an ingenuous confession of them; and of whom he required "fruits meet for repentance", and which showed it to be genuine; and hence his baptism is called, "the baptism of repentance", because he required it previous to it (Matthew 3:6-8; Mark 1:4). So

the apostles of Christ exhorted men to repent, to profess their repentance, and give evidence of it, previous to their baptism (Acts 2:38). John said to the people that came to his baptism, "That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus", upon which they were baptized in his name (Acts 19:4-5), faith in Christ was made a prerequisite to baptism by Christ and his apostles (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36-37).

2. In the way and manner of the administration of both. John’s baptism was by immersion, as the places chosen by him for it show; and the baptism of Christ by him is a proof of it (Matthew 3:6; Matthew 3:16; John 3:23), and in like manner was baptism performed by the apostles, as of the eunuch by Philip (Acts 8:38-39).

3. In the form of their administration. John was sent of God to baptize; and in whose name should he baptize, but in the name of the one true God, who sent him, even in the name of God, Father, Son, and Spirit? The doctrine of the Trinity was known to John, as it was to the Jews in common; it is said of John’s hearers and disciples, that they were "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5). The same form is used of the baptism of those baptized by the apostles of Christ (Acts 8:16; Acts 10:48), which is only a part of the form put for the whole, and is sufficiently expressive of Christian baptism, which is to be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19).

4. In the end and use of baptism, John’s baptism, and so the apostles was, upon repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 8:38), not that either repentance or baptism procure the pardon of sin; that is only obtained by the blood of Christ; but baptism is a means of leading to the blood of Christ; and repentance gives encouragement to hope for it, through it. Now since there is such an agreement between the baptism of John, as administered before the death of Christ; and between the baptism of the apostles, after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; it is a plain case, it was not limited to the interval of time from the beginning of John’s ministry to the death of Christ; but was afterwards continued; which further appears from the commission of Christ (Matthew 28:19), "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them"; and though water is not expressed, it is always implied, when the act of baptizing is ascribed to men; for it is peculiar to Christ to baptize with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5), nor did he give to his apostles, nor to any man, or set of men, a commission and power to baptize with the Spirit: besides, an increase of the graces of the Spirit, and a large donation of his gifts, are promised to persons after baptism, and as distinct from it (Acts 2:38). The apostles, doubtless, understood the commission of their Lord and Master to baptize in water, since they practiced it upon it; such was the baptism administered by Philip, who, having taught the eunuch the doctrine of it, when they came to a "certain water", he said to him, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" that is, in water; and when Philip had observed unto him the grand requisite of it, even faith in Christ, which he at once professed; and the chariot in which they rode being ordered to stand, theft went down both into the water, and he baptized him; this was most certainly water baptism; and so was that which Peter ordered to be administered to Cornelius and his friends, upon their receiving of the Holy Ghost, and so a baptism different from that; "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" (Acts 8:36; Acts 8:38-39; Acts 10:47-48). And this was designed to be continued unto the end of the world, to the second coming of Christ; as the ordinance of the supper is to be kept to that time, the ordinance of water baptism is to be continued as long; hence says Christ, to encourage his ministers to preach his gospel, and to baptize in his name; "Lo, I am with you

always", in the ministry of the word, and in the administration of baptism, "even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).

II. Secondly, I shall next consider the author of it; and show, that it is not a device of men, but an ordinance of God; it is a solemn part of divine worship, being performed in the name of the Three divine Persons in Deity, Father, Son, and Spirit, and by their authority; in which the name of God is invoked, faith in him expressed, and a man gives up himself to God, obliges himself to yield obedience to him, expecting all good things from him. Now for an act of religious worship there must be a command of God. God is a jealous God, and will not suffer anything to be admitted into the worship of him, but what is according to his word and will; if not commanded by him, he may justly say, "Who hath required this at your hands?" and will resent it: a command from men is not sufficient; no man on earth is to be called master; one is our Master in heaven, and him only we are to obey: if the commandments of men are taught for doctrines, in vain is the Lord worshipped; what is done according to them is superstition and will worship. Indeed, as it is now commonly practiced, it is a mere invention of men, the whole of it corrupted and changed; instead of rational spiritual men the subjects of it, infants, who have neither the use of reason, nor the exercise of grace, are admitted to it; and instead of immersion in water, and immersion out of it, a very expressive emblem of the sufferings of Christ, his death, burial, and resurrection from the dead; sprinkling a few drops of water on the face is introduced; with a number of foolish rites and ceremonies used by the papists, and some of their usages are retained by some Protestants; as sponsors, or sureties for infants, and the signing them with the sign of the cross. In short, the face of the ordinance is so altered, that if the apostles were to rise from the dead, and see it as now performed, they would neither know nor own it to be the ordinance commanded them by Christ, and practiced by them. But as it is administered according to the pattern, and as first delivered, it appears to be of an heavenly original; the "counsel of God", a wise appointment of his, and in which all the Three Persons have a concern; they all appeared at the baptism of Christ, and gave a sanction to the ordinance by their presence; the Father by a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!" as in his person, so in this act of his, in submitting to the ordinance of baptism; the Son in human nature, yielding obedience to it; and the Spirit descending on him as a dove; and it is ordered to be administered in the name of all three, Father, Son, and Spirit. Which, among other things, is expressive of divine authority, under which it is performed. Christ received from God the Father honor and glory, as at his transfiguration, so at his baptism, by the voice from heaven, owning his relation to him, as his Son, and expressing his well pleasedness in him, as obedient to his will; the Son of God, in human nature, not only left an example of it, that we should tread in his steps; though he himself baptized none, yet he countenanced it in his disciples, and gave them orders to do it; which orders were repeated, and a fresh commission given for the same after his resurrection from the dead: and the Spirit of God showed his approbation of it, by his descent on Christ at his baptism; and his authority for it is to be seen in the administration of it in his name, as in the name of the other Two Persons; so that it is to be regarded, not as an institution of men, but as an ordinance of God; as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled, a branch of the righteous will of God, to be observed in obedience to it.

III. Thirdly, the subjects of baptism are next to be inquired into; or who they are to whom it is to be administered, and according to the scripture instances and examples, they are such who,

1. Are enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their lost state by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and Christ as the only Saviour of sinners; who look to him and are saved; and such only can see to the end of the ordinance, which is to represent the sufferings and death, burial and resurrection of Christ; hence baptism was by the ancients; called fwtismov, "illumination"; and baptized persons fwtizomenoi, "enlightened" ones; and the Syriac and. Ethiopic, versions of Hebrews 6:4 translate the word "enlightened" by baptized; an emblem of this was the falling off from the eyes of Saul, as it had been scales; signifying his former blindness, and ignorance, and unbelief, now removed; upon which he arose and was baptized (Acts 9:18).

2. Penitent persons; such who having seen the evil nature of sin, repent of it, and acknowledge it; such were the first who were baptized by John that we read of; they were "baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matthew 3:6), being made sensible of them, they ingenuously confessed them; and such were the first who were baptized after Christ had renewed the commission to his disciples, upon his resurrection, to teach and: baptize; such as were pricked to the heart, were exhorted to profess repentance and give evidence of it, and then be baptized, as they were (Acts 2:37-38; Acts 2:41), and it is pity that these first examples of baptism were not strictly followed.

3. Faith in Christ is a prerequisite to baptism (Mark 16:16), this is clear from the case of the eunuch, desiring baptism, to whom Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest"; by which it seems, that if he did not believe, he had no right to the ordinance; but if he did, he had; upon which he professed his faith in Christ; and upon that profession was baptized (Acts 8:36), and the various instances of baptism recorded in scripture, confirm the same; as of the inhabitants of Samaria, who, upon believing in Christ, "were baptized, both men and women"; so the Corinthians, "hearing" the word preached by the apostle Paul, "believed" in Christ, whom he preached, "and were baptized", upon their faith in him (Acts 8:12; Acts 18:8), and without faith it is impossible to please God in any ordinance or part of worship; and what is not of faith is sin; and without it no one can see to the end of the ordinance of baptism, as before observed.

4. Such who are taught and made disciples by teaching, are the proper subjects of baptism, agreeable both to the practice of Christ and his commission; it is said, "that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John" (John 4:1), he first made them disciples, and then baptized them, that is, ordered his apostles to baptize them; and so runs his commission to them, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them", that is, those that are taught, and so made disciples; and they are the disciples of Christ, who have learnt to know him, and are taught to deny sinful, righteous, and civil self, for his sake, and to take up the cross and follow him.

5. Such who have received the Spirit of God, as a Spirit of illumination and conviction, of sanctification and faith, as the persons before described may well be thought to have, should be admitted to baptism (Acts 10:47; see Galatians 3:2), from all which it appears, that such who are ignorant of divine things, impenitent, unbelievers, not disciples and followers of Christ, and who are destitute of the Spirit, are not proper subjects of baptism, let their pretences to birthright be what they may; and so not the infants of any, be they born of whom they may; and to whom the above characters, descriptive of the subjects of baptism, do by no means belong: with respect to their first birth, though born of believing parents, they are carnal and corrupt, and children of wrath, as others; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh"; and they must be born again, or they cannot

see, possess, and enjoy the kingdom of God, or have a right to be admitted into the church of God now, nor will they enter into the kingdom of God, into heaven hereafter, unless born again; their first and carnal birth neither entitles them to the kingdom of God on earth, nor to the kingdom of God in heaven, be it taken in either sense; for the baptism of such there is neither precept nor precedent in the word of God.

(1.) First, there is no precept for it; not the words of Christ in Matthew 19:14, "But Jesus said, Suffer little children", etc. For, a. Let the words be said to or of whom they may, they are not in the form of a precept, but of a permission or grant, and signify not what was enjoined as necessary, but what was allowed of, or which might be; "Suffer little children", etc. b. These children do not appear to be newborn babes. The words used by the evangelists, neither paidia nor brefh, do not always signify such; but are sometimes used or such who are capable of going alone, and of being instructed, and of understanding the scriptures, and even of one of twelve years of age (Matthew 18:2; 2 Timothy 3:15; Mark 5:39; Mark 5:42). Nor is it probable that children just born should be had abroad; besides, these were such as Christ called unto him (Luke 18:16), and were capable of coming to him of themselves, as is supposed in the words themselves; nor is their being brought unto him, nor his taking them in his arms, any objection to this, since the same are said of such who could walk of themselves (Matthew 12:22; Matthew 17:16; Mark 9:36). c. It cannot be said whose children these were; whether they belonged to those who brought them, or to others; and whether the children of believers, and of baptized persons, or not; and if of unbelievers, and of unbaptized persons, the Paedobaptists themselves will not allow such children to be baptized. d. It is certain they were not brought to Christ to be baptized by him, but for other purposes; the evangelist Matthew (Matthew 19:13; Matthew 19:15), says, they were brought to him that he "should put his hands upon them, and pray", as he did, that is, for a blessing on them; as it was usual with the Jews to do (Genesis 48:14-15). The evangelists Mark and Luke say, they were brought to him, "that he would touch them", as he did when he healed persons of diseases; and probably these children were diseased, and were brought to him to be cured; however, they were not brought to be baptized by Christ; for Christ baptized none at all, adult or infants; had they that brought them this in view, they would have brought them to the disciples of Christ, and not to Christ, whom they might have seen administering the ordinance of baptism, but not Christ: however, it is certain they were not baptized by Christ, since he never baptized any. e. This passage rather concludes against Paedobaptism than for it, and shows that this practice had not obtained among the Jews, and had not been used by John, by Christ, and his disciples; for then the apostles would scarcely have forbid the bringing of these children, since they might readily suppose they were brought to be baptized; but knowing of no such usage in the nation, whether of them that did or did not believe in Christ, they forbade them; and Christ’s silence about this matter, when he had such an opportunity of speaking of it to his disciples, and enjoining it, had it been his will, does not look very favorably upon this practice. f. The reason given for suffering little children to come to Christ, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven", is to be understood in a figurative and metaphorical sense; of such who are comparable to children for modesty, meekness, and humility, and for freedom from rancor, malice, ambition, and pride (see Matthew 18:2); and which sense is given into by Origen,[4] among the ancients, and by Calvin and Brugensis, among the moderns. Nor does the commission in Matthew 28:19 contain in it any precept for infant baptism; "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them", etc. For,

(a.) The baptism of all nations is not here commanded; but the baptism only of such who are taught; for the antecedent to the relative "them", cannot be "all nations"; since the words panta ta eynh, "all nations", are of the neuter gender; whereas autouv, "them", is of the masculine; but mayeutav, disciples, is supposed and understood in the word mayhteusate, "teach", or "make disciples"; now the command is, that such who are first taught or made disciples by teaching under the ministry of the word, by the Spirit of God succeeding it, should be baptized.

(b.) If infants, as a part of all nations, and because they are such, are to be baptized, then the infants of Heathens, Turks, and Jews, ought to be baptized, since they are a part, and a large part, of all nations; as well as the children of Christians, or believers, which are but a small part; yea, every individual person in the world ought to be baptized, all adult persons, heathens as well as Christians; even the most profligate and abandoned of mankind, since they are a part of all nations.

(c.) Disciples of Christ, and such who have learned to know Christ, and the way of salvation by him, and to know themselves, and their need of him, are characters that cannot agree with infants; and if disciples and learners are the same, as is said, they must be learners or they cannot be disciples; and they cannot be learners of Christ unless they have learnt something of him; and according to this notion of disciples and learners, they ought to learn something of him before they are baptized in his name; but what can an infant be taught to learn of Christ? to prove infants disciples that text is usually brought (Acts 15:10), which falls greatly short of proving it; for infants are not designed in that place, nor included in the character; for though the Judaizing teachers would have had the Gentiles, and their infants too, circumcised; yet it was not circumcision, the thing itself, which is meant by the intolerable yoke; for that was what the Jewish fathers, and their children, were able to bear, and had bore in ages past; but it was the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other rites of Moses, to salvation; and obliged to the keeping of the whole law, and was in tolerable; and which doctrine could not be imposed upon infants, but upon adult persons only.

(d.) These two acts, teaching, or making disciples, and baptizing, are not to be confounded, but are two distinct acts, and the one is previous and absolutely necessary to the other: Men must first be made disciples, and then baptized; so Jerom[5] long ago understood the commission; on which he observes, "First they teach all nations, then dip those that are taught in water; for it cannot be that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul has before received the truth of faith." And so says Athanasius,[6] "Wherefore the Saviour does not simply command to baptize; but first says, teach, and then baptize thus, "In the name of the Father, nd of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"; that faith might come of teaching, and baptism be perfected."

(2.) Secondly, there is no precedent for the baptism of infants in the word of God. Among the vast numbers who flocked to John’s baptism from all parts, we read of no infants that were brought with them for that purpose, or that were baptized by him. And though more were baptized by Christ than by John, that is, the apostles of Christ, at his order, yet no mention of any infant baptized by them; and though three thousand persons were baptized at once, yet not an infant among them: and in all the accounts of baptism in the Acts of the Apostles in different parts of the world, not a single instance of infant baptism is given. There is, indeed, mention made of households, or families, baptized; and which the "paedobaptists" endeavor to avail themselves of; but they ought to be sure there were infants in these families, and that they were baptized, or else they must

baptize them on a very precarious foundation; since there are families who have no infants in them, and how can they be sure there were any in these the scriptures speak of? and it lies upon them to prove there were infants in them, and that these infants were baptized; or the allegation of these instances is to no purpose. We are able to prove there are many things in the account of these families, which are inconsistent with infants, and which make it at least probable there were none in them, and which also make it certain that those who were baptized were adult persons and believers in Christ. There are but three families, if so many, who are usually instanced in: the first is that of Lydia and her household (Acts 16:14-15), but in what state of life she was is not certain, whether single or married, whether maid widow or wife; and if married, whether she then had any children, or ever had any; and if she had, and they living, whether they were infants or adult; and if infants, it does not seem probable that she should bring them along with her from her native place, Thyatira to Philippi, where she seems to have been upon business, and so had hired a house during her stay there; wherefore her household seems to have consisted of menial servants she brought along with her, to assist her in her business: and certain it is, that those the apostles found in her house, when they entered into it, after they came out of prison, were such as are called "brethren", and were capable of being "comforted" by them; which supposes them to have been in some distress and trouble, and needed comfort. The second instance is of the jailor and his household, which consisted of adult persons, and of such only; for the apostles spoke the word of the Lord to "all" that were in his house, which they were capable of hearing, and it seems of understanding; for not only he "rejoiced" at the good news of salvation by Christ, but "all" in his house hearing it, rejoiced likewise; which joy of theirs was the joy of faith; for he and they were believers in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; for it is expressly said, that he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house"; so that they were not only hearers of the word, but rejoiced at it, and believed in it, and in God the Saviour, revealed in it to them (Acts 16:32-34), all which shows them to be adult persons, and not infants. The third instance, if distinct from the household of the jailor, which some take to be the same, is that of Stephanus; but be it a different one, it is certain it consisted of adult persons, believers in Christ, and very useful in the service of religion; they were the first fruits of Achaia, the first converts in those parts, and who "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" (1 Corinthians 16:15), which, whether understood of the ministry of the word to the saints, which they gave themselves up unto; or of the ministration of their substance to the poor, which they cheerfully communicated, they must be adult persons, and not infants. There being then neither precept nor precedent in the word of God for infant baptism, it may be justly condemned as unscriptural and unwarrantable.

(3.) Thirdly, nor is infant baptism to be concluded from any things or passages recorded either in the Old or in the New Testament. Baptism being an ordinance peculiar to the New Testament, it cannot be expected there should be any directions about the observance of it in the Old Testament; and whatever may be gathered relative to it, from typical and figurative baptisms, under the former dispensation, there is nothing from thence in favor of infant baptism, and to countenance that; and yet we are often referred thereunto for the original and foundation of it, but to no purpose. a. It is not fact, as has been asserted,[7] that the "infants of believers" have, with their parents, been taken into covenant with God in the former ages of the church, if by it is meant the covenant of grace; the first covenant made with man, was that of works, made with Adam, and which indeed included all his posterity, to whom he stood as a federal head, as no one ever since did to his natural offspring; in whom they all sinned, were condemned, and died; which surely

cannot be pleaded in favor of the infants of believers! after the fall, the covenant of grace, and the way of life and salvation by Christ, were revealed to Adam and Eve, personally, as interested therein; but not to their natural seed and posterity, and as interested therein; for then all mankind must be taken into the covenant of grace, and so nothing peculiar to the infants of believers; of which not the least syllable is mentioned throughout the whole age of the church, reaching from Adam to Noah. The next covenant we read of, is that made with Noah, which was not made with him and his immediate offspring only; nor were any taken into it as infants of believers, nor had they any sacrament or rite as a token of it, and of God being their God in a peculiar relation. Surely this will not be said of Ham, one of the immediate sons of Noah. That covenant was made with Noah, and with all mankind to the end of the world, and even with every living creature, the beasts of the field, promising security from an universal deluge, as long as the world should stand; and so had nothing in it peculiar to the infants of believers. The next covenant is that made with Abraham and his seed, on which great stress is laid (Genesis 17:10-14), and this is said[8] to be "the grand turning point on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; and that if Abraham's covenant, which included his infant children, and gave them a right to circumcision, was not the covenant of grace; then it is confessed, that the "main ground" is taken away, on which "the right of infants to baptism" is asserted; and consequently the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned." Now that this covenant was not the pure covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of works, but rather a covenant of works, will soon be proved; and if so, then the main ground of infant's baptism is taken away, and its principal arguments in support of it overturned: and that it is not the covenant of grace is clear,

(a.) From its being never so called, nor by any name which shows it to be such; but "the covenant of circumcision" (Acts 7:8). Now nothing is more opposite to one another than circumcision and grace; circumcision is a work of the law, which they that sought to be justified by fell from grace (Galatians 5:2-4). Nor can this covenant be the same we are now under, which is a new covenant, or a new administration of the covenant of grace, since it is abolished, and no more in being and force.

(b.) It appears to be a covenant of works, and not of grace; since it was to be kept by men, under a severe penalty. Abraham was to keep it, and his seed after him; something was to be done by them, their flesh to be circumcised, and a penalty was annexed, in case of disobedience or neglect; such a soul was to be cut off from his people: all which shows it to be, not a covenant of grace, but of works.

(c.) It is plain, it was a covenant that might be broken; of the uncircumcised it is said, "He hath broken my covenant" (Genesis 17:14), whereas the covenant of grace cannot be broken; God will not break it, and men cannot; it is ordered in all things, and sure, and is more immovable than hills and mountains (Psalms 89:34).

(d.) It is certain it had things in it of a civil and temporal nature; as a multiplication of Abraham's natural seed, and a race of kings from him; a promise of his being the Father of many nations, and a possession of the land of Canaan by his seed: things that can have no place in the pure covenant of grace and have nothing to do with that, any more than the change of his name from Abram to Abraham.

(e.) There were some persons included in it, who cannot be thought to belong to the covenant of grace; as Ishmael, not in the same covenant with Isaac, and a profane Esau: and on the other hand, there were some who were living when this covenant of circumcision was made, and yet were left out of it; who nevertheless, undoubtedly, were in the covenant of grace; as Shem, Arphaxad, Melchizedek, Lot, and others; wherefore this can never be the pure covenant of grace.

(f.) Nor is this covenant the same with what is referred to in Galatians 3:17 said to be "confirmed of God in Christ", which could not be disannulled by the law four hundred and thirty years after; the distance of time between them does not agree, but falls short of the apostle's date twenty four years; and therefore must not refer to the covenant of circumcision, but to some other covenant and time of making it; even to an exhibition and manifestation of the covenant of grace to Abraham, about the time of his call out of Chaldea (Genesis 12:3).

(g.) The covenant of grace was made with Christ, as the federal head of the elect in him, and that from everlasting, and who is the only head of that covenant, and of the covenant ones: if the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, as the head of his natural and spiritual seed, Jews and Gentiles; there must be two heads of the covenant of grace, contrary to the nature of such a covenant, and the whole current of scripture; yea, the covenant of grace, as it concerns the spiritual seed of Abraham, and spiritual blessings for them; it, and the promises of it, were made to Christ (Galatians 3:16). No mere man is capable of covenanting with God; the covenant of grace is not made with any single man; and much less with him on the behalf of others: whenever we read of it as made with a particular person or persons, it is always to be understood of the manifestation and application of it, and of its blessings and promises to them.

(h.) Allowing Abraham's covenant to be a peculiar one, and of a mixed kind, containing promises of temporal things to him, and his natural seed, and of spiritual things to his spiritual seed; or rather, that there was at the same time when the covenant of circumcision was given to Abraham and his natural seed, a fresh manifestation of the covenant of grace made with him and his spiritual seed in Christ. That the temporal blessings of it belonged to his natural seed, is no question; but that the spiritual blessings belong to all Abraham's seed, after the flesh, and to all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, must be denied: if the covenant of grace was made with all Abraham's seed according to the flesh, then it was made with his more immediate offspring, with a mocking, persecuting Ishmael, and with a profane Esau, and with all his remote posterity; with them who believed not, and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness; with the ten tribes who revolted from the pure worship of God; with the Jews in Isaiah's time, a seed of evildoers, whose rulers are called the rulers of Sodom, and the people the people of Gomorrah; with the scribes and Pharisees, that wicked and adulterous generation in the times of Christ: but what serious, thoughtful man, who knows anything of the covenant of grace, can admit of this? (see Romans 9:6-7). It is only a remnant, according to the election of grace, who are in this covenant; and if all the natural seed of Abraham are not in this covenant, it can scarcely be thought that all the natural seed of believing Gentiles are; it is only some of the one and some of the other, who are in the covenant of grace; and this cannot be known until they believe, when they appear to be Abraham's spiritual seed; and it must be right to put off their claim to any supposed privilege arising from covenant interest, until it is plain they have one; if all the natural seed of Abraham, as such, and all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, as such, are in the covenant of grace; since all they that are in it, and none but they are in it, who are the chosen of God, the redeemed of the Lamb, and will

be called by grace, and sanctified, and persevere in faith and holiness, and be eternally glorified; then the natural seed of Abraham, and of believing Gentiles, must be all chosen to grace and glory, and be redeemed by the blood of Christ from sin, law, hell, and death; they must all have new hearts and spirits given them, and the fear of God put into their hearts; must be effectually called, their sins forgiven them, their persons justified by the righteousness of Christ, and they persevere in grace to the end, and be for ever glorified; (see Jeremiah 31:33-34; Jeremiah 32:40; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Romans 8:30). But who will venture to assert all this of the one, or of the other? And after all,

(i.) If their covenant interest could be ascertained, that gives no right to an ordinance, without a positive order and direction from God. It gave no right to circumcision formerly; for on the one hand there were persons living when that ordinance was appointed, who had an undoubted interest in the covenant of grace; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, and they had no right to use it: on the other hand, there have been many of whom it cannot be said they were in the covenant of grace, and yet were obliged to it. And so covenant interest gives no right to baptism; could it be proved, as it cannot, that all the infant seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace, it would give them no right to baptism, without a command for it; the reason is, because a person may be in covenant, and as yet not have the prerequisite to an ordinance, even faith in Christ, and a profession of it, which are necessary both to baptism and the Lord’s Supper; and if covenant interest gives a right to the one, it would to the other.

(j.) Notwithstanding all this attention made about Abraham’s covenant (Genesis 17:1-14), it was not made with him and his infant seed; but with him and his adult offspring; it was they in all after ages to the coming of Christ, whether believers or unbelievers, who were enjoined to circumcise their infant seed, and not all of them, only their males: it was not made with Abraham’s infant seed, who could not circumcise themselves, but their parents were by this covenant obliged to circumcise them; yea, others, who were not Abraham’s natural seed, were obliged to it; "He that is eight days old shalt be circumcised among you, which is NOT OF THY SEED" (Genesis 17:12). Which leads on to observe, b. That nothing can be concluded from the circumcision of Jewish infants, to the baptism of the infants of believing Gentiles: had there been a like command for the baptism of the infants of believing Gentiles, under the New Testament, as there was for the circumcision of Jewish infants under the Old, the thing would not have admitted of any dispute; but nothing of this kind appears. For,

(a.) It is not clear that even Jewish infants were admitted into covenant by the rite of circumcision; from whence it is pleaded, that the infants of believers are admitted into it by baptism; for Abraham’s female seed were taken into the covenant made with him, as well as his male seed, but not by any "visible rite" or ceremony; nor were his male seed admitted by any such rite; not by circumcision, for they were not to be circumcised until the eighth day; to have circumcised them sooner would have been criminal; and that they were in covenant from their birth, I presume, will not be denied; as it was a national covenant, so early they were in it; the Israelites, with their infants at Horeb, had not been circumcised; nor were they when they entered into covenant with the Lord their God (Deuteronomy 29:10-15).

(b.) Circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace under the former dispensation; nor is baptism a seal of it under the present: had circumcision been a seal of it, the covenant of grace must have been without one from Adam to Abraham: it is called a sign or token, but not a seal; it was a sign or mark in the flesh of Abraham's natural seed, a typical sign of the pollution of human nature, and of the inward circumcision of the heart; but no seal, confirming any spiritual blessing of the covenant of grace to those who had this mark or sign; it is indeed called, "a seal of the righteousness of faith" (Romans 4:11), but not a seal to Abraham's natural seed of their interest in that righteousness, but only to Abraham himself; it was a seal to him, a confirming sign, assuring him, that the righteousness of faith, which he had before he was circumcised, should come upon the uncircumcised believing Gentiles; and therefore it was continued on his natural offspring, until that righteousness was preached unto, received by, and imputed to believing Gentiles.

(c.) Nor did baptism succeed circumcision; there is no agreement between the one and the other; not in the subjects, to whom they were administered; the use of the one and the other is not the same; and the manner of administering them different; baptism being administered to Jews and Gentiles, to male and female, and to adult persons only: not so circumcision; the use of circumcision was to distinguish the natural seed of Abraham from others; baptism is the badge of the spiritual seed of Christ, and the answer of a good conscience towards God; and represents the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the one is by blood, the other by water; and ordinances so much differing in their subjects, use, and administration; the one can never be thought to come in the room and place of the other. Besides, baptism was in use and force before circumcision was abolished, which was not until the death of Christ; whereas, the doctrine of baptism was preached, and the ordinance itself administered, some years before that; now that which was in force before another is out of date, can never with any propriety be said to succeed, or come in the room of that other. Besides, if this was the case, as circumcision gave a right to the Passover, so would baptism to the Lord's Supper; which yet is not admitted. Now as there is nothing to be gathered out of the Old Testament to countenance infant baptism, so neither are there any passages in the New, which can be supported in favor of it. i. Not the text in Acts 2:39. "The promise is unto you and to your children", etc. It is pretended, that this refers to the covenant made with Abraham, and to a covenant promise made to him, giving his infant children a right to the ordinance of circumcision; and is urged as a reason with the Jews, why they and their children ought to be baptized; and with the Gentiles, why they and theirs should be also, when called into a church state. But,

(i.) There is not the least mention made in the text of Abraham's covenant, or of any promise made to him, giving his infant seed a right to circumcision, and still less to baptism; nor is there the least syllable of infant baptism, nor any hint of it, from whence it can be concluded; nor by "children" are infants designed, but the posterity of the Jews, who are frequently so called in scripture, though grown up; and unless it be so understood in many places, strange interpretations must be given of them; wherefore the argument from hence for "paedobaptism" is given up by some learned men, as Dr. Hammond and others, as inconclusive.

(ii.) The promise here, be it what it may, is not observed as giving a right or claim to any ordinance; but as an encouraging motive to persons in distress, under a sense of sin, to repent of it, and declare their repentance, and yield a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism; when they might hope that remission of sins would be applied to them, and they should receive a larger

measure of the grace of the Spirit; wherefore repentance and baptism are urged in order to the enjoyment of the promise; and consequently must be understood of adult persons, who only are capable of repentance, and of a voluntary subjection to baptism.

(iii.) The promise is no other than the promise of life and salvation by Christ, and of remission of sins by his blood, and of an increase of grace from his Spirit; and whereas the persons addressed had imprecated the guilt of the blood of Christ, they had shed upon their posterity, as well as on themselves, which distressed them; they are told, for their relief, that the same promise would be made good to their posterity also, provided they did as they were directed to do; and even to all the Jews afar off, in distant countries and future ages, who should look on Christ and mourn, repent and believe, and be baptized: and seeing the Gentiles are sometimes described as those "afar of", the promise may be thought to reach to them who should be called by grace, repent, believe, and be baptized also; but no mention is made of their children; and had they been mentioned, the limiting clause, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call", plainly points at and describes the persons intended, whether Jews or Gentiles, effectually called by grace, who are encouraged by the motive in the promise to profess repentance, and submit to baptism; which can only be understood of adult persons, and not of infants. ii. Nor Romans 11:16, etc. "If the first fruits be holy", etc. For, (i.) By the first fruits, and lump, and by the root and branches, are not meant Abraham and his posterity, or natural seed, as such; but the first among the Jews who believed in Christ, and laid the first foundation of a gospel church state, and were first incorporated into it; Who being holy, were a pledge of the future conversion and holiness of that people in the latter day.

(ii.) Nor by the good olive tree, after mentioned, is meant the Jewish church state; which was abolished by Christ, with all the peculiar ordinances of it; and the believing Gentiles were never engrafted into it; the axe has been laid to the root of that old Jewish stock, and it is entirely cut down, and no engrafture is made upon it. But,

(iii.) By it is meant the gospel church state, in its first foundation, consisting of Jews that believed, out of which were left the Jews who believed not in Christ, and who are the branches broken off; into which church state the Gentiles were received and engrafted; which engrafture, or coalition, was first made at Antioch, when and hereafter the Gentiles partook of the root and fatness of the olive tree, enjoyed the same privileges, communicated in the same ordinances, and were satisfied with the goodness and fatness of the house of God; and this gospel church may be truly called, by the converted Jews in the latter day, their "own olive tree", into which they will be engrafted; since the first gospel church was set up at Jerusalem, and gathered out of the Jews; and so in other places, the first gospel churches consisted of Jews, the first fruits of those converted ones. From the whole it appears, that there is not the least syllable about baptism, much less of infant baptism, in the passage; nor can anything be concluded from hence in favor of it. iii. Nor from 1 Corinthians 7:14 "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy"; which is by some understood of a federal holiness, giving a claim to covenant privileges, and so to baptism. But,

(i.) It should be told what these covenant privileges are; since, as we have seen, covenant interest gives no right to any ordinance, without divine direction; nor is baptism a seal of the covenant: it should be told what this covenant holiness is, whether imaginary or real; by some it is called

"reputed", and is distinguished from internal holiness, which is rejected from being the sense of the text; but such holiness can never qualify persons for a New Testament ordinance; nor as the covenant of grace any such holiness belonging to it; that provides, by way of promise, real holiness, signified by putting the laws of God in the heart, by giving new hearts and new spirits, and by cleansing from all impurity, and designs real, internal holiness, shown in an holy conversation; and such who appear to have that, have an undoubted right to the ordinance of baptism, since they have received the Spirit as a Spirit of sanctification (Acts 10:47). But this cannot be meant in the text, seeing,

(ii.) It is such a holiness as heathens may have; unbelieving husbands and wives are said to have it, in virtue of their relation to believing wives and husbands, and which is prior to the holiness of their children, and on which theirs depends; but surely such will not be allowed to have federal holiness, and yet it must be of the same kind with their children; if the holiness of the children is a federal holiness, that of the unbelieving parent must be so too, from whence is the holiness of the children.

(iii.) If children, by virtue of this holiness, have claim to baptism, then much more their unbelieving parents, since they are sanctified before them, by their believing yoke fellows, and are as near to them as their children; and if the holiness of the one gives a right to baptism, why not the holiness of the other? and yet the one are baptized, and the other not, though sanctified, and whose holiness is the more near; for the holiness spoken of, be it what it may, is derived from both parents, believing and unbelieving; yea, the holiness of the children depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent; for if the unbeliever is not sanctified, the children are unclean, and not holy. But,

(iv.) These words are to be understood of matrimonial holiness, even of the very act of marriage, which, in the language of the Jews, is frequently expressed by being sanctified; the word ■■■ to "sanctify", is used in innumerable places in the Jewish writings,[9] , to "espouse"; and in the same sense the apostle uses the word agiazw here, and the words may be rendered, "the unbelieving husband is espoused", or married, "to the wife"; or rather, "has been espoused", for it relates to the act of marriage past, as valid; "and the unbelieving wife has been espoused to the husband"; the preposition en, translated "by", should be rendered "to", as it is in the very next verse; "God hath called us en eirhnh, to peace"; the apostle’s inference from it is, "else were your children unclean", illegitimate, if their parents were not lawfully espoused and married to each other; "but now are they holy", a holy and legitimate seed, as in Ezra 9:2 (see Malachi 2:15), and no other sense can be put upon the words, than of a legitimate marriage and offspring; nothing else will suit with the case proposed to the apostle, and with his answer to it, and reasoning about it; and which sense has been allowed by many learned interpreters, ancient and modern; as Jerome, Ambrose, Erasmus, Camerarius, Musculus, and others. There are some objections made to the practice of adult baptism, which are of little force, and to which an answer may easily be returned. i. That though it may be allowed that adult persons, such as repent and believe, are the subjects of baptism, yet it is nowhere said, that they are the only ones: but if no others can be named as baptized, and the descriptive characters given in scripture of baptized persons are such as can "only" agree with adult, and not with infants; then it may be reasonably concluded, that the former "only" are the proper subjects of baptism. ii. It is objected to our practice of baptizing the adult offspring of Christians, that no scriptural instance of such a practice can be given; and it is

demanded of us to give an instance agreeable to our practice; since the first persons baptized were such as were converted either from Judaism or from heathenism, and about the baptism of such adult, they say, there is no controversy. But our practice is not at all concerned with the parents of the persons baptized by us, whether they be Christians, Jews, Turks, or Pagans; but with the persons themselves, whether they are believers in Christ or not; if they are the adult offspring of Christians, yet unbaptized, it is no objection to us: and if they are not, it is no bar in the way of admitting them to baptism, if they themselves are believers; many, and it may be the greater part of such baptized by us are the adult offspring of those who, without breach of charity, cannot be considered as Christians. As for the first persons that were baptized, they were neither proselytes from Judaism nor from Heathenism; but the offspring of Christians, of such that believed in the Messiah; the saints before the coming of Christ, and at his coming, were as good Christians as any that have lived since; so that those good men who lived before Abraham, as far back as to the first man, and those that lived after him, even to the coming of Christ, Eusebius[10] observes, that if any should affirm them to be Christians, though not in name, yet in reality, he would not say amiss. Judaism, at the time of Christ's coming, was the same with Christianity, and not in opposition to it; so that there was no such thing as conversion from Judaism to Christianity. Zachariah and Elizabeth, whose offspring John the first baptizer was, and Mary, the mother of our Lord, who was baptized by John, when adult, were as good Christians, and as strong believers in Jesus, as the Messiah, as soon as born, and even when in the womb of the Virgin, as have been since; and these surely must be allowed to be the adult offspring of Christians; such were the apostles of Christ, and the first followers of him, who were the adult offspring of such who believed in the Messiah, and embraced him upon the first notice of him, and cannot be said to be converted from Judaism to Christianity; Judaism not existing until the opposition to Jesus being the Messiah became general and national; after that, indeed, those of the Jewish nation who believed in Christ, may be said to be proselytes from Judaism to Christianity, as the apostle Paul and others: and so converts made by the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles, were proselytes from heathenism to Christianity; but then it is unreasonable to demand of us instances of the adult offspring of such being baptized, and added to the churches; since the scripture history of the first churches contained in the Acts of the Apostles, only gives an account of the first planting of these churches, and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; but not of the additions of members to them in later times; wherefore to give instances of those who were born of them, and brought up by them, as baptized in adult years, cannot reasonably be required of us: but on the other hand, if infant children were admitted to baptism in these times, upon the faith and baptism of their parents, and their becoming Christians; it is strange, exceeding strange, that among the many thousands baptized in Jerusalem, Samaria, Corinth, and other places, that there should be no one instance of any of them bringing their children with them to be baptized, and claiming the privilege of baptism for them upon their own faith; nor of their doing this in any short time after. This is a case that required no length of time, and yet not a single instance can be produced. iii. It is objected, that no time can be assigned when infants were cast out of covenant, or cut off from the seal of it. If by the covenant is meant the covenant of grace, it should be first proved that they are in it, as the natural seed of believers, which cannot be done; and when that is, it is time enough to talk of their being cast out, when and how. If by it is meant Abraham's covenant, the covenant of circumcision, the answer is the cutting off was when circumcision ceased to be an ordinance of God, which was at the death of Christ: if by it is meant the national covenant of the Jews, the

ejection of Jewish parents, with their children, was when God wrote a "Loammi" upon that people, as a body politic and ecclesiastic; when he broke his covenant with them, signified by breaking his two staffs, beauty and bands. iv. A clamorous outcry is made against us, as abridging the privileges of infants, by denying baptism to them; making them to be lesser under the gospel dispensation than under the law, and the gospel dispensation less glorious. But as to the gospel dispensation, it is the more glorious for infants being left out of its church state; that is, for its being not national and carnal, as before; but congregational and spiritual; consisting not of infants, without understanding, but of rational and spiritual men, believers in Christ; and these not of a single country, as Judea, but in all parts of the world: and as for infants, their privileges now are many and better, who are eased from the painful rite of circumcision; it is a rich mercy, and a glorious privilege of the gospel, that the believing Jews and their children are delivered from it; and that the Gentiles and theirs are not obliged to it; which would have bound them over to fulfil the whole law: to which may be added, that being born of Christian parents, and having a Christian education, and of having opportunities of hearing the gospel, as they grow up; and that not in one country only, but in many; are greater privileges than the Jewish children had under the former dispensation. v. It is objected, that there are no more express commands in scripture for keeping the first day of the week as a sabbath; nor for women partaking of the Lord’s Supper, and other things, than for the baptism of infants. As for the first, though there is no express precept for the observance of it, yet there are precedents of its being observed for religious services (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2), and though we have no example of infant baptism, yet if there were scriptural precedents of it, we should think ourselves obliged to follow them. As for women’s right to partake of the Lord’s Supper, we have sufficient proof of it; since these were baptized as well as men; and having a right to one ordinance, had to another, and were members of the first church, communicated with it, and women, as well as men, were added to it (Acts 8:12; Acts 1:14; Acts 5:1; Acts 5:14) we have a precept for it: "Let a man", anyrwpov, a word of the common gender, and signifies both man and woman, "examine him or herself, and so let him or her eat" (1 Corinthians 11:29; see Galatians 3:28); and we have also examples of it in Mary the mother of our Lord, and other women, who, with the disciples, constituted the gospel church at Jerusalem; and as they continued with one accord in the apostles’ doctrine and in prayer, so in fellowship and in breaking of bread; let the same proof be given of the baptism of infants, and it will be admitted. vi. Antiquity is urged in favor of infant baptism; it is pretended that this is a tradition of the church received from the apostles; though of this no other proof is given, but the testimony of Origen, none before that; and this is taken, not from any of his genuine Greek writings, only from some Latin translations, confessedly interpolated, and so corrupted, that it is owned, one is at a loss to find Origen in Origen. No mention is made of this practice in the first two centuries, no instance given of it until the third, when Tertullian is the first who spoke of it, and at the same time spoke against it.[11] And could it be carried up higher, it would be of no force, unless it could be proved from the sacred scriptures, to which only we appeal, and by which the thing in debate is to be judged and determined. We know that innovations and corruptions very early obtained, and even in the times of the apostles; and what is pretended to be near those times, is the more to be suspected as the traditions of the false apostles;[12] the antiquity of a custom is no proof of the truth and genuineness of it;[13] "The customs the people are vain" (Jeremiah 10:3). I proceed to consider,

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IV. Fourthly, the way and manner of baptizing; and to prove, that it is by immersion, plunging the body in water, and covering it with it. Custom, and the common use of writing in this controversy, have so far prevailed, that for the most part immersion is usually called the "mode" of baptism; whereas it is properly baptism itself; to say that immersion or dipping is the mode of baptism, is the same thing as to say, that dipping is the mode of dipping; for as Sir John Floyer[14] observes "Immersion is no circumstance, but "the very act of baptism", used by our Saviour and his disciples, in the institution of baptism." And Calvin expressly says,[15] "The word "baptizing" signifies to plunge; and it is certain, that the rite of plunging was used by the ancient churches." And as for sprinkling, that cannot, with any propriety, be called a mode of baptism; it would be just such, good sense as to say, sprinkling is the mode of dipping, since baptism and dipping are the same; hence the learned Selden,[16] who in the former part of his life, might have seen infants dipped in fonts, but lived to see immersion much disused, had reason to say, "In England, of late years, I ever thought the parson "baptized his own fingers" rather than the child," because he dipped the one, and sprinkled the other. That baptism is immersion, or the dipping of a person in water, and covering him with it is to be proved,

1. From the proper and primary signification of the word baptizw, "baptize", which in its first and primary sense, signifies to "dip or plunge into"; and so it is rendered by our best lexicographers, "mergo", "immergo", "dip or plunge into." And in a secondary and consequential sense, "abluo, lavo", "wash", because what is dipped is washed, there being no proper washing but by dipping; but never "perfundo or aspergo", "pour or sprinkle"; so the lexicon published by Constantine, Budaeus, etc. and those of Hadrian Junius, Plantinus, Scapula, Stephens, Schrevelius, Stockius, and others; besides a great number of critics; as Beza, Casanbon, Witsius, etc. which might be produced. By whose united testimonies the thing is out of question. Had our translators, instead of adopting the Greek word baptize in all places where the ordinance of baptism is made mention of, truly translated it, and not have left it untranslated, as they have, the controversy about the manner of baptizing would have been at an end, or rather have been prevented; had they used the word dip, instead of baptize, as they should have done, there would have been no room for a question about it.

2. That baptism was performed by immersion, appears by the places chosen for the administration of it; as the river Jordan by John, where he baptized many, and where our Lord himself was baptized by him (Matthew 3:6; Matthew 3:13; Matthew 3:16), but why should he choose the river to baptize in, and baptize in it, if he did not administer the ordinance by immersion? had it been done any other way, there was no occasion for any confluence of water, much less a river;[17] a basin of water would have sufficed. John also, it is said, "was baptizing in Aenon, near Salim, because there was much water" (John 3:23), which was convenient for baptism, for which this reason is given; and not for convenience for drink for men and their cattle, which is not expressed nor implied; from whence we may gather, as Calvin on the text does, "That baptism was performed by John and Christ, by plunging the whole body under water;" and so Piscator, Aretius, Grotius, and

others on the same passage.

3. That this was the way in which it was anciently administered, is clear from various instances of baptism recorded in scripture, and the circumstances attending them; as that of our Lord, of whom it is said, "That when he was baptized he went up straightway out of the water", which supposes he had been in it; and so Piscator infers from his going up out of it, that therefore he went down into it, and was baptized in the river itself; of which going down there would have been no need, had the ordinance been administered to him in another way, as by sprinkling or pouring a little water on his head, he and John standing in the midst of the river, as the painter and engraver ridiculously describe it: and certain it is, he was then baptized in Jordan; the evangelist Mark says "into Jordan" (Mark 1:9), not at the banks of Jordan, but into the waters of it; for which reason he went into it, and when baptized, "came up out" of it, not "from" it, but "out" of it; apo and ex, signifying the same, as in Luke 4:35; Luke 4:41. So the preposition is used in the Septuagint version of Psalms 40:2 ex and apo are "aequipollent", as several lexicographers from Xenophon observe. The baptism of the eunuch is another instance of baptism by immersion; when he and Philip were "come unto a certain water", to the water side, which destroys a little piece of criticism, as if their going into the water, after expressed, was no other than going to the brink of the water, to the water side, whereas they were come to that before; and baptism being agreed upon, "they went down both into the water", both Philip and the eunuch, "and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water", etc. Now we do not reason merely from the circumstances of "going down into, and coming up out of the water"; we know that persons may go down into water, and come up out of it, and never be immersed in it; but when it is expressly said, upon these persons going down into the water, that Philip baptized, or dipped, the eunuch; and when this was done, that both came up out of it, these circumstances strongly corroborate, without the explanation of the word "baptized", that it was performed by immersion; for these circumstances cannot agree with any other way of administering it but that; for a man can hardly be thought to be in his senses who can imagine that Philip went down with the eunuch into the water to sprinkle or pour a little water on him, and then gravely come out of it; hence, as the above learned commentator, Calvin, on the text says, "Here we plainly see what was the manner of baptizing with the ancients, for they plunged the whole body into the water; now custom obtaining, that the minister only sprinkles the body or the head." So Barnabas,[18] an apostolic writer of the first century, and who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as a companion of the apostle Paul, describes baptism by going down into and by coming up out of the water; "We descend," says he, "into the water full of sin and filth; and we ascend, bringing forth fruit in the heart, having fear and hope in Jesus, through the Spirit."

4. The end of baptism, which is to represent the burial of Christ, cannot be answered in any other way than by immersion, or covering the body in water; that baptism is an emblem of the burial of Christ, is clear from Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12. It would be endless to quote the great number, even of "paedobaptist" writers, who ingenuously acknowledge that the allusion in these passages, is to the ancient rite of by immersion: as none but such who are dead are buried, so none but such who are dead to sin, and to the law by the body of Christ, or who profess to be so, are to be buried in and by baptism, or to be baptized; and as none can be properly said to be buried, unless under ground, and covered with earth; so none can be said to be baptized, but such who are put under water, and covered with it; and nothing short of this can be a representation of

the burial of Christ, and of ours with him; not sprinkling, or pouring a little water on the face; for a corpse cannot be said to be buried when only a little earth or dust is sprinkled or poured on it.

5. This may be concluded from the various figurative and typical baptisms spoken of in scripture. As,

(1.) From the waters of the flood, which Tertullian calls[19] the baptism of the world, and of which the apostle Peter makes baptism the antitype (1 Peter 3:20-21). The ark in which Noah and his family were saved by water, was God's ordinance; it was made according to the pattern he gave to Noah, as baptism is; and as that was the object of the scorn of men, so is the ordinance of baptism, rightly administered; and as it represented a burial, when Noah and his family were shut up in it, so baptism; and when the fountains of the great deep were broken up below, and the windows of heaven were opened above, the ark, with those in it, were as it were covered with and immersed in water; and so was a figure of baptism by immersion: and as there were none but adult persons in the ark, who were saved by water in it, so none but adult persons are the proper subjects of water baptism; and though there were few who were in the ark, it was attended with a salutary effect to them, they were saved by water; so such who truly believe in Christ, and are baptized, shall be saved, and that "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ", which was typified by the coming of Noah and his family out of the ark; to which baptism, as the antitype, corresponds, being an emblem of the same (Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12).

(2.) From the passage of the Israelites under the cloud and through the sea, when "they were said to be baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Corinthians 10:1-2). There are various things in this account which agree with baptism; this was following Moses, who directed them into the sea, and went before them; so baptism is a following Christ, who has set an example to tread in his steps; and as the Israelites were baptized into Moses, so believers are baptized into Christ, and put him on; and this passage of theirs was after their coming out of Egypt, and at the beginning of their journey through the wilderness to Canaan; so baptism is administered to believers, at their first coming out of darkness and bondage worse than Egyptian, and when they first enter on their Christian pilgrimage; and as joy followed upon the former, "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel", etc. so it often follows upon the latter; the eunuch, after baptism, went on his way rejoicing: but chiefly this passage was a figure of baptism by immersion; as the Israelites were "under the cloud", and so under water, and covered with it, as persons baptized by immersion are; "and passed through the sea", that standing up as a wall on both sides them, with the cloud over them; thus surrounded they were as persons immersed in water, and so said to be baptized; and thus Grotius remarks upon the passage.

(3.) From the various washings, bathings, or baptisms of the Jews; called "various", because of the different persons and things washed or dipped, as the same Grotius observes; and not because of different sorts of washing, for there is but one way of washing, and that is by dipping; what has a little water only sprinkled or poured on it, cannot be said to be washed; the Jews had their sprinklings, which were distinct from washings or bathings, which were always performed by immersion; it is a rule, with them, that "wherever in the law washing of the flesh, or of the clothes, is mentioned, it means nothing else than ■■■■ ■■ ■■■■■ "the dipping of the whole body" in a laver--for if any man dips himself all over except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness."[20] according to them.

(4.) From the sufferings of Christ being called a baptism; "I have a baptism to be baptized with", etc. (Luke 12:50), not water baptism, nor the baptism of the Spirit, with both which he had been baptized; but the baptism of his sufferings, yet to come, he was desirous of; these are called so in allusion to baptism, as it is an immersion; and is expressive of the abundance of them, sometimes signified by deep waters, and floods of waters; and Christ is represented as plunged into them, covered and overwhelmed with them (Psalms 62:7; Psalms 69:1-2).

(5.) From the extraordinary donation of the Holy Spirit, and his gifts unto, and his descent upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, which is called "baptizing" (Acts 1:5; Acts 2:1-2), expressive of the very great abundance of them, in allusion to baptism or dipping, in a proper sense, as the learned Casaubon[21] observes; *"Regard is had in this place to the proper signification of the word baptizein, to immerse or dip; and in this sense the apostles are truly said to be baptized, for the house in which this was done, was filled with the Holy Ghost; so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it, as into some pool." All which typical and figurative baptisms, serve to strengthen the proper sense of the word, as it signifies an immersion and dipping the body into, and covering it in water, which only can support the figure used. Nor is this sense of the word to be set aside or weakened by the use of it in Mark 7:4 and Luke 11:38 in the former, it is said, "Except they wash, baptizwntai, baptize, or dip themselves, they eat not"; and in it mention is made of baptismwn, "washings or dippings" of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables or beds; and in the latter, the Pharisee is said to marvel at Christ, that he had not first ebaptisyh, "washed, or dipped, before dinner"; all which agrees with the superstitious traditions of the elders, here referred to, which enjoined dipping in all the cases and instances spoken of, and so serve but the more to confirm the sense of the word contended for; for the Pharisees, upon touching the common people or their clothes, as they returned from market, or from any court of judicature, were obliged to immerse themselves in water before they eat; and so the Samaritan Jews:[22] "If the Pharisees, says Maimonides,[23] touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled all one as if they had touched a profluvious person, and needed immersion," or were obliged to it: and Scaliger,[24] from the Jews observes, "That the more superstitious part of them, everyday, before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body; hence the Pharisees admiration at Christ" (Luke 11:38). And not only cups and pots, and brazen vessels were washed by dipping, or putting them into water, in which way unclean vessels were washed according to the law (Leviticus 11:32), but even beds, pillows, and bolsters, unclean in a ceremonial sense, were washed in this way, according to the traditions of the elders referred to; for they say,[25] "A bed that is wholly defiled, if a man "dips" it part by part, it is pure." Again,[26] "If he "dips the bed" in it (a pool of water) though its feet are plunged into the thick clay (at the bottom of the pool) it is clean." And as for pillows and bolsters, thus they say,[27] "A pillow or a bolster of skin, when a man lifts up the mouth of them out of the water, the water which is in them will be drawn; what must be done? He must "dip" them, and lift them up by their fringes." Thus, according to these traditions, the various things mentioned were washed by immersion; and instead of weakening, strengthen the sense of the word pleaded for. The objections against baptism, as immersion, taken from some instances of baptism recorded in scripture, are of no force; as that of the three thousand, in Acts 2:1-47, not with respect to their number; it may be observed, that though these were added to the church in one and the same day, it does not follow, that they were baptized in one day; but be it that they were, there were twelve apostles to administer the ordinance, and it was but two hundred and fifty persons apiece; and besides, there were seventy disciples, administrators of it; and supposing them

employed, it will reduce the number to six or seven and thirty persons each: and the difference between dipping and sprinkling is very inconsiderable, since the same form of words is used in the one way as in the other; and therefore it might be done in one day, and in a small part of it too.[28] Nor with respect to convenience for the administration of it; as water and places of it sufficient to baptize in: here can be no objection, when it is observed, what number of private baths were in Jerusalem for ceremonial uncleanness; the many pools in the city, and the various apartments and things in the temple fit for such a use; as the dipping room for the high priest, the molten sea for the common priests, and the ten brazen lavers, each of which held forty baths of water sufficient for the immersion of the whole body; all which they might be allowed the use of, as they were of the temple; they "having favor with all the people": not with respect to clothes, and change of garments; it was only everyone's providing and bringing change of raiment for himself. Another instance objected to is, that of the baptism of Saul (Acts 9:18), supposed to be done in the house where he was: but that does not necessarily follow, but rather the contrary; since he "arose" from the place where he was, in order to be baptized; and admitting it was done in the house, it is highly probable there was a bath in the house, in which it might be performed; since it was the house of a Jew, with whom it was usual to have baths to wash their whole bodies in on certain occasions; and had it been performed by sprinkling or pouring a little water on him, he needed not to have rose for that purpose. Besides, he was not only bid to arise and be baptized, which would sound very oddly if rendered, "be sprinkled" or "poured" (Acts 22:16), but he himself says, that he, with others, were "buried by" or "in baptism" (Romans 6:4). Another instance is that of the jailer and his household (Acts 16:33), in which account there is nothing that makes it improbable that it was done by immersion; for it seems to be a clear case, that the jailer, upon his conversion, took the apostles out of prison into his own house, where they preached to him and his family (Acts 16:32), and after this they went out of his house, and he and his were baptized, very probably in the river without the city, where the oratory was (Acts 16:13), for it is certain, that after the baptism of him and his family, he brought the apostles into his house again, and set meat before them (Acts 16:33-34). Upon the whole, these instances produced, fail of showing the improbability of baptism by immersion; which must appear clear and manifest to every attentive reader of his Bible, notwithstanding all that has been opposed unto it. The next thing to be considered is,

V. Fifthly, the form in which this ordinance is to be administered; which is "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19), which contains in it a proof of a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the divine essence, of the Deity of each Person, and of their equality to, and distinction from each other; and shows, that this ordinance is performed under the authority of all Three; in which a person submitting to it, expresses his faith in them, and invocation of them, and gives up himself to them; obliging himself to yield obedience to what they require of him, as well as putting himself under their care and protection. This form is sometimes a little varied and otherwise expressed; as sometimes only "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16), which is a part of the form for the whole; and includes in it the substance of it, and of Christian baptism; and everything relating to the person and offices of Christ, and his relation to and connection with the other Two persons. Cornelius and his family were ordered to be baptized, "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48), that is, in the name of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; for kuriov, Lord, in the New Testament, answers to Jehovah in the Old. The form of baptism in Matthew 28:19 is in the name of "the Father", etc. which single name denotes the one Deity, power, and substance of Father, Son, and Spirit; the equal dignity, co-eternal kingdom, and

government in the Three perfect Persons; as it is expressed in the synodical epistle of the general council at Constantinople.[29] VI. Sixthly, the ends and uses for which baptism is appointed, and which are answered by it.

1. One end of it, and a principal one, as has been frequently hinted, is, to represent the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; which is plainly and fully suggested in Romans 6:4-5 and Colossians 2:12 his sufferings are represented by going into the water, and being overwhelmed in it, his burial by a short continuance under it, and being covered with it, and his resurrection by an immersion out of it.

2. It was practiced both by John and by the apostles of Christ, for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38), not that that is the procuring and meritorious cause of it, which only is the blood of Christ; but they who submit unto it, may, by means of it, be led, directed, and encouraged to expect it from Christ. And so,

3. In like manner it is for the washing away of sin, and cleansing from it; "Arise, and be baptized, and wash thy sins" (Acts 22:16), this only is really done the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; baptism neither washes away original nor actual sin, it has no such virtue in it;[30] but it is a means of directing to Christ the Lamb of God, who, by his atoning blood and sacrifice, has purged and continues to take away the sins of men.

4. A salutary or saving use and effect is ascribed unto it; "The like figure whereunto, baptism, doth also now save us"; should it be asked how, and by what means? the answer follows, "By the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21), that is, by leading the faith of the person baptized to Christ, as delivered for his offences, and as risen again for his justification.

5. In the same passage it is said to be of this use, and to serve this purpose, "The answer of a good conscience towards God"; a man who believes baptism to be an ordinance of God, and submits to it as such, discharges a good conscience, the consequence of which is joy and peace; for though "for" keeping the commands of God there is no reward, yet there is "in" keeping them; and this is their reward, the testimony of a good conscience: for great peace have they which love God and keep his commandments.

6. Yielding obedience to this ordinance of Christ, is an evidence of love to God and Christ (1 John 5:3), and such who from a principle of love to Christ keep his commandments, may expect, according to his promise, to have fresh manifestations of his and his Father’s love, and to have communion with Father, Son, and Spirit (John 14:15; John 14:21; John 14:23). This is an end to be had in view, in obedience to it, and a very encouraging one.

ENDNOTE:

[1] De Doctrina Christiana, 50:3, c. 9.

[2] Vid. Socin. Disp. de Baptismo, c. 15, 16, 17.

[3] See the Dissertation concerning the Baptism of Jewish Proselytes, at the end of this work. See on topic 1300.

[4] Comment. on Matthew p. 372, 375.

[5] Comment. On Matthew 28:19.

[6] Contr. Arian. orat. 3. p. 209.

[7] Baptism of infants a reasonable service, p. 14, 15.

[8] Bostwick's Fair and Rational Vindication of Infant-baptism, p. 19.

[9] See, my Exposition of 1 Corinthians 7:14. See Gill on 1 Corinthians 7:14.

[10] Ecclesiastes Hist. 50:1. c. 4.

[11] See my Treatises, "The Argument from apostolic Tradition, in Favour of Infant Baptism, considered;" and "Antipaedo-Baptism, or Infant Baptism, an Innovation," with others.

[12] "Quod longinquitas temporis objicitur, eo major suspicio, inesse debet, emanasse illas traditiones a Pseudo apostolis; qui mirandum in modum conturbaverunt sanctos apostolos; quo magis cavendum est, viri Christiani". Aonii Palearii Testimonium, c. 2. p. 238.

[13] "Consuetudo sine veritate vetustas erroris est", Cyprian. epist. 74. p. 195.

[14] Essay to Restore the Dipping of Infants in Baptism, p. 44.

[15] Institut. 50:4. c. 15. s. 19.

[16] Opera, vol. 6. col. 2008.

[17] Some represent the river Jordan, from Sandys's account of it, as if it was a shallow river, and insufficient for immersion; but what Sandys says of it, is only that it was not navigably deep, not above eight fathoms broad, nor, except, by accident, heady. Travels, b. 3:p. 110. ed. 5. But Mr. Maundrel says, for its breadth, it might be about twenty yards over, and in depth it far exceeded his height. Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 83. ed. 7. vid. Reland. de Palestina, 50:1. p. 278. And Adamnan. in ib. And therefore must be sufficient for immersion. And Strabo speaks of ships of burden sailing through Jordan, Geograph. 50:16. p. 519. And that it was a river to swim in, and navigable, according to the Jewish writers, see Gill on "Matthew 3:5".

[18] Ep. c. 9. p. 235. ed. Voss.

[19] De Baptismo, c. 8.

[20] Maimon. Hilchot Mikvaot, c. 1. s. 2.

[21] In Acts 1:5.

[22] Epiph. contra Haeres. 50:1. Haeres. 9.

[23] In Misn. Chagigah, c. 2. s. 7.

[24] De Emend. Temp. 50:6. p. 771.

[25] Maimon. Hilchot Celim. c. 26. s. 14.

[26] Misn. Mikvaot, c. 7. s. 7.

[27] Ibid. s. 6.

[28] Ten thousand were baptized in one day by Austin the monk, in the river Swale, if our historians are to be credited. Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. 1:p. 154. Ranulph. Polychron. 50:5. c. 10. The twelve sons of Wolodomir, Grand Prince of Russia, with twenty thousand Russians, in cent. 10. were baptized in one day, by a missionary of Photius the patriarch; and the ancient Russians would allow no person to be a Christian, unless he had been dipped quite under water. Strahlenberg. Histor. Geograph. Descript. of the Northern and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia, ch. 8. p. 283, 286. Vid. Fabricii Lux Evangel. p. 475. No doubt assistance was had in both instances; but these show what numbers may be baptized in a day.

[29] Apud. Theodorit. Eccl. Hist. 50:5. c. 9. This form was first changed and corrupted by Mark the heretic, and his followers, in the second century; who baptized into the name of the unknown Father of all; into truth the mother of all; into him who descended on Jesus; into union and redemption, and communion of powers: the same also first changed and corrupted the mode; taking a mixture of oil and water, poured it on the head, and then anointed with balsam. Vid, Irenaeum adv. Haeres. 50:1. c. 18.

[30] "Non enim aqua lavat animam, sed ipsa prius lavatur a Spiritu", Aonii Palearii Testimonium, c. 2. p. 24.

Chapter 6

01.03. The Ancient Mode of Baptizing by Immersion,

The Ancient Mode Of Baptizing, BY IMMERSION, PLUNGING, OR DIPPING INTO WATER;

Maintained And Vindicated;

Against the Cavils and Exceptions of the Author of a late Pamphlet, entitled, The manner of Baptizing with Water cleared up from the Word of God and right Reason, etc.

Together with some remarks upon the Author's REASONS for the Practice of a FREE or mix Communion in Churches.

CHAPTER 1.

Some Remarks upon the Title of the Book, and the Author's method of writing. The controversy about baptism, both with respect to its mode of administration, and proper subjects, has been of late so diligently searched into, and thoroughly discussed, that it may well seem needless to trouble the world with any further writings upon that subject, it being in a great measure only actum agere, to do the same thing over again, which has been well done already; but those of a different persuasion from us, being continually thrusting their crambe millies cocta upon us, and repeating the same things over and over again, though they have been sufficiently answered already, makes it necessary for us, in the defense of truth, and for the honor of Christ in his ordinance, to reply. A late anonymous author has thought fit to let the world know what a talent he has in that part of the controversy, which concerns the mode of administering this ordinance, by publishing a tract, whose title page runs thus, The Manner of baptizing with Water, cleared up from the Word of God, and right Reason, in a plain free Debate upon that subject, between Mr.. J.P. and Mr.. B. W. June 6th, 1726. Published for instruction in righteousness. How he has acquitted himself in the management thereof, and what improvements and discoveries he has made beyond others, is our present business to consider. It seems our author has not thought fit to say any thing concerning the subjects of baptism, but has confined himself to the mode of administration of it; whether it was because he did not care to engage in that part of the controversy, or whether he thought that it has been sufficiently handled already, and this not so, is what I do not pretend to determine; therefore seeing he has not thought proper to take notice of it, I shall not think my-self concerned to say any thing about it. From the title page we are given to expect, that the manner of baptizing with water shall be cleared up to us; for it seems we were all in the dark before about it, or at least, there were such mists and fogs beclouding our apprehensions concerning this ordinance, that there was no seeing clearly into it, until the publication of this treatise, by which the author fancies these are dissipated, and the affair let in a clear light; but I hope to make it appear, before I have done, that instead of giving more light, he has darkened counsel by words without knowledge. The title also promises that this shall be cleared up from the word of God, and right reason. By the word of God, I suppose he means the written word of God, the scriptures of truth, which indeed are the only rule of our faith and practice; and from whence, under the conduct of the blessed Spirit, all our light in faith and worship springs; but what he means by right reason, needs explaining, and is not so easy

to determine. If he means a just and strong way of reasoning, one might justly expect to find somewhat of it in this his performance; but the case being otherwise, I shall not, at present, farther inquire what else he designed by it; but only observe to him, that we ought to believe and act in matters of faith and worship, upon the sole credit and authority of the great God, as he has revealed his mind and will in the sacred writings. The method which our author has taken, in order to set this matter in a clear light, is dialogue-wise, or in the form of a conference between two persons, or to use his own words, in a plain free debate. What moved him to take this method does not indeed much concern me to know, but yet I cannot forbear thinking, one reason might be, that he might have the opportunity of making his antagonist speak what he himself pleased; for it would have betrayed his weakness yet more, to have produced such arguments and objections which he was not, in his own way, able to solve: though at the same time it is an instance of his disingenuity, not fairly to propose those arguments which are made use of, nor give them their full weight and force, which he ought to have done in handling a controversy honestly and faithfully; as well as making his friend speak such weak and ridiculous things as never were, at least publicly, made use of in this controversy. Had he had a mind to have made a trial of his skill and his talents and abilities this way, why did not he take out the arguments of some such writers as Tombs, Danvers, Keach, Stennet, or Gale, and fairly propose them in their own words, and give an answer to them? But this would not have answered his design, which seems to be, exposing to ridicule and contempt the ordinance of baptism, by plunging or dipping; and would, moreover, have been a task too difficult and laborious for him. Perhaps he also thought, this method best to conceal himself from being known to be the author of it; but if it is truth he is in search of, and bearing a testimony to, why should he be ashamed of it? why did not he put his name to his book? This is such a poor, mean, and cowardly way of writing, as manifestly betrays either shame or fear to appear publicly in the cause he has espoused; if he thinks he is fighting the Lord’s battles, why does not he appear like a man, in the open field, and not lie scouting behind the hedge? But perhaps this is to keep off a full blow that he is afraid might be given to him. But to go on, this debate or conference is represented, as managed by two persons, under the fictitious names of Mr.. J. P. a plunger in water, and Mr.. B. W. a baptizer with water; for it seems, according to our author, that plunging in water, and baptizing with water, are directly opposite to each other; but unless he can tell us, how a person can be baptized or dipped into water, without being baptized with it, they will not appear so opposite as he imagines, but of this more hereafter.

It is scarce worth my while to take any notice of the time when this conference was held, unless it be just to remark, that it would have been as well for the credit of the author, the good and peace of the churches of Christ, and the glory of his name, or better, if it had never been, or at least, if it had never been published; but it seems it is published for instruction in righteousness; but if any are instructed by it in that way, in which our blessed Lord thought it became him and his followers to fulfill all righteousness, it will be contrary to the design and intention of the author; though I am credibly informed, that two persons have been already convinced by reading his book, that plunging or dipping the whole body in water, is the right way and mode of administering Baptism; such is the force of truth, that it will break out and appear, in spite of all opposition made against it.

I have nothing more to observe here, but only, that seeing the author has not thought fit to discover his name, the reader is desired to observe, that I shall call him by the name of Mr.. B. W, which is what he has been pleased to assume to himself; and so proceed to the consideration of

this wild, jumbling, and confused debate, in the best order and method into which I am capable of ranging it: Though I should have observed to the reader, the terms or articles agreed upon in this conference. As,

1. "That whatever was spoke, should be tried by the written word of God, and that only." But I thought from the title page, that right reason was to be joined to the word of God, in the management of this debate; but perhaps the mode of baptizing, the thing debated, is to be tried by the one, and cleared up by the other.

2. "That in all they should use plainness of speech, without any cunning craftiness; granting unto him that spoke, the liberty of explaining his own words, and meaning;" but if cunning craftiness is not made use of, and a handling the word of God deceitfully, in this debate, by Mr. B. W. I am much mistaken.

3. "That all be done with the spirit of meekness, and true Christianity; without passion, prejudice, bitter reflection, or railing accusation." How Mr. B. W. has conformed and acted agreeably to this article, may be very easily observed, when he calls baptism, as administered by plunging, a superstitious invention; and a pleading for it, fathering foolish lies upon God, page 23 and will-worship, page 24. The last article is, "That they both should keep within the bounds of brevity "and civility; the one must not be tedious in speaking, nor the other troublesome in interrupting:" Which terms being agreed upon, to work they go, and what they made of it, is now our business to inquire.

CHAPTER 2 The first argument for dipping or plunging in water, as the right mode of baptizing, taken from John’s practice, and our Lord’s example, in Matthew 3:1-17 with the objections of Mr. B.W. thereunto, considered.

Mr. B. W. introduces his antagonist in page 6 producing the instance of Christ’s being baptized by John in Jordan, in favor of plunging or dipping in water, as the right and only mode of baptizing: the text cited is, Matthew 3:16, And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; from whence he argues, that he had been in it, seeing he could never be said to go out of that wherein he had not been. To which Mr. B. W. replies:

1. That the words signify no more than that he went up from the water; as, says he, persons of your judgment have been often told. It is true, it is kind in such learned Gentlemen as Mr. B. W. that they will condescend to instruct such poor ignorant creatures as we plungers are commonly represented, and as I suppose this author takes us to be; but when they have done their part, we are left without excuse, and cannot say, that we have not been told to the contrary; though it is prodigiously affronting, that after all the pains they have taken to instruct us, yet that we should strenuously insist on the justness of our translation, as we think, to be a little more serious, we have just reason to do. The reason of this low criticism is, because the preposition apw, and not ejk, is here made use of, but apw signifies out of, as well as from, and answers to the Hebrew ■■, which also is of the same signification; and the rather it should be rendered so here, not only because it suits best with the scope of the place, but agrees with that parallel text in Acts 8:39 where ejk is made use of: So that there can be no foundation there for this trifling criticism. But if Mr. B. W. should question whether the word apw is ever used in this sense, let him turn to the Septuagint in Psalms 40:2 which he seems to have some regard for, and there he will find it,

where David says, the Lord brought him up out of an horrible pit, ki apw phlou iluov, and out of the miry clay. But,

2. He adds, "Supposing the translation very right, I wonder, says he, where "dipping, overwhelming, or plunging, can be seen therein!" What a prodigious deal of strong reasoning is here? And I as much wonder too, where washing with water, either by pouring or sprinkling, can be seen therein. He goes on, "you say, he went out of the water, therefore he had been in it; but if you had said, he had been dipped, overwhelmed, or plunged, I should have denied the consequence."

It seems, however, that he is willing to grant, that Christ's going into the water, and being there, is a necessary inference and consequence, justly deduced from his coming up out of the water; though he is unwilling to allow plunging to be so, for otherwise I doubt not, but that he would have denied the one as well as the other; and I hope he will be willing to grant, that Christ went down into the water, in order to be baptized, and that he came up out of it as a baptized person; therefore he is desired to observe, that we do not infer plunging merely from Christ's going down into the water, nor from his coming up out of it, but from his going down into it in order to be baptized, and from his coming up out of it as a baptized person; for that a person may go into water, and come again out of it, and not be plunged into it, we know as well as he; but that a person should go into water, and be baptized in it, as Christ was, without being dipped or plunged into it, is what we deny; and if those circumstance, of John's administering this ordinance in the river Jordan, and Christ, when baptized, coming up out of the water, are not demonstrative proofs of plunging, yet they are at least strong presumptive ones, and such as I challenge him to produce the like, in favor of this ordinance being administered to Christ, by washing with water, either by pouring or sprinkling. If plunging is not a necessary inference from what is revealed concerning Christ's baptism, I am sure sprinkling or pouring of water can never be; and I will leave it to any impartial man of judgment, to use his own phrase, whether there is not a greater probability, to put it upon no other foot, of Christ's being baptized by immersion, when he went into the river Jordan to be baptized, and accordingly was baptized there by John, than there is of his being baptized in that river only by an affusion or sprinkling of water upon him: So that he has but little reason, with that air of assurance, and in that dogmatical way, to say, "that John baptized in Jordan is true, but he never dipped nor plunged any in his life;" as he does in page 10. And here I cannot forbear mentioning a passage of those excellent divines, John Polyander, Andrew Rivet, Anthony WaLeus, and Anthony Thysius, who at the same time that they are endeavoring to have the mode of baptism, either by plunging or sprinkling, accounted an indifferent thing, acknowledge this instance of Christ's baptism to be an example of plunging. Their words are these,[1] "Whether baptism is to be administered by a single or a trine immersion, was always judged a thing indifferent in the Christian church; as also whether plunging or sprinkling is to be used, seeing no express command is extant concerning it; and examples of sprinkling as well as of plunging may be found in scripture; for as in Matthew 1:1 Christ went into the water, and came out of it, as also the Ethiopian, Acts 8:1-40. So, many thousands are said to be baptized in one day, in the city of Jerusalem, Acts 2:1-47. Likewise many in private houses (Acts 16:1-40; Acts 18:1-28; 1 Corinthians 1:16), where such a going into water was scarcely possible:" Which, by the way, is a mistake in those great men, for none of the texts alleged, though they prove a baptism of whole households, yet they do not prove that it was administered in their houses; for most of them plainly

shew, that this was performed before the apostles entrance into them; and if it had been done there, it would be no proof or evidence that it was done by sprinkling, seeing proper accommodations to baptize by immersion might be had, even in a house: Though there is no reason, as I have hinted, to suppose it was done there; all that I produced this passage for, is to show, that though those valuable writers were fond of these instances, as evidences of sprinkling; yet they could not but acknowledge, that the baptism of Christ, and of the Eunuch, were examples of plunging. But to return: I desire, when our author insinuates, that Christ's being plunged by John in the river Jordan, when he was baptized by him, is a human conjecture, which he is not willing to build his faith upon; I desire, I say, that he would consider whether his suppositions that Christ went ankle or knee deep into the water, and was baptized by pouring or sprinkling water upon him, and that the multitudes baptized by John in Jordan, went down some little way into the water, from whence, being baptized, without any such thing as stripping, and shifting, and plunging, as his words are, "they straightway came up, and went about their business," are not human conjectures; and whether, seeing things are so, he may not be justly numbered among those who build their faith upon human conjectures, which he seems to be resolved against. And if nothing but conjectures can be formed from Christ's baptism, concerning the mode of it, I persuade myself, that to every thinking and unprejudiced person, the conjecture, if it must be called so, of Christ's being plunged, when baptized, will appear more probable, and much preferable to that of his having water poured or sprinkled on him. As for his rejecting the observation which same have made on Mark 1:9 and saying, that it might as well be let alone, I do not much wonder at it, it no ways agreeing with his notion of baptism. The observation is this, that whereas it is said in Mark 1:9 that Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, it might have been rendered eiV ton Iordanhn, into Jordan, as the preposition eiV is frequently translated. Now to say, that he was poured or sprinkled of John into Jordan, would want sense, but to say, that he was plunged or dipped into Jordan, runs very smooth, and is very good sense; for a person cannot be said to be baptized, or dipped in a river, without being baptized or dipped into it; and indeed this is the meaning of all those scriptures which speak of John's baptizing in Jordan, as Matthew 3:6 and Mark 1:5. And whereas he says, that the Holy Ghost intends by it a baptizing in Jordan; he ought to observe, that this cannot be without a baptizing into it; to which, I suppose, he will readily reply, that this is taking for granted that the word properly signifies to dip or plunge; and he may take it for granted that we will do so, until he, or somebody else, can give us an instance where the word is otherways used; which I believe he, and greater masters of the Greek tongue than himself, will never be able to do. But,

3. Mr. B. W. not only represents plunging, as urged from Christ's baptism, to be a mere non sequitur, and an human conjecture, but also attended with nonsense, and very gross absurdities; as when he says, page 9 "By the same way of reasoning, you may as well persuade an impartial man of judgment, that Christ is under water still, because it is said, that he went into the place where John at first baptized, and there he abode (John 10:40)." As if Christ's going to Bethabara, a place where John had formerly baptized, and Christ had dwelt in, was a parallel case to his going down into the river Jordan, to be baptized by John there. But I am persuaded, that the very mention of this, without making any further remarks upon it, will much more expose our author to the scorn and contempt of every impartial man of judgment, than our way of reasoning, for plunging, from Christ's baptism, ever will do us. He goes on in a trifling manner, to shew how weak and ridiculous our method of arguing from John's baptism is, "they were baptized in Jordan, says he; therefore they were plunged over head and ears;" which he fancies is as absurd, and as

inconsequential, as if one should say, the staff stands in the corner, therefore it rains; or because, says he, it is said that John baptized in the wilderness, therefore in baptizing he thrust the people into thorns and briars."

What he means by all this ludicrous stuff I cannot tell, unless it be to banter the ordinance of water-baptism in general, and so join forces with the Quakers, utterly to explode it; for what he seems here to direct against the mode of baptizing by immersion, may be retorted upon any other, and particularly his own; thus, they were baptized in Jordan, therefore they went ankle or knee deep into it, and had water poured or sprinkled on them; which is equally as filly and ridiculous, as if one should say, "the staff stands in the corner, therefore it rains;" or because it is said, that John baptized in the wilderness, therefore in baptizing, he put the people knee deep into thorns and briars, and scratched their faces with them. But away with such ridiculous impertinencies as these. Could not the man distinguish between the place where John was preaching the doctrine of baptism unto repentance, and the place where he was administering the ordinance of it, the one being in the wilderness, and the other in the river Jordan, as he might have been informed, if he had more diligently consulted the text he has reference to, in Mark 1:4-5. But what he fancies will most affect us, is, that John is said to baptize with water: now says our author, if "baptizing and. plunging signify the same thing, then John might have said, I plunge you indeed with water;" all persons, adds our author, but those of your judgment, would readily conclude, that such an expression wanted sense;" that is, because he looks upon us plungers, as he is pleased to call us, no doubt, as persons exceeding illiterate, and who are altogether unacquainted with language; whilst he, and those of his persuasion, must be considered as the only men of sense and learning; but if this penetrating man, this man of sense, can tell us, how a person can be plunged in water, without being plunged with it, what a prodigious discovery would he make to the world! and if it would want sense to read the words, "I plunge you indeed with water;" then pray let them be read, I plunge you indeed in water, and I hope they will not want sense then; aye, "but, says Mr. B. W. John tells us himself, that he baptized them with water; and, says he, lest plungers should not observe this, all the four evangelists take notice of it" (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26). I confess I have consulted all those texts, and find the words to be read thus, I indeed baptize you, en udap, in water, only in Luke 3:16 the preposition en is omitted, which some, as Pasor and Schmidius think, in the other texts, is an Hebraism, or an Attic pleonasm, and then the sense and reading will be, either way, the same as what I have given; but then here is another prodigious absurdity behind, which those of a different persuasion from us think we are inevitably thrown into by this reading, and that is, that then we must be obliged to read the other part of the text thus, he shall baptize you in the holy Ghost and in fire; and this our author seems to have regard unto, when he says, "It is impossible that any impartial man of judgment can so much as imagine, that by being baptized with the holy Ghost, a being plunged in the holy Ghost should be understood; for the Lord himself tells us, that by baptizing he means pouring;" for the proof of which, he mentions Isaiah 44:3 and Acts 10:44. That the donation of the Spirit is sometimes expressed by pouring, sometimes by sprinkling, I frankly own; but this which John has reference to, is the extraordinary donation of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, as is manifest from Acts 1:5. and therefore another word is made use of, as being more expressive of the glory and greatness of that dispensation; and when we consider the account that is given of it, by the inspired writer, as that there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the house where they were sitting; and that cloven tongues, like as of fire, sat upon each of them; and that they

were all filled with the holy Ghost; it will not seem so very strange, incongruous, and disagreeable to say, that they were as if they had been dipped or plunged all over therein. I am persuaded our author will acknowledge the learned Casaubon to be an impartial man of judgment, and yet he speaks of, and explains this affair much in the same language. His words are there, with which I shall conclude this chapter: "Although, says he,[2] do not disapprove of the word baptizare being retained here, that the antithesis may be full, yet I am of opinion, that a regard is had in this place to its proper signification, for baptizein is to immerse, so as to tinge or dip, and in this sense the apostles are truly said to be baptized, for the house in which this was done, was filled with the holy Ghost so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it as into a fish-pool." And in the same way, their being baptized or dipped in fire, may be accounted for, that being expressive of the same thing, unless our author should think, that this is still a much more improper way of speaking, but among the best Greek authors, we have this phrase of dipping in fire made use of, and particularly in Moschus.[3]

CHAPTER 3 The second argument in favor of baptism by immersion, taken from the place John chose to baptize in, and the reason of that choice (1 John 3:1-24). with the weak replies, and foolish shifts and evasions which Mr. B. W. makes thereunto, considered.

Mr. B. W. next introduces his friend Mr. P. in page 11, 12 arguing for immersion, from those words in John 3:26. And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there, after this manner; namely, "John was baptizing in Enon, because there was much water there; therefore all that were baptized were overwhelmed with water. They were dipped, they were plunged, because there was much water there." But this argument is not very fairly represented; for we do not argue merely from there being much water there, that they were dipped or plunged, but from their being baptized in a place of much water, and which was chose for that very reason. We know that there may be much water where no person is dipped or plunged into it; but that any person should be baptized in a place of much water, without being dipped or plunged into it, is what we deny. Moreover the reasonableness of concluding that baptism, in those times, was performed by immersion, we think may be fairly argued from John’s choosing of, and baptizing in a place where there was much water, and we believe it will appear so to every thinking and unprejudiced person; but let us consider what Mr. B. W. has to reply. And,

1st, To shew his learning and skill in choreography, he inquires what Enon was, whether it was a river or no, and seems to call in question its being so, and therefore tells us, page 13. That such a river cannot be found in the best accounts we have of the land of Israel: and adds, and it is very probable, that Enon was either a village, or a tract of land, where there were abundance of springs and little rivulets of water. Whether Enon is the name of a river, or of a city, town or village, or of a trace of land abounding with water, does not much affect our controversy, if it is but granted that there was much water there, for which reason John made choice of it to baptize in; and I hope it will be granted, that there was a sufficiency of water to baptize by immersion, especially seeing Mr. B. W. tells us in page 17 that for plunging of people there need not be much water. The Arabic version divides the word into two, and calls it Ain-Nun, which may be rendered, the fountain of Nun; as does also the Syriac, Ain-Yon, which Junius renders the fountain of the Dove: And as for Salim, near to which was Enon, and which is the best direction for the finding where it was; this was either Shalem, a city of Shechem, mentioned in Genesis 33:18 as some think, though this is not very likely, seeing that was in Samaria, with the inhabitants of which John had nothing to do; or

else it is the same with Shalim, in 1 Samuel 9:4 as Junius and others think, though it seems rather to be that place which Arias Montanus[4] calls Salim juxta torrentem, Salim by the brook, which he places in the tribe of Issachar, not far from the lake of Genesaret; and may be called so, perhaps, either because it was near this Enon, where there was much water, or else because it was not far from the place where the two rivers Jaboc and Jordan met; as Calvin, from the geographers, observes upon this place. But supposing that our present best accounts of the land of Israel, make no mention of any such river as Enon; nor can it be determined by them what it was, or where it was; yet I hope it will be acknowledged, that the account of it in the sacred text is just, and that whether it be a river, village, or tract of land, yet there was much water there; for which reason John made choice of it as a proper place to baptize in, which is sufficient for our purpose. But,

2dly, From inquiring into the place itself, he proceeds to give us the notation of the word, or the reason of its name; for he says, the learned tell us, that the word does signify a place of springs: And the learned[5] also tell us, that it signifies an eye, as well as a spring or fountain; and also soothsaying, and clouds, or a beclouding; so that there is not much to be learned from that. And here I cannot forbear mentioning the observation of Aretius, upon this place; though I suppose that Mr. B. W. will think that he might as well have let it alone, who, after he had said that it was a town near Jordan, observes,[6] that it signifies affliction, humility, and weeping: I suppose he derives it from the Hebrew word hn[Anab, which sometimes signifies to humble and afflict; "thereby, says he, teaching us, "that such we are required to be in baptism and true repentance." But to go on: In order to strengthen this sense of the word, which Mr. B. W. says is given by the learned, he informs us, that "it is observable, that the town called. Middin, in Joshua 15:61 is called Enon, by the seventy Greek interpreters of the Old Testament;" whether this is an observation of his own, or of the learned with whom he converses, he does not tell us; if of the latter, he might have been so kind as to have told us who they were, that we might have consulted them, and have considered their proofs of it. By what goes before and after, it seems as if he meant that it was one of theirs; which when one comes to examine, it looks, according to the order of the text, as if it was Secacah, and not Middin, that is rendered Enon; the words in Joshua 15:61 in the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin & Secacah, are by the Septuagint thus rendered, etc. Baddargeis, etc Tharabaam, etc. Aenon; so that if a regard is to be had to the order of the words, then as Baddargeis answers to Beth-arabah, so Tharabaam to Middin, and Aenon to Secacah; and if so, here is a fine piece of critical learning spoiled: But supposing that Baddargeis answers to Bamidbar, which we render, in the wilderness; and Tharabaam to Beth-arabah, and so AEnon to Middin, because the Septuagint make seven cities here, and in the following verse, when there are but fix, to what purpose is this produced? or what is gained by it? or how does this prove that the word signifies a place of springs? Yes, in Mr. B. W's imagination, it serves a very good purpose, and sufficiently proves this signification of the word; but how? why they (the learned) also observe, says he, "that in Judges 5:10, there is mention made of those that fit in, upon, or near Middin, we read injudgment, where immediately the holy Ghost takes notice of the places of drawing water; so that, if any body would know wherefore Middin is rendered Enon by the Septuagint, the reason is ready, because of the places of drawing water." A fine way of arguing indeed! what, because Middin, in Joshua 15:61 is rendered Aenon by the Septuagint, and because a word of the same form and found, is rendered in Judges 5:10. by the same ep Krithriou, "upon the judgment-seat;" and we read in judgment, where the holy Ghost immediately takes notice of the places of drawing water; therefore the reason is ready for any body to know why Middin is rendered by Enon, in the

former text, and that is, because of the places of drawing water." Can any man in the world see any connection here? and how does this appear to be the ready, plain and easy reason of this version: Had either Middin or Enon been in the Septuagint text of Judges 5:10 there had been some tolerable color and pretense for all this, though that would have fell short of proving it to be the reason of such a version in Joshua 15:61 but here is not the least appearance of either; though it is true, there are some interpreters who think that the word rendered judgment, is the proper name of a place either of that city mentioned in Joshua 15:6,. or of a path or road-way which bore this name; so the Masora, R. David Kimchi, and R. Levi Ben Gersom; though the Targum, Septuagint, R. Solomon Jarchi, R. Isaiah, understood it of judgment, as we do, as well as many other interpreters and expositors; but granting that the word does signify a place of fountains and springs, and was so called, because of the places of drawing water, then I hope there was aplenty of water there, and what was sufficient for the baptizing of persons by immersion of the whole body; for which reason John made choice of it. But,

3. He goes on and says, "You and your friends must grant, that the words of the holy Ghost do not denote much water in one great channel, but many waters, streams or rivulets, in a certain tract or neighborhood." By the words of the holy Ghost, I suppose he means polla udata, which our translators have very well rendered much water; and he seems in this passage to have reference to that poor low criticism, which those of his persuasion are often obliged to have recourse to, which is, that there words are not expressive of a large quantity of water, but signify only, many little streams and rivulets, which are not sufficient for an immersion of the whole body, and therefore should have been rendered, not much water, but many waters. We grant that udata polla may be literally rendered many waters; but that they signify some little small streams and rivulets of water, and not a large quantity thereof, is what we deny. That John intends a large and not a small quantity of water, is manifest from his use of the phrase in other of his writings, as for instance, in Revelation 1:15, it is said of Christ, that his voice was as the sound, udatoin pollan, of many waters; but what found does little purling streams, and small rivulets of water make? And who can imagine the allusion should be made to them; or that these should be expressive of the voice of Christ in the gospel, especially in the ministry of it by the apostles, whose sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world? Again, in Revelation 17:1 the great whore is represented as fitting epi twn uditwn twn pollwn, "upon many waters," by which are metaphorically set forth unto us, those many people, kingdoms, and nations over whom she exercised a lawless and tyrannical power, as appears from Revelation 17:15 where the angel tells John, that the waters which he saw, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues: from whence it is manifest, that by this phrase is intended, not a small quantity of people, or some little petty nations and kingdoms, which were subject to the see of Rome; but a large quantity of people, even multitudes, and of nations and kingdoms, the chief and greatest; besides, our author, as well as others, would do well to consider, that udata polla is an Hebraism, and answers to ■■■■ ■■■ Rabbim Mayim, and by which the Septuagint frequently render there words; and that where small streams and rivulets cannot be intended, but large and great waters are spoken of, nay where indeed, the waters of the sea are plainly meant: As for instance, in Psalms 77:19 it is said concerning God’s leading his people through the Red Sea, Thy way is in the sea, and thy path, ejn udaoi wolloiv, in many waters, or as we justly read it, in the great waters; for surely the waters of the sea may be called so, and I hope that udata polla, here, does not signify many little streams and rivulets. Again, in Psalms 107:23, sea-faring persons are

thus described, they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business, ejn udaoi polloiv, in many waters, that is, in great waters, as the waters of the sea are; and I persuade myself, that none can be so weak as to imagine, that ships can sail in small streams and rivulets, or the business that the Psalmist speaks of, to be done in such places where there is not a sufficiency of water to dip or plunge into.

Moreover, if this phrase may not be allowed to be an Hebraism, it will be hard to prove that many waters signify a small quantity, and only some little streams or rivulets: Sure I am, some persons, of far superior learning to what Mr. B. W. discovers, have thought the contrary, as Grotius, Piscator, Lightfoot, and others; but if there may not be allowed to be good judges of the Greek tongue, I hope Nonnus Panopolitanus may, who flourished about the year 420 was a famous Greek and Christian poet, and turned this gospel, according to John, into Greek verse, who not only says, that the place where John was baptizing, was baqukumonov, "a place of deep waters," but also expresses udata polla by afqonon udwr, copiosa aqua, "a large water, or abundance of water:" But because his version of the whole text makes much for the elucidation of it, I will transcribe it from him:—Hn de ki autov qeoV IwannhV qeopeiqea laon alhthn Udati baptizwn baqukumonoV enduqi salhm Keiqi gar euruporoio kulendomenou potamoio Ceumasin aenaoiV kumainetai afqonon udwr Arkion eim eni pasin, Which may be rendered in English thus, "And the divine John himself also was baptizing in water, the straying people, who were obedient to God, at or in a place of deep waters, near to Salem, because there abundance of water, sufficient for them altogether, flowed in the ever-running streams of the winding river, whole passage over is very broad." But supposing that much water in one great channel is not intended, though I must confess I can see no reason why it should not, and that many waters, streams, or rivulets are here meant; yet, who does not know that many of these together, can not only fill large and capacious pools, sufficient enough for immersion, but also frequently form and feed very great rivers? so that I do not see that this will much help his cause, or affect our argument. But Mr. B. W. says, page 14. "But what and if the holy Ghost intends to give us the reason why the place was called Enon, because there were many waters, springs or rivulets there? what will become of your argument then, and how will you help yourself?" Where he insinuates, as if the design of the holy Ghost in there words, because there was much water there, is not to inform us of the convenience of this place for baptizing, or that it was the reason why John made choice of it, but to explain the meaning of the word Enon, and to let us know, that the place was so called, because there was much water, or many springs or rivulets there: How trifling and ridiculous is this? Does the holy Ghost take such a method as this in other parts of the Bible, where the proper names of places are mentioned? and what necessity can there be for explaining of this any more than there is of others? and why is not the meaning of Salim as well as Enon given? Surely we need not be afraid of losing our argument from such interpretations and senses of scriptures as there, which will appear vain and trifling at the first view, to every impartial man of judgment; nor need we be much solicitous about helping ourselves, when pressed with such silly nonsense as this. But,

4. Mr. B. W. proceeds to charge the argument for plunging in baptism, taken from hence, not only with want of consequence, but as a vain conjecture: his words are there; "Granting, says he, that Enon was a great river, or a great water, yet it can never be proved that John plunged persons all over in it; that is nothing at all but your vain conjecture;" and then in his usual, positive, and dogmatical way, adds, "he baptized them, but he never plunged them." Here I need only reason as

I did before, with regard to the baptism of Christ, and others, in Jordan, that if John's pitching upon Enon, as a convenient place to baptize in, because there was much water there, and his baptizing in that place is not a demonstrative proof of his baptizing by plunging, yet at least must be a strong presumptive one, and such an one as he can never produce in favor of his baptizing there by an affusion or sprinkling of water: And again, is to suppose that John baptized there by immersion, is a vain and trifling conjecture, I am sure, and I believe it will appear to every unprejudiced person, that to suppose that he did it by sprinkling or pouring, is much more so. And if we poor ignorant creatures may not be allowed to infer and conclude immersion from hence, without being charged with making vain and trifling conjectures; yet I hope he will be a little more sparing of the great Calvin, for whom, I do not doubt, from some few hints I have observed in this conference, he has a value and respect, and whom I persuade myself he will allow to be an impartial man of judgment, and to whole judgment he will always pay a deference: His note upon this text, is this; "Geographers write, says he, that there two towns, Enon and Salim, were not far from the confluence of Jaboc and Jordan, nigh to which they place Scythopolis. Moreover, from those words we may gather that baptism was performed by John and Christ, by a plunging of the whole body under water;"[7] and I think we may conclude this very fairly too, whatever Mr. B W. may think of it. But,

5thly, Our ingenious author, by a new turn and mighty stretch of thought, has found out another reason, besides that of convenience, for baptizing, which made John fix upon, and determined him in the choice of this place, there being much water there, and that is, that the vast multitudes which flocked to, and attended upon his ministry, might be refreshed; as also their horses, or their camels, or whatsoever we may suppose many of them did ride upon; by which, I suppose, he means asses. I cannot but observe, that he seems to speak this with some caution or guard upon himself, as he does also in page 17 where he says, speaking of the people which flocked to John's ministry, "a great number of them, doubtless, must travel many miles; and we must suppose, many on foot, and many otherwise:" and this I cannot but attribute to a self-consciousness in him, that he deserved to be numbered among those animals, or at least, to his being aware that this would be turned upon him, for his foolish and ridiculous glosses on the sacred writings. What seems the most to strengthen him in his folly, and upon which he says much stress, is the vast multitudes of people which followed John, and attended upon his ministry; and the unwise part John would have acted, if he had not chore places where refreshment might be had for themselves and their cattle: But surely the man forgets himself, or at least, does not give himself time to consider, that John was now upon the declining hand, and had not those vast numbers and multitudes following him as formerly he had; the crowd was now after Christ, and not John; and though he had some which came to him, and were baptized, yet they were but few in comparison of what he had formerly, or what now followed Christ; as he might easily have observed, by reading this third chapter of John; and therefore there was no need for him to be so solicitous for accommodations for the people and their cattle, as is here by our author intimated; and to make his sense appear the more plausible, he tells us, that "by John's baptizing, we are to understand John's preaching, administering in his office, and fulfilling his course;" for which he cites, Matthew 21:25 and Acts 10:47. It is readily granted, that sometimes by John's baptism, we are to understand his whole ministry, and particularly the doctrine of baptism, preached by him, as distinct from the administration of the ordinance; but that by his baptizing here is meant his preaching, must be denied; for that it intends his administration of the ordinance of water-baptism,

not only his act of baptizing, but the people's submission to it; for the text says, they came and were baptized, manifestly prove it; to say nothing of the place where it was performed, being a place of much water, the thing now in debate. He also insinuates, that great part of the land of Judea was sandy and barren; but not so barren as his arguments are. "You may understand, says he, what fort of a country, for water, a great part of that land was, from the great contentions between Isaac's servants, and others, about digging, finding, and enjoying wells of water;" but there contentions did not arise so much from the scarcity of water, as from the envy of the Philistines on the one hand, and from Isaac's servants, stiffly insisting upon their right and property, on the other: For though persons may have never such plenty of things, yet they are not willing to be defrauded of what is their just right.

He goes on: "Glad at heart they were when they found plenty of water, for their own refreshment, and the refreshment of their cattle." One would be almost tempted to think that the man was describing the sandy deserts of Arabia, rather than the fertile land of Canaan, and representing the travelling companies of Dedanim who being almost scorched with heat, are thrown into a transport of joy, at the sight of a spring of water; but who will it be most proper to give credit to, Moses, an inspired writer, who told the people of Israel, that God was bringing them into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills; or our blundering geographer, who represents it as a desert and wilderness. Moreover, it seems, that there need not be much water for the plunging of persons, and therefore John need not have chore this place upon that account; but I hope, so much is needful, as will cover the persons all over. And there is one thing therefore that we need not be afraid of being pressed with by our author, as we are by some, and that is, the scarcity of water in some parts. But what he says of the practice of our friends in London, is entirely false, which is, that they plunge in little holes or tubs; for I cannot see, but he must mean them, and not those in other places; because he adds, rather than the Thames, that is just by. Now there are but two places, in and about London, that I know of, which are made use of for the administration of this ordinance, the one is in the midst of a public meeting-house, and the other in an open place, where there are conveniences for a large number of spectators; and it is very rare that this ordinance is administered by us in a private manner, as same other performances commonly are, in a lying-in chamber; and that only in the presence of a midwife, a nurse, and two or three gossiping women. As for the instance of a certain plunger in the country, performing the ordinance in an horse-pond, in the middle of a town, I shall suspend my thoughts about it, and neither condemn nor commend his practice, unless I had a better account of it, with its circumstances, than Mr. B. W. has given; though I can see no great damage in it, as he has related it, provided the water was not dirty and filthy: But I suppose he designs it as a banter upon us, and a diversion for his reader; much good may do him with it, and let him make the best of it he can.

CHAPTER 4. The third argument insisted on, in favor of plunging or dipping, as the right mode of baptizing, taken from the practice of the apostles, and particularly from the instance of the Eunuch's baptism in Acts 8:1-40 with the cavils and exceptions of Mr. B. W. against it, considered. The next argument which our author, page 18 produces, as insisted on by us, for the proof of baptism by immersion, and which he excepts against, is taken from the practice of the apostles, and particularly the instance of Philip's baptizing the Eunuch, recorded in Acts 8:38-39. thus; And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went dawn both into the water, bath Philip and

the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were came up out of the water, etc. Here I must again observe, as I have already, in a parallel case, that we do not from this instance infer plunging, merely from Philip and the Eunuch's going down into, and coming up out of the water; for we know, as well as he, that persons may go hundreds of times into water, as he says, without any design of plunging, or of being plunged; but we argue from both of them going down into the water; the one in order to administer the ordinance of water-baptism, and the other to submit unto it; and from their coming up out of it, as having performed it; from whence we think we have sufficient reason to conclude, that this was performed by immersion, or a plunging of the whole body under water; for to what purpose should they both go down into the water, if the ordinance was to be performed any other way? or what need would there have been of it? But if plunging cannot be inferred from hence, I am sure it is impossible that pouring or sprinkling should. But let us see what Mr. B. W. will infer from this instance, and has to except against our argument from hence. And,

1st, From Philip and the Eunuch's both going down into the water, and coming up out of it, in a profane and irreligious manner, he infers, that neither of them were drowned there. Does this become a minister of the gospel, to treat the sacred writings, and the accounts they give of a solemn ordinance of Christ, after this manner? Whatever profane loose he may give himself in his attempts to be witty on the mode of baptizing by immersion, which he supposes to be unscriptural, yet, at least, he ought to set bounds to himself, and not be so free in playing with, and bantering the very words of the holy Ghost. But,

2dly, If that is rejected, why then he infers from hence, that they were both plunged over head and ears in the water. This, I suppose, is designed to shew the absurdity of our way of reasoning, as he imagines: But does not the man consider, that the one went down as an administrator, the other as a subject of baptism; the one to baptize, the other to be baptized? But suppose the ordinance was administered by pouring or sprinkling water, might it not be as justly inferred, that because they both went down into the water, one to perform, and the other to have it performed, and came up again out of it, when it was done, therefore they both had water poured upon them, or were sprinkled with it? And then,

3dly, When he is asked why he could not have concluded, that one was plunged and the other not: he replies, "Why truly, says he, because I thought it out "of the way of all sense, reason and revelation so to infer." I hope he will not say that it is out of the way of all sense, reason, and revelation to infer, that the one went down in order to administer the ordinance of baptism, and the other to have it administered to him; but I suppose he means that it is out of the way of all sense, reason and revelation, to infer plunging from hence: But how then came the judicious Calvin to be so much out of the way, to conclude from hence that plunging was the ancient mode of baptizing, as he does, when he says, "here we see what was the rite of baptizing with the ancients; for they plunged the whole body into water?"[8] How came this great man to be guilty of matting such a vain conjecture as our author says it is? especially when he affirms there is not in sacred history, the least shadow of a foundation for it. But to proceed,

4thly, In order to elude the force of our argument, from their going down into the water, he observes, that whosoever goes to any water, especially out of a chariot, must go down to it. But he is desired to observe, that it is not said, that they both went down to the water, but they both went into it. As for the text in Psalms 107:23 which speaks of persons going down to the sea in ships, I

hope our author does not think that they went by land in ships to the sea-side: If he would know what is meant by this, let him read Psalms 107:26 where the distress that seafaring men are often in, is thus elegantly and beautifully described, they mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble; and what this means, those who have used the seas know full well, when their ships have been tossed up as it were to the heavens, and then again plunged into the depths of the sea, where they have been immersed in, and covered over with the waves thereof for a while, and on a sudden, have sprang out from thence. It is then they see the wondrous works of the Lord, in his remarkable appearance for them, and providential preservation of them.

5thly, He tells us, that "had he been in the Eunuch's place, he should not have chosen to have water poured upon him in the chariot, but for several reasons should have been entirely for going down to the water." He does not tell us what these designs are, that we might have considered them; but with his usual air of confidence affirms, that "there was no stripping, nor plunging, nor putting on change of raiment in the case;" and all the reason he has to assign for it, is, because "Philip was directly caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and the Eunuch immediately went on his way rejoicing:" But I hope he will allow that Philip was come up out of the water first, before he was caught away, and that the Eunuch was got into his chariot, before he went on his way; and to suppose so much time as was necessary to change their raiment, is no way contrary to the account in the sacred text, and he would also do well to consider, that those words directly, and immediately, are not to be found there. But,

6thly, He argues, that if those who were baptized by the apostles were plunged or overwhelmed, "then what prodigious labor must the apostles go though, when three thousand were baptized in one day, yea perhaps in less than half of it!" To which I answer; There does not seem to be any necessity of concluding from Acts 2:41 that they were all baptized in one day; but if they were, when we consider that there were twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, who were employed in the ministry of the word, Luke 10:1 and so no doubt in baptizing, it will not appear so prodigiously fatiguing as our author intimates; for a single person, without having the strength either of Hercules, or Samson, and without much fatiguing himself, may baptize, in this way, a considerable number in a very little time. But then here is another difficulty behind, and that is, "What great trouble must they be at in stripping, and shifting, and changing apparel! and what abundance of plunging garments they must have ready!" To which I reply, no more trouble than a single person has for himself, and no more plunging garments to be provided than every one to provide for themselves, which is no more trouble than when five or ten persons only are baptized: and when we consider how much bathing was in use among the Jews, it will not seem so strange, where, and how they should be so easily provided with plunging garments. Our objector goes on, and adds, "In what a poor condition was Paul, when he was plunged, having been so ill, and so long without eating or drinking! and after that, how unfit must Paul himself be under his wounds and bruises, and in the dead of the night, to go into some deep water, and take up the jailor and plunge him!" Here I cannot but remark the wretched blunder that our author makes, or at least the inadvertency, to say no worse of it, that he is guilty of, in talking as if the baptism Paul and the jailor was in one and the same night. But if he objects this is not his meaning, why did he write in such a blundering manner, and many times with want of sense, as when he talks of Paul's taking up the jailor, and many such like passages which are to be found in this his performance. But to

proceed, that Paul was three-days before his baptism without eating or drinking, is true, but that he was so very ill as our author represents, does not appear so manifest; however, it is plain, that he was not so ill, but he was able to arise and be baptized, which he need not have done, had it been performed by pouring or sprinkling water upon him. As to Paul's unfitness, under his wounds and bruises, to plunge the jailor, I need only act, how he and Silas were capable of praying and singing the praises of God, and that so loud as the other prisoners heard them? and after thee preached the gospel to the jailor and his family, which must be a much more laborious work, and more spending and fatiguing to them, than baptizing of them was; but that same God who enabled them to perform the one, carried them through the other. Again, he says, "how improperly did Peter speak in Cornelius's house, when he talked of forbidding water! whereas he should have said, can any man forbid these men from going to the river to be plunged?" to which I answer; if there is any impropriety in this text, it is not to be charged upon the words or sense of the holy Ghost, but upon our translation; for udwr "water," ought not to be put in construction, with keilusai, "forbid," but with baptizhnai, "to be baptized;" and so the whole be rendered thus, "Can any man forbid, that these should be baptized with water, which have received the holy Ghost as well as we?" and then the sense is this; has any man any thing to object why these who have received the holy Ghost, even as we, should not be admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism? for seeing they have received the greater privilege, why should they be deprived of the lesser? And this reading and sense of the words are confirmed by the learned Erasmus, in his notes upon the text, which are these," the Greeks, says he,[9] read after this manner, mhti udwr, etc. and the sense appears to be this: "Can any man forbid that there should be baptized in water, who have received the holy Ghost as well as we? for as the spirit is preferable to water, and seeing they have him, it will be no great matter if this be added also: Moreover the accusative to udwr. "water;" either depends upon the preposition kata, which may be understood, or else adheres to the verb baptizhnai, "to be baptized;" just in the same form in which we say, baptizomoi baptizisma, "to be baptized with a baptism." As to what Mr. B. W. says, concerning the use of plunging garments in baptism, that therefore the water comes to the body only a filtering, or as it can work its way through, which, says he, at best is only equivalent to sprinkling. I need only reply, it is sufficient in baptism that the whole body be plunged into and covered under water; nor does it much concern us, to observe and know, how it works its way through to the body. I hope he will acknowledge, that a corpse may be said to be truly buried, when covered with earth, though it is wrapt up in a shroud, or in its funeral clothes, and put up close in a coffin, so that the earth with which it is covered, does not as yet touch it; even so a person may be truly said to be baptized, when in the name of the three Divine Persons, he is plunged into, and covered over with water, even though the water may not be supposed to have had time enough to have worked its way through to his body; and hen it has done so, how that is equivalent to sprinkling, no man can evise. But enough of this, I proceed to the next argument.

01.03. The Ancient Mode of Baptizing by Immersion, con

CHAPTER 5 The fourth argument taken from Romans 6:1-23 and Colossians 2:1-23 with the sense given of those scriptures, by Mr. B. W. considered. Our next argument for baptism by immersion, which Mr. B. W. has thought fit to produce in page 24 and except against, is taken from Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12 where this ordinance is took notice of by the apostle, as a burial, and as representing the burial and resurrection of Christ; which argument may be formed thus, and not in the loose rambling way, in which he has represented it, and which, no doubt, he thought would best answer his purpose; namely, "If the end and design of baptism are to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, then it ought to be performed by plunging into, and overwhelming with water; but the end and design of baptism, are to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, therefore it ought to be performed by plunging into, and overwhelming with water; the reason is, because no other mode of baptizing either by pouring or sprinkling a little water on the face, can answer this end." But let us attend to what Mr. B. W. has to except. And,

1. He seems to deny this to be the end and design of the institution of this ordinance, when he asks, "But did Christ ever institute baptism for any such end? As for the Lord’s Supper, he hath said, Do this in remembrance of me; and it is plain from the word, that in the Lord’s Supper we shew forth his death till he come: but where has he said, be plunged or baptized, to represent my burial or resurrection?" To which I answer, that though we have not the end of this institution declared, in so many express words, yet we think it may be fairly concluded from those texts now mentioned, and must continue to be of the same mind, for ought Mr. B. W. has advanced against it: Nor are we alone in our sentiments: For that Christ’s burial and resurrection are represented by baptism, has been acknowledged by many, both ancient and modern divines, whose words I forbear to transcribe, partly because they have been many of them produced by others already, and partly because I would not fill my book with citations, and therefore shall only direct the reader to the reference in the margent.[10] Though Mr. B. W. is of opinion, that to infer this from those words, buried with him in baptism, is very absurd and inconclusive; and that "we may as well be hanged up against a tree, to represent Christ crucified, because it is said, that we are crucified with Christ." But can any mortal see this to be a parallel case? to say nothing how shocking this expression must be to every serious mind, and not to be borne with; no more than the wretched jargon which follows it, when he says, "and to make a fair end of you, be fore to see you dead under the earth or under the water;" which, I doubt not, to every impartial intelligent reader, will appear to have as little of argument as it has of sense in it. Besides, who does not see that all this, whatever he can mean by it, may be leveled as much against the ordinance of the Lord’s-Supper, as that of Baptism. Moreover, there are other texts, besides these mentioned, which demonstrate the representation of Christ’s resurrection, which supposes his burial to be the end of baptism; as for instance, 1 Peter 3:21 where baptism is said to save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But how does it do that, but by representing the resurrection, of Christ unto us, and thereby leading our faith to it, to behold our justification and discharge, by a risen Savior? To which I might also add, 1 Corinthians 15:29 where the apostle evincing the truth of the resurrection of the dead,

thus argues, else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not? that is, "Who are baptized into the faith of the resurrection of Christ, which is represented thereby, and which is the confirmation of our resurrection;" the thing that is there debated; and which, if not true, the apostle argues that their baptism, as well as their faith, and his preaching, was in vain. Besides, if our author removes this end of baptism, he ought to have substituted another, and have told us what was the end and design of it, which he has not done; for all the ordinances of the gospel are, no doubt, designed for the comfort and edification of believers, and the confirmation of their faith in the person of Christ; and seeing there appears nothing more manifestly to be the end of it, than what has been mentioned, we shall think fit to abide by it. But,

2. Our author asks, "What there is in your plunging that represents Christ's burial and resurrection;" and to shew that there is no agreement, he runs the parallel between them, and observes, that Christ was carried to his grave, where, being dead, he was buried, and lay there three days, and three nights, and that in the earth, where a great stone was rolled at the mouth of the sepulcher, and when he arose, it was by his own power, and thereby declared to be the Son of God: But as for us, we go ourselves into the water, are plunged alive, and that not three minutes, in water; and that our plunger dares not leave us, nor roll a stone upon us; and it is he that puts us in that pulls us out, and we are declared to be what we are: What would the man have us be declared to be, what we are not? and then in a taunting manner says, "and this is the representation and the mighty resemblance." These are some of our author's masterly strokes, and when the candor of the reader has supplied the want of sense in his expression, and charitably conjectured at his meaning, I need only reply, that the things instanced in are only circumstantial, and not essential to a burial, and therefore unnecessary to be represented in baptism; nay, it would have been absurd to have had them: It is enough that the things themselves are, namely, the burial and resurrection of Christ, which are sufficiently represented by an immersion into water, and an immersion out of it. But who does not see that a Quaker, or any other person that denies the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper, may argue after the same manner, and say, you say that this ordinance represents a crucified Christ, and shews forth his death and sufferings, but pray how does it appear? you take a loaf of bread, and break it in pieces, and a bottle of wine, and pour it out; but Christ, when. he was crucified, was hanged on a tree, his head was crowned with thorns, his hands and feet were pierced with nails, and his side with a spear; but here are no thorns, nails, or spear made use of by you, his real body was treated after this manner, but yours is only a loaf of bread; he poured out his blood, you only wine; "and this is the representation, and the mighty resemblance." And I think all this may be said with as much justness as the other. But,

3. Mr. B. W. has got another way of getting off the argument taken from these texts, in Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12 and that is, by asserting that the baptism of Christ's sufferings, and not water-baptism, is intended in them. It would be endless, and perhaps our author will say needless, to oppose to him the several expositors and interpreters, who understand, by baptism, the ordinance of water-baptism, in those texts; as well as a large number of them who think the allusion is made to the ancient practice of baptizing by immersion; as Grotius, Vorsiius, Paraeus, Piscator, Diodate, and the Assembly of Divines on Romans 6:4 and Zanchy and Davenant on Colossians 2:12. I suppose that Mr. B. W. will reply, that these are but men, and their judgment fallible; I hope he does not think that he is more than a man, or that his judgment is infallible; and it

wilt scarcely be accounted modestly in him, to set himself upon a level with them: Though I confess that his sense of the words is not disagreeable to the analogy of faith, yet I wonder that he should be so positive as to say that this is the only meaning of them, as he does in page 31. As to what he says with respect to those texts, one of them being produced as an argument to promote holiness in believers, and the other to strengthen their faith in the doctrine of justification; I cannot see, but to understand them of water-baptism, suits very well with the scope thereof, however it is ridiculed by our author: For why may not our baptism, wherein we profess our faith in a buried Christ, and that we are dead by him to the law, the world, and particularly to sin, be urged and made use of by the spirit of God, as an argument why we should not live any longer therein. And are there no force, power and cogency in this argument? Again, in baptism we profess our faith in the resurrection of Christ, which is represented hereby, and that we are risen with him, and therefore are under the highest obligations, to walk in newness of life, as the apostle himself argues. Moreover, what can have a greater tendency to strengthen our faith in the doctrine of justification, than this ordinance has? by which it is led to see where our Lord lay, and how our sins were left in the grave by him; and he, as our glorious representative, rising again for our justification, by whom we are acquitted and discharged from all sin and condemnation; and is such a way of arguing from hence, to promote holiness, and strengthen us in the doctrine of justification, to be wondered at, what is meant by it? But to proceed,

4. Supposing that the baptism of Christ's sufferings is intended here, and that we are buried with him therein, as our head and representative, it must be allowed, that Christ's sufferings are called so, in allusion to water-baptism; and if we are said to be buried with him in them, it must be in allusion to a person's being buried in water in that ordinance, which cannot be by pouring or sprinkling of water upon him, but by an immersion into it. So that our argument for plunging, from hence, is like to lose nothing by this sense of the words. That Christ's sufferings are called a baptism, in Matthew 20:22 and Luke 12:50, as also that by a Synechdoche, they are called the blood of his cross, is granted; but then the shedding of his blood was not the whole of Christ's sufferings, but a part only, and riffs is called the blood of sprinkling, not with regard to its being called a baptism; but because it is sprinkled upon a believer's conscience, and being so, speaks peace and pardon there; but when the greatness and multitude of Christ's sufferings are let forth, they are represented, not by a sprinkling of water, but by mighty floods of water, which overflowed him, so that he seemed, as it were, to be plunged into them, and overwhelmed with them; as he says, in Psalms 69:2. I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me; where the Septuagint use the word katapontizw, as they do also in Psalms 69:15 which Mr. B. W. in page 45 grants is very proper to express plunging by; and therefore no wonder then that his sufferings are compared to a baptism, and such an one as is administered by immersion: So that the argument from hence, notwithstanding all those cavils and exceptions, stands firm and unshaken. As to the argument taken from the universality of Christ's sufferings in every part of his body, which he makes his antagonist plead in page 32 he acknowledges it was never made use of by the greatest men of our persuasion, why then does he produce it? If every thing that has been dropt by weak Christians, in private conversation on the subject of infant-baptism, was published to the world, how silly and ridiculous would it appear?

CHAPTER 6 The fifth and last argument taken from the signification of the word baptizw, which always signifies to dip or plunge, with Mr. B. W's. exceptions to it, considered. The fifth and last

argument used by us, for immersion in baptism, taken from the constant signification of the word baptizw, baptizo, to dip or plunge, Mr. B. W. has thought fit to produce in page 33 and except against, which we hope, notwithstanding, to make good, however we may be represented by our author, as incapable of reading our mother tongue. And,

1. Mr. B. W. denies that baptw, bapto, and baptizw, baptizo, signify one and the same thing; but the reason he gives, is not a sufficient one, and that is, because the holy Ghost never makes use of the former, when this ordinance is expressed, but the latter; for the holy Ghost may make use of what words he pleases, without destroying the sense of others; and by the way, then it may be observed, that ranpzw, rantizo, and baptizw, baptizo, do not signify one and the same thing; because the holy Ghost never makes use of the former, when the ordinance is expressed, but the latter. Besides, all the Lexicographers that I have been able to consult, tell me, that baptw and baptizw do signify one and the same thing; for they render both by the very same words, and they are both promiscuously used by Greek authors: And indeed, why should not baptizw, baptizo, the derivative, signify the same as its primitive? what, is its signification lessened by the addition of a syllable to it? Dr Gale[11] has given instances enough of derivatives in zw, which signify the same with their primitives. And indeed, some have taken the word, under consideration, to be what grammarians call a frequentative, which signifies more than the derivative does. But,

2. It seems our author will scarcely allow baptw, bapto, to signify dip or plunge, and therefore puts it upon us to prove, that Judas, when he put his hand in the dish, thrust it all over in the sauce (Matthew 26:23), where the word embapyaV embapsas, is used; but he should have observed, that it was not his hand, but the sop in his hand, by a metonymy of the subject, as Piscator observes, which he dipt into the sauce, as he might have learned, by comparing the text with John 13:26. And in page 45 he says, "yea, with respect unto baptw itself, it is very evident that the Greeks did not directly mean plunging thereby; for when the Septuagint tell us in Daniel 4:33 that Nebuchadnezzar's body was wet with the dew of heaven, they make use of the very word;" and I would also add, very justly, it exactly answered to the Chaldee word ■■■■■ here used. which word always signifies to tinge or dip, as dyers dip their clothes in their vats, and so is expressive of what a condition Nebuchadnezzar's body was in, he being as wet with the dew of heaven, as if he had been dipt or plunged all over in water. But enough of this; let us consider,

3. How we are like to come off with the word baptizo, baptizo; And here our author in page 41 tells us, ore rotundo, and with confidence enough, in so many words, that "it never does signify plunging; washing with water by pouring or sprinkling, is the only meaning of it." The man has got a good assurance, but yet by his writing, he does not seem to have such a stock of learning; however what he wants in one, he makes up in the other. It is strange that all our Lexicographers, so many learned critics, and good divines, should be so much mistaken, as to render the word to dip or plunge, and allow this to be the proper signification of it. I have myself consulted several Lexicons, as those of Suidas, Scapula, Hadrian, Junius, Pasor, as also another made by Budaeus, Tusanus, Gesner, Junius, Constantine, Hartung, Hopper, and Xylander, who all unanimously render the word by mergo, immergo, to plunge or dip into: And though they afterwards add also, abluo, lava, to wash, yet it is plato they mean such a washing, as is by dipping; and we are very willing to grant it, for we know that there can be no dipping without washing: But had they meant a washing by pouring or sprinkling, they would have rendered it by persundo, or aspergo, to pour upon, or sprinkle; but this they never do. And, to there I might add a large number of learned

critics, and good divines, who grant, that the word in its first and primary sense; signifies to dip or plunge only; and to wash only in a secondary, remote, and consequential one; as Casaubon, Camerarius, Grotius (Matthew 3:6), Calvin,[12] Alting,[13] Alsted,[14] Wendelin,[15] and others. But what need I heap up authors, to prove that which no man of any tolerable learning will deny: But what will not ignorance, attended with a considerable share of confidence, carry a man through? I might oppose to him, the use of the word in many Greek authors, but this has been done better already than I am capable of doing it, to which I refer him,[16] and shall content myself, with just mentioning that passage of Plutarch,[17] baptizwn onauton eiV qalasoan, which I think the author I have reference to, has took no notice of; and let him try how his sense of pouring or sprinkling will agree with it. I am flare it will found very harsh, to render the words pour or sprinkle thyself into the sea, but will read very well to be rendered thus, plunge thyself into the sea: But I suppose he will take this to be a breach of the first article agreed upon in this conference; but why the Greek authors should not be allowed as evidences, in the sense of a Greek word, I cannot see: I am sure this is not very consistent with right reason, which the thing in debate was to be cleared up from, as well as from the word of God. But let us consider the use of the word with, the Septuagint, which I suppose he will not except against, because he has himself brought it into the controversy. And there are but two places, which I have as yet met with, where the word is used by them, and the first is in 2 Kings 5:14 where it is said of Naaman the Syrian, that he went down, ki ebappzato, and baptized or dipped himself seven times in Jordan: I presume our author will not say, that this is to be understood of a washing, by pouring or sprinkling; especially, seeing it answers to the Hebrew word ■■■, which always signifies to dip or plunge, and is the word, which is so often rendered by bapto, bapto, and which, by the way, proves there two to be of the same signification, seeing they are promiscuously used by them, to express one and the same word. The other place is in Isaiah 21:4 where what we read, fearfulness affrighted me, they render, k anomia me baptizei, iniquity hath plunged me; for to translate the words, iniquity hath washed, or poured, or sprinkled me, would be intolerable; but both the language and the sense are smooth and easy, by rendering them, iniquity hath plunged me; that is, into the depths of misery and distress; so that I am overwhelmed with horror and terror: And hereby also the sense of the Hebrew word ■■■, here used, is very beautifully expressed. But let us now consider,

4. What exceptions Mr. B. W. makes against this universal sense of the word, and there are three places in the New Testament which he opposes to it. The first is in Mark 7:4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not, and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. Whereupon Mr. B. W. observes, that the words of the holy Ghost are, except they first baptize themselves; and many other such things they have, as the baptizing of tables. Excellent observations indeed! But how does this prove that the word signifies only a washing, by pouring or sprinkling? I believe it will appear, that this is meant of the washing of the whole body by dipping, which might be done, without their going into a pond or a river before they came home; for they had, no doubt, proper conveniences for immersion, when they came home, seeing bathing was in many cases required of the people, as well as of the priests; and to understand it of such a washing, seems better to express their superstitious solicitude to cleanse themselves from all impurity they might contract by converting with others in the market; it seems to be distinct from washing of hands in the former verse, where a different word is used. But supposing that washing of hands was intended here, does not every body know, that the usual manner of doing that, is not by pouring or sprinkling

water upon them, but by putting them into it. And here I cannot but take notice of the observation of Beza[18] upon this text; baptizeqai, says he, in this place, is more than cerniptein; for the former seems to respect the whole body, the latter only the hands, nor does baptizein signify to wash, but only by consequence, for it properly denotes to immerse for the sake of dipping." As for the washing or baptizing of cups, pots, etc. it is well known that the cleansing of vessels, which were polluted by the falling of any dead creature that was unclean into them, was by putting into the water, end not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them. The express command in Leviticus 11:32, is, that it must be put into the water, or as the Septuagint render it bafmoetai, it must be dipt into water. Moreover, their superstitious washing of vessels, which our Lord seems here to mean, and justly reprehends, of which we read many things in their Misnah,[19] or oral law, their book of traditions, was performed this way, where they make use of the word ■■■ to express it by, which always signifies to dip or plunge. But what need I use many words to prove this, when every old woman could have informed him of the usual manner of washing their vessels, which is not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them, but by putting them into it: And if he asks, did the Jewish women wash their tables so? There appears no reason to conclude the contrary; and if he should say, how and where could they do it? I answer, in or near their own houses, where they had conveniences for bathing themselves, and washing their garments, at proper times, without carrying them to a river. The next place instanced in by him, is Hebrews 9:10. where the ceremonial law is said to stand only in meats and drinks, and divers washings; it is in the Greek text, in divers baptisms; and, says our author, "it is evident from the word of God, that those washings generally stood in pouring or sprinkling of water;" but that is a mistake of his, for they neither flood in them generally, nor particularly; for those ceremonial ablutions were always performed by bathing or dipping in water, and are called diaforio, divers, or different, not because they were performed different ways, as some by sprinkling, others by pouring, and others by plunging, but because of the different persons and things, the subjects thereof; as the priests, Levites, Israelites, vessels, garments, etc. And here it may not be atolls to observe what Maimonides,[20] who was one of the most learned of the Jewish writers, says concerning this matter, "Wherever, says he, the washing of the flesh or garments is mentioned in the law, it means nothing else than the washing of the whole body; for if a man washes himself all over, excepting the very tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness." Nay, he says it is necessary that every hair of his head should be washed; and therefore the apostle might well call these washings, baptisms. The third and last instance produced by him, is 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, where the apostle says, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea; which when our author has mentioned, he very briskly arks, "Pray how were our fathers baptized there?" to which, I hope, we shall be capable of returning an answer, without appearing to be so bitterly graveled with this place, as he is pleased to make his friend say we are. As for the manner in which he represents some of our friends accounting for it; namely, that when the people of Israel passed through the Red sea, they had the waters stood up, both on their right hand, and on their left, and a cloud over them; so that there was a very great resemblance of a person’s being baptized, or plunged under water. This, I say, is not so much to be despised, nor does it deserve so much ridicule and contempt, as he has pleased to cast upon it; and I believe will appear to any unprejudiced person, a much better way of accounting for it, than he is capable of giving, consistent with his way of administering the ordinance: Though I cannot but think that the Israelites were first baptized in the cloud, and then in

the sea, according to the order of the apostle's words; and agreeable to the story in Exodus 14:1-31 where we read, that the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them, and was between the two camps, to keep off the Egyptians from the Israelites. I am therefore of opinion, with the learned Gataker,[21] that the cloud when it passed over them, let down a plentiful rain upon them, whereby they were in such a condition, as if they had been all over dipt in water; so that they were not only covered by it, but baptized in it: Therefore our author very improperly directs us to Psalms 77:17, the clouds poured out water, as the better way of resolving the case; for the apostle does not say, that they were baptized in the clouds, but in the cloud which went before them, but now palling over them, in order to stand behind them, they were, as it were, immersed in it. But supporting that the text in Psalms 77:1-20 may be a direction in this case, and seem to explain what the apostle means by baptizing, it will no ways agree either with our author's sense of the word, nor his way of administering the ordnance: For, were the Israelites baptized under the clouds, by their pouring or sprinkling a small quantity of water upon their faces? the Hebrew word ■■■ here used, signifies an overflow, or an inundation of water: And Ainsworth reads it streamed down or gushed with a tempest; so that they were as persons overwhelmed, and plunged over head and ears in water; and therefore the apostle might well call it a being baptized. But now let us consider also, how they might be said to be baptized in the sea; and there are several things, in which the Israelites passage through the Red sea, resembled our baptism. As for instance, their following of Moses into it, which may be meant by their being baptized into him, was an acknowledgment of their regard unto him, as their Guide and Governor; as our baptism is a following of Christ as our Prophet, who has taught and led us the way; as well as a profession of our faith in him, as our Surety and Savior, and a subjection to him, as our King and Governor: Theirs was at their first entrance upon their journey to Canaan, as ours is, when, in a way of profession, we publicly begin our Christian race: They, when they came out of it, could ring and rejoice, in the view of all their enemies being destroyed; as the believer also can in this ordinance, in the view of all his sins being drowned in the sea of Christ's blood, withers the instances of the Eunuch and Jailor. But in nothing is there a greater resemblance between them, than in their descending into it, and coming up out of it; which is very much expressive of the mode of baptism by immersion. And this I choose to deliver in the words of the judicious Gataker.[22] "The descent, (that is, of the Israelites) says he, into the inmost and lowest parts of the sea, and their ascent out of it again upon dry land, hath a very great agreement with the rite of Christian baptism, as it was administered in the primitive times; seeing in baptizing they went down into the water, and came up again out of the same; of which descent and ascent express mention is made in the dipping of the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:38-39). Moreover, as in the Christian rite, when they were immersed, they were overwhelmed in water, and as it were buried; and in some measure, seemed to be buried together with Christ. And again, when they immersed, they seemed to rise, even as out of a grave, and to be risen with Christ (Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12). "So likewise, the waters of the sea standing up higher than the heads of those that passed through it, they might seem to be overwhelmed; and in some respects, to be buried therein, and to immerse and rise out again, when they came out safe on the other side of the shore." And having now considered all those exceptions, which our author has made against this sense of the word, which is contended for, I hope it will appear, that he has little reason to make that vain triumph he does, in page 38 where, he asks, "Where now is your baptizo, that signifies nothing else but plunging and overwhelming?" As for his comparing the passage of the Israelites through the Red sea, to his travelling to

Scotland with the Irish Sea on his left hand, and the German on his right, and to his journeying to Cornwall, with the British channel at some distance from him, on his left hand, and the channel of Bristol on his right, I cannot see it can be of any service, unless it be to lay aside the Israelites' passage through the sea as a miracle, and so furnish the atheist and deist with an argument, such an one as it is, for their purpose. As for his sneer upon plunging in it, I can easily forgive him, and pass it by, as well as that of the plunging of the Egyptians, with the same contempt in which he delivers them. Having thus considered his exceptions to those arguments produced for plunging, I shall in the next chapter take notice of his reasons against it.

CHAPTER 7 Mr. B. W.'s reasons against plunging in baptism, considered.

Mr. B. W. in the next place, proceeds to give us some reasons in page 43 why he is against the administration of the ordinance of baptism by plunging. And his

First reason is, "because there is not any foundation for it in the word of God; no precept, no example, says he, no necessary consequence, no words nor found of words to favor it;" and a little lower, "There is not a word, he means of plunging, nor the shadow of a word; and therefore I think I have good reason against it." Words are the shadows, representations, and expressions of our minds; but what the shadow of a word is, I cannot devise, unless he means the least appearance of a word: as perhaps he may; and that I suppose is an initial letter of a word, or an abbreviation, etc. But the holy Ghost does not write in such a manner, and therefore we expect to find whole words, or none at all. But to proceed, does he want a precept? let him read Matthew 28:19 or an example? let him take Christ for one (Matthew 3:16), the Eunuch (Acts 8:38-39). And is no necessary consequence to be deduced from the places John and the apostles baptized in? nor from the circumstances which attended it, of going down and coming up out of the water? I hope it will appear to every thinking, and unprejudiced person, that it has been proved that not only the found of words, but the true sense of words favor it. His other reason is, "because it is not only without foundation in the word of God, but it is directly against it;" but how does that appear? Why, suppose some poor creatures, says he, upon a bed of languishing, under consumptions, catarrhs, pains, sores, and bruises, be converted, and that perhaps in the depth of winter, it is their duty to be baptized, that is true? but is it their duty to be plunged? no, to be sure; for the whole word of God commands self-preservation; and therefore it is evident, that plunging is against the commands of God."

I suppose he takes it to be contrary to the sixth command; but if it is the duty of persons to be baptized, it is their duty to be plunged; for there is no true baptism without it? But what, in the depth of winter? why not? what damage is like to come by it? Our climate is not near so cold as Muscovy, where they always dip their infants in baptism, to this very day; as does also the Greek church in all parts of the world. But what, plunge persons when under consumptions, catarrhs, etc? why not? perhaps it may be of use to them for the restoration of health; and its being performed on a sacred account, can never be any hindrance to it. Whoever reads Sir John Floyer's History of Cold-bathing, and the many cures that have been performed thereby, which he there relates, will never think that this is a sufficient objection against plunging in baptism; which learned physician has also of late published An Essay to restore the dipping of Infants in their Baptism; which he argues for, not only from the signification of baptism, and its theological end, but likewise from the medicinal use of dipping, for preventing and curing many distempers. If it

may be useful for the health of tender infants, and is in many cases now made use of, it can never be prejudicial to grown persons: He argues from the liturgy and rubric of the church of England, which requires dipping in baptism, and only allows pouring of water in case of weakness, and never so much as granted a permission for sprinkling. He proves in this book, and more largely in his former, that the constant practice of the church of England, ever since the plantation of Christianity, was to dip or plunge in baptism; which he says continued after the reformation until King Edward the sixth's time and after. Nay, that its disuse has been within this hundred years: And here I cannot forbear mentioning a passage of his, to this purpose,[23] "Our fonts are built, says he, with a sufficient capacity for dipping of infants, and they have been so used for five hundred years in England, both Kings and Common people have been dipped; but now our fonts stand in our churches as monuments, to upbraid us with our change or neglect of our baptismal immersion." And I wish he had not reason to say as he does,[24] that sprinkling was first introduced by the Assembly of Divines, in 1643, by a vote of 25 against 24, and established by an ordinance of parliament in 1644. Which complaint Mr. Wall[25] has taken up, who wrote the last in this controversy, having studied it for many years; and has fairly acknowledged, that immersion is the right mode of baptism; for which reason he calls upon his brethren, the clergy, to a reformation in it: As for those who would willingly conform to the liturgy, he says before them the difficulties they must expect to meet with; which, betides the general one of breaking an old custom, he mentions two more: The one is from those who are presbyterianly inclined, who as they were the first introducers of it, will be tenacious enough to keep it. And the other is, from midwives and nurses, etc. whole pride in the fine dressing of the child will be entirely lost. But to return from whence I have digressed. Mr. B. W. it seems, is of opinion, that baptism by plunging, is not only against the sixth, but also against the seventh command, for which reason he must be against it. To baptize by plunging, he insinuates is "a practice contrary to the whole current of Christ's pure precepts, of an uncomely aspect, and seemingly scandalous and ignominious to the honor of Christianity; and that one would think a man would as soon deny all right reason, and religion, as believe Christ would ever command such a practice." But I appeal to any, even our worst adversaries, that make any conscience of what they say or do, who have seen the ordinance administered, whether it is of such an uncomely aspect, and so seemingly scandalous, as this defamer has represented it. "And, says he, to use the words of a servant of Christ, can we therefore imagine, that Christ's baptism should entrench so much upon the laws of civility, charity, and modesty, as to require women and maids to appear openly in the light of the fun, out of their wonted habit, in transparent and thin garments, next to nakedness, and in that posture be took by a man in his arms, and plunged in the face of the whole congregation, before men and boys!" Who this servant of Christ is, whose words he uses, and has made his own, he does not tell us. I shall therefore inform the reader, they are the words of one Ruffen, an author he might well be ashamed to mention in the manner he does: However I shall not be ashamed to give Mr. Stennett's reply to this paragraph, in his excellent answer to that scurrilous writer, which I have put in the margent;[26] and would also recommend that book to the readers of our author, but especially to himself; for had he read it before he published his, perhaps it might have prevented it, or at least, have made him ashamed to quote those expressions, with such a complement upon the author of them. How does this become one, who calls himself a minister of the gospel, to be guilty of such a scandal and defamation as this is? What, did the man never see the ordinance administered? If he has, his wickedness in publishing this is the greater; if not, he ought to have took an opportunity to

have informed himself, before he had made so free with the practice, as to asperse it after this manner. It is well known, that the clothes we use in baptism, are either the person's wearing apparel, or else those which are on purpose provided, which are made of as thick, or thicker stuff, than what are usually worn in the performance of the most servile work. those who have seen the ordinance administered, know with what decency it is performed, and with couth, I am persuaded what our author says will find but little credit. I have nothing else, I think, to observe now, unless it be, his arguing for the preferableness of applying water to the person, to any other mode of baptism, from the application of grace to us, and not us to that, in page 46 which I suppose was forgot in the conference, or else he had not an opportunity to crowd it in. To which I need only reply, that there does not appear to be any necessity of using a mode in baptism, that must be conformable to that; besides, if there was, does not every body know, that in plunging a person, there is an application of the water to him, as well as an application of him to the water? For as soon as ever a person is plunged, the water will apply itself to him. As to the vanity which he thinks we are guilty of, in monopolizing the name of baptists to ourselves, he may take the name himself if he pleases, seeing he thinks we have nothing to do with it, for we will not quarrel with him about it: But since it is necessary to make use of some names of distinction in civil conversation, he does well to tell us, what name we should be called by, and that is plungers; but then he will be hard put to it to shew the difference between a Baptist and a plunger. Betides, the old objection against the name Baptist being peculiar to John, or so an administrator, may as well be objected against this name as the other, because we are not all plungers, but by far the greatest part, are only persons plunged. However I could wish, as well as he, that all names were laid aside, especially as terms of reproach, and the great name of Christ alone exalted.

CHAPTER 8.

Concerning the free or mixt communion of churches.

Mr. B. W. here and there drops a sentence, signifying his love and affection to persons of our persuasion, as in page 42 "Christians of your persuasion, I hope, I dearly love;" this and such like expressions, I can understand no otherwise than as a wheedling and cajoling of those of his members, who are of a different persuasion from him in this point, whom he knows he must have grieved and offended, by this shameful and scandalous way of writing. And at the same time, when he expresses so much love to them, he lets them know, that he "does not admire their plunging principle, though he does not love to make a great noise about it." I think he has made a great noise about it, and such an one as, perhaps by this time, he would be glad to have said. He signifies his readiness "to carry on evangelical fellowship, in all the acts thereof, with chearfulness," with those who are differently minded from him. That those of a different persuasion from us, should willingly receive into their communion such whom they judge believers in Christ, who have been baptized by immersion; I do not wonder at, seeing they generally judge baptism performed so, to be valid; but how Mr. B. W. can receive such, I cannot see, when he looks upon it to be no ordinance of God, page 41 and a superstitious invention, page 23. nay, will-worship, page 24. There are two churches in London, which, I have been informed, will not receive persons of our persuasion into their communion; but whether it is, because they judge our baptism invalid, and so we not proper persons for communion, or whether it is a prudential step, that their churches may not be over-run by us, I cannot tell; I think those of our persuasion act a very weak part in proposing to belong to any such churches, who, when they are in them, are too much regarded

only for the sake of their subscriptions, are but noun substantives therein, and too many like Issachar's ass, bow down between two burdens. But to return, Mr. B. W. has thought fit, in the close of this conference, to produce "some few reasons for the equity and necessity of communion with saints as saints, without making difference in judgment about water-baptism, a bar unto evangelical church fellowship;" which I shall now consider.

1. "God has received them, and we should be followers of God as dear ildren. We are commanded to receive one another, as Christ hath received us to the glory of God." That we should be followers of God in all things, which he has made our duty, is certain, but his, and his Son's reception of persons, is no rule for the reception of church members. A sovereign lord may do what he pleases himself, but his servants must act according to his orders: God and Christ have received unconverted sinners, but that is no rule for churches; God the Father has so received them into his love and affections, as to let them apart for himself, provide all blessings of grace for them, nay, give himself in covenant to them, send his Son to die for them, his Spirit to convert them, and all previous to it. Christ also hath received them, so as to become a surety for them, take the charge both of their persons and grace, give himself a ransom for them, and bestow his grace upon them; for we are first apprehended by Christ, before we are capable of apprehending and receiving him: must we therefore receive unconverted persons into church-fellowship, because God and Christ have received them? It is what God has commanded us to do, and not all that he himself does, that we are to be followers of him in, or indeed can be; besides, the churches of Christ are oftentimes obliged, according to Christ's own rules, to reject those whom Christ has received, and cut them off from church-communion; witness the incestuous person; so that they are not persons merely received by Christ, but persons received by Christ, subjecting themselves to his ordinances, and to the laws of his house, that we are to receive, and retain in churches. The text in Romans 15:7 which speaks of receiving one another, as Christ, hath received us to the glory of God, can never be understood of the receiving of persons into church-fellowshipping For the persons who are exhorted both to receive and be received, were members of churches already; therefore that text only regards the mutual love and affection which they should have to one another, as brethren and church-members; which is enforced by the strong love and affection Christ had to them.

2. "All saints are alike partakers of the great and fundamental privileges of the gospel." If by the great and fundamental privileges of the gospel, he means union to Christ, justification by him, faith in him, and communion with him, who denies that saints are partakers of these things? Though in some of them, not all alike; for some have more faith in Christ, and more communion with him, than others have: But what is this argument produced for? Or indeed, is there any argument in it? does he mean that therefore they ought to partake of gospel ordinances? who denies it? And we would have them partake of them alike too, both of Baptism and the Lord's supper; it is the thing we are pleading for.

3. "All believers, though in lesser things differently minded, are in a capacity to promote mutual edification in a church state." But then their admittance into it, and walk with it, must be according to gospel order, or else they are like to be of little service to promote mutual edification in it.

4. "It is observable that the churches for the free communion of saints, are "the most orderly and prosperous." This observation is wrong, witness the churches in Northamptonshire, where there is

scarcely an orderly or prosperous one of that way; they having been made a prey of, and pillaged by others, to whole capricious humors they have been too much subject.

5. "Many waters should not in the least quench love, nor should the floods drown it." This is foolishly and impertinently applied to water-baptism: But what is it that some men cannot see in some texts of Scripture?

6. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is!" I think I must also make a note of admiration too, as wondering what the man means by giving us half a sentence! But perhaps this is to give us a specimen of what shadows of words are, though I suppose he means for brethren to dwell together in unity; it would have been no great trouble to have expressed it; but he is willing to let us know that he has got a concise way of speaking and writing. For brethren to dwell together in unity, is indeed very pleasant and delightful: But how can two walk, or dwell together thus, except they are agreed!

7. "All the saints shall for ever dwell in glory together." Who denies it? But does it from thence follow, that they must all dwell together on earth? And if he means that it may be inferred from hence, that they ought to be admitted, whilst here, to church-fellowship, who denies it? But I hope it must be in a way agreeable to gospel order; and he ought to have first proved, that admission to church-fellowship without water baptism, is according to gospel order, Jesus Christ, no doubt, receives many unbaptized persons into heaven; and so he does no doubt, such who never partook of the Lord’s supper; nay, who never were in church-fellowship: But are these things to be laid aside by us upon that account? We are not to take our measures of acting in Christ’s church here below, from what he himself does in heaven, but from those rules which he has left us on earth to go by. Having thus considered our author’s reasons, for the free and mixt communion of saints, without making water baptism a bar to it; I shall take the liberty to subjoin some reasons against it, which I desire chiefly might be regarded and considered by those who are of the same persuasion with us, with respect to the ordinance of water-baptism. They are as follow:

1. Because such a practice is contrary to Christ’s commission, in Matthew 28:19 where Christ’s orders are to baptize those that are taught. It is not only without a precept of Christ, which in matters of worship we should be careful that we do not act without, (for he has no where commanded to receive unbaptized persons into churches) but it is also contrary to one which requires all believers to be baptized; and this must be either before they are church members or after they are so, or never. The two latter, I dare say, will not be asserted, and therefore the former is true.

2. It is contrary to the order and practice of the primitive churches; it is not only without a precept, but without a precedent: The admission of the first converts after Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension, into church fellowship, was after this manner. First, they gladly received the word, then were baptized, and after that, added to the church (Acts 2:41). So the apostle Paul first believed, then was baptized, and after that assayed to join himself to the disciples (Acts 9:18; Acts 9:26). Who therefore that has any regard to a command of Christ, and an apostolic practice, would break in upon such a beautiful order as this? I challenge any person, to give one single instance of any one that was ever received into those primitive churches without being first baptized.

3. It has a tendency to lay aside the ordinance entirely. For upon the same foot that persons, who plead their baptism in their infancy, which to us is none at all, may be received, those who never make pretensions to any, yea, utterly deny water-baptism, may also. Moreover, if once it is accounted an indifferent thing, that may, or may not be done; that it is unnecessary and unessential to church-communion, to which persons may be admitted without it, they will lie under a temptation wholly to omit it, rather than incur the trouble, shame, and reproach that attend it.

4. It has a tendency to lay aside the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper, and indeed all others. For, suppose a person should come and propose for communion, to any of those churches who are upon this foundation, and give a satisfactory account of his faith and experience to them, so that they are willing to receive him; but after all, he tells them he is differently minded from them, with respect to the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper: I am willing to walk with you, says he, in all other ordinances but that; and, as to that, I am very willing to meet when you do, and with you; to remember Christ's dying love: I hope I shall be enabled to feed by faith, upon his flesh and blood as well as you; but I think to eat the bread, and drink the wine, are but outward ceremonies, and altogether needless. I should be glad to know, whether any of these churches would reject this man? I am lure, according to their own principles, they cannot. Therefore has not this a tendency to lay aside the ordinance of the Lord's Supper? For if it is warrantable for one man, it is for ten or twenty, and so on ad infinitum. All that I can meet with, as yet, that is objected to this, is, that the Lord's-Supper is a church-ordinance, and cannot be dispensed with in such a case; but baptism is not, and therefore may. But baptism is an ordinance of Christ, and therefore cannot be dispensed with no more than the other: By a church-ordinance, they either mean an ordinance of the church's appointing; or else one that is performed by persons when in a church state. The former, I presume, they do not mean, because the Lord's-Supper is not in that sense a church-ordinance: And if they mean in the latter sense, that baptism is not a church-ordinance, then certainly it ought to be performed before they are in a church state; which is the thing pleaded for. When they talk of baptism's not being essential to salvation, who says it is? but will this tolerate the abuse, neglect, or omission of it? Is any thing relating to divine worship essential to salvation? but what, must it all be laid aside because it is not? is not this an idle way of talking?

5. It is a rejecting the pattern which Christ has given us, and a trampling upon his legislative power; is this doing all things according to his direction, when we step over the first thing, after believing, that is enjoined us? Is not this making too free with his legislative power, to alter his rules at pleasure? and what else is it, but an attempt to jostle Christ out of his throne? It is no other than an imputation of weakness to him, as if he did not know what was best for his churches to observe; and of carelessness, as if he was unconcerned whether they regarded his will or no. Let such remember the case of Nadab and Abihu. In matters of worship, God takes notice of those things that seem but small, and will contend with his people upon that account. A power to dispense with Christ's ordinances, was never given to any men, or set of men or churches upon earth. An ordinance of Christ does not depend upon so precarious a foundation, as persons having, or not having light into it: If they have not, they must make use of proper means, and wait till God gives them it.

6. We are commanded to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly; not only from persons of an immoral conversation, but also from those who are corrupt in doctrine, or in the administration of ordinances; if this is not a disorderly walking, to live in the abuse, or neglect and

omission of a gospel ordinance,. I know not what is: We are not to suffer sin upon a brother, but reprove him for it; bear our testimony against it, lest we be partakers of his guilt; and if we are to withdraw from such disorderly persons, then we ought not to receive them.

7. This practice makes our separation from the Established church, look more like a piece of obstinacy, than a case of conscience: What, shall we boggle at reading the Common-prayer-book, wearing the surplice, kneeling at the Lord's supper, etc. and can at once drop an ordinance of Christ? If this is not straining at gnats, and swallowing of camels, I must confess myself mistaken. To all this I might have added also, that it is contrary to the constant and universal practice of the churches of Christ, in all ages of the world. To receive an unbaptized person into communion, was never once attempted among all the corruptions of the church of some: This principle of receiving only baptized persons into communion, was maintained by the authors of the glorious Reformation from Popery, and those who succeeded them. As for the present practice of our Presbyterians and Independents, they proceed not upon the same foot as our Semi-Quakers do. They judge our baptism to be valid, and their own too; and therefore promiscuously receive persons; but, according to their own principles, will not receive one that is unbaptized. And could we look upon their baptism valid too, what we, call mixed communion would wholly cease, and consequently the controversy about it be entirely at an end; therefore the Presbyterians and Independents do not maintain a free and mixt communion in the same sense, and upon the same foundation, as some of our persuasion do, which those persons would do well to consider. It may be thought necessary by some, that before I conclude, I should make an apology for taking notice of such a trifling pamphlet as this is, which I have been considering. Had it not been for the importunity of some of my friends, as well as the vain ovations, and silly triumphs, which those of a different persuasion from us are ready to make upon every thing that comes out this way, however weak it be, I should never have given myself the trouble of writing, nor others of reading hereof. If it should be asked, why I have been so large in considering several things herein, to which a shorter reply would have been sufficient? I answer, It is not because I thought the author deserved it, but having observed that the arguments and exceptions which he has licked up from others, have been, and still are, received by persons of far superior judgment and learning to himself, and who are better versed in this controversy than he appears to be; it is upon that account, as well as to do justice to the truth I have been defending, I have taken this method. But if any should think me blame-worthy, in taking notice of some things herein, which do not carry in them the appearance of an argument, I persuade myself they will easily forgive me, when they consider how ready some captious persons would have been to say, I had passed over some of his material objections. However, without much concerning myself what any one shall say of this performance, I commit it to the blessing of God, and the consideration of every impartial reader.

ENDNOTES:

[1] An vero una, an trina mersione sit baptizandum, indifferens semper judicature fuit in ecclesia christiana; quemadmodum etiam an immersione an vero adspersione atendum, cum iilius expressum mandatum nullum extet; & exempla adspersionis non minus quam immersionis in scripturis possint deprehendi, sicuii enim Matthew 3:1-17. Christus in aquam ingressus, & ex ea egressus est, & Ethiops. Acts 8:1-40. Sic multa millia uno die in ipsa urbe Jerusalem dicuntur fuisse baptizata. Acts 2:1-47. item multi in totalbus privatis, Acts 16:1-40; Acts 18:1-28 1 Corinthians 1:16. ubi egressus ejusmodi in aquas vix esse potuit. Synop Put. Theolog. Dispage

44. Thes. 19.

[2] Etsi non improbo ut hic quoque retineatur verbum baptizare quo plena sit h antiqesiv, tamen: habendam hoc loco propriae significationis rationem censeo, baptizoin enim tanquam ad tingendum. mergere est. Atque hoc sensu vore dicuntur apostoli baptioqnhai. Domus euim in qua hoc peractum est, Spiritu sancto fuit repleta, ita ut in cam tanquam in kolumbhqran, quandam apostoli demersi fuisse. videantur. Casaub. in Acts 1:5.

[3] Idyll 1. Mhti qighV plana dwra tagar puoi panta bezaptai [4] Antiqu. Jude 1:2. c 3.

[5] Vid. Stephan. Dictionar. Geograph.

[6] Significat afflictionem, humilitatem & fletum, admonens nos tales requiri in baptismo & vera poenitentia, Aretius in John 3:23.

[7] Fuisse autem duo haec oppida AEnon & Salim, non procul a confluente Jordanis & Jaboc tradunt geographi, quibus viciniam faciunt Scythopolim. Coeterum ex his verbis colligere licet, baptismum fuisse celebratum a Joanne & Christo totius corporis submerfione. Calvin in John 3:23.

[8] Hic perspicimus, quisnam apud veteres baptizandi titus fuerit: totum enim corpus in aquam mergebant, Calvin in Acts 8:38.

[9] Graeci legunt in hunc modum mhnti udwr, etc. et apparet hunc esse sensum: num quis vetare potest, quo minus aqua baptizentur ii, qui spiritum sanctum axceperunt, sicunt & nos? veluti plus sit spiritus quam aqua, cumque ille contingerit, nihil esse magni si hoc accesserit: Caeterum to udwr accusativus aut pendet a praepositione subaudita kata, aut adhaeret verbo baptioqhnai, ea forma qua dicimus, baptizomai baptisma. Erasmus in Acts 10:47.

[10] Gregory Nazianzen. Basil. Chrysostome, Ambrose, Daille, Fowler, Cave, Towerson, cited by Mr. Stennett, in his answer to Ruffen, page 144, 145, 147,156, 157. See also. Dr Goodwin's Christ set forth, Sect. 3. Ch. 7.

[11] Reflections on Mr. Wall's History of Infant-baptism, page 217.

[12] Institut. 1. 4. c. 15. s. 19.

[13] Loc commun. page 198. & Explic. Catech. page 311.

[14] Lexic. Theolog. page 221, 222.

[15] Christ. Theolog. 1:1. page 22.

[16] Dr Gale's Reflections on Mr. Wall's History of Infant. baptism, letter 3.

[17] De Superstitione

[18] Plus autem est baptizeoqai, hoc in loco; quam cerniptein, quod illud videatur de corpore uni-verso, istud de manibus duntaxat intelligendum. Neque to baptizein significat lavare, nifi a consequenti, nam proprie declarat tingendi causa immergere. Beza in Marc. 7. 4.

[19] Tract. Mikvaoth. c 10. f. 1, 5, 6.

[20] Ubicunque in lege memoratur ablutio carnis aut vestium, nihil aliud vult, quam ablutionem totius corporis, nam siquis se totum abluat. Excepto ipsissimo apice minimi digiti ille adhuc in im-munditie fua, Maimon. In Mikvaoth. c. 1, 4. in Lightfoot Hor. Hebr, in Matthew page 47.

[21] In Adversar. Miscellan. p 30.

[22] Magnum habet convenientiam ille in maris intima infimaque descensus, ex eodem ascensus denuo in aridam, cum baptismi christiani ritu, prout is primis temporibus administrabatur. Siquidem inter baptizandum in aquas descendebant, & ex eisdem denuo ascendebant: Cujus kataazasewv ki anazasewv in Eunachi AEthiopis tinctione mentio expressia reperitur (Acts 8:38-39). Quin &, sicuti in ritu christiano, quum immergerentur aquis obruti, & quasi sepulti & Christo ipsi consepulti quodammodo videbantur; rursusque cum emergerent, a sepulchro quodammodo resur-gere, ac cum Christo resuscitare prae se serebant (Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12). Ita maris illius aquis capitibus ipsis transeuntium altius extantibus obruti ac sepulti quodammodo poterunt videri & cruet-gere ac resurgere denuo, cum ad littus objectum exeuntes evasissent. Gatak. ibid.

[23] Essay to restore the Dipping of Infants in their Baptism, page 60.

[24] Ibid. page 4, 12, 32.

[25] Defence of the History of Infant-baptism, page 129, 130, 131, 146, 147.

[26] It does not shock me so much, to find Mr. R. use such terms as are scarce reconcilable to good sense, as it does to find him using such expressions, and making such descriptions, as are hardly consistent with that civility and modesty, for which he would appear to be an advocate. I can bear with him, when, on this occasion, he calls thin garments a posture instead of a habit, and tells us of things that are ignominious to the honor of Christianity, being now pretty well acquainted with his stile. But I must confess myself offended with that air of levity, and those indecent terms, in which he condemns the pretended immodesty of others. For the words by which he sometimes describes the vicious acts and inclinations which he censures, seem not so much adapted to excite horror and aversion in the reader, as to defile his imagination, end to dispose him to that imprudent temper of making a mock of fin. And the true reason why I do not quote Mr. R’s words at large in this place, as I do in many others, is not to evade the force of his argument, but to avoid the mode of his expression, by which he has given too much occasion of offense to virtuous minds, and perhaps too much gratified those that are viciously inclined. Stennett’a Answ. to Ruffen. page 137.

01.04. A Defence of a Book entitled, The

A Defense Of A Book, Entitled, THE ANCIENT MODE OF BAPTIZING BY IMMERSION, Plunging, Or Dipping In Water, Etc.

AGAINST MR. MATTHIAS MAURICE'S REPLY, CALLED, Plunging into Water no Scriptural Mode of Baptizing, etc.

Chapter 1.

Some Remarks on Mr. M's entrance to his Work

Having lately attempted to vindicate the ancient mode of baptizing, by immersion, plunging, or dipping into water, against the exceptions of an anonymous pamphlet, entitled, The manner of baptizing with water, cleared up from the word of God and right reason, etc. The author, who appears to be Mr. Matthias Maurice of Rowell in Northamptonshire, has thought fit to reply. He seems angry at the treatment he has met with; but if he thought that his name would have commanded greater respect, why did not he put it to his book? and why did he refuse to give satisfaction to his friends when inquired of about the author of it? Would he be treated as a gentleman, a scholar, or a Christian? he ought to have wrote as such. Who is the aggressor? who gave the first provocation? If I have any where exceeded the bounds of Christianity, or humanity, I would readily acknowledge it upon the first conviction; but who indeed "can touch pitch, without being defiled with it?" Three or four pages are filled up with a whining, insinuating harangue, upon the nature of controversies, and the disagreeable temper and spirit with which they are frequently managed; designing hereby to wipe himself clean, whilst he is casting reproach upon others. I would not be an advocate for burlesque and banter in religious controversies; but if he would have them banished from thence, why does he make use of them, even in this his performance, which begins with such loud exclamations against them. As for instance, how does he pun upon presumptive proofs, page 13 and in page 27. Speaking of our baptizing in holes or cisterns, as he is pleased to call them, "Thus, says he, you have forsook the scriptural way of baptizing with water, and have hewn out unto yourselves cisterns," referring to Jeremiah 2:13 besides the frequent sneers with which his book abounds. Now if burlesque and banter, in general, ought to be laid aside, much more punning and bantering with the words of scripture, which are sacred and awful. Is this the man that directs others to "write in the fear of God, having the awful Judge, and the approaching judgment in view;" and yet takes such a liberty as this? He says, page 7, "I shall not entertain the reader with any remarks upon his performance, as it is ludicrous, virulent and defaming:" Which, itself is a manifest defamation, as the reader cannot but observe; it being asserted without attempting to give one single instance wherein it appears to be so. With what face can he call it ludicrous; when he himself, in the debate, has been so wretchedly guilty that way? when he talks, page 9 of "Christ's being under water still: and in page 10 of John's thrusting the people into thorns and briars, when he baptized in the wilderness;" as also his concluding from Philip and the Eunuch's coming up out of the water, page 19 that "neither of them was drowned there;" with other such like rambling stuff, which he might have been attained to publish to the

world. Moreover, what defamation has he been guilty of, in representing it, as the judgment of "some of us to baptize naked?" page 22. And in the words of a servant of Christ, as he calls him, page 44 tells the world that we "baptize persons in thin and transparent garments;" which, in other cases, would be accounted down right lying. Nay even in this his last performance, page 44 he has the assurance to insinuate, as if we ourselves thought plunging to be immodest, because we put lead at the bottom of our plunging garments; why could not he as well have argued from our making use of clothes themselves? it is strange that a carefulness to prevent every thing that looks like immodesty, should be improved as an evidence of it: None but a man that is ill-natured and virulent, would ever be guilty of such an insinuation.

What his friends, at Rowell, may think of his performances, I cannot tell; but I can assure him, that those of his persuasion at London think very meanly of them; and, as the most effectual way to secure the honor of their cause, which is endangered by such kind of writing as his, say, "he is a weak man that has "engaged in the controversy;" though, perhaps, some of his admirers may think that he is one of the mighty men of Israel, who, like another Samson, has smote us hip and thigh; but if I should say, that it is with much such an instrument as he once used, I know that I should be very gravely and severely reprimanded for it, my grace and good manners called in question, and perhaps be pelted into the bargain, with an old musty proverb or sentence, either in Greek or Latin; but I will forbear, and proceed to the consideration of his work, as he calls it. His first attack, page 8 is upon a final sentence of Latin, made use of to express the nauseous and fulsome repetition, of threadbare arguments in this controversy, to which he has thought fit, to give no less than three several answers.

1. He says the Latin is false, because of an erratum of coctum for cocta; which had I observed before the last half sheet had been worked off, should have been inserted among the errata; whereby he would have been prevented making this learned remark; though had it not fallen under my notice, before he pointed it to me, he should have had the honor of this great discovery. He does well indeed to excuse his making such low observations, as being beneath the vast designs he has in view. I might as well take notice of his Greek proverb, page 25 where osper, is put for asper, and charge it with being false Greek, though I should rather choose to ascribe it to the fault of the printer, than the inadvertency of the writer. However, he does well to let his readers know that he can write Greek; which they could not have come at the knowledge of, by his former performance. But why does not he give a version of his Latin and Greek scraps, especially seeing he writes for the benefit of the Lord’s people, the Godly, and poor men and women, that cannot look into Dictionaries, and consult Lexicons; besides, all the wit therein will be lost to them, as well as others be left unacquainted with his happy genius for, and skill in translating.

2. He says, "the application of this sentence is false:" But how does it appear? why, because at Rowell he and his people are very moderate in the affair of baptism, they seldom discourse of it; when every body knows, that has read my book, that the paragraph referred to, regards not the private conversation of persons on that subject, but the repeated writings which have been published to the world on his fide the question. If the different sentiments of his people, about Baptism, "make no manner of difference in affection, church-relation," etc. as he says page 9 why does he give them any disturbance? what could provoke him to write after the manner he has done? He knows very well, however mistaken they may be about this ordinance, in his apprehensions, yet that they are conscientious in what they do; why should he then sneer at them,

as he does for their practice of plunging, and fix upon them the heavy charges of superstition and will-worship? Is not this man a wise shepherd, that will give disturbance to his flock, when the sheep are still and quiet?

3. He would have his reader believe, that in using this sentence, I would insinuate, that the notions wherein they differ from us about baptism are poisonous, when I intend no such thing; nor does the proverb, as expressed by me, lead to any such thought, but is used for a nauseous repetition of things, with which his performance, we are considering, very plentifully abounds. We do not look upon mistakes about the grace of God, the person of Christ, and the person and operations of the Spirit, to be of a lesser nature than those about Baptism, as he reproachfully insinuates; for we do with a becoming zeal and courage, oppose such erroneous doctrines in those who are of the same mind with us, respecting baptism, as much as we do in those who differ from us therein. Page 10. He seems to be angry with me for calling him an anonymous author; what should I have called him, since he did not put his name to his book? he asks, "Who was the penman of the epistle to the Hebrews?" Very much to the purpose indeed! and then brings in a scrap of Greek out of Synesius, with whom, however he may agree in the choice of an obscure life, yet will not in the affair of Baptism; for Synesius was baptized upon profession of his faith, and after that made bishop of Ptolemais. "Hundreds of precious tracts, he says, have been published without the names of their authors;" among which, I hope, he does not think his must have a place, it having no authority from the scripture, whatever else it may pretend to; as I hope hereafter to make appear.

Chapter 2. The proofs for immersion, taken from the circumstances which attended the Baptism of John, Christ, and his Apostles, maintained: and Mr. M’s demonstrative proofs, for pouring or sprinkling, considered. The ordinance of water-baptism, is not only frequently inculcated in the New Testament, as an ordinance that ought to be regarded; but also many instances of persons who have submitted to it, are therein recorded, and those attended with such circumstances, as manifestly show, to unprejudiced minds, in what manner it was performed.

1. The baptism of Christ administered by John deserves to be mentioned, and considered first: This was performed in the river Jordan (Matthew 3:6; Matthew 3:13), and the circumstance of his coming up out of the water, as soon as it was done, recorded verse 16 is a full demonstration that he was in it; now that he should go into the river Jordan, to have water poured, or sprinkled on him, is intolerable, and ridiculous to suppose. Mr. M. in his debate, page 6 tells us, that the words "only signify, that he went up from the water;" to which I replied, that the preposition apo signifies out of, and is justly rendered so here. I gave him an instance of it, which he has not thought fit to except against; yet still he says, the "criticism delivers us from a necessity of concluding, that Christ was in the water:" though it has been entirely baffled; neither has he attempted to defend it. And, because I say, that "we do not infer plunging, merely from Christ’s going down into, and coming up out of the water;" therefore he would have the argument from hence, as well as from the same circumstances attending the baptism of the Eunuch, wholly laid aside; which I do not wonder at, because it presses him hard. He seems to triumph, because I have not, in his positive and dogmatical way, asserted those circumstances, to be demonstrative proofs of immersion; as though they were entirely given up as such; but he is more ready to receive, than I am to give. This is a manifest indication, I will not say, of a wounded cause only, but of a dying one, which makes him catch at every thing to support himself under, or, free himself from those pressures, which lie

hard upon him. We insist upon it, that those proofs are demonstrative, so far as proofs from circumstances can be so; and challenge him to give the like in favor of pouring or sprinkling. Is it not a wretched thing, to use our author's words; that not one text of scripture can be produced, which will vindicate the practice of sprinkling in baptism; and that among all the instances of the performance of the ordinance, which are recorded in scripture; not one single circumstance can render it so much as probable?

2. We not only read of many others baptized by John, but also the places which he chore to administer it in, which will lead any thinking, and considering mind to conclude, that it was performed by immersion: Now, one of those places, where John baptized a considerable number, and among the rest Christ Jesus, was the river Jordan (Matthew 3:6; Mark 1:5; Mark 1:9), the latter of which texts Mr. M. says, page 12 "leads us to no other thought, than that Jesus was baptized of John at Jordan; as the preposition eiv, he says, is sometimes translated;" though he gives us no one instance of it. Now in his debate, page 7 he says, "that the holy Ghost himself tells us, that nothing else is intended by it than baptizing in Jordan;" and yet this man takes a liberty to differ from him. What will he be at next? to such straits are men driven, who oppose the plain words of the Holy Ghost, as he is pleased to say in another case. Ænon was another of those places, which John chose to baptize in; and the reason of his making choice of it was, because there was much water there (John 3:23), which was proper and necessary, for the baptizing of persons by immersion. Mr. M. says, page 19 "that the holy Ghost does not say that they were baptized there, because there was much water; but that John was also baptizing in Ænon because there was much water there;" but what difference is there? Why only between John's administering the ordinance, and the persons to whom it was administered. He says, page 21 that I have granted that the words, he means udata polla, literally denote, "many rivulets or streams;" which is notoriously false; for I do in express words utterly deny it; and have proved from the use of the phrase in the New Testament, and in the Septuagint version of the Old, as well as from Nonnus's paraphrase of the text, that it signifies "large waters, or abundance of them:" I do assure him, that neither of the editions of Nonnus, which he has the vanity to mention, was made use of by me; but if there had been any material difference in them, from what I have made use of, I suppose he would have observed it to me, if he has consulted them; and I would also inform him, that Nonnus has not always a Latin version printed along with it, as he wrongly asserts. I have consulted Calvin upon the place directed to by him: the text says, that Jesus and his disciples came into the land of Judea; and Calvin upon it says, that "he came into that part of the country which was nigh to Ænon;" but neither the text, nor Calvin upon it, say that they were both at Ænon, as our author insinuates; so that from hence there appears no necessity of concluding that choice was made of this place for the accommodation of the large number of people which attended, either upon the ministry of Christ or John; that so both they and their cattle might be refreshed, as he ridiculously enough suggests. As to the account he has given of the land of Canaan, it is manifest, notwithstanding all his shifts and cavils, that he did represent it in general as a land that wanted water, especially a great part of it; now whatever little spots (for the land itself was not very large) might not be so well watered, yet it is certain, that in general it was; and is therefore called a land of brooks of water, etc. But since he acknowledges there was plenty of water at Ænon, where John was baptizing, which is sufficient for our purpose, we need not further inquire about the land.

3. Another remarkable instance of baptism is that of the Eunuch's, in Acts 8:38 which is attended with such circumstances, as would leave any person, that is seriously inquiring after truth, without any scruple or hesitation, in what manner it was performed. In Acts 8:36 we are told, that they came unto a certain water, where the Eunuch desiring baptism, and Philip agreeing to it, after he had made a confession of his faith, it is said, verse 38 that they went down both into the water; they first came to it, and then went into it; which leaves that observation without any real foundation, which supposes that their going down into the water signifies no more than the descent which led to the rivers for they were come thither before, as appears from verse 36 where a phrase is made use of different from this in verse 38. Now though I had observed to our author, that it was not to, but into the water they went, to which he has not thought fit to reply; yet he still produces his impertinent instance of going down to the sea in ships; which is all that can be obtained from him, to set aside the force of this evidence; which, how weak and ridiculous it is, will easily appear to every judicious reader. Now if persons will but diligently consider those plain instances of baptism, in an humble and hearty search after truth, they will find that they amount to little less than a full demonstration that it was performed in those early times of John, Christ, and his apostles, by an immersion or plunging of the whole body under water, as has been fully acknowledged by many great and excellent divines, But now let us consider Mr. M's demonstrative proofs for pouring or sprinkling water in baptism, produced by him, page 14.

1. He says, "pouring water in baptism, is a true representation of the donation of the Spirit; being, according to God's word, instituted for that end" (Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:25; Matthew 3:11; 1 Corinthians 12:13). But the word of God no where expresses, or gives the least intimation, that baptism was instituted for any such end; it is true, the donation of the Spirit is sometimes called a baptism, and so are the sufferings of Christ; but do we make use of such mediums as there to prove the representation of them to be the end of this ordinance? though it would with equal strength conclude the one as the other: Besides, he might as well argue, that the end of baptism is to represent the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, because that is called a baptism also. But how does pouring of water in baptism, according to the practice of our modern Paedobaptists, represent the donation of the Spirit, when they only let fall a few drops of water upon the face? But the Spirit's grace is expressed by pouring floods of water upon his people in Isaiah 44:3 one of the texts referred to by our author. Though I have acknowledged, and still do, that the ordinary donation of the Spirit is sometimes expressed by pouring, and sometimes by sprinkling, yet that it was the extraordinary one which the disciples received on the day of Pentecost, that is particularly called the baptism of the Spirit and of fire, by John and Christ. Now says Mr. M. page 17 if this was by pouring, then you are undone: perhaps not. But what does he think will undo us? why the prophecy of Joel, cited in Acts 2:16-17. I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh. To which I reply, that though this extraordinary instance of the Spirit's grace is expressed, as well as the more ordinary ones are, by pouring, under the Old-Testament-dispensation, in allusion to those frequent libations, or drink-offerings, which were then used; yet it need not seem strange, that when this prophecy was nearer accomplishing, and there was a greater display of divine grace, that another word should be used which more largely expressed the abundance of it: It is no wonder that it should be more abundant in the exhibition than in the prophecy; besides this text, and all others in the Old Testament, which express the Spirit's grace in this, or any other form of language whatever, can never be looked upon as sufficient proofs of the manner in which a New-Testament ordinance is to be administered, which was never instituted with a view to

represent it.

2. He says, it, that is, "pouring water in baptism," exactly answers to John’s "baptism he said that he baptized with water" (Luke 3:15). But it seems, according to him in page 15 that the phrase of baptizing with water, regards the strength of the administrator’s arms, wherewith he performs, and not the mode of baptizing; so that he can pretty easily tell us wherein and wherewith a person may be plunged, though he still says plunging with water is an expression without sense; but he cannot yet inform us how a man can be plunged in it, without being plunged with it. I urged that in all the evangelists the words are, en udap, "in water," excepting Luke 3:16 where the preposition is omitted, which has occasioned some to think it redundant in the other Evangelists, which I observe no ways hurts our sense and reading of the words; now he wonders that this should make for our reading, or be of any use to us; when all that I observe is, that it does not make against us; if it does, let him make it appear. John baptized in water, persons were baptized by him in the river Jordan, and not with it.

3. Another demonstrative proof of "pouring water in baptism, is, that it is exactly agreeable to the signification of the word, as the Lord gives it to us in the New Testament" (1 Corinthians 10:2). Which place I shall more fully consider hereafter, and make it appear, that it is there to be understood in the sense of dipping or plunging.

4. His last proof is, "that it directly answers the promise of what Christ should do (Isaiah 52:15), so shall he sprinkle many nations;" to this text he says, page 43 the commission in Matthew 28:19 refers, which if it does, though I cannot see it can without a very large stretch, it must be only in that part of it which concerns the teaching of the Gentiles by the ministry of the apostles, and not that which respects the baptizing of them; for the word here rendered sprinkle, is rwbd zyn[expressive of speaking, as Kimchi on the place observes; and the meaning is, that Christ shall speak to the Gentiles in the ministry of the gospel by the apostles, with so much power, majesty, and authority, that Kings themselves shall shut their mouths at him; that is, shall silently submit to the scepter of his grace, and to the doctrines of his gospel; for that which had not been told them, shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider. Moreover, who, in the world, could ever imagine, that the ordinance of water baptism, with the mode of its administration, should be intended here? a man must have his imagination prodigiously heated indeed, and his mind captivated with a mere jingle of words, that can look upon such proofs as there, fetcht out of the Old Testament, as demonstrative ones of the true mode of baptizing under the New. Thus we have had a taste, as he calls it, of his demonstrations of pouring or sprinkling water in baptism.

Chapter 3. A vindication of Erasmus, and of his version of (Acts 10:47). The author of the debate in page 22 urges the impropriety of Peter’s speech in Cornelius’ house, when he talked of forbidding water in baptism, if plunging was the right mode of its administration; to which I replied, that if there was any impropriety in the text, it was not to be charged, either upon the words or sense of the holy Ghost, but upon our translation; and urged, that the word water should be put in construction with the word to be baptized, and not with the word forbid, and the whole text be rendered thus, Can any man forbid that these should be baptized in water, which have received the holy Ghost as well as we? and produced the testimony of Erasmus to confirm it. Now let us attend to Mr. M’s animadversions upon it. And,

1. Within the compass of four or five lines, he tells two palpable and notorious untruths; for first, he affirms that I say that the words in Acts 10:47 are not good sense, when it is he that insinuates an impropriety in Peter's manner of speaking, supposing plunging to be the mode of baptism; what I say, is, that if there is any impropriety in it, it is not to be charged upon the words or sense of the holy Ghost, but upon our translation;" and yet he would have it, that I assert that the words are not good sense; where do I say so? It is true, I think the words are better rendered according to Erasmus' version; and, for what I can yet see to the contrary, I shall abide by it. Again, he says, that I think there is something wanting in the original. With what face can he say so? Or have I attempted a supplement to any part of it? How unfair is this? Yet this is the man that complains of rank injustice, wresting of words and wracking of sentences in polemical writings. He says, he fears God; I hope he does; but he has given but very little evidence of it, in his management of this controversy.

2. He next falls foul upon Erasmus, calling him old Erasmus; and represents him as disapproved of by the learned; when almost every body knows how much the learned world owes to that great man, and what deference is always paid to him; but why old Erasmus, and great Beza? Not that I would go about to diminish the praise of Beza, yet I cannot but be of opinion, that to let Erasmus upon a level with him, in respect of learning, can be no lessening of him; but it seems to me, that the reason of those different epithets which Mr. M. has given to those excellent men, is only because the version of the one removes the foundation of his impertinent cavil, and the note of the other, as he imagines, secures it to him.

3. He proceeds, in the next place, to find fault with my translation of Erasmus' version; but if he had had that candor which he would have the world believe he shews in the management of this controversy, he would have easily overlooked this, which he thinks is so much blame-worthy; especially when he could not but observe, that in the very same page, this text is rendered according to the transposition of Erasmus, without the negative particle, which hurts the sense: so that he might easily have perceived that this did not arise from a want of knowledge in translating, but from an inadvertency in writing.

4. As to what Beza says of this trajection, that it is dura ac plane insolens; I shall only say cum pace tanti viri, that the trajections in scripture, which he himself approves of, for which see his notes on John 8:25 and Acts 1:2 are not more easy or more usual.

5. The sense of the text requires such a transposition of the words; for the meaning is not, as if Peter thought that any person would go about to hinder them of water convenient for the administration of the ordinance of baptism; for such a sense of the words would be trifling and jejune, and yet this our version seems to incline to; but that there might be some who would be displeased with, and to their utmost oppose, the baptizing of those Gentiles. Hence Peter says, Who can forbid that these should be baptized in water? Therefore, and what will further confirm this sense and reading of the words, he commands them in the next verse to be baptized: he does not order water to be brought unto them, but that they be baptized in the name of the Lord. To all which,

6. Might be added, that this transposition of the words has not its confirmation only from the authority, judgment and learning of Erasmus, which is not inconsiderable, but also from others; for, as Cornelius a Lapide has observed, both the Tigurine version, and that of Pagnine's, read the

words the same way: so that however Erasmus may be disapproved of by the learned, as our author asserts, yet it seems this version is regarded by them.

Chapter 4. The end of the institution of the ordinance of Baptism, considered. As the ordinance of water-baptism derives its authority from Christ, so it was instituted by him for some end or other, which may make for his own glory, as well as for the comfort, edification, and increase of faith in his people; and what that end is, we shall now inquire. Mr. M. page 33 says, "the manifest end of it is a representation of the donation of the Spirit to us in the new covenant" (Isaiah 44:3; Matthew 3:11; 1 Corinthians 12:13). As for the former of there proofs, I need only say, that an Old-Testament-text can never be a proof or evidence of what is the end of the institution of a New-Testament-ordinance: Besides, if it could be thought to have any reference to the affair of baptism, it would only regard the mode, and not the end of this ordinance, for which he has cited it already, and to what purpose has been also shown. As for the two latter texts here produced by him, they only inform us, that the Spirit's grace is called a baptism, and so are the sufferings of Christ (Luke 12:50), the representation of which he will not own to be the end of baptism, though every body will see that this may be as strongly concluded from hence, as what he contends for; besides, the martyrdom of the saints is called a Baptism (Matthew 20:23), as also the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:2), yet no body ever thought that the design of baptism was to represent either of these. Now these are what he calls the plain proofs of the manifest end of baptism, without any force upon scripture. What sort of readers does Mr. M. expect to have, that will be imposed upon by such proofs as there? But there are manifest proofs which fully discover to us, that the end of this ordinance is to represent the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ Jesus.

Christ has particularly instituted two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's-Supper, to be observed by his people; and the end of the one is no less evident than that of the other. It is said of the Lord's-Supper, As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come (1 Corinthians 11:26). It is also said of Baptism, That so many of us, as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death (Romans 6:3). Did Christ say in the celebration of the Ordinance of the Supper? This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins (Matthew 26:28). His disciples in his name have also laid, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38): that is, that their faith in that ordinance might be led to the blood of Christ, by which remission of sins was procured; to the grave of Christ, where they were left; and to a risen Savior, where they have a full discharge from them; all which, in a very lively manner, is represented in this ordinance of baptism. There are many other texts, besides their, which would lead any truly serious and inquiring mind to observe this to be the true end of baptism, as Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12, 1 Peter 3:21, and 1 Corinthians 15:29 but because those texts are excepted against by Mr. M. it will be proper more particularly to consider them, and what he is pleased to advance against the commonly received sense of them.

1st, "Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12" he says, "are not to be understood of water-baptism, but of the baptism of Christ's sufferings, in which his people were considered in him, and with him, as their head and representative." I firmly believe the doctrine of Christ's being a common head, representative, and surety of all the elect of God; for which reason, in my reply, I acknowledged his sense of those texts to be agreeable to the analogy of faith; on the account of which he triumphs,

as if it shone with an unconquerable evidence, as his expression is, page 34 when I never owned it to be the true sense of the words; for a sense may be given of a text that is agreeable to the analogy of faith, which is foreign enough to the mind of the holy Ghost therein; as for instance, if of Genesis 1:1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; a man should give such a sense as this, that God chore a certain number of men in Christ unto salvation, before he created the heaven and the earth: This is a sense that is agreeable enough to the analogy of faith, but none will say that it is the sense of the text. But let us a little consider the exposition of those texts, so much boasted of, and see how well it will bear. As for Romans 6:4, it does not say, that we are buried with him in baptism, but by baptism into death: So that according to Mr. M's exposition, it runs thus, "We are buried with Christ representatively in the grave, by his sufferings on the cross, into that death he there submitted to;" in which, how oddly things hang together, every judicious reader will observe. As to Colossians 2:12. though we are hid to be buried with him in baptism, yet it is added, Wherein also you are risen with him; but how we can be laid to be risen with him in the baptism of his sufferings, will, I believe, not be very easy, to account for. It is better therefore to understand those texts, in the more generally received sense both of ancient and modern divines, who unanimously interpret them of water baptism; in which the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are very evidently represented, when performed by immersion.

2dly, He says, 1 Peter 3:21 is not meant of water baptism, but of the blood of Christ sprinkled upon the conscience. That the blood of Christ, as sprinkled upon a believer's conscience, is ever called a Baptism, I never met with; and, I will venture to say, can never be proved. Besides, the baptism that Peter speaks of was a figure, anptupon, "an antitype" of Noah's ark, and of the deliverance of him and his family by water; which was a kind of resurrection from the dead, and did well prefigure our salvation by the resurrection of Christ, represented to us in the ordinance of water baptism.

3dly, The sense of 1 Corinthians 15:29. given by me, is also objected against by Mr. M. page 32. and another substituted in its room. Let the readers of the controversy between us judge which is most agreeable. The text is difficult, and has employed the thoughts and pens of the most able and learned men in all ages: Both the senses have their defenders. I shall only refer the reader to the learned notes of Sir Norton Knatchbull, on 1 Peter 3:21 where both those texts are considered by him; and where he has sufficiently proved, from scripture, fathers, schoolmen, and modern interpreters, that the ordinance of baptism is a true figure, and just representation of the resurrection of Christ, and of ours by him.

Chapter 5 A consideration of the signification of the Greek word paptizw, and particularly, the use of it in Mark 7:4, Luke 11:38, and Hebrews 9:10. That the proper, primary, common, and natural sense of the Greek word baptizo, is to dip or plunge, has been acknowledged by the greatest masters of that language; and it is a rule which should be carefully attended to, that the first, natural, and common sense of a word ought to be used in the interpretation of scripture, unless some very good reason can be given why it should be used in a remote, improper, and consequential one. Now though the nature, end, and circumstances of the ordinance of baptism, manifestly shew that immersion is the right mode of administering it, and do abundantly confirm the sense of the Greek word, directing us to the proper and primary use thereof; yet some have endeavored to confine it to a more low and remote sense, but none have attempted to do it with more positiveness and confidence than our author. But what method does he take to effect it, and how does he succeed therein?

Why, 1st, he will exclude all the testimonies of the use of the word among Greek authors uninspired, especially Heathens; which is unreasonable If our translators had confined themselves to this rule, they would have made but poor work in their version of some part of the Bible, where a word is but once used, or at least but very rarely in that sense in which it is to be taken. Now if a controversy concerning the use of a Greek word in scripture arises, which cannot be determined by it, though I do not say this is the case in hand, what methods must be taken? Will it not be very proper to consult Greek authors, either Christian or Heathen, and produce their testimonies, especially the latter? who cannot be suspected of perverting the use of a word, having never been concerned in our religious controversies. But it seems, if we will make use of them, we must be said under an obligation to prove that: "they were delivered under the immediate inspiration of the holy Ghost" was ever such an unreasonable demand made in this world before? Or was the inspiration of the holy Spirit ever thought necessary to fix and determine the sense of a word? But I am willing to lay aside those testimonies in this controversy. And,

2dly, Be confined, as he would have me, to the use of the word in the New Testament; but then I must, it seems, be confined to the use of it, as applied to the ordinance of baptism, which is also unreasonable: He says the word, whenever applied to the ordinance, signifies pouring or sprinkling only; which is a shameful begging of the question; and if I should say it only signifies dipping or plunging, whenever applied to it, how must the controversy be decided? Must we not refer the decision of it to other texts of scripture? It is true, the circumstances, which attend the administration of the ordinance are sufficient to determine the true sense of the word, and I am willing to put it upon that issue; but I know he will not stand to it: Besides, why has he himself brought other texts of scripture into the controversy, where the ordinance or baptism is not concerned? As Mark 7:4, Hebrews 9:10, and 1 Corinthians 10:2 as also the Septuagint version in Daniel 4:33 why may not others take the same liberty? And what miserable replies has he made to my instances out of the latter? that in 2 Kings 5:14 he says, discovers that they, that is, the Septuagint, understood no more by it than, louw. No more than louw! Is not that enough? is not louw a word that includes in it all kinds of washing, especially bathing of the whole body; and is always used by the Septuagint to express the Jewish bathings, which were always performed by immersion; and that Naaman understood the prophet of such a kind of washing, is manifest from his use of it; he dipped himself in Jordan, kata to rhma Elisaie, according to the word of Elisha. As for the other in Isaiah 21:4 he says, "it is no wonder they made use of the word, for they knew very well that sin procures showers of divine displeasure to be poured upon a person, people, and nation." I desire the next time he pretends to baptize an infant, that he would pour showers of water upon it, if he thinks proper, according to this sense of the word baptizw, which he allows of. But however, though those testimonies must be laid aside, yet,

3dly, I hope Lexicons may be made use of to direct us in the sense of the word, if it is only as it is used in the New Testament. Yes, that will be allowed of; for Mr. M. himself consults Lexicons, though he does well to let us know so; for one would have thought, by his positiveness, that he had never looked into one in all his life. Well, but what do the Lexicons say? How do they render the word baptizw? Why by mergo, immergo, to dip or plunge into; and this they give, as the first, and primary sense of the word; but do they make use of no other words to express it by? Yes, they also use abluo, lavo, to wash; and they mean such a washing as is by dipping, but Mr. M. page 38 asks, where do they tell us so? I answer in their Lexicons. Let Scapula be consulted, who thus

renders the word baptizo, mergo seu immergo: Ut quae tingendi aut abluendi gratia aquae immergimus. But,

4thly, Let us now consider those texts where the word is used in the New Testament; I am willing to be confined to those which Mr. M. himself has fixed upon, and we will begin,

First, With Mark 7:4 and when they come from the market, except they wash or baptize (themselves) they eat not; which may be understood either,

1. Of the things they bought in the market, which they did not eat until they were washed: Thus the Syriac version reads the words; and what they buy in the market, unless it be washed, they eat not: The same way read all the oriental versions, the Arabic, Ethiopic, and Persic. Now this must be understood of those things that may be, and are proper to be washed, as herbs, etc. And nobody will question, but that the manner of the washing there was by putting them into water. But,

2. If the words design the washing of persons, they must be understood, either of the washing of their whole bodies, or else of some part only; as their hands or feet: It seems most likely, that the washing of the whole body is intended, as Grotius,[1] Vatablus, Drufius,[2] and others think; because washing of hands is mentioned in the preceding verse. Besides, to understand it thus, better expresses the outward, affected sanctity of the more superstitious part of the people. All the Jews washed their hands and feet before eating; but those who pretended to a greater degree of holiness, washed their whole bodies, especially when they came from a market; and of this total ablution of the body is Luke 11:38 to be understood. And here I cannot forbear mentioning, a passage of the great Scaliger[3] to this purpose. "The more superstitious part of the Jews, says he, not only washed their feet, but their whole body. Hence they were called Hemerobaptists, who every day washed their bodies before they sat down to food; wherefore, the Pharisee, which had invited Jesus to dine with him, wondered that he sat down to meat before he had washed his whole body, Luke 11:1-54. But those that were more free from superstition, were contented with washing of their feet, instead of that universal immersion. Witness the Lord himself, who being entertained at dinner by another Pharisee, objected to him, when he was sat down to meat, that he had given him no water for his feet, Luke 7:1-50."

3. If, by this washing, we understand only the washing of their hands when they came from market; then it will be proper to inquire in what manner this was performed: And it must be observed, that whatever was the manner which they used, it was not used as a national custom, or as it was according to the word of God; but what was most agreeable to the traditions of the elders, as is manifest from the text itself. Now this tradition is delivered in their Misna in these words; "They washed their hands before they eat common food, by an elevation of them; but before they eat the tithes, the offering, and the holy flesh, they washed by immersion."[4] It is reported in the same tract, that Johanan Ben Gud-Gada, who, they say, was one of the most religious in the priesthood, "always eat his common food after the manner of purification for eating of the holy flesh;" that is, he always used immersion before eating; and it is highly reasonable to suppose, that the Pharisees, especially the more superstitious part, who pretended to a greater strictness in religion than others, used the same method. It deserves also to be remarked, that this tradition, which some of the Jews have been so tenacious of, that they would rather die than break it, is by them laid to be founded on Leviticus 15:11 and hath not rinsed his hands in water; where the Hebrew word qfç is used, which signifies a washing by immersion: and so Buxtorf renders it.

Moreover, in the above said Misna[5] we are told many things concerning this tradition, as the quantity and quality of the water they used, the vessels they washed in, as well as how far this washing reached, which was qrp d[, by which they meant, either the back of the hand or the wrist or else the elbow, as Theopylact observes on Mark 7:3 who in this is followed by Capellus.[6]

Now some one of these, the word pugmu intends, which we translate oft. As to their manner of washing, it was either by taking water in one hand and pouring it upon the other, and then lifting it up,[7] that the water might run down to the aforesaid parts, that so it might not return and defile them; or else it was performed by an immersion of them into water; which latter was accounted the moot effectual way, and used by the more superstitious part of the Jews. Now those who contend the most for a washing of hands, and not the whole body, as Pocock[8] and Lightfoot, yet frankly acknowledge that it must be understood of washing of them by immersion. Lightfoot's words are these, "The Jews used, says he, µydy tlyfg "a washing of hands;"[9] that is, by lifting them up in the manner before described; and µyry tlibf an immersion of the hands; and the word niywntai, used by our Evangelist, seems to answer to the former, and baptizwontai, to the latter." So that from the whole, suppose washing of hands is here intended; yet the sense of the Greek word, baptizw contended for, is nevertheless effectually secured: Nor need we be much concerned at 2 Kings 3:11 being thrown in our way by Mr. M. page 41. For,

1. The text does not say that Elisha poured water upon the hands of Elijah, to wash his hands withal: and if he asks what did he then do it for; suppose I should answer, I cannot tell, how will he help himself? It lies upon him to prove that he did it for that end, which he will not find very easy to do.

2. Some of the Jewish writers think,[10] that washing of hands, is not intended, but some very great miracle, which followed upon Elisha's pouring water on Elijah's hands, and is therefore mentioned as a thing known, and what would serve to recommend him to the kings of Judah, Israel, and Edom. But taken in the other sense, the recommendation would be but very inconsiderable; besides, they were now in a very great strait for water, 2 Kings 3:9 and they might expect, from his former performance, some miracle would be now wrought by him for their relief, as was 2 Kings 3:17, 2 Kings 3:20. But,

3. Suppose washing of hands is intended, and that this phrase is expressive of Elisha's being Elijah's ministering servant, and that it was his usual method to wash his master's hands by pouring water upon them; it makes nothing against the sense of the word in Mark 7:4 since that regards the superstitious walking of hands, as has been observed, which was performed by an immersion of them, and is there justly reprehended by our Lord.

Secondly, The other text produced by Mr. M. in page 41 is Hebrews 9:10 where the apostle speaks of divers washings or baptisms, which I have asserted to be performed always by bathing or dipping, and never by pouring or sprinkling. And I still abide by my assertion, the instances produced by him being insufficient to disprove, it 1. He mentions Hebrews 9:19 where the apostle speaks of Moses's sprinkling the book and people with blood; but does he say that they were waffled therewith? or was ever this instance of sprinkling reckoned among the ceremonial ablutions? When only a few drops of blood or water are sprinkled upon persons or things, can they be said, in any just propriety of speech, to be washed therewith?

2. He instances in Exodus 29:4. which speaks of the washing of Aaron and his sons, but not a word either of sprinkling or pouring, so that it makes nothing for his purpose: Besides, the Septuagint here use the word louw, by which they always express the Jewish bathings, which were performed by a total immersion of the body in water.

3. His next instance is Numbers 8:6-7. Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them; and thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them; sprinkle water of purifying upon them. But why did not he read on? and let them shove all their flesh, and wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean; that is, by bathing their whole bodies, which was done, as the Targum of Jonathan upon the place says, in forty measures of water. Now, it was thus the Levites were washed. Sprinkling the water of purification, was indeed a ceremony used preparatory to this bathing, but was itself no part of it, as will more fully appear from,

4. His other instance in Numbers 19:18. where it is laid, that tents, vessels, or persons, that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave, were to be sprinkled; but why did not he transcribe Numbers 19:19? where his readers would have been informed, that as this sprinkling was to be done on the third and seventh days, so after that, on the seventh day, the unclean person was to purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water: So that all those aspersions before, were but so many preparations to the general washing or bathing himself all over in water, on the seventh day. I shall therefore still abide by it, that none of the ceremonial washings were performed by sprinkling; and indeed, to talk of washing by sprinkling, deserves rather to be laughed at, than to have a serious answer; it being no more reconcilable to good sense, than it is to the just propriety of language, or universal customs of nations. From the whole it appears, that Maimonides was not mistaken in his observation; and that the word in Hebrews 9:10 properly signifies bathings or dippings. And now,

Thirdly, We are come, as he says, to that great text, 1 Corinthians 10:2. which he directs to, as the poor man and woman's Lexicon; and it is pity but that they should know how to make use of it. Here the children of Israel are said to be baptized in the cloud, and in the sea. But since the word is here used in a figurative sense, it is not very fair in our antagonists to urge us with it, nor, indeed, any other place where it is so used; yet we are no: afraid of engaging with them in the consideration of those places, and particularly this; wherein there is enough to justify the apostle in the use of the word, and at the same time secure its sense on our side. When we consider, that the cloud in which they are said to be baptized, passed over them, so that they were covered therewith; and if it let down, at the same time, a shower of rain upon them, it makes it still look more like a baptism; which also is aptly resembled by their passage through the sea, the waters standing up on both tides, so that they seemed to be buried in them. Which things being considered, justifies the apostle, I say, in the use of the word, which strictly and properly signifies dipping or plunging. Words, when used in a figurative sense, though what is expressed by them is not literally true; yet the literal sense is not lost thereby: For instance, in the word dipage When a person has been in a large shower of rain, so that his clothes and body are exceeding wet, we often say of such an one, he is finely dipt; the meaning of which is, that he is as wet as if he had been dipt all over in a brook or river. So likewise of a person that has just looked into a book, controversy, art, or science; we say, that he has just dipt into it; whereby we mean, that he has arrived but to a small acquaintance with, or knowledge in those things. Now would it not be a vain thing for a man, from hence, to attempt to prove, that the word dip is not to be understood in its

native, common, and literal sense, in which we mostly use it. This observation will serve to vindicate my way of accounting for the use of the word in the present text, as well as for baptw in Daniel 4:33. In fine, from the whole, we may well conclude that Baptism ought to be performed by immersion, plunging, or dipping in water, according to the practice of John, Christ, and his apostles, the nature and end of the ordinance, and the true and native signification of the word; which mode of baptizing has been used in all ages of the world, and I doubt not but will be, notwithstanding all opposition made against it. As to the endangering of health by immersion, I referred the reader to Sir John Floyer's History of Cold-bathing. Mr. M. insinuates that I have misrepresented him. I only intimate to the reader, that Sir John gives a relation of several cures performed by cold-bathing: And I could easily fill up several pages with a catalogue of diseases for which he says it is useful, together with instances of cures performed by it. He asks, "Why I do not inform my reader in how many cases Sir J. F. and Dr. B. thought cold-bathing inconvenient and dangerous?" I could, indeed, soon acquaint the reader, that Sir John Floyer thought it not proper to be used when persons were hot and sweating, nor after excessive eating or drinking; as also, that they should not stay in it too long, until they were chilled; and that if any danger came by it, it was usually in such cases: But this will do his cause no service, nor affect ours. I could also have told my reader, that he thinks cold-bathing to be useful in Consumptions, Catarrhs, etc. the cases which Mr. M. instances in; who cites Dr. Cheyne's Essay on Health, page 108. where the Doctor says, "that Cold-bathing should never be used under a fit of a chronical distemper, with a quick pulse, or with a headache, or by those that have weak lungs." But why does he not acquaint his reader that the Doctor in the very same paragraph, says, "that cold-bathing is of great advantage to health — It promotes perspiration, enlarges the circulation, and prevents the danger of catching cold." So that every body will easily see, as all experience testifies, that there is no force in the argument, taken from the endangering of health by immersion. By this time the reader will be capable of judging whether Mr. Gill is fairly answered or no, as Mr. M. has expressed in his title-page; though it would have been as well to have left it for another to have made the remark, and so took the advice of the wise man, Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips (Proverbs 27:2). But before I conclude, I shall take liberty to ask Mr.. M. four or five questions.

1. Why does he not tell the world who that servant of Christ is, whose words he uses; he says, I am mistaken in saying that they are the words of Ruffen; but I still aver, that they are used by him; but whether Ruffen took them from his servant of Christ, or his servant of Christ from Ruffen, I cannot tell; for that two men, without the knowledge of one another's words, should fall into the same odd, and awkward way of speaking, and commit the very same blunders, is not reasonable to suppose; but however, let him be who he will, Mr. Stennett's reply to Ruffen, which I have transcribed, fully detects the sin and folly of those indecent expressions. As to what Mr.. M. says, page 44 "that he is very willing that both Stennett and Ruffen should lie dormant;" I believe it, for as the latter will never be of any service to his cause, so the former would give a considerable blow to it, was his book more diligently perused.

2. What does he mean by the word of the Lord, he so often mentions, when speaking of the sense of the Greek word? Does he mean the original text of the New Testament? That uses a word in the account it gives of this ordinance, which, as has been made appear, always signifies to dip or plunge. Or, by the word of the Lord, does he mean our translation; which uses the word baptize,

thereby leaving the sense of the Greek word undetermined, had not the circumstances, attending the accounts we have of the administration of this ordinance, sufficiently explained it; as will clearly appear to every one who considers them: Had this rendered it dip, as some other versions have done, none, one would think, would have been at a loss about the right mode of administering this ordinance; though in Holland, where they use no other word but dipping to express baptism by, yet they nevertheless use sprinkling; nay, as I am informed, the minister when he only sprinkles or pours water upon the face of the infant, says, "I dip thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost." Such a force have prejudice and custom on the minds of men, that it puts them on doing what is contrary to the plain and manifest sense of words.

3. Why has he dropped his new found name of Plungers, which he seemed to be so fond of in his former performance, and thought so exceeding proper for us, and revived the old name of Anabaptists? which we cannot be, neither according to his principles, nor our own; not according to ours, because we deny pouring or sprinkling to be baptism; not according to his, because he denies dipping or plunging to be baptism.

4. Why are Dr Owen's arguments for Infants-baptism published at the end of his book? How impertinent is this? When the controversy between us, is not about the subjects, but the mode of baptism: Perhaps his bookseller did this, seeing Mr. M. says nothing of them himself, nor recommends them to others; but if he thinks fit to shew his talent in this part of the controversy, he may expect attendance thereto, if what he shall offer deserves it.

5. Why has he not defended his wise reasons for mixed communion, and made some learned strictures upon those arguments of mine, which he has been pleased to call frivolous, without making any further reply to them? He has very much disappointed many of his friends, who promised both me and themselves an answer, to that part of my book especially; but perhaps a more elaborate performance may be expected from him, upon that subject, or some other learned hand. However, at present, I shall take my leave of him; but not with Proverbs 26:4 which he has been ashamed to transcribe at length, lest his readers should compare the beginning and end of his book together; whereby they would discover, how much he deserves the character of a Gentleman, a Scholar, or a Christian; as also, how well this suits the whining insinuations, with which he begins his performance. I shall add no more, but conclude with the words of Job, Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; and cause me to understand wherein I have erred. How forcible are right words? But what doth your arguing reprove?

ENDNOTES:

[1] In loc.

[2] De tribus Sect. Jud. lib. a. c. 15.

[3] Judaei vero superstitiosiores non pedes tantum, sed & corpus totum intingebant. Hinc hmerobaptivai, dicti, qui quodidie, ante discubitum, corpus intingebant. Quare Pharisaeus ille, qui Iesum ad coenam invitaverat, mirabatur eum, antequam totum corpus abluisset, discubuisse: oti ou prwton ebaptioqh pro tou arisou, Luke 11:1-54. Puriores vero a superstitione, pro universali ilia baptizev contenti erant podoniptrw|, hoc est, pedilavio. Testis dominus ipse, qui alii Pharisaeo, a quo coena exceptus fuerat, objicit, sibi discubituro aquam ad pedes datam non suiffe. Luke 7:1-50. udwr epi touv podav mou ouk edwkav . Scaliger de Emend. Temp. lib. 6 p. 571.

[4] Trad. Chagigah, c. 2. §. 5.

[5] Tract. Yadaim. c. 1 p. 1-3. etc. 2 § 3.

[6] Spicileg. in Mark 7:3.

[7] Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. 8. & Lex. Talm. p. 1335. Pocock not. misc. p. 375. 376, 393, Scaliger. Elenchus Tritaeres. Serrar. c. 7.

[8] Pocock. not. misc. p. 397, 398.

[9] Adhibuerunt Judaei µydy tlyfn lotionem rnanuum, & µydy tlybf immersionem rnanuum & videtur vocabulum niywntai, apud Evangelistam nostram, priori respondere, & baptizwntai postetiori. Lightfoot. Hot. Hebrews in Mark 7:4.

[10] Vid. R. David Kimchi & R. Sol. Jarchi in loc.

01.05. The Divine Right of Infant-Baptism,

The Divine Right Of Infant Baptism, Examined And Disproved; Being an Answer to a Pamphlet, Entitled, A brief Illustration and Confirmation of the Divine Right of Infant-Baptism.

PRINTED AT BOSTON IN NEW-ENGLAND, 1746.

CHAPTER 1. The Introduction, observing the Author, Title, method and occasion of writing the Pamphlet under consideration.

Many being converted under the ministry of the word in New-England, and enlightened into the ordinance of believers baptism, whereby the churches of the Baptist persuasion at Boston and in that country have been much increased, has alarmed the paedobaptist ministers of that colony; who have applied to one Mr. Dickenson, a country minister, who, as my correspondent informs me, has wrote with some success against the Arminians, to write in favor of infant sprinkling; which application he thought fit to attend unto, and accordingly wrote a pamphlet on that subject; which has been printed in several places, and several thousands have been published, and great pains have been taken to spread them about, in order to hinder the growth of the Baptist interest. This performance has been transmitted to me, with a request to take some notice of it by way of reply, which I have undertook to do. The running title of the pamphlet, is The Divine Right of Infant-Baptism; but if it is of divine right, it is of God; and if it is of God, if it is according to his mind, and is instituted and appointed by him, it must be notified somewhere or other in his word; wherefore the scriptures must be searched into, to see whether it is so, or no: and upon the most diligent search that can be made, it will be found that there is not the least mention of it in them; that there is no precept enjoining it, or directing to the observation of it; nor any instance, example, or precedent encouraging such a practice; nor any thing there laid or done, that gives any reason to believe it is the will of God that such a rite should be observed; wherefore it will appear to be entirely an human invention, and as such to be rejected. The title-page of this work promises an Illustration and Confirmation of the said divine right; but if there is no such thing, as it is certain there is not, the author must have a very difficult task to illustrate and confirm it; how far he has succeeded in this undertaking, will be the subject of our following inquiry. The writer of the pamphlet under consideration has chose to put his thoughts together on this subject, in the form of a dialogue between a minister and one of his parishioners, or neighbors. Every man, that engages in a controversy, may write in what form and method he will; but a by-stander will be ready to conclude, that such a way of writing is chose, that he may have the opportunity of making his antagonist speak what he pleases; and indeed he would have acted a very unwise part, had he put arguments and objections into his mouth, which he thought he could not give any tolerable answer to; but, inasmuch as he allows the person the conference is held with, to be not only a man of piety and ingenuity, but of considerable reading, he ought to have represented him throughout as answering to such a character; whereas, whatever piety is shewn in this debate, there is very little ingenuity discovered; since, for the most part, he is introduced as admitting the weak reasonings of the minister, at once, without any further controversy; or if he is allowed to attempt a

defense of the cause and principles he was going over to, he is made to do it in a very mean and trifling manner; and, generally speaking, what he offers is only to lead on to the next thing that presents itself in this dispute: Had he been a man of considerable reading, or had he read Mr. Stennett, and some others of the Antipaedobaptist authors, as is said he had, which had occasioned his doubt about his baptism, he would have known what answers and objections to have made to the minister's reasonings, and what arguments to have used in favor of adult-baptism, and against infant-sprinkling. What I complain of is, that he has not made his friend to act in character, or to answer the account he is pleased to give of him: However he has a double end in all this management; on the one hand, by representing his antagonist as a man of ingenuity and considerable reading, he would bethought to have done a very great exploit in convincing and silencing such a man, and reducing him to the acknowledgment of the truth; and, on the other hand, by making him talk so weakly, and so easily yielding to his. arguments, he has acted a wise part, and taken care not to suffer him to say such things, as he was not able to answer; and which, as before observed, seems to be the view of writing in this dialogue-way.

CHAPTER 2 Of the Consequences of renouncing Infant baptism. The minister, in order to frighten his parishioner out of his principle of adult-baptism, he was inclined to, suggests terrible consequences that would follow upon it; as his renouncing his baptism in his infancy; vacating the covenant between God and him, he was brought into thereby; renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel, as the ministry of the Word, and the sacrament of the Lord's-Supper; that upon this principle, Christ, for many ages, must have forsaken his church, and not made good his promise of his presence in this ordinance; and that there could be no such thing as baptism in the world now, neither among Paedobaptists, nor Antipaedobaptists.

1st, The first dreadful consequence following upon a man's espousing the principle of believers baptism, is a renunciation of his baptism; not of the ordinance of baptism, that he cannot be laid to reject and renounce; for when he embraces the principle of adult-baptism, and acts up to it, he receives the true baptism, which the word of God warrants and directs unto, as will be seen hereafter: But it seems it is a renunciation of his baptism in his infancy; and what of that? it should be proved first, that that is baptism, and that it is good and valid, before it can be charged as an evil to renounce it; it is right to renounce that which has no warrant or foundation in the word of God: But what aggravates this supposed evil is, that in it a person in his early infancy is dedicated to God the Father, Son, and holy Ghost; it may be asked, by whom is the person in his infancy dedicated to God, when baptism is said to be administered to him? Not by himself, for he is ignorant of the whole transaction; it must be either by the minister, or his parents: The parents indeed desire the child may be baptized, and the minister uses such a form of words, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; but what dedication is here made by the one, or by the other? However, seeing there is no warrant from the word of God, either for such baptism, or dedication; a renunciation of it need not give any uneasiness to any person so baptized and dedicated.

2dly, To embrace adult-baptism, and to renounce infant-baptism, is to vacate the covenant into which a person is brought by his baptism, [page 4] by which covenant the writer of the dialogue means the covenant of grace, as appears from all his after-reasonings from thence to the right of infants to baptism.

1. He supposes that unbaptized persons are, as to their external and visible relation, strangers to the covenants of promise; are not in covenant with God; not so much as visible Christians; but in a state of heathenism; without hope of salvation, but from the uncovenanted mercies of God, [pages 4, 5, 6]. The covenant of grace was made from everlasting; and all interested in it were in covenant with God, as early, and so previous to their baptism, as to their secret relation God-wards; but this may be thought to be sufficiently guarded against by the restriction and limitation, "as to external and visible relation:" But I ask, are not all truly penitent persons, all true believers in Christ, though not as yet baptized, in covenant with God, even as to their external and visible relation to him, which faith makes manifest? Were not the three thousand in covenant with God visibly, when they were pricked to the heart, and repented of their fins, and gladly received the word of the gospel, promising the remission of them, though not as yet baptized? Was not the Eunuch in covenant with God? or was he in a state of heathenism, when he made that confession of his faith, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, previous to his going down into the water, and being baptized? Were the believers in Samaria, or those at Corinth, in an uncovenanted state, before the one were baptized by Philip, or the other by the apostle Paul? Was Lydia, whole heart the Lord opened, and who attended to the things that were spoken; and the Jailer, that believed and rejoiced in God, with all his house, in an uncovenanted state, before they submitted to the ordinance of baptism? Are there not some persons, that have never been baptized, of whom there is reason to believe they have an interest in the covenant of grace? Were not the Old Testament saints in the covenant of grace, before this rite of baptism took place? Should it be said, that circumcision did that then, which baptism does now, enter persons into covenant, which equally wants proof, as this; it may be replied, that only commenced at a certain period of time; was not always in use, and belonged to a certain people only; whereas there were many before that, who were in the covenant of grace, and many after, and even at the same time it was enjoined, who yet were not circumcised; of which more hereafter: From all which it appears, how false that assertion is.

2. That a man is brought into covenant by baptism, as this writer affirms; seeing the covenant of grace is from everlasting; and those that are put into it, were put into it so soon; and that by God himself, whole sole prerogative it is. Parents cannot enter their children into covenant, nor children themselves, nor ministers by sprinkling water upon them; it is an act of the sovereign grace of God, who says, I will be their God, and they shall be my people: The phrase of bringing into the bond of the covenant, is but once used in scripture; and then it is ascribed to God, and not to the creature; not to any act done by him, or done to him (Ezekiel 20:37), and much less,

3. Can this covenant be vacated, or made null and void, by renouncing infant-baptism: The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and sure; its promises are Yea and Amen in Christ; its blessings are the sure mercies of David; God will not break it, and men cannot make it void; it is to everlasting, as well as from everlasting; those that are once in it can never be put out of it; nor can it be vacated by any thing done by them. This man must have a strange notion of the covenant of grace, to write after this rate; he is said to have wrote against the Arminians with some success; if he has, it must be in a different manner from this; for upon this principle, that the covenant of grace may be made null and void by an act of the creature, how will the election of God stand sure? or the promise of the covenant be sure to all the seed? What will become of the doctrine of the faints perseverance? or of the certainty of salvation to those that are chosen, redeemed, and called?

3dly, Another consequence said to follow, on espousing the principle of adult-baptism, and renouncing that of infants, is a renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel, as the ministry of the word, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper, practically denying the influences of the Spirit in them, and all usefulness, comfort and communion by them. All which this author endeavors to make out, by observing, that if infant-baptism is a nullity, then those, who have received no other, if ministers, have no right to administer sacred ordinances, being unbaptized; and, if private persons, they have no right to partake of the Lord's supper, for the same reason; and so all public ordinances are just such a nullity as infant-baptism; and all the influence: of the Spirit, in conversion, comfort, and communion, by them, must be practically denied, [pages 5, 6]. To which may be replied, that though upon the principle of adult-baptism, as necessary to the communion of churches, it follows, that no unbaptized person is regularly called to the preaching of the word, and administration ordinances, or can be a regular communicant; yet it does not follow, that a man that renounces infant baptism, and embraces believers baptism, must renounce all other ordinances, and look upon them just such nullities as infant-baptism is, and deny all the comfort and communion he has had in them; because the word may be truly preached, and the ordinance of the Lord's supper be duly administered, by an irregular man, and even by a wicked man; yea, may be made useful for conversion and comfort; for the use and efficacy of the word and ordinances, do not depend upon the minister or administrator; but upon God himself, who can, and does sometimes, make use of his own word for conversion, though preached by an irregular, and even an immoral man; and of his own ordinances, for comfort, by such an one, to his people, though they may be irregular and deficient in some things, through ignorance and inadvertency.

4thly, Another consequence following upon this principle, as supposed, is, that if infant-baptism is no institution of Christ, and to be rejected, then the promise of Christ, to be with his ministers in the administration of the ordinance of baptism, to the end of the world (Matthew 28:19-20), is not made good; since for several ages, even from the fourth to the sixteenth century, infant baptism universally obtained, [pages 6-8]. To which the following answer may be returned; That the period of time pitched upon for the prevalence of infant, baptism is very unhappy for the credit of it, both as to the beginning and end; as to the beginning of it, in the fourth century, a period in which corruption in doctrine and discipline flowed into the church, and the man of sin was ripening apace, for his appearance; and likewise as to the end, the time of the reformation, in which such abuses began to be corrected: The whole is a period of time, in which the true church of Christ began gradually to disappear, or to be hidden, and at last fled into the wilderness; where she has not been forsaken of Christ, but is, and will be, nourished, for a time, and limes, and half a time; this period includes the gross darkness of popery, and all the depths of Satan; and which to suffer was no ways contrary to the veracity of Christ, in his promise to be with his true church and faithful ministers to the end of the world. Christ has no where promised, that his doctrines and ordinances should not be perverted; but, on the contrary, has given clear and strong intimations, that there should be a general falling-away and departure from the truth and ordinances of the gospel, to make way for the revelation of antichrist; and though it will be allowed, that during this period infant-baptism prevailed, yet it did not universally obtain. There were witnesses for adult-baptism in every age; and Christ had a church in the wilderness, in obscurity, at this time; namely, in the valleys of Piedmont; who were, from the beginning of the apostasy, and witnessed against it, and bore their testimony against infant-baptism, as will be seen hereafter, and with these his presence was; nor did he promise it to any, but in the faithful ministration of his word and ordinances, which

he has always made good; and it will lie upon this writer and his friends, to prove the gracious presence of Christ in the administration of infant-baptism.

5thly, It is said, that, upon these principles, rejecting infant-baptism, and espousing believers-baptism, it is not possible there should be any baptism at all in the world, either among Paedobaptists or Antipaedobaptists; the reason of this consequence is, because the madmen of Munster, from whom this writer dates the first opposition to infant-baptism; and the first Antipaedobaptists in England, had no other baptism than what they received in their infancy; that adult-baptism must first be administered by unbaptized persons, if infant-baptism is no ordinance of Christ, but a mere nullity; and so by such as had no claim to the gospel ministry, nor right to administer ordinances; and consequently the whole succession of the Antipaedobaptist churches must remain unbaptized to this day; and so no more baptism among them, than among the Paedobaptists, until there is a new commission from heaven, to renew and restore this ordinance, which is, at present, lost out of the world, [pages 6, 8, 9]. As for the madmen of Munster, as this writer calls them, and the rife of the Antipaedobaptists from them, and what is said of them, I shall consider in the next chapter. The English Antipaedobaptists, when they were first convinced of adult-baptism, and of the mode of administering it by immersion, and of the necessity of letting a reformation on foot in this matter, met together, and consulted about it: when they had some difficulties thrown in their way, about a proper administrator to begin this work; some were for fending messengers to foreign churches, who were the successors, of the ancient Waldenses in France and Bohemia; and accordingly did send over some, who being baptized, returned and baptized others. And this is a sufficient answer to all that this writer has advanced. But others thought that this was a needless scruple, and looked too much like the popish notion of an uninterrupted succession, and a right conveyed through that to administer ordinances; and therefore judged, in such a care as theirs, there being a general corruption as to this ordinance, that an unbaptized person, who appeared to be otherwise qualified to preach the word, and administer ordinances, should begin it; and justified themselves upon the same principles that other reformers did, who, without any regard to an uninterrupted succession, let up new churches, ordained pastors, and administered ordinances: It must be owned, that in ordinary cases, he ought to be baptized himself, that baptizes another, or preaches the word, or administers other ordinances; but in an extraordinary care, as this of beginning a reformation from a general corruption, where such an administrator cannot be had, it may be done; nor is it essential to the ordinance that there should be such an administrator, or otherwise it could never have been introduced into the world at all at first; the first administrator must be an unbaptized person, as John the Baptist was.

According to this man’s train of reasoning, there never was, nor could be any valid baptism in the world; for John, the first administrator, being an unbaptized person, the whole succession of churches from that time to this day must remain unbaptized. It will be said, that he had a commission from heaven to begin this new ordinance; and a like one should be shewn for the restoration of it. To which I answer, that there being a plain direction for the administration of this ordinance, in the Word, there was no need of a new commission to restore it from a general corruption; it was enough for any person, sensible of the corruption, to attempt a reformation, and to administer it in the right way, who was satisfied of his call from God to preach the gospel, and administer ordinances, according to the word. I shall close this chapter with the words of

Zanchy,[1] a Protestant Divine, and a Paedobaptist, and a man of as great learning and judgment, as any among the first reformers: "It is a fifth question, he says, proposed by Augustin, [contra Parmen. 1.2. c. 13. col. 42] but not solved, whether he that never was baptized may baptize another; and of this question he says, that is, Austin, nothing is to be affirmed without the authority of a council. Nevertheless, Thomas (Aquinas) takes upon him to determine it, from an answer of Pope Nicholas, to the inquiries of the Dutch, [as it is had in Decr. de Consec. dist. 4. can. 22] where we thus read; "You say, by a certain Jew, whether a Christian or a heathen, you know not, (that is, whether baptized or unbaptized) many were baptized in your country, and you desire to know what is to be done in this care; truly if they are baptized in the name of the holy Trinity, or only in the name of Christ, they ought not to be baptized again." And Thomas confirms the same, by a laying of Isidore, which likewise is produced in the same distinction, [can. 21] where he says, "that the Spirit of Christ ministers the grace of baptism, though he be a heathen that baptizes. Wherefore, says Thomas, if there should be two persons not yet baptized, who believe in Christ, and. They have no lawful administrator by whom they may be baptized, one may, without sin, be baptized by the other; the necessity of death obliging to it. All this, adds Zanchy, proceeds from hence, that they thought water-baptism absolutely necessary; but what cannot be determined by the word of God, we should not dare to determine. But, says he, I will propose a question, which, I think, may be easily answered; supposing a Turk in a country where he could not easily come at Christian churches; he, by reading the New Testament, is favored with the knowledge of Christ, and with faith; he teaches his family, and converts that to Christ, and so others likewise; the question is, whether he may baptize them whom he has converted to Christ, though he himself never was baptized with water-baptism? I do not doubt but he may; and, on the other hand, take care that he himself be baptized, by another of them that were converted by him; the reason is, because he is a minister of the Word, extraordinarily raised up by Christ; so that such a minister may, with them, by the consent of the church, appoint a colleague, and take care that he be baptized by him." The reason which Zanchy, gives, will, I think, hold good in the case of the first Antipaedobaptists in England.

CHAPTER 3. Of the Antiquity of Infant- baptism; when first debated; and concerning the Waldenses. The minister, in this dialogue, in order to stagger his neighbor about the principle of adult-baptism, he had espoused, suggests to him, that infant-baptism did universally obtain in the church, even from the apostles times; that undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that it constantly obtained in the truly primitive church; and that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, till the madmen of Munster set themselves against it; and affirms, that the ancient Waldenses being in the constant practice of adult-baptism, is a mere imagination, a chimerical one, and to be rejected as a groundless figment, [pages 7, 9].

I. This writer intimates, that the practice of infant-baptism universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. The truly primitive church is the church in the times of Christ and his apostles: The first Christian church was that at Jerusalem, which consisted of such as were made the disciples of Christ, and baptized; first made disciples by Christ, and then baptized by his apostles; for Jesus himself baptized none, only they baptized by his order (John 4:1-2; Acts 1:15). This church afterwards greatly increased; three thousand persons, who were pricked to the heart under Peter’s ministry, repented of their sins, and joyfully received the good news of pardon and

salvation by Christ, were baptized, and added to it; these were adult persons; nor do we read of any one infant being baptized, while this truly primitive church subsisted. The next Christian church was that at Samaria; for that there was a church there, is evident from Acts 9:31. This seems to have been founded by the ministry of Philip; the original members of it were men and women baptized by Philip, upon a profession of their faith in the things preached by him, concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12); nor is there the least intimation given that infant-baptism at all obtained in this church. Another truly primitive Christian church, was the church at Philippi; the foundation of which was said in the two families of Lydia and the Jailer, and which furnish out no proof of infant-baptism obtaining here, as we shall see hereafter; for Lydia's household are called brethren, whom the apostles visited and comforted; and the Jailer's household were such as were capable of hearing the word, and who believed in Christ, and rejoiced in God as well as he (Acts 16:14-15; Acts 16:32-34; Acts 16:40). So that it does not appear that infant-baptism obtained in this church. The next Christian church we read of, and which was a truly primitive one, is the church at Corinth, and consisted of persons who, hearing the apostle Paul preach the gospel, believed in Christ, whom he preached, and were baptized (Acts 18:8): but there is no mention made of any infant being baptized, either now or hereafter, in this truly primitive church state. These are all the truly primitive churches of whole baptism we have any account in the Acts of the apostles, excepting Cornelius, and his family and friends, who very probably founded a church at Caesarea; and the twelve disciples at Ephesus, who very likely joined to the church there, and who are both instances of adult-baptism (Acts 10:48; Acts 19:1-7). Let it be made appear, if it can, that any one infant was ever baptized: in any of the above truly primitive churches, or in any other, during the apostolic age, either at Antioch or Thessalonica, at some, or at Colosse, or any other primitive church of those times. But though this cannot be made out from the writings of the New Testament, we are told,

II. That undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that infant-baptism constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. Let us a little inquire into this matter:

1. The Christian writers of the first century, besides the evangelists and apostles, are Barnabas, Herman, Clemens Romanus, Ignatius and Polycarp. As to the two first of there, Barnabas and Hermas, the learned Mr. Stennett[2] has cited some passages out of them; and after him Mr. David Rees;[3] for which reason, I forbear transcribing them; which are manifest proofs of adult-baptism, and that as performed by immersion; they represent the persons baptized, the one[4] as hoping in the cross of Christ, the other[5] as having heard the word, and being willing to be baptized in the name of the Lord; and both as going down into the water, and coming up out of it. Clemens Romanus wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, still extant; but there is not a syllable in it about infant-baptism. Ignatius wrote epistles to several churches, as well as to particular persons; but makes no mention of the practice of infant-baptism in any of them: what he lays of baptism, favors adult-baptism; since he speaks of it as attended with faith, love and patience: "Let your baptism, says he[6] remain as armor; faith as an helmet, love as a spear, and patience as whole armor." Polycarp wrote an epistle to the Philippians, which is yet in being; but there is not one word in it about infant-baptism. So that it is so far from being true, that there is undoubted evidence from the ancient fathers, that this practice universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church, that there is no evidence at all that it did obtain, in any respect, in the first century, or apostolic age; and which is the only period in which the truly primitive church of Christ can be said

to subsist. There is indeed a work called The constitutions of the apostles, and sometimes the constitutions of Clemens, because he is laid to be the compiler of them; and another book of Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, out of which, passages have been cited in favor of infant-baptism; but there are manifestly of later date than they pretend to, and were never written by the persons whose names they bear, and are condemned as spurious by learned men, and are given up as such by Dr. Wall, in his History of Infant Baptism.[7]

2. The Christian writers of the second century, which are extant, are Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian, Minutius Felix, Irenaeus, and Clemens of Alexandria; and of all these writers, there is not one that lays any thing of infant-baptism; there is but one pretended to, and that is Irenaeus, and but a single passage out of him; and that depends upon a single word, the signification of which is doubtful at best; and besides the passage is only a translation of Irenaeus, and not expressed in his own original words; and the chapter, from whence it is taken, is by some learned men judged to be spurious; since it advances a notion inconsistent with that ancient writer, and notoriously contrary to the books of the evangelists, making Christ to live to be fifty years old, yea, to live to a senior age: The passage, produced in favor of infant-baptism, is this; speaking of Christ, he says,[8] "Sanctifying every age, by that likeness it had to him; for he came to save all by himself; all, I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, "who by him are born again unto God;" infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men; therefore he went through every age, and became an infant, to infants sanctifying infants; and to little ones a little one, sanctifying those: of that age; and likewise became an example of piety, righteousness, and subjection:" Now, the question is about the word renascuntur, whether it is to be rendered born again, which is the literal sense of the word, or baptized; the true sense of Irenaeus seems to be this, that Christ came to fare all that are regenerated by his grace and spirit; and none but they, according to his own words (John 3:3; John 3:5), and that by assuming human nature, and parting through the several stages of life, he has sanctified it, and let an example to men of every age. And this now is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of infant-baptism, from the fathers of the first two centuries; it would be easy to produce passages out of the above writers, in favor of believers-baptism; I shall only cite one out of the first of them; the account, that Justin Martyr gave to the emperor Antoninus Pius of the Christians of his day; though it has been cited by Mr. Stennett and Mr. Rees, I shall choose to transcribe it; because, as Dr. Wall says,[9] it is the most ancient account of the way of baptizing next the scripture. "And now, says Justin,[10] we will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God; lest, omitting this, we should seem to act a bad part in this declaration. As many, as are persuaded, and believe the things, taught and said by us, to be true, and promise to live according to them, are instructed to pray, and to ask, fasting, the forgiveness of their past sins of God, we praying and fasting together with them. After that, they are brought by us where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration, as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water, in the name of the Father and Lord God of all, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit." There is a work, which bears the name of Justin, called Answers to the orthodox, concerning some necessary questions; to which we are sometimes referred for a proof of infant-baptism; but the book is spurious, and none of Justin’s, as many learned men have observed; and as Dr. Wall allows; and is thought not to have been written before the fifth century. So stands the evidence for infant-baptism, from the ancient fathers of the first two centuries.

3. As to the third century, it will be allowed, that it was spoken of in it; though as loon as it was mentioned, it was opposed; and the very first man that mentions it, speaks against it; namely, Tertullian. The truth of the matter is, that infant-baptism was moved for in the third century; got footing and establishment in the fourth and fifth; and so prevailed until the time of the reformation: Though, throughout these several centuries, there were testimonies bore to adult-baptism; and at several times, certain persons rose up, and opposed infant-baptism; which brings me,

III. To consider what our author affirms, that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, until the madmen of Munster let themselves against it, [page 7]. Let us examine this matter, and,

1. It should be observed, that the disturbances in Germany, which our Paedobaptist writers so often refer to in this controversy about baptism, and so frequently reproach us with, were first begun in the wars of the boors, by such as were Paedobaptists, and them only; first by the Papists, some few years before the reformation; and after that, both by Lutherans and Papists, on account of civil liberties; among whom, in process of time, some few of the people called Anabaptists mingled themselves; a people that scarce in any thing agree with us, neither in their civil, nor religious principles; nor even in baptism itself; for if we can depend on those that wrote the history of them, and against them; they were for repeating adult-baptism, not performed among them; yea, that which was administered among themselves, when they removed their communion to another society; nay, even in the same community, when an excommunicated person was received again;[11] besides, if what is reported of them is true, as it may be, their baptism was performed by sprinkling, which we cannot allow to be true baptism; it is laid, that when a community of them was satisfied with the person's faith and conversation, who proposed for baptism, the payor took water into his hand, and sprinkled it on the head of him that was to be baptized, using there words, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost:[12] And even the disturbances in Munster, a famous city in Westphalia, were first begun by Bernard Rotman, a Paedobaptism minister of the Lutheran persuasion, assisted by other ministers of the reformation, in opposition to the Papists in the year 1532; and it was not till the year 1533, that John Matthias of Harlem, and John Bocoldus of Leyden came to this place;[13] who, with Knipperdolling and others, are, I suppose, the madmen of Munster this writer means; and he may call them madmen, if he pleases; I shall not contend with him about it; they were mad notions which they held, and mad actions they performed; and both dip avowed by the people who are now called Anabaptists; though it is not reasonable to suppose, that there were the only men concerned in that affair, or that the number of their followers should increase to such a degree in so small a time, as to make such a revolution in so large a city: However, certain it is, that it was not their principle about baptism, that led them into such extravagant notion, and actions: But what I take notice of all this for, is chiefly to observe the date of the confusions and distractions, in which there madmen were concerned; which were from the year 1533 to 1536: And our next inquiry therefore is, whether there was any debate about the practice of infant-baptism before this time. And,

2. It will appear, that it was frequently debated, before these men set themselves against it, or acted the mad part they did: In the years 1532 and 1528, there were public disputations at Berne in Switzerland, between the ministers of the church there and some Anabaptist teacher;[14] in the years 1529, 1527 and 1525, Oecolampadius had various disputes with people of this name at

Basil in the same country;[15] in the year 1525, there was a dispute at Zurich in the same country about Paedobaptism, between Zwinglius, one of the first reformers, and Balthasar Hubmeierus,[16] who afterwards was burnt, and his wife drowned at Vima, in the year 1528; of whom Meshovius,[17] though a Papist, give, this character; that he was from his childhood brought up in learning; and for his singular erudition was honored with a degree in divinity; was a very eloquent man, and read in the scriptures, and fathers of the church. Hoornbeck[18] calls him a famous and eloquent preacher, and lays he was the first of the reformed preachers at Waldshut: There were several disputations with other, in the same year at this place; upon which an edict was made by the senate at Zurich, forbidding rebaptization, under the penalty of being fined a silver mark, and of being imprisoned, and even drowned, according to the nature of the offense. And in the year 1526, or 1527, according to Hoornbeck, Felix Mans, or Mentz, was drowned at Zurich; this man, Meshovius says,[19] whom he calls Felix Mantscher, was of a noble family; and both he, and Conrad Grebel, whom he calls Cunrad Grebbe, who are said to give the first rise to Anabaptism at Zurich, were very learned men, and well skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. And the same writer affirms, that Anabaptism was set on foot at Wittenberg, in the year 1522, by Nicholas Pelargus, or Stork, who had companions with him of very great learning, as Carolostadius, Philip Melancthon, and others; this, he says, was done, whilst Luther was lurking as an exile in the cable of Wartpurg in Thuringia; and that when he returned from thence to Wittenberg he banished Carolostadius, Pelargus, More, Didymus, and others,[20] and only received Melancthon again. This carries the opposition to Paedobaptism within five years of the reformation, begun by Luther; and certain it is, there were many and great debates about infant-baptism at the first of the reformation, years before the affair of Munster: And evident it is, that some of the first reformers were inclined to have attempted a reformation in this ordinance, though they, for reasons best known to themselves, dropped it; and even Zwinglius himself, who was a bitter persecutor of the people called Anabaptists afterwards, was once of the same mind himself, and against Paedobaptism. But,

3. It will appear, that this was a matter of debate, and was opposed before the time of the reformation. There was a set of people in Bohemia, near a hundred years before that, who appear to be of the same persuasion with the people, called Anabaptists; for in a letter, written by Costelecius out of Bohemia to Erasmus, dated October 10, 1519,[21] among other things said of them, which agree with the said people, this is one; "such as come over to their sect, must every one be baptized anew in meer water;" the writer of the letter calls them Pyghards; so named, he says, from a certain refugee, that came thither ninety-seven years before the date of the letter. Pope Innocent the third, under whom was the Lateran council, A.D. 1215, has, in the decretals, a letter, in answer to a letter from the bishop of Arles in Provence, which had represented to him,[22] that "some Heretics there had taught, that it was to no purpose to baptize children, since they could have no forgiveness of sins thereby, as having no faith, charity, etc." So that it is a clear point, that there were some that let themselves against infant-baptism in the thirteenth century, three hundred years before the reformation; yea, in the twelfth century there were some that opposed Paedobaptism. Mr. Fax, the martyrologist, relates from the history of Robert Guisburne,[23] that two men, Gerhardus and Dulcinus, in the reign of Henry the second, about the year of our Lord 1158; who, he supposes, had received some light of knowledge of the Waldenses, brought thirty with them into England; who, by the king and the prelates, were all burnt in the forehead, and so driven out of the realm; and after were slain by the Pope. Rapin[24] calls

them German Heretics, and places their coming into England at the year 1166: But William of Newbury[25] calls them Publicans, and only mentions Gerhardus, as at the head of them; and whom he allows to be somewhat learned, but all the rest very illiterate, and says they came from Gascoigne; and being convened before a council, held at Oxford for that purpose, and interrogated concerning articles of faith, said perverse things concerning the divine sacraments, detesting holy baptism, the Eucharist and marriage: And his annotator, out of a manuscript of Radulph Picardus, the monk, shews, that the Heretics, called Publicans, affirm, that we must not pray for the dead; that the suffrages of the saints were not to be asked; that they believe not purgatory; with many other things; and particularly, afferunt isti parvulos non baptisandos donec ad intelligibilem perveniant etatem; "they assert that infants are not to be baptized, till they come to the age of understanding."[26] In the year 1147, St Bernard wrote a letter to the earl of St Gyles, complaining of his harboring Henry, an Heretic; and among other things he is charged with by him, are there; "the infants of Christians are hindered from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them; nor are they suffered to come to their salvation, though our Savior compassionately cries out in their behalf, Suffer little children to come unto me, etc." and, about the same time, writing upon the Canticles, in his 65th and 66th sermons, he takes notice of a sort of people, he calls Apostolici; and who, perhaps, were the followers of Henry; who, says he, laugh at us for baptizing infants;[27] and among the tenets which he ascribes to them, and attempts to confute, this is the first, "Infants are not to be baptized:" In opposition to which, he affirms, that infants are to be baptized in the faith of the church; and endeavors, by instances, to show, that the faith of one is profitable to others;[28] which he attempts from Matthew 9:2 and Matthew 15:28; 1 Timothy 2:15. In the year 1146, Peter Bruis, and Henry his follower, set themselves against infant-baptism. Petrus Cluniacensis, or Peter the Abbot of Clugny, wrote against them; and among other errors he imputes to them, are there: "That infants are not baptized, or saved by the faith of another, but ought to be baptized and saved by their own faith; or, that baptism without their own faith does not save; and that those, that are baptized in infancy, when grown up, should be baptized again; nor are they then rebaptized, but rather rightly baptized:"[29] And that there men did deny infant-baptism, and pleaded for adult-baptism, Mr. Stennett[30] has proved from Cassander and Prateolus, both Paedobaptists: And Dr. Wall[31] allows these two men to be Antipaedobaptists; and says, they were "the first Antipaedobaptist preachers that ever let up a church, or society of men, holding that opinion against infant-baptism, and rebaptizing such as had been baptized in infancy;" and who also observes,[32] that the Lateran[33] council, under Innocent the II, 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant-baptism: Moreover, in the year 1140, or a little before it, Evervinus, of the diocese of Cologn, wrote a letter to St Bernard; in which he gives him an account of some heretics, lately discovered in that country; of whom he says, "they condemn the sacraments, except baptism only; and this only in those who are come to age; who, they say, are baptized by Christ himself whoever be the minister of the sacraments; they do not believe infant-baptism; alleging that place of the gospel, he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."[34]

There seem also to be the disciples of Peter Bruit, who began to preach about the year 1126; so that it is out of all doubt, that this was a matter of debate, four hundred years before the madmen of Munster let themselves against it: And a hundred years before there, there were two men, Bruno, bishop of Angiers, and Berengarius, archdeacon of the same church, who began to spread their particular notions about the year 1035; which chiefly respected the sacraments of baptism

and the Lord's-Supper. What they said about the former, may be learned from the letter sent by Deodwinus, bishop of Liege, to Henry I. King of France; in which are the following words:[35] "There is a report come out of France, and which goes through all Germany, that there two (Bruno and Berengarius) do maintain, that the Lord's body (the Host) is not the body, but a shadow and figure of the Lord's body; and that they do disannul lawful marriages; and, as far as in them lies, overthrow the baptism of infants:" And from Guimundus, bishop of Aversa, who wrote against Berengarius, who says, "that he did not teach rightly concerning the baptism of infants, and concerning marriage."[36] Mr. Stennett[37] relates from Dr. Allix, a passage concerning one Gundulphus and his followers, in Italy; divers of whom, Gerard, bishop of Cambray and Arras, interrogated upon several heads in the year 1025. And, among other things, that bishop mentions the following reason, which they gave against infant-baptism; "because to an infant, that neither wills, nor runs, that knows nothing of faith, is ignorant of its own salvation and welfare; in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, or confession; the will, faith and confession of another seem not in the least to appertain."

Dr. Wall, indeed, represents these men, the disciples of Gundulphus, as Quakers and Manichees in the point of baptism; holding that water-baptism is of no use to any: But it must be affirmed, whatever their principles were, that their argument against infant-baptism was very strong. So then we have testimonies, that Paedobaptism was opposed five hundred years before the affair of Munster. And if the Pelagians, Donatists, and Luciferians, so called from Lucifer Calaritanus, a very orthodox man, and a great opposer of the Arians, were against infant-baptism, as several Paedobaptist writers affirm; this carries the opposition to it still higher; and indeed it may seem strange, that since it had not its establishment till the times of Austin, that there should be none to let themselves against it: And if there were none, how comes it to pass that such a canon should be made in the Milevitan council, under pope Innocent the first, according to Carranza;[38] and in the year 402, as say the Magdeburgensian centuriators;[39] or be it in the council at Carthage, in the year 418, as says Dr. Wall[40] which runs thus, "Also, it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized; or says, they are indeed to be baptized for the remission of sins; and yet they derive no original sin from Adam to be expiated by the washing of regeneration; (from whence it follows, that the form of baptism for the forgiveness of sins in them, cannot be understood to be true, but false) let him be anathema:" But if there were none, that opposed the baptism of new-born infants, why should the first part of this canon be made, and an anathema annexed to it? To say, that it respected a notion of a single person in Cyprian's time, 150 years before this, that infants were not to be baptized, until eight days old; and that it seems there were some people still of this opinion, wants proof. But however certain it is, that Tertullian[41] in the beginning of the third century, opposed the baptism of infants, and dissuaded from it, who is the first writer that makes mention of it: So it appears, that as soon as ever it was set on foot, it became matter of debate; and sooner than this, it could not be: And this was thirteen hundred years before the madmen of Munster appeared in the world. But,

IV. Let us next consider the practice of the ancient Waldenses, with respect to adult-baptism, which this author affirms to be a chimerical imagination, and groundless figment. It should be observed, that the people called Waldenses, or the Vaudois, inhabiting the valleys of Piedmont, have gone under different names, taken from their principal leaders and teachers; and so this of the Waldenses, from Peter Waldo, one of their barbs, or pastors; though some think, this name is

only a corruption of Vallenses, the inhabitants of the valleys: And certain it is, there was a people there before the times of Waldo, and even from the apostles time, that held the pure evangelic truths, and bore a testimony to them in all ages,[42] and throughout the dark times of popery, as many learned men have observed; and the sense of there people concerning baptism may be best understood,

1. By what their ancient barbs or pastors taught concerning it. Peter Bruis, and Henry his successor, were both, as Morland affirms,[43] their ancient barbs and pastors; and from them there people were called Petrobrussians and Henricians; and we have seen already, that there two men were Antipaedobaptists, denied infant-baptism, and pleaded for adult-baptism. Arnoldus of Brixia, or Brescia, was another of their barbs, and is the first mentioned by Morland, from whom there people were called Arnoldists. Of this man Dr. Allix says,[44] that besides being charged with some ill opinions, it was said of him, that he was not found in his sentiments concerning the sacraments of the altar and the baptism of infants; and Dr. Wall allows,[45] that the Lateran council, under Innocent the second, in 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant-baptism, Lollardo was another of their barbs, who, as Morland says, was in great reputation with them, for having conveyed the knowledge of their doctrine into England, where his disciples were known by the name of Lollards; who were charged with holding, that the sacrament of baptism used in the church by water, is but a light matter, and of small effect; that Christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water; and that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents be baptized before them:[46] All which seem to arise from their denying of infant baptism, and the efficacy of it to take away sin.

2. By their ancient confessions of faith, and other writings which have been published. In one of there, bearing date A.D. 1120, the 12th and 13th articles run thus:[47] "We do believe that the sacraments are signs of the holy thing, or visible forms of the invisible grace; accounting it good that the faithful sometimes use the said signs, or visible forms, if it may be done. However we believe and hold, that the above said faithful may be saved without receiving the signs aforesaid, in case they have no place, nor any means to use them. We acknowledge no other sacrament but baptism and the Lord’s-Supper." And in another ancient confession, without a date, the 7th article is:[48] "We believe that in the sacrament of baptism, water is the visible and external sign, which represents unto us that which (by the invisible virtue of God operating) is within us; namely, the renovation of the Spirit, and the mortification of our members in Jesus Christ; by which also we are received into the holy congregation of the people of God, there protesting and declaring openly our faith and amendment of life." In a tract,[49] written in the language of the ancient inhabitants of the valleys, in the year 1100, called The Noble Lesson, are there words; speaking of the apostles, it is observed of them, "they spoke without fear of the doctrine of Christ; they preached to Jews and Greeks, working many miracles, and those that believed they baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." And in a treatise concerning Antichrist, which contains many sermons of the barbs, collected in the year 1120, and so speaks the sense of their ancient pastors before this time, stands the, following passage:[50] "The third work of antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the holy Spirit, unto the dead outward work (or faith) baptizing children in that faith, and teaching, that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had, and therein he confers and bellows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is

against the Holy Spirit."

There are indeed two confessions of theirs, which are said to speak of infant-baptism; but there are of a late date, both of them in the sixteenth century; and the earliest: is not a confession of the Waldenses or Vaudois in the valleys of Piedmont, but of the Bohemians, said to be presented to Ladislaus king of Bohemia, A.D. 1508, and afterwards amplified and explained, and presented to Ferdinand king of Bohemia, A.D. 1535; and it should be observed, that those people say, that they were fairly called Waldenses;[51] whereas it is certain there were a people in Bohemia that came out of the valleys, and sprung from the old Waldenses, and were truly so, who denied infant-baptism, as that sort of them called Pyghards, or Picards; who, near a hundred years before the reformation, as we have seen by the letter sent to Erasmus out of Bohemia, rebaptized persons that joined in communion with them; and Scultetus,[52] in his annals on the year 1528, says, that the united brethren in Bohemia, and other godly persons of that time, were rebaptized; not that they patronized the errors of the Anabaptist's, (meaning such that they were charged with which had no relation to baptism) but because they could not see how they could otherwise separate themselves from an unclean world. The other confession is indeed made by the ministers and heads of the churches in the valleys, assembled in Angrogne, September 12, 1532.[53] Now it should be known, that this was made after that "Peter Masson and George Morell were sent into Germany in the year 1530, as Morland[54] says, to treat with the chief ministers of Germany, namely, Oecolampadius, Bucer, and others, touching the reformation of their churches; but Peter Masson was taken prisoner at Dijon."

However, as Fox says[55] "Morell escaped, and returned alone to Merindol, with the books and letters he brought with him from the churches of Germany; and declared to his brethren all the points of his commission; and opened unto them how many and great errors they were in; into the which their old ministers, whom they called Barbs, that is to say Uncles, had brought them, leading them from the right way of true religion." After which, this confession was drawn up, signed, and swore to: From hence we learn, where they might get this notion, which was now become matter of great debate in Switzerland and Germany; and yet, after all this, I am inclined to think, that the words of the article in the said confession, are to be so understood, as not to relate to infant-baptism: They are these;[56] "We have but two sacramental signs left us by Jesus Christ; the one is baptism; the other is the Eucharist, which we receive, to shew that our perseverance in the faith, is such, as we promised, when we were baptized, being little children." This phrase, being little children, as I think, means, their being little children in knowledge and experience, when they were baptized; since they speak of their receiving the Eucharist, to shew their perseverance in the faith, they then had promised to persevere in: Besides, if this is to be understood of them, as infants in a literal sense; what promise were they capable of making, when such? Should it be said, that "they promised by "their sureties;" it should be observed, that the Waldenses did not admit of godfathers and godmothers in baptism; this is one of the abuses their ancient Barbs complained of in baptism, as administered by the Papists.[57]

Besides, in a brief confession of faith, published by the reformed churches of Piedmont, so late as A.D. 1655, they have there words in favor of adult-baptism;[58] "that God does not only instruct and teach us by his word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with it, as a means to unite us unto Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits. And there are only two of them belonging in common to all the members of the church under the New Testament; to wit,

baptism and the Lord’s-Supper; that God has ordained the sacrament of baptism to be a testimony of our adoption, and of our being cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and renewed in holiness of life:" Nor is there one word in it of infant-baptism.

Upon the whole, it will be easily seen, what little reason the writer of the dialogue under consideration had to say, that the ancient Waldenses, being in the constant practice of adult-baptism, is a chimerical imagination, and a groundless fiction; since there is nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were in the practice of it until the sixteenth century; for what is urged against it, is since that time: And even at that time, there were some, that continued in the practice of it; for Ludovicus Vives, who wrote in the said century, having observed, that "formerly no person was brought to the holy baptistery, till he was of adult age, and when he both understood what that mythical water meant, and desired to be washed in it, yea, desired it more than once," adds the following words; "I hear, in some cities of Italy, the old custom is still in a great measure preferred."[59]

Now, what people should he mean by some cities of Italy, unless the remainders of the Petrobrussians, or Waldenses, as Dr. Wall observes,[60] who continued that practice in the valleys of Piedmont: And it should be observed, that there were different sects, that went by the name of Waldenses, and some of them of very bad principles; some of them were Manichees, and held other errors: And indeed, it was usual for the Papists in former times, to call all by this name, that dissented from them; so that it need not be wondered at, if some, bearing this name, were for infant-baptism, and others not. The Vaudois in the valleys, are the people chiefly to be regarded; and it will not be denied, that of late years infant-baptism has obtained among them: But that the ancient Waldenses practiced it, wants proof.

CHAPTER 4. The Argument for Infant-baptism, taken from the Covenant made with Abraham, and from Circumcision, the Sign of it, considered. The minister in this debate, in answer to his neighbor’s requiring a plain scripture institution of infant-baptism, tells him; if he would "consider the covenant of grace, which was made with Abraham, and with all his seed, both after the flesh, and after the Spirit, and by God’s express command to be sealed to infants, he would there find a sufficient scripture instance for infant-baptism:" And for this covenant he directs him to Genesis 17:2; Genesis 17:4; Genesis 17:7; Genesis 17:10; Genesis 17:12. He argues, that this covenant was a covenant of grace; that it was made with all Abraham’s seed, natural and spiritual, Jews and Gentiles; that circumcision was the seal of it; and that the same institution, which requires circumcision to be administered to infants, requires baptism to be also administered to them, that succeeding circumcision, [page 10-18]. Wherefore,

First, The leading inquiry is, whether the covenant made with Abraham (Genesis 17:1-27), was the covenant of grace; that is, the pure covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of works; which is the sense in which it is commonly understood, and in which this writer seems to understand this covenant with Abraham; for of it, he says [p. 13], "it was the covenant of grace, that covenant by which alone we can have any grounded hope of salvation:" But that it was the covenant of grace, or a pure covenant of grace, must be denied: For,

1. It is never called the covenant of grace, nor by any name which shews it to be so; it is called the covenant of circumcision, which God is said to give to Abraham (Acts 7:8) but not a covenant of grace; circumcision and grace are opposed to one another; circumcision is a work of the law,

which they that sought to be justified by, fell from grace (Galatians 5:2-4).

2. It seems rather to be a covenant of works, than of grace; for this was a covenant to be kept by men. Abraham was to keep it, and his seed after him were to keep it; something was to be done by them; they were to circumcise their flesh; and not only he and his seed were to be circumcised, but all that were born in his house, or bought with his money; and a severe penalty was annexed to it: In care of neglect, or disobedience, such a soul was to "be cut off from his people" (Genesis 17:9-14). All which favor nothing of a covenant of grace, a covenant by which we can have a grounded hope of salvation, but the contrary.

3. This was a covenant that might be broken, and in some instances was (Genesis 17:14); but the covenant of grace cannot be broken; God will not break it (Psalms 89:34), nor man cannot: It is a covenant ordered in all things, and sure; it cannot be moved; it stands firmer than hills, or mountains.

4. It must be owned, that there were temporal things promised in this covenant, such as a multiplication of Abraham's natural seed; a race of kings from him, with many nations, and a possession of the land of Canaan (Genesis 17:6; Genesis 17:8). Things which can have nothing to do with the pure covenant of grace, any more than the change of his name from Abram to Abraham [Genesis 17:5].

5. There were some persons, included in this covenant made with Abraham, of whom it cannot be thought they were in the covenant of grace, as Ishmael, Esau, and others; and on the other hand, there were some, and even living at the time when this covenant was made, and yet were not in it; who, nevertheless, were in the covenant of grace, as Arphaxad, Melchizedek, Lot, and others; wherefore this can never be reckoned the pure covenant of grace.

6. The covenant of grace was only made with Christ, as the federal head of it; and who is the only head of the covenant, and of the covenant-ones; wherefore, if the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, as the federal head of his natural and spiritual seed, of Jews and Gentiles; then there must be two heads of the covenant of grace, contrary to the nature of such a covenant, and the whole current of scripture: Yea, this covenant of Abraham's, so far as it respected his spiritual seed, or spiritual blessings for them, it and the promises were made to Christ (Galatians 3:16). No mere man is capable of covenanting with God, of stipulation and restipulation; for what has man to restipulate with God? The covenant of grace is not made with any single man; and much less with him on the behalf of others: When, therefore, at any time we read of the covenant of grace, being made with a particular person, or with particular persons, it must always be understood of making it manifest to them; of a revelation of the covenant, and of an application of covenant-blessings to them; and not of any original contract with them; for that is only made with them in Christ. To which may he added,

7. That the covenant of grace was made with Christ, and with his people, as considered in him, from everlasting; for so early was Christ set up as the mediator of it; the promise of eternal life in it was before the world was; and those interested in it, were blessed with all spiritual blessings and grace before the foundation of it; now could there be a mediator so early, a promise of eternal life so soon, and blessings of grace provided, and no covenant subsisting? wherefore the covenant made with Abraham in time, could not, strictly and properly speaking, be the covenant of grace.

But,

8. To shorten this debate, it will be allowed, that the covenant made with Abraham was a peculiar covenant, such as was never made with any before, or since; that it was of a mixed kind; that it had in it promises and mercies of a temporal nature, which belonged to his natural seed; and others of a spiritual sort, which

01.06. The Argument From Apostolic Tradition,

The Argument From Apostolic Tradition, In Favor Of Infant Baptism With OTHERS, advanced in a late Pamphlet, called, The Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. considered;

It is with reluctance I enter again into the controversy about baptism; not from any consciousness either of the badness or weakness of the cause I am engaged in; but partly on account of other work upon my hands, which I chose not to be interrupted in; and partly because I think there has been enough written already, to bring this controversy to an issue; and it is not our fault that it has not been closed long ago; for there has been scarce any thing wrote by us these fifty years past, but in our own defense; our Paedobaptist brethren being continually the aggressors, and first movers of the controversy; they seem as if they were not satisfied with what has been done on their fide, and therefore are always attempting either to put the controversy upon a new foot, or to throw the old arguments into a new form; and even say the same things over and over again, to make their minds, and the minds of their people easy, if possible. If persons are content to search the scriptures, and form their judgment of this matter by them, there has been enough published on both sides of the question to determine themselves by; and we are willing things should rest here: but this is our care; if we reply to what is written against us, then we are litigious persons, and lovers of controversy; though we only rise up in our own vindication, for which surely we are not to be blamed; and if we make no reply, then what is written is unanswerable by us, and we are triumphed over. No less than half a dozen pamphlets have been published upon this subject, within a very little time; without any provocation from us., that I know of. Some of them indeed are like mushrooms, that rise up and die almost as soon as they live; it has been the luck of the pamphlet before me, to live a little longer; and which is cried up as an unanswerable one, for no other reason, that I can see, but because it has not yet been answered in form; otherwise the arguments advanced in it, have been answered before it was in being; for there is nothing new throughout the whole of it. Is there any one argument in it, but what has been brought into the controversy before? not one. Is the date of infant-baptism, as it appears from the writings of the ancients, from antiquity, for which this performance is mostly boasted of, carried one year, one month, one day, one hour, or moment higher, than it was before? not one. Is there any one passage of the ancients cited, which has not been produced and been under consideration before? not one. What then has this Gentleman been doing? just nothing at all. However an answer would have been made to him before this time, had not some things in providence prevented. My late worthy friend, the Reverend Mr.. Samuel Wilson, intended to have drawn up one, as he signified to me; for which reason, I did not give myself the trouble to read this pamphlet: His view was first to publish his Manual, and then to take this under consideration; but he dying before the publication of the former, prevented his design; nor did he, as I could ever find, leave any materials behind him relating to this affair. Some time after Mr. Killingworth published an answer to Dr. Foster on the subject of communion, and added some remarks upon this pamphlet; when I ordered my Bookseller to get me that, and the strictures on it; upon reading of which, I found that Mr. Killingworth expected a formal answer to it was preparing, and would be published

by a Gentleman he represents as the occasion of its being written; which for some time I have been waiting for: but hearing nothing of it, and the boasts of the party increasing, because of no answer, determined me to take it under examination in the manner I have done; but whether after all I am not too forward, I cannot tell; but if any thing is preparing or prepared by another hand, I hope what I have written will not hinder the publication of it.

Infant-baptism is sometimes put upon one footing, and sometimes on another; as on the covenant of grace; on circumcision; on the baptism of Jewish proselytes; on scripture consequences; and by our author it is rested on apostolic tradition. This he says is an argument of great weight;[1] and that it is principally for the sake of this, that his performance appears in the world;[2] for which reason, I shall chiefly attend unto it. Whatever weight this argument may be thought to have in the present controversy, it has none in others; not in the controversy with the Papists, nor with the church of England about rites and ceremonies, this Gentleman himself being judge; who I understand is the author of The dissenting Gentleman's answer to Mr. White's Three Letters. In his controversy with him, Christ is the only lawgiver and head of the church, and no man upon earth, or body of men, have authority to make laws, or prescribe things in religion, or to set aside, alter or new-make any terms fixed by him; and apostolical authority, or what is directed to by the apostles, as fallible and unassisted men, is no authority at all, nor obligatory as a law on men, they having no dominion over their faith and practice; and the scriptures are the only, common, sufficient and perfect rule: but in the controversy about infant-baptism, apostolic tradition is of great weight; if the dispute is about sponsors and the cross in baptism, then fathers and councils stand for nothing; and the testimonies of the ancients for these things, though clear and indubitable, and about the sense of which there is no contest, and are of as early antiquity as any thing can be produced for infant-baptism, are not allowed sufficient; but if it is about infant-baptism itself, then fathers and councils are called in, and their testimonies produced, insisted upon, and retained, though they have not one syllable of baptism in them; and have senses affixed to them, strained and forced, contrived to serve an hypothesis, and what the good old fathers never dreamed of; is this fair dealing? can this be said to be sincerity, integrity and honesty? no surely. This Gentleman should know that we, who are called Anabaptists, are Protestants, and the Bible is our religion; and that we reject all pretended apostolic tradition, and every thing that goes under that name, not found in the Bible, as the rule of our faith and practice. The title of the pamphlet before me is, The baptism of Infants a reasonable service, founded upon Scripture, and undoubted Apostolic Tradition; but if it is founded upon scripture, then not upon tradition; and if upon tradition, then, not on scripture; if it is a scriptural business, then not a traditional one; and if a traditional one, then not a scriptural one: if it can be proved by scripture, that is enough, it has then no need of tradition; but if it cannot be proved by that, a cart-load of traditions will not support it.—This put me in mind of what I have heard, of a countryman offering to give the Judge a dozen reasons why his neighbor could not appear in court; in the first place, my Lord, says he, he is dead; that is enough, quote the Judge, I shall spare you the trouble of giving me the rest: so prove but infant-baptism by scripture, and there will be no need of the weighty arguments from tradition. However, by putting the care as it is, we learn that this author by apostolic tradition, means unwritten apostolic tradition, since he distinguishes it from the scripture; and not apostolic tradition, delivered in the scriptures, which is the sense in which sometimes tradition is used, both in the word of God (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:15), and in ancient writers.[3] So we are not at a loss about the sense of it; it is unwritten, uninspired apostolic tradition; tradition not in, but out of the scriptures; not delivered by

the apostles in the sacred writings, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches.

It is pretty much that infant-baptism should be called an undoubted apostolic tradition, since it has been doubted of by some learned Paedobaptists themselves; nay, some have affirmed that it is not observed by them as an apostolic tradition, particularly Curcellaeus,[4] and who gives a very good reason for it: his words are these; "Paedobaptism was unknown in the two first ages after Christ; in the third and fourth it was approved by a few; at length, in the fifth and following ages it began to obtain in divers places; and therefore this rite is indeed observed by us as an ancient custom, but not as an apostolic tradition."

Bishop Taylor[5] calls it a pretended apostolical tradition; and says, that the tradition cannot be proved to be apostolical, we have very good evidence from antiquity. Since then the Paedobaptists disagree about this point among themselves, as well as it is called in question and contested by others; one would think, this writer should not be so confident as to call it an undoubted apostolic tradition.

Besides, apostolic tradition, at most and best, is a very precarious and uncertain thing, and not to be depended on; we have a famous instance of this, in the controversy that arose in the second century, about the time of keeping Easter; whether it should be observed on the 14th day of the first moon, let it fall on what day of the week it would, or on the Sunday following; the former was observed by the churches of Asia, and the latter by the church of some; both pleaded the custom and usage of their predecessors, and even ancient apostolic tradition;[6] the Asiatic churches said, they had it by tradition from Philip and John; the Roman church from Peter and Paul; but not being able to fettle this point, which was in the right, Victor, the then bishop of Rome, excommunicated the other churches that would not fall in with the practice of him and his church; this was in the year 196; and even before this, in the year 157, this same controversy was on foot; and Polycarp bishop of Smyrna, who had been a hearer and disciple of the apostle John, made a journey to some, and conversed with Anicetus bishop of that place, about this matter; they talked it over candidly, parted friendly, but without convincing each other, both retaining their former customs and tradition;[7] if now it was so difficult a thing to fix a tradition, or fettle what was an apostolic tradition, about the middle of the second century, fifty or sixty years after the death of the apostle John, and when some of the immediate successors of the apostles were living; what judgment can we form of apostolic traditions in the eighteenth century?

Moreover, it is doubtful whether there ever was any such thing as apostolic tradition; or that ever any thing was delivered by the apostles to their successors, or to the churches, to be observed by them, which was not delivered in the sacred writings; and I defy this Gentleman, and demand of him to give me one single instance of any apostolic tradition of this nature; and if no such instance can be given, it is in vain to talk of undoubted apostolic tradition; and upon what a miserable foundation must infant baptism stand, that relics upon this? unwritten apostolic tradition is a non-entity, as the learned Alting[8] calls it; it is a mere chimaera; a refuge of heretics formerly, and of papists now; a favorite argument of theirs, to prove by it what they please. But be it so, that there is such a thing as apostolic tradition; let it be proved that infant-baptism is such; let the apostles be pointed out that delivered it. Were they all the apostles or only some of them that delivered it? let them be named who they were, and to whom they delivered it, and when, and where. The apostles Peter and Paul, who were, the one the apostle of the circumcision, and the

other the apostle of the uncircumcision, one would think, should be the most likely to hand down this tradition; the one to the Christian Jews, and the other to the Christian Gentiles; or however, to their successors or companions: but is there any proof or evidence that they did so? none at all; though there are writings of persons extant that lived in their times. If Clemens Romanus was a successor of Peter, as the papists say, it might have been expected, that it would have been delivered to him, and he would have published it; but there is not a word of it in his epistles still in being. Barnabas was a companion of the apostle Paul; and had it been a tradition of his, it might be justly thought, it would be met with in an epistle of his now extant; but there is not the least hint of it in it, but on the contrary, several passages in favor of believers-baptism. Perhaps, as John was the last of the apostles, and outlived them all, it was left with him to transmit it to others; and had this been the care, it might have been hoped it would have been found in the writings of Polycarp, a hearer and disciple of the apostle John; but not a syllable of it is to be found in him. Nay Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, one that was a hearer of John the elder of Ephesus, and a companion of Polycarp, and who had conversed with those who were familiar with the apostles, and made it his business to pick up sayings and facts, said or done by the apostles, not recorded in scripture, has not a word of this; which childish business would have been a very pretty thing for that weak-headed man, as Eusbius[9] represents him, to have gone prattling about with; here is an apostolic tradition then, which no body knows by whom it was delivered, nor to whom, nor when and where: the companions and successors of the apostles say nothing of it. The[10] Jews talk of a Mosaic tradition and oral law, delivered from one to another for several thousand years running; they tell you by whom it was first given and received; and can name the persons to whom it was transmitted in succeeding ages; this is something to the purpose; this is doing business roundly; but here is a tradition no body can tell from whence it comes, nor who received it, and handed it down; for there is not the least mention of it, nor any pretended to in the first century or apostolic age. But let us attend to what evidence is given of it, in the next or second century.

Two passages are produced out of the writers of this age, to prove this undoubted apostolic tradition; the one out of Justin Martyr; the other out of Irenaeus. That from Justin is as follows;[11] "several persons among us, men and women, of sixty and seventy years of age, oi ek paidwn emaqhteuqhsan tw Criso, who from their childhood were instructed in Christ, remain incorrupt:" for so the phrase on which the whole depends should be rendered, and not discipled or proselyted to Christ; which rendering of the words, as it is unjustifiable, so it would never have been thought of, had it not been to serve a turn; and is not agreeable to Justin's use of the word, who frequently makes use of it in the sense of instruction and teaching; as when he speaks of persons being maqhteuqhnaV , instructed into divine doctrines;[12] and of others being maqhteuomenouV , instructed in the name (person or doctrine) of Christ, and leaving the way of error;[13] and of Christ's sending his disciples to the Gentiles, who by them emaaqhteusan, instructed them:[14] nor should ek paidwn, be rendered in infancy, but from childhood; and is a phrase of the same signification with that in 1 Timothy 3:15 where Timothy is said apo brefouV , from a child to know the holy scriptures; and Justin's sense is, that notwithstanding the strict and severe commands of Christ in Matthew 5:28-30, Matthew 5:44 as they might seem to be, and which he cites; yet there were several persons of the age he mentions, then living, who had been instructed in the person, offices, and doctrines of Christ, or had been trained up in the Christian religion from their childhood, who had persevered hitherto, and were incorrupt in their practices, and in their principles; and which is no other than a verification of what the wise man observes, Proverbs 22:6.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it: and we are able in our day, to point out persons of an age that Justin mentions, who have been trained up in the Christian religion from their childhood; and who in riper years have made a public profession of it, and have held fast their profession without wavering, and lived unblemished lives and conversations; and yet never were baptized in their infancy.

Behold, here the first proof and evidence of infant-baptism being an undoubted apostolic tradition; when there is not a word of baptism in it, much less of infant-baptism; nor any hint of it, or reference unto it. Can the most sanguine Paedobaptist sit down, and in cool reflection conclude, upon reading and considering this passage, that it proves infant-baptism to be an undoubted apostolic tradition? surely he cannot. The other passage is out of Irenaeus, and stands thus;[15] "He (Christ) came to save all; all I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, who by him are born again unto God, infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." For so the words are to be rendered, and not baptized unto God; for the word renascor is never used by Irenaeus, or rather by his translator, in such a sense; nor had it as yet obtained among the ancients to use the words regenerated and regeneration, for baptized and baptism. Likewise, it is certain that Irenaeus speaks elsewhere of regeneration as distinct from baptism, as an inward spiritual work, agreeable to the scriptures; which never speak of it but as such, no not in John 3:5, Titus 3:5. And what reason can there be to depart from the literal and scriptural sense of the word, and even the sense which Irenaeus uses it in; and especially, since infants are capable of regeneration in such a sense of it? besides, to understand Irenaeus as speaking of baptism, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false; as if Christ came to save all and only such, who are baptized unto God; when it is certain, he came to save the Old-Testament-saints, who never were baptized, as well as New-Testament saints; and no doubt many now are fared by him, who never were baptized with water at all: and on the other hand, nothing is more true than that he came to save all and only those, who are regenerated by the Spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age they he. And after all, when it is observed that the chapter out of which this passage is taken, is thought by some learned men to be none of Irenaeus', but a spurious piece; and if it is his, it is only a translation, as almost all his works be, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one, as learned men observe; so that it is not certain that there are his words, or are a true translation of them; what wise and considerate man will say, that this is a proof of infant-baptism being an undoubted apostolic tradition? seeing the passage is so much contested, and so much is to be said against it; seeing, at most and best, the sense of it is doubtful; and seeing it is certain that Irenaeus uses the word regeneration in a different sense from baptism;[16] who can be sure he uses it of baptism here? Upon the whole, what thoughtful man will affirm from hence, that infant-baptism is an undoubted apostolic tradition? And seeing these two testimonies are the only ones produced in favor of infant-baptism in the second century; and the latter Dr. Wall[17] confesses, "is the first express mention that we have met with of infants baptized;" though there is no mention at all made of it in it, any more than in the former; he must have a strong faith to believe, and a good assurance upon such evidence to assert,[18] "that the baptism of infants was the undoubted practice of the Christian church in its purest and first: ages; the ages immediately succeeding the apostles." Let us now proceed to the third century.

Tertullian is the first man that ever made mention of infant-baptism, that we know of; and as he was the first that spoke of it, he at the same time spoke against it, dissuaded from it, and advised

to defer it; and though he was quire singular, as our author says, in this his advice; it should be observed, that he is also quite singular in his mention of the thing itself; there being no writings of any contemporary of his extant, from which we might learn their sense of this affair. We allow that infant-baptism was moved in the third century; that it then began to be talked of, and became matter of debate, and might be practiced in the African churches, where it was first moved. We do not deny the probability of the practice of it then, though the certainty of it does not appear; it is probable it might be practiced, but it is not certain it was; as yet it has not been proved. Now here we stick, by this we abide, that there is no mention made of it in any authentic writer before Tertullian's time. And this writer himself elsewhere[19] observes, that "by his time, it is well known, a great variety of superstitious, and ridiculous, and foolish rites were brought into the church." The date of infant-baptism cannot, we apprehend, be carried higher than his time; and we require of any of our learned Paedobaptist brethren, to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before Tertullian, in which infant-baptism is expressly mentioned, or clearly hinted at, or plainly supposed, or manifestly referred unto. This being the care, as we own it began in this century, and might be practiced by some, it might be needless in a good measure to consider after-testimonies; however, I shall not think fit wholly to neglect them.

Origen is next quoted, and three passages out of him; shewing that the baptism of infants is a tradition of the apostles, and an usage of the church for the remission of sins; but it should be observed, that these quotations are not from the Greek of Origen; he wrote much in that language, and there is much still extant in it; and yet nothing is produced from thence, that can fairly be construed in favor of infant-baptism; though many things may be observed from thence, in favor of adult-baptism. The three passages are quoted out of some Latin translations, greatly interpolated, and not to be depended on. His Homilies on Leviticus, and exposition of the epistle to the Romans, out of which two of them are taken, are translated by Ruffinus; who with the former, he himself owns, he used much freedom, and added much, and took such a liberty in both of adding, taking away, and changing, that, as Erasmus says,[20] whoever reads there pieces, it is uncertain whether he reads Origen or Ruffinus; and Vossius observes,[21] that the former of these was interpolated by Ruffinus, and thinks therefore, that the passage cited was of the greater authority against the Pelagians, because Ruffinus was inclined to them. The Homilies on Luke, out of which is the other passage, were translated by Jerom, of whom Du Pin says,[22] that "his versions are not more exact than Ruffinus's." Now both there lived at the latter end of the fourth century, and it looks very probable, that these very passages, are additions, or interpolations of these men, tinct (the color of) the language agrees with those times, and no other; for no contemporary of Origen's, nor any writer before him or after him, until the times of Ruffinus, Jerom and Austin, speak of infant-baptism as an usage of the church, or an apostolical tradition; in short, as bishop Taylor observes,[23] "a tradition apostolical, if it be not consigned with a fuller testimony than of one person (Origen,) whom all after-ages have condemned of many errors, will obtain so little reputation amongst those, who know that things have upon greater authority pretended to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely; that it will be a great argument, that he is credulous, and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in a matter of so great concernment."

Cyprian, with his council of sixty-six bishops, are brought as witnesses of infant-baptism, a little after the middle of the third century. We allow that as infant-baptism was moved for in Tertullian's time, so it obtained in the African churches in Cyprian's time; but then by Fidus the country bishop,

applying to the council to have a doubt resolved, whether it was lawful to baptize infants until they were eight days old; it appears to be a novel practice; and that as yet it was undetermined, by council or custom, when they were to be baptized, whether as soon as born, or on the eighth day, or whether it was to be left to every one's liberty: and it should also be observed, that in this age, infant communion was practiced as well as infant, baptism; and very likely both began together, as it is but reasonable, that if the one be admitted, the other should. But of this more hereafter. The Clementine Constitutions, as they are called, are next produced, as enjoining infant-baptism; but why does this Gentleman call them the Clementine Constitutions, unless he is of opinion, and which he suggests by this title of them, that Clemens Romanus was the compiler of them from the mouths of the apostles? and if so, he might have placed the passage out of them with greater advantage, at the head of his testimonies; but he must know, that there writings are condemned as spurious, by almost all learned men, excepting Mr. Whiston; and were not heard of till the times of Epiphanius, in the latter end of the fourth century, if so soon: and it should be observed, that these same Constitutions, which direct to the baptizing of infants, injoin the use of godfathers in baptism; the form of renouncing the devil and all his works; the consecration of the water; trine immersion; the use of oil, and baptizing, fasting; crossing with the sign of the cross in the forehead; keeping the day of Christ's nativity, Epiphany, the Quadragesima or Lent; the feast of the passover, and the festivals of the apostles; falling on the fourth and sixth days of the week; praying for saints departed; singing for the dead, and honoring their relics; with many other things foreign enough from the simplicity of the apostolic doctrine and practice. A testimony from such a work, can be of very little credit to the cause of infant-baptism. And now we are come to a very remarkable and decisive testimony, as it is called, from the writings of Austin and Pelagius; the sum of which is, that there being a controversy between these two persons about original sin, the latter, who denied it, was pressed by the former, with an argument taken from the baptism of infants for the remission of sins; with which Pelagius seemed exceedingly embarrassed, when it greatly concerned him to deny it if he could; and had it been an innovation, so acute, learned, and sagacious a man as he was, would have discovered it; but on the contrary, when he was charged with a denial of it as the consequence of his opinion, he warmly disclaims it, and complains of a slander; and adds, that he never heard that even any impious heretic denied it, or refused it to infants; and the same says Austin, that it never was denied by any man, catholic or heretic, and was the constant usage of the church; for all which vouchers are produced. To which may be replied,

1. However embarrassed Pelagius might be with the argument, it did not lead to a controversy about the subject, but the end of baptism, and about the latter, and not the former was the dispute; nor was he under so great a temptation, and much less necessity, nor did it so greatly concern him to deny the baptism of infants, on account of his tenet; since he was able upon his principles to point out other ends of their baptism, than that of remission of sin; and particularly, their receiving and enjoying the kingdom of heaven; and as a late writer[24] observes, this proposition "baptism ought to be administered to children, as well as to the adult; was not inconsistent with, nor repugnant to his doctrine; for though he denied original sin, he allowed baptism to be administered even to children, but only for their sanctification."

2. It should be known and observed, that we have no writings of Pelagius extant, at least under his name, only some passages quoted by his adversaries, by which we can judge what were his sentiments about infant-baptism; and it is well known that a man's words often are misquoted, or

misunderstood, or misrepresented by an adversary; I will not say that this is the case of Pelagius; I would hope better things of his adversaries, particularly Austin, and that he has been used fairly; I am willing to allow his authorities, though it would have been a greater satisfaction to have had there things from himself, and not at second hand. Nor,

3. Would I detract from the character of Pelagius, or call in question his acuteness, sagacity, and learning; yet two doctors of the age in which he lived, are divided about him in this respect, Austin and Jerom; the former speaks of him as a very considerable man, and of great penetration; but the latter, as if he had no genius, and but very little knowledge;[25] it must be owned, that Austin was the most candid man, and Jerom a sour one, who seldom spoke well of those he opposed, though he was a man of the greatest learning, and so the best judge of it: but however acute, learned, and sagacious Peliagius was, yet falling in with the stream of the times, and not seeing himself concerned about the subject, but the end of baptism, might give himself no trouble to inquire into the rise of it; but take it for granted, as Austin did; who perhaps was as acute, learned and sagacious as he, that it had been the constant usage of the church, and an apostolic tradition; as he had many other things, in which he was mistaken, as will soon appear.

4. Though Pelagius complained that he was defamed, and slandered by some who charged him with denying infant-baptism; yet this, Austin observes, was only a shift of his, in order to invert the state of the question, that he might more easily answer to what was objected to him, and preserve his own opinion. And certain it is, according to Austin;[26] that the Pelagians did deny baptism to some infants, even to the infants of believers, and that for this reason, because they were holy; what others made a reason for it, they make a reason against it.

5. Pelagius says no such thing, that he never heard, no not even any impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants. His words indeed are[27] nunquam se vel impium aliquem haereticum audisse, qui hoc, quod proposuit, de parvulis diceret; that "he never heard, no not any impious heretic, that would say concerning infants, what he had proposed or mentioned:" the sense depends upon the meaning of the phrase, quod proposuit, "what he had proposed or mentioned," of whom, and what that is to be understood; whether of Austin, and the state of the case as proposed and set down by him; so our author seems to understand it, since by way of explanation, he adds, viz. "that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man; and that they are not to be cleansed by the regeneration of baptism:" but this gentleman has not put it as Austin has stated it, which is thus; "it is objected to them (the Pelagians) that they will not own that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man; & in eos tranfisse originale peccatum regeneratiane purgandum, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration:" and according to this sense the meaning cannot be, that he never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants; but either that he never heard that any one should say, that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin had not passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration; but then this is to bring the wicked heretics as witnesses against himself, and to make himself worse than they: or the meaning is, that he never heard that any of them should say, that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration, which is most likely: but then this makes rather against, than for the thing for which it is brought; since it makes the heretic as never saying that infants flood in need of being cleansed by baptism: or else, quod proposuit, "what he had proposed or mentioned," refers to Pelagius, and to the state of the question as he

had put it; representing that he was charged with promising the kingdom of heaven to some, without the redemption of Christ; and of this he might say, he never heard the most impious heretic to say; and this seems to be the sense by what he subjoins; "for who is so ignorant of what is read in the gospel, not only as to attempt to affirm it, but even lightly mention it, or even imagine it?

Moreover, who so impious that would exclude infants from the kingdom of heaven, dum eos baptizari & in Christo renasci putat? whilst he thinks, or is of opinion that they are baptized and regenerated in Christ?" for so it is in my edition[28] of Austin; putet, and not vetat, as Dr. Wall quotes it; and after him this Gentleman: and Pelagius further adds, "who so impious as to forbid to an infant, of whatsoever age, the common redemption of mankind?" but this, Austin says, like the rest is ambiguous; what redemption he means, whether from bad to good, or from good to better: now take the words which way you will, they cannot be made to say, that he had never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants, but that they denied the kingdom of heaven to them; and indeed every one must: allow, whoever is of that opinion, that infants are by baptism really regenerated in Christ; which was the prevailing notion of those times, and the light in which it is put; that they must belong to the kingdom of heaven, and share in the common redemption by Christ.

6. Austin himself does not say, that he had never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism; he could never say any such thing; he must know, that Tertullian had opposed it; and he himself was at the council of Carthage, and there presided, and was at the making of that canon which runs thus; "also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized—let him be anathema:" but to what purpose was this canon made, if he and his brethren knew of none that denied infant-baptism? To say that this respects some people, who were still of the same opinion with Fidus, an African bishop, that lived 150 years before this time, that infants were not to be baptized until they were eight days old, is an idle notion of Dr. Wall:[29] can any man in his senses think, that a council, consisting of all the bishops in Africa, should agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves; only they thought it should not be administered to them as soon as born, but at eight days old? Credat Judaeus Apella, believe it who will; he is capable of believing any thing, that can believe this. Austin himself makes mention of some that argued against it, after this manner:[30] "men are used to ask this question, says he, of what profit is the sacrament of Christian baptism to infants, seeing when they have received it, for the most part they die before they know any thing of it?" and as before observed, he brings in the Pelagians[31] saying, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized: and so Jerom,[32] who was a contemporary of his, speaks of some Christians, qui dare noluerint baptisma, "who refused to give baptism to their children;" so that though infant-baptism greatly obtained in those times, yet it was not so general as this author represents it. Austin therefore could not say what he is made to say: but what then does he say, that he never remembered to have read in any catholic, heretic, or schismatic writer? why, "that infants were not to be baptized, that they might receive the remission of sins, but that they might be sanctified in Christ:" it is of this the words are spoken, which our author has quoted, but are not to be found in the place he refers to; having through inadvertence mistaken Dr. Wall, from whom I perceive he has taken this, and other things. This, and not infant-baptism itself, was what was transiently talked of at Carthage, and cursorily heard by Austin some little time ago, when he was there: this was the novelty he was startled at, but did not think it

seasonable to enter into a debate about it then, and so forgot it: for surely it will not be said, that it was the denial of infant-baptism that was defended with so much warmth against the church, as he lays this was; and was committed to memory in writing; and the brethren were obliged to ask their advice about it; and they were obliged to dispute and write against; for this would prove the very reverse of what this gentleman produces it for. Now, though Austin could not say that he never remembered to have heard or read of any catholic, schismatic, or heretic, that denied infant-baptism; yet he might say he never remembered to have heard or read of any that owned and practiced infant-baptism, but who allowed it to be for the remission of sin; which is widely different from the former: it is one thing what Austin says, and another, what may be thought to be the consequence of his so saying; and in the same sense are we to understand him, when he says,[33] "and this the church has always had, has always held." What? why, that infants are diseased through Adam; and stand in need of a physician; and are brought to the church to be healed. It was the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for the remission of it, he speaks of in there passages; it is true indeed, he took infant-baptism to be an ancient and constant usage of the church. and an apostolic tradition;[34] which perhaps he had taken up from the Latin translations of Origen by Jerom and Ruffinus before-mentioned; since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it as such, before those times: but in this he was deceived and mistaken, as he was in other things which he took for apostolic traditions; which ought to be equally received as this, by those who are influenced by his authority; and indeed every honest man that receives infant-baptism upon the foot of tradition, ought to receive every thing else upon the same foot, of which there is equally as full, and as early, evidence of apostolic tradition, as of this: let it then be observed,

1. That the same Austin that asserts infant-baptism to be an apostolic tradition, affirms infant-communion to be so likewise, as Bishop Taytlor[35] observes; and thus Austin says,[36] "if they pay any regard to the apostolic authority, or rather to the Lord and Matter of the apostles, who says, that they have no life in themselves, unless they eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, which they cannot do unless baptized; will sometimes own that unbaptized infants have not life;"—and a little after, "no man that remembers that he is a Christian, and of the catholic faith, denies or doubts that infants, not having the grace of regeneration in Christ, and without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them; but are hereby liable to everlasting punishment;" by which he means the two sacraments of baptism, and the Lord’s supper; the necessity of both which to eternal life he founded upon a mistaken sense of John 3:5 and John 6:53 as appears from what he elsewhere says;[37] where having mentioned the first of those passages, he cites the latter, and adds; "let us hear the Lord, I say, not indeed speaking this of the sacrament of the holy laver, but of the sacrament of the holy table; whither none rightly come, unless baptized. Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye shall have no life in you; what do we seek for further? what can be laid in answer to this, unless one would set himself obstinately against clear and invincible truth? will any one dare to say this, that this passage does not belong to infants; and that they can have life in themselves, without partaking of his body and blood?" And of the necessity of this, as well as of baptism to eternal life, he says[38] the African Christians took to be an ancient and apostolic tradition. Innocent the first, his contemporary, was also of the same mind; and the giving of the Eucharist to infants generally obtained; and it continued fix hundred years after, until transubstantiation took place; and is continued to this day in the Greek church: and if we look back to the times before Austin, we shall find that it was not only the opinion of Cyprian, but

was practiced in his time; he tells[39] a story which he himself was a witness of; how that "a little child being left in a fright by its parents with a nurse, she carried the child to the magistrates, who had it to an idol's sacrifice; where because the child could not eat flesh, they gave it bread soaked in wine: some time after, the mother had her child again; which not being able to relate to her what had passed it was brought by its parent to the place where Cyprian and the church were celebrating the Lord's-supper; and where it shrieked, and was dreadfully distressed; and when the cup was offered it in its turn by the deacon, it shut its lips against it; who forced the wine down its throat; upon which it sobbed, and threw it up again." Now here is a plain instance of infant-communion in the third century; and we defy any one to give a more early instance, or an instance so early, of infant-baptism: it is highly probable that infant-baptism was now practiced; and that this very child was baptized, or otherwise it would not have been admitted to the Lord's-supper; and it is reasonable to suppose, they both began together; yet no instance can be given of infant-baptism, so early as of infant-communion; wherefore whoever thinks himself obliged to receive the one upon such evidence and authority, ought to receive the other; the one has as good a claim to apostolic authority and tradition, as the other has.

2. The sign of the cross in baptism was used by the ancients, and pleaded for as an apostolic tradition. Basil, who lived in the fourth century observes,[40] that some things they had from scripture; and others from apostolic tradition, of which he gives instances; and, says he, "because this is the first and most common, I will mention it in the first place; as that we sign with the sign of the cross those who place their hope in Christ; and then asks who taught this in scripture?" Chrysostom, who lived in the same age, manifestly refers to it, when he says,[41] "how can you think it fitting for the minister to make the sign on its (the child's) forehead, where you have besmeared it with the dirt?" which Cyril[42] calls the royal seal upon the forehead. Cyprian in the middle of the third century relates the custom of his times;[43] "what is now also in use among us is, that those who are baptized, are offered to the governors of the church; and through our prayers and imposition of hands, they obtain the holy Spirit, and are made compleat signaculo Dominico, with the seal of the Lord:" and in another place[44] he says, "they only can escape, who are regenerated and signed with the sign of Christ." And Tertullian, in the beginning of the same century, speaking of baptism says[45] "the flesh is washed, that the soul may be unspotted; the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated; caro signatur, "the flesh is signed," that the soul also may be fortified." Now this use of the cross in baptism, was as early as any instance of infant-baptism that can be produced; higher than Tertulian's time it cannot be carried: what partiality then is it, I know to whom I speak, to admit the one upon the foot of tradition, and reject the other? The same Tertullian[46] also speaks of sponsores, sponsors, or godfathers, in baptism; which this writer himself has mentioned, and thus renders; "what occasion is there—except in cases of necessity, that the sponsors or godfathers be brought "into danger;" not to take notice of the Clementine Constitutions, as our author calls them, which enjoin the use of them; and which appear to be as early as infant-baptism itself; and indeed it is but reasonable that if infants are baptized, there should be sponsors or sureties for them.

3. The form of "renouncing the devil and all his works," used in baptism, is also by Basil[47] represented as an apostolic tradition; for having mentioned several rites in baptism, received upon the same foot, he adds; "and the rest of what is done in baptism, as to renounce the devil and his angels, from what scripture have we it? is it not from this private and secret tradition?" Origen

before the middle of the third century relates the usage of his times;[48] "let every one of the faithful remember when he first came to the waters of baptism; when he received the first seals of faith, and came to the fountain of salvation; what words there he then used; and what he denounced to the devil, non se, usurum pompis ejus, "that he would not use his pomps, nor his works, nor any of his service, nor obey his pleasures:" and Tertullian[49] before him; "when we enter into the water, we profess the faith of Christ, in the words of his law; we protest with our mouth that we renounce the devil, and his pomp, and his angels;" and in another place[50] in proof of unwritten tradition, and that it ought to be allowed of in some cases, he says; "to begin with baptism; when we come to the water, we do there, and sometimes in the congregation under the hand of the pallor, protest that we renounce the devil, and his pomp, and angels; and then we are thrice immersed; answering something more than the Lord has enjoined in the gospel:" now this is as early as any thing can be produced in favor of infant-baptism.

4. Exorcisms and exsusslations are represented by Austin[51] as rites in baptism, prisae traditionis, "of ancient tradition," as used by the church every where, throughout the whole world. He frequently presses the Pelagians with the argument taken from thence, and luggers, that they were pinched with it, and knew not how to answer it; he observes, that things the most impious and absurd, were the consequences of their principles, and among the rest there:[52] "that they (infants) are baptized into a Savior, but not saved; redeemed by a deliverer, but not delivered; washed in the laver of regeneration, but not washed from any thing; exorcised and exsusslated, but not freed from the power of darkness:" and elsewhere he says,[53] that "notwithstanding their craftiness, they know not what answer to make to this, that infants are exorcised and exsusslated; for this, without doubt, is done in mere show, if the devil has no power over them; but if he has power over them, and therefore are not exorcised and exsusstated in mere show, by what has the prince of sinners power over them, but by sin?" And Gregory Nazianzen before him, as he exhorts to confession of sin in baptism, so to exorcism; "do not refuse, says he,[54] the medicine of exorcism—for that is the trial of sincerity, with respect to that grace (baptism)." And says Optatus of Milevis,[55] "every man that is born, though born of Christian parents, cannot be without the spirit of the world, which must be excluded and separated from him, before the salutary laver; this exorcism effects, by which the unclean spirit is driven away, and is caused to flee to desert places." Cyprian, in the third century, speaking of the efficacy of baptism to destroy the power of Satan, relates what was done in his day;[56] "that by the exorcist the devil was buffeted, distressed, and tortured, with an human voice, and by a divine power." And Cornelius bishop of Rome, a contemporary of his, makes mention[57] of the same officers in the church; and this is also as early as the practice of infant-baptism.

5. Trine immersion is affirmed to be an apostolic tradition, nothing is more frequently asserted by the ancients than this. Basil,[58] among his instances of apostolic tradition, mentions this; "now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived?" his meaning is, is it from scripture or apostolic tradition? not the former, but the latter. And Jerom,[59] in a dialogue of his, makes one of the parties say after this manner, which clearly appears to be his own sense; "and many other things which by tradition are observed in the churches, have obtained the authority of a written law; as to dip the head thrice in the laver," etc. And so Tertullian in the third century as above, in support of tradition, mentions[60] this as a common practice; "we are thrice immersed;" and elsewhere speaking[61] of the commission of Christ, he says, "he commanded them to dip into the Father,

and the Son, and the holy Ghost; not into one, for not once, but thrice are we dipped, at each name, into each person;" and he is the first man that makes mention of infant-baptism, who relates this as the then usage of the church: and Sozomen[62] the historian observes, that it was said, that: "Eunomius was the first that dared to assert, that the divine baptism should be performed by one immersion; and so corrupted the apostolic tradition, which till now had been every where observed."

6. The consecration of the water of baptism is an ancient rite, and which[63] Basil derives from apostolic tradition; "we consecrate, says he, the water of baptism, and the anointing oil, as well as the person that receives baptism, from what scripture? is it not from private and secret tradition?" by which he means apostolic tradition, as he in the same place calls it; which was done, not only by the prayer of the administrator over the water, but by signing it with the sign of the cross; which rite was in use in the times of Austin,[64] who says, "baptism is signed with the sign of Christ, that is, the water where we are dipped;" and Ambrose, who lived in the same age, relates, that exorcism was also used in consecration: he describes the manner of it thus:[65] "why did Christ descend first, and afterwards the Spirit, seeing the form and use of baptism require, that first the font be consecrated, and then the person that is to be baptized, goes down? for where the priest first enters, he makes an exorcism, next an invocation on the creature of the water, and afterwards prays that the font may be sanctified, and the eternal Trinity be present." Cyprian, in the middle of the third century, makes mention of this ceremony of consecrating the baptismal water; he says,[66] "the water must first be cleansed and sanctified by the priest, that it may, by his baptizing in it, wash away the sins of the man that is baptized." And Tertullian[67] before him, though he makes no difference between the water of a pool, river or fountain, Tyber or Jordan, yet supposes there is a sanctification of it through prayer; "all waters," he says, from their ancient original prerogative, (referring to Genesis 1:2) "obtain the sacrament of sanctification, Deo invocato, God being called upon;" for immediately the Spirit comes down from heaven, and rests upon the waters, sanctifying them of himself; and so being sanctified, they drink in together the sanctifying virtue." This also is as high as the date of infant-baptism can be carried.

7. Anointing with oil at baptism, is a rite that claims apostolic tradition. Basil[68] mentions it as an instance of it, and asks; "the anointing oil, what passage in scripture teaches this?" Ausin[69] speaks of it as the common custom of the church in his time; having quoted that passage in Acts 10:38, "how God anointed him (Jesus) with the holy Ghost; adds, not truly with visible oil, but with the gift of grace, which is signified by the visible ointment, quo baptizatos ungit ecclesia, "with which the church anoints those that are baptized:" several parts of the body were wont to be anointed. Ambrose[70] makes mention of the ointment on the head in baptism, and gives a reason for it. Cyril[71] says, the oil was exorcised, and the forehead, ear, nose and breast, were anointed with it, and observes the mystical signification of each of there; the necessity of this anointing is urged by Cyprian[72] in the third century; "he that is baptized must needs be anointed, that by receiving the chrysm, that is, the anointing, he may be the anointed of God, and have the grace of Christ." And Tertullian, in the beginning of the same century, says,[73] as before observed, "the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated;" and in another place,[74] "when we come out of the laver, we are anointed with the blessed ointment, according to the ancient discipline, in which they used to be anointed with oil out of the horn, for the priesthood;" this was the custom used in the times of the man that first spoke of infant-baptism.

8. The giving a mixture of milk and honey to a person just baptized, is a rite that was used in the churches anciently through tradition; Jerom[75] makes mention of it, as observed upon this footing, and as an instance, among other things which obtained authority in that way: "as to dip the head thrice in the laver, and when they came out from thence, to taste of a mixture of milk and honey, to signify the new birth;" and elsewhere he says,[76] it was a custom observed in the western churches to that day, to give wine and milk to them that were regenerated in Christ. This was in use in Tertullian's time; for, speaking of the administration of baptism, he says,[77] we come to the water—then we are thrice dipped—then being taken out from thence we taste a mixture of milk and honey; and this, as well as anointing with oil, he observes, was used by heretics themselves, for so he says of Marcion;[78] "he does not reject the water of the creator, with which he washes his disciples; nor the oil with which he anoints his own; nor the mixture of milk and honey, by which he points them out as newborn babes;" yea, even Barnabas, a companion of the apostle Paul, is thought to refer to this practice, in an epistle of his still extant;[79] not to take notice of the white garment, and the use of the ring and kiss in baptism, in Cyprian and Tertullian's time.[80]

Now these several rites and usages in baptism, claim their rise from apostolic tradition, and have equal evidence of it as infant-baptism has; they are of as early date, have the same vouchers, and more; the testimonies of them are clear and full; they universally obtained, and were practiced by the churches, throughout the whole world; and even by heretics and schismatics; and this is to be said of them, that they never were opposed by any within the time referred to, which cannot be laid of infant-baptism; for the very first man that mentions it, dissuades from it: and are there facts which could not but be publicly and perfectly known, and for which the ancient writers and fathers may be appealed to, not as reasoners and interpreters, but as historians and witnesses to public standing facts; and all the reasoning this gentleman makes use of, concerning the apostles forming the churches on one uniform plan of baptism, the nearness of infant-baptism to their times, from the testimony of the ancients, the difficulty of an innovation, and the easiness of its detection, may be applied to all and each of these rites.

Wherefore whoever receives infant-baptism upon the foot of apostolic tradition, and upon such proof and evidence as is given of it, as above, if he is an honest man; I say again, if he is an honest man, he ought to give into the practice of all those rites and usages. We do not think ourselves indeed obliged to regard these things; we know that a variety of superstitious, ridiculous, and foolish rites, were brought into the church in there times; we are not of opinion, as is suggested, that even the authority of the apostles a hundred years after their death, was sufficient to keep an innovation from entering the church, nor even whilst they were living; we are well assured, there never was such a set of impure wretches under the Christian name, so unfound in principle, and so bad in practice, as were in the apostles days, and in the ages succeeding, called the purest ages of Christianity. We take the Bible to be the only authentic, perfect and sufficient rule of faith and practice: we allow of no other head and lawgiver but one, that is, Christ; we deny that any men, or let of men, have any power to make laws in his house, or to decree rites and ceremonies to be observed by his people, no not apostles themselves, uninspired: and this gentleman, out of this controversy, is of the same mind with us, who asserts the above things we do; and affirms, without the least hesitation, that what is "ordained by the apostles, without any precept from the Lord, or any particular direction of the holy Spirit, is not at all obligatory as a law

upon the consciences of Christians;—even the apostles had no dominion over the faith and practice of Christians, but what was given them by the special presence, and Spirit of Christ, the only Lawgiver, Lord, and Sovereign of the church: they were to teach only the things which he should command them; and whatever they enjoined under the influence of that Spirit, was to be considered and obeyed as the injunctions of Christ; but if they enjoined any thing in the church, without the peculiar influence and direction of this Spirit, that is, as merely fallible and unassisted men, in that case, their injunctions had no authority over conscience; and every man's own reason had authority to examine and discuss their injunctions, as they approved themselves to his private judgment, to observe them or not: should we grant thee what you ask.—lays he to his antagonist—that the church in the present age, has the same authority and power, as the church in the apostolic age, considered, as not being under any immediate and extraordinary guidance of the holy Ghost what will you gain by it? This same authority and power is you see, Sir, really no power nor authority at all."[81] The controversy between us and our brethren on this head, is the same as between Papists and Protestants about tradition, and between the church of England and Dissenters, about the church's power to decree rites and ceremonies namely, whether Christ is the sole head and lawgiver in his church; or whether any let of men have a power to set aside, alter, and change any laws of his, or prescribe new ones? if the latter, then we own it is all over with us, and we ought to submit, and not carry on the dispute any further: but since we both profess to make the Bible our religion, and that only the rule of our faith and practice; let us unite upon this common principle, and reject every tradition of men, and all rites and ceremonies which Christ hath not enjoined, us; let us join in pulling down this prop of Popery, and remove this scandal of the Protestant churches, I mean infant-baptism; for lure I am, so long as it is attempted to support it upon the foot of apostolic tradition, no man can write with success against the Papists, or such, who hold that the church has a power to decree rites and ceremonies.

However; if infant baptism is a tradition of the apostles, then this point must be gained, that it is not a scriptural business; for if it is of tradition, then not of scripture; who ever appeals to tradition, when a doctrine or practice can be proved by scripture? appealing to tradition, and putting it upon that foot, is giving it up as a point of scripture: I might therefore be excused from considering what this writer has advanced from scripture in favor of infant-baptism, and the rather, since there is nothing produced but what has been brought into the controversy again and again, and has been answered over and over: but perhaps this gentleman and his friends will be displeased, if I take no notice of his arguments from thence; I shall therefore just make some few remarks on them. But before I proceed, I must congratulate my readers upon the blessed times we are fallen into! what an enlightened age! what an age of good sense do we live in! what prodigious improvement in knowledge is made! behold! tradition proved by Scripture! apostolic tradition proved by Abraham's covenant! undoubted apostolic tradition proved from writings in being hundreds of years before any of the apostles were born! all extraordinary and of the marvelous kind! but let us attend to the proof of there things. The first argument is taken from its being an incontestable fact, that the infants of believers were received with their parents into covenant with God, in the former dispensations or ages of the church; which is a great privilege, a privilege still subsisting, and never revoked; wherefore the infants of believers, having still a right to the same privilege, in consequence have a right to baptism, which is now the only appointed token of God's covenant, and the only rite of admission into it.[82]

01.06. The Argument From Apostolic Tradition, contd

To which I reply, that it is not an incontestable loci:, but a fact contested, that the infants of believers were with their parents taken into covenant with God, in the former dispensations and ages of the church; by which must be meant, the ages preceding the Abrahamic covenant; since that is made, to furnish out a second and distinct argument from this; and so the scriptures produced are quite impertinent (Genesis 17:7; Genesis 17:10-12; Deuteronomy 29:10-12; Ezekiel 16:20-21), seeing they refer to the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations, of which hereafter. The first covenant made with man, was the covenant of works, with Adam before the fall, which indeed included all his posterity, but had no peculiar regard to the infants of believers; he standing as a federal head to all his feed, which no man since has ever done: and in him they all finned, were condemned, and died. This covenant, I presume this Gentleman can have no view unto: after the fall of Adam, the covenant of grace was revealed, and the way of life and salvation by the Messiah; but then this revelation was only made to Adam and Eve personally, as interested in there things, and not to their natural feed and posterity as such, as being interested in the same covenant of grace with them; for then all mankind must be taken into the covenant of grace; and if that gives a right to baptism, they have all an equal right to unto it; and so there is nothing peculiar to the infants of believers; and of whom, there is not the least syllable mentioned throughout the whole age or dispensation of the church, reaching from Adam to Noah; a length of time almost equal to what has run out from the birth of Christ, to the present age. The next covenant we read of, is the covenant made with Noah after the flood, which was not made with him, and his immediate offspring only; nor were they taken into covenant with him as the infants of a believer; nor had they any sacrament or rite given them as a token of Jehovah being their God, and they his children, and as standing in a peculiar relation to him; will any one dare to say this of Ham, one of the immediate sons of Noah? The covenant was made with Noah and all mankind, to the end of the world, and even with every living creature, and all the beasts of the earth, promising them security from an universal deluge, as long as the world stands; and had nothing in it peculiar to the infants of believers: and these are all the covenants the scripture makes mention of, till that made with Abraham, of which in the next argument. This being the case, there is no room nor reason to talk of the greatness of this privilege, and of the continuance of it, and of asking when it was repealed, since it does not appear to have been a fact; nor during there ages and dispensations of the church, was there ever any sacrament, rite, or ceremony, appointed for the admission of persons adult, or infants, into covenant with God; nor was there ever any such rite in any age of the world, nor is there now: the covenant with Adam, either of works or grace, had no ceremony of this kind; there was a token, and still is, of Noah’s covenant, the rainbow, but not a token or rite of admission of persons into it, but a token of the continuance and perpetuity of it in all generations: nor was circumcision a rite of admission of Abraham’s feed into his covenant, as will quickly appear; nor is baptism now an initiatory rite, by which persons are admitted into the covenant. Let this Gentleman, if he can, point out to us where it is so described; persons ought to appear to be in the covenant of grace, and partakers of the blessings of it, the Spirit of God, faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, before they are admitted to baptism. This Gentleman will find more work

to support his first argument, than perhaps he was aware of; the premises being bad, the conclusion must be wrong. I proceed to, The second argument, taken from the Abrabamic covenant, which stands thus: The covenant God made with Abraham and his seed, Genesis 17:1-27 : into which his infants were taken together with himself, by the rite of circumcision, is the very same we are now under, the same with that in Galatians 3:16-17 still in force, and not to be disannulled, in which we believing Gentiles are included (Romans 4:9-17), and so being Abraham's seed, have a right to all the grants and privileges of it, and so to the admission of our infants to it, by the sign and token of it, which is changed from circumcision to baptism.[83] But,

1. though Abraham's seed were taken into covenant with him, which designs his adult posterity in all generations, on whom it was enjoined to circumcise their infants, it does not follow that his infants were; but so it is, that wherever the words seed, children, etc. are used, it immediately runs in the heads of some men, that infants must be meant, though they are not necessarily included; but be it so, that Abraham's infants were admitted with him, (though at the time of making this covenant, he had no infant with him, Ishmael was then thirteen years of age) yet not as the infants of a believer; there were believers and their infants then living, who were left out of the covenant; and those that were taken in successive generations, were not the infants of believers only, but of unbelievers also; even all the natural feed of the Jews, whether believers or unbelievers.—

2. Those that were admitted into this covenant, were not admitted by the rite of circumcision; Abraham's female feed were taken into covenant with him, as well as his male feed, but not by any viable rite or ceremony; nor were his male feed admitted by any such rite, no not by circumcision; for they were not to be circumcised until the eighth day; to have circumcised them sooner would have been criminal; and that they were in covenant from their birth, this gentleman, I presume, will not deny.—

3. The covenant of circumcision, as it is called (Acts 7:8), cannot be the same covenant we are now under, since that is abolished (Galatians 5:1-3), and it is a new covenant, or a new administration of the covenant of grace, that we are now under; the old covenant under the Mosaic dispensation is waxen old, and vanished away (Hebrews 8:8; Hebrews 8:13), nor is the covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:1-27), the same with that mentioned in Galatians 3:17 which is still in force, and not to be disannulled; the distance of time between them does not agree, but falls short of the apostle's date, four and twenty years; for from the making of this covenant to the birth of Isaac, was one year (Genesis 17:1; Genesis 21:5), from thence to the birth of Jacob, sixty years (Genesis 25:26), from thence to his going down to Egypt, one hundred and thirty years (Genesis 47:9), where the Israelites continued two hundred and fifteen;[84] and quickly after they came out of Egypt, was the law given, which was but four hundred and fix years after this covenant. The reason this gentleman gives, why they must be the same, will not hold good, namely, "this is the only covenant in which "God ever made and confirmed promises to Abraham, and to his seed;" since God made a covenant with Abraham before this, and confirmed it to his seed, and that by various rites, and usages, and wonderful appearances (Genesis 15:8-18), which covenant, and the confirmation of it, the apostle manifestly refers to in Galatians 3:17 and with which his date exactly agrees, as the years are computed by Paraeus[85] thus; from the confirmation of the covenant, and taking Hagar to wife, to the birth of Isaac, fifteen years; from thence to the birth of Jacob, sixty (Genesis 25:26), from thence to his going down to Egypt, one hundred and thirty (Genesis 47:9), from thence to his death, seventeen (Genesis 47:28), from thence to the death of

Joseph, fifty three (Genesis 1:26), from thence to the birth of Moses, seventy-five; from thence to the going out of Israel from Egypt, and the giving of the law, eighty years; in all four hundred and thirty years.—

4. It is allowed, that the covenant made with Abraham (Genesis 17:1-27), is of a mixed kind, consisting partly of temporal, and partly of spiritual blessings; and that there is a twofold seed of Abraham, to which they severally belong; the temporal blessings, to his natural seed the Jews, and the spiritual blessings, to his spiritual seed, even all true believers that walk in the steps of his faith, Jews or Gentiles (Romans 4:11-12; Romans 4:16), believing Gentiles are Abraham's spiritual seed, but then they have a right only to the spiritual blessings of the covenant, not to all the grants and privileges of it; for instance, not to the land of Canaan; and as for their natural feed, there have no right, as such, to any of the blessings of this covenant, temporal or spiritual: for either they are the natural, or the spiritual seed of Abraham; not his natural seed, no one will say that; not his spiritual seed, for only believers are such; they which are of faith (believers) the same are the children of Abraham; and if ye be Christ's, (that is, believers) then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the premise; and it is time enough to claim the promise, and the grants and privileges of it, be they what they will, when they appear to be believers; and as for the natural seed of believing Gentiles, there is not the least mention made of them in Abraham's covenant.

5. Since Abraham's seed were not admitted into covenant with him, by any visible rite or token, no not by circumcision, which was not a rite of admission into the covenant, but a token of the continuance of it to his natural seed, and of their distinction from other nations, until the Messiah came; and since therefore baptism cannot succeed it as such, nor are the one or the other seals of the covenant of grace, as I have elsewhere[86] proved, and shall not now repeat it; upon the whole, this second argument can be of no force in favor of infant-baptism: and here, if any where, is the proper time and place for this gentleman to ark for the repeal of this ancient privilege, as he calls it,[87] of infants being taken into covenant with their parents, or to shew when it was repealed; to which I answer, that the covenant made with Abraham, into which his natural feed were taken with him, so far as it concerned them as such, or was a national covenant, it was abolished and disannulled when the people of the Jews were cut off as a nation, and as a church; when the Mosaic dispensation was put an end unto, by the coming, sufferings, and death of Christ:, and by the destruction of that people on their rejection of him; when God wrote a Loammi upon them, and said, Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God (Hosea 1:9) when he took his staff, beauty, and cut it asunder, that he might break his covenant he had made with this people (Zechariah 11:10), when the old covenant and old ordinances were removed, and the old church-state utterly destroyed, and a new church-state was set up, and new ordinances appointed; and for which new rules were given; and to which none are to be admitted, without the observance of them; which leads me to The third argument, taken from the commission of Christ for baptism (Matthew 28:19), and from the natural and necessary sense in which the apostles would understand it;[88] though this gentleman owns that it is delivered in such general terms, as not certainly to determine whether adult believers only, or the infants also of such are to be baptized; and if so, then surely no argument can be drawn from it for admitting infants to baptism. And,

1. The rendering of the words, disciple or proselyte all nations, baptizing them, will not help the cause of infant-baptism; for one cannot be a proselyte to any religion, unless he is taught it, and

embraces and professes it; though had our Lord used a word which conveyed such an idea, the evangelist Matthew was not at a loss for a proper word or phrase to express it by; and doubtless would have made use of another clear and express, as he does in Matthew 23:15.—

2. The suppositions this writer makes, that if, instead of baptizing them, it had been said circumcising them, the apostles without any farther warrant would have naturally and justly thought, that upon proselytizing the Gentile parent, and circumcising him, his infants also were to be circumcised: or if the twelve patriarchs of old had had a divine command given them, to go into Egypt, Arabia, etc. and teach them the God of Abraham, circumcising them, they would have understood it as authorizing them to perform this ceremony, not upon the parent only, but also upon the infants of such as believed on the God of Abraham. As these suppositions are without foundation, so I greatly question whether they would have been so understood, without some instructions and explanations; and betides the cases put are not parallel to this before us, since the circumcision of infants was enjoined and practiced before such a supposed commission and command; whereas the baptism of infants was neither commanded nor practiced before this commission of Christ; and therefore could not lead them to any such thought as this, whatever the other might do.—

3. The characters and circumstances of the apostles, to whom the commission was given, will not at all conclude that they apprehended infants to be actually included; some in which they are represented being entirely false, and others nothing to the purpose: Jews they were indeed, but men that knew that the covenant of circumcision was not still in force, but abolished: men, who could never have observed that the infants of believers with their parents had always been admitted into covenant, and passed under the same initiating rite: men, who could not know, that the Gentiles were to be taken into a joint participation of all the privileges of the Jewish church; but must know that both believing Jews and Gentiles were to constitute a new church, state, and to partake of new privileges and ordinances, which the Jewish church knew nothing of:—men, who were utter strangers to the baptism of Gentile proselytes, to the Jewish religion, and of their infants; and to any baptism, but the ceremonial ablutions, before the times of John the Baptist:—men, who were not tenacious of their ancient rites after the Spirit was poured down upon them at Pentecost, but knew they were now abolished, and at an end:—men, though they had seen little children brought to Christ to have his hands laid on them, yet had never seen an infant baptized in their days:—men, who though they knew that infants were sinners, and under a sentence of condemnation, and needed remission of sin and justification, and that baptism was a means of leading the faith of adult persons to Christ for them; yet knew that it was not by baptism, but by the blood of Christ, that there things are obtained:—men, that knew that Christ came to set up a new church-state; not national as before, but congregational; not consisting of carnal men, and of infants without understanding; but of spiritual and rational men, believers in Christ; and therefore could not be led to conclude that infants were comprehended in the commission: nor is Christ's silence with respect to infants to be construed into a strong and most manifest presumption in their favor, which would be presumption indeed; or his not excepting them, a permission or order to admit them: persons capable of making such constructions, are capable of doing and saying any thing. I hasten to The fourth argument, drawn from the evident and clear consequences of other passages of scripture;[89] as,

1. From Romans 11:17 and if some of the branches be broken off, etc. here let it be noted, that the olive tree is not the Abrahamic covenant or church, into which the Gentiles were grafted; for they never were grafted into the Jewish church, that, with all its peculiar ordinances, being abolished by Christ; signified by the shaking of the heaven and the earth, and the removing of things shaken (Hebrews 12:26-27) but the gospel church-state, out of which the unbelieving Jews were left, and into which the believing Gentiles were engrafted, but not in the stead of the unbelieving Jews: and by the root and fatness of the olive-tree, are meant, not the religious privileges and grants belonging to the Jewish covenant or church, which the Gentiles had nothing to do with, and are abolished; but the privileges and ordinances of the gospel-church, which they with the believing Jews jointly partook of, being incorporated together in the same church-state; and which, as it is the meaning of Romans 11:17 so of Ephesians 3:6 in all which there is not the least syllable of baptism; and much less of infant, baptism; or of the faith of a parent grafting his children with himself, into the church or covenant-relation to God, which is a mere chimera, that has no foundation either in reason or scripture.

2. From Mark 10:14. Suffer little children to come unto me, etc. and John 3:5. Except any one is born of water, etc. from there two passages put together, it is said, the right of infants to baptism may be clearly inferred; for in one they are declared actually to have a place in God's kingdom or church, and yet into it, the other as expressly says, none can be admitted without being baptized. But supposing the former of these texts is to be understood of infants, not in a metaphorical sense, or of such as are compared to infants for humility, etc. which sense some versions lead unto, and in which way some Paedobaptists interpret the words, particularly Calvin, but literally; then by the kingdom of God, is not meant the visible church on earth, or a gospel church-state, which is not national, but congregational; consisting of persons gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and that make a public profession of the name of Christ, which infants are incapable of, and so are not taken into it: betides, this sense would prove too much, and what this writer would not choose to give into, viz. that infants, having a place in this kingdom or church, must have a right to all the privileges of it; to the Lord's supper, as well as to baptism; and ought to be treated in all respects as other members of it. Wherefore it should be interpreted of the kingdom of glory, into which we doubt not that such as these in the text are admitted; and then the strength of our Lord's argument lies here; that since he came to save such infants as these, as well as adult persons, and bring them to heaven, they should not be hindered from being brought to him to be touched by him, and healed of their bodily diseases: and so the other text is to be understood of the kingdom of God, or heaven, in the same sense; but not of water-baptism as necessary to it, or that without which there is no entrance into it; which mistaken, shocking and stupid sense of them, led Austin, and the African churches, into a confirmed belief and practice of infant-baptism; and this sense being imbibed, will justify him in all his monstrous, absurd and impious tenets, as this writer calls them, about the ceremony of baptismal water, and the absolute necessity of it unto salvation: whereas the plain meaning of the words is, that except a man be born again of the grace of the Spirit of God, comparable to water, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, or be a partaker of the heavenly glory; or without the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, which in Titus 3:5 is called the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost, there can be no meetness for, no reception into, the kingdom of heaven; and therefore makes nothing for the baptizing of infants.

3. A distinction between the children of believers and of unbelievers, is attempted from 1 Corinthians 7:14 as if the one were in a visible covenant-relation to God, and the other not; whereas the text speaks not of two sorts of children, but of one and the same, under supposed different circumstances; and is to be understood not of any federal, but matrimonial holiness, as I have shewn elsewhere,[90] to which I refer the reader. As for the Queries with which the argument is concluded, they are nothing to the purpose, unless it could be made out, that it is the will of God that infants should be baptized, and that the baptism of them would give them the remission of sins, and justify their persons; neither of which are true: and of the same kind is the harangue in the introduction to this treatise: and after all a poor, slender provision is made for the salvation of infants, according to this author's own scheme, which only concerns the infants of believers, and leaves all others to the uncovenanted mercies of God, as he calls them; seeing the former are but a very small part of the thousands of infants that every day languish under grievous distempers, are tortured, convulsed, and in piteous agonies give up the ghost. Nor have I any thing to do with what this writer lays, concerning the moral purposes and use of infant-baptism in religion; since the thing itself is without any foundation in the word of God: upon the whole, the baptism of infants is so far from being a reasonable service, that it is a most unreasonable one; since there is neither precept nor precedent for it in the sacred writings; and it is neither to be proved by scripture nor tradition.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Reasonable Service, p. 30.

[2] Preface, p.

[3] Irenaeus adv. Haeres. 1. 3. c. 4. Cyprian. Ep. 63. ad Caecillum, p. 146. Athanas. ad Adelph, p. 333.

[4] Institut. Rel. Christ. 1. 1. c. 12. J. 4. p. 25.

[5] Of the liberty of Prophesying, p. 320, 321. Ed. 3d.

[6] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:5. c. 23-25. Socrat. Eccl. Hist. 1. 5. c. 22. p 285.

[7] Euseb. lb. 1. 4. c. 14. See Bowcr's Lives of the Popes, vol. I. p. 27, 37.

[8] Loc. Common. p. 287.

[9] Euseb. ib. l 3. c. 39.

[10] Pirke Abot. c. 1 § 1.

[11] Apolog. 2 p. 62.

[12] Apolog. 1 p. 43.

[13] Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 258.

[14] Ib. p. 272.

[15] Adv. Haeres. 1. 3. c. 39.

[16] Ib. 1:1. c 18. & 1. 4. c. 39. & 1. 5. c. 15.

[17] History of Infant-baptism, p. 1. ch. 3. p. 6.

[18] Reasonable Service, p. 30.

[19] The Dissenting Gentleman’s Third Letter, etc. p. 32.

[20] In Rivet. critici facri, 1. 2. c. 12. p. 202.

[21] Hist. Pelag. par. I. 1.2. p. 147.

[22] Hist. Eccles. Vol. I. p. 132.

[23] Liberty of Prophesying, p. 320.

[24] Bower’s History of Popes, vol. I. p. 339.

[25] Bower ibid. p. 329, c. 330.

[26] De peccator. merit. & remiss. I. 2. c. 25.

[27] In Aug. de peceator, originali, 1. 2. c. 18.

[28] Ed. Antwerp. by Plantine, 1576.

[29] Hist. of Infant, baptism, part I. ch. 19 p. 37.

[30] De libero Arbitdo, 1. 3. c. 23.

[31] De Peccator. nierit. 1. 2. c. 25.

[32] Ep. ad Laetam, t. I. fol. 19. M.

[33] De verbis Apostoli, serm 10, c. 2.

[34] De Genesi, I. 10. c. 22. De baptismo, contr. Donat. 1. 4. c. 23, 24.

[35] Liberty of Prophesying. p. 119.

[36] Ep. 106. Bonifacio, contr. Pelag.

[37] De Peccator. merit. & remiss. 1. 1. c. 20.

[38] Ibid. c. 24.

[39] Cyprian de lapsis, p. 244.

[40] Basil. de Spiritu Sanct. c. 27.

[41] Homil. 12. in 1 Ep. ad Corinth.

[42] Catechef. 12. §. 4.

[43] Ep. 73. ad Jubajanum. p. 184.

[44] Ad Demetrian, prope finem.

[45] De resurrectione carnis, c. 8.

[46] De Baptismo. c. 18.

[47] Ut supra.

[48] Homil 12. in Numeros, fol. 114. D.

[49] De spectaculis, c. 4.

[50] De corona, c. 3.

[51] De peccato originali 1. 2. c, 40. de nupt,. & concup. 1. 1. c 20. & 1. 2. c. 18.

[52] Contr. Julian. 1. 3. c 5.

[53] Ep. 105. Bonifacio, prope sinem.

[54] Orat. 40. p. 657.

[55] Adv. Parmenian. 1.4. P. 92.

[56] Ep 76. ad Magnum.

[57] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:6. c. 43.

[58] Ut supra.

[59] Adv. Luciserianos, fol. 47. H. tom. 2.

[60] De corona, c. 3.

[61] Adv. Praxeam e. 26.

[62] Hist. Ecclesiastes 1:6. c. 26.

[63] Ut supra.

[64] De tempore sermo, 119. c. 8.

[65] De sacramentis, l. 1 c. 5.

[66] Ep. 70. ad Januasium.

[67] De baptismo, c. 4.

[68] Ut supra.

[69] De trinhate, 50:15. c. 26.

[70] De sacramentis, l. 3. c. 11.

[71] Cateches. mystagog, 2. p. 3. & 3. p. 3.

[72] Ep. 70. ad Januariam, p. 175.

[73] De resurrectione carnis, c. 8.

[74] De baptismo, c 7.

[75] Adv. Luciferianos, fol. 47.

[76] Comment. in Esaiam. c. 55. 1. fol. 94. E.

[77] De corona, c. 3.

[78] Adv. Marcion, 1. 3. c. 14.

[79] C. 5. prope finem.

[80] Tertullian de pudicitia, c. 9. Cyprian. Ep 59. ad Fidum, vid. Aug. contr, 2. Epist. Pelag. I. 4. c. 8.

[81] The dissenting Gentleman’s Second Letter, etc. p. 29, 30.

[82] Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. p. 14, 15.

[83] Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. p. 16-19.

[84] See Pool’s Annotation on Galatians 3:17.

[85] In ibid.

[86] The divine right of Infant baptism disproved, p. 56-61.

[87] Reasonable service, etc. p. 16.

[88] Reasonable service, etc. p. 19-22.

[89] Reasonable service, etc. p. 23-28.

[90] The divine right of Infant-baptism disproved, etc. p. 73-78.

01.08. An Answer To A Welsh Clergyman's Twenty

An Answer to a Welsh Clergyman’s Twenty Arguments In Favor of Infant-Baptism With Some STRICTURES on what the said AUTHOR has advanced concerning the Mode of BAPTISM. A BOOK some time ago being published in the Welch language, entitled,

"A Guide to a saving Knowledge of the Principles and Duties of Religion, viz. Questions and Scriptural Answers, relating to the Doctrine contained in the Church Catechism," etc.

Some extracts out of it respecting the ordinance of baptism, its subject, and mode, being communicated to me, with a request from our friends in Wales to make some Reply unto, and also to draw up some Reasons for dissenting from the church of England, both which I have undertook, and shall attempt in the following manner.

I shall take but little notice of what this author says, part 5, page 40 concerning sponsors in baptism, but refer the reader to what is said of them in the Reasons for dissenting, hereunto annexed. This writer himself owns, that the practice of having sureties is not particularly mentioned in scripture; only he would have it, that it has in general obtained in the churches from the primitive times, and was enacted by the powers which God has appointed, and whole ordinances are to be submitted to, when they are not contrary to those of God;[1] and must be allowed to be of great service, if the sureties fulfilled their engagements. The answer to all which is, that since it is not mentioned in scripture, it deserves no regard; at least, this can never recommend it to such, who make the Bible the rule of their faith and practice; and as to its obtaining in primitive times, it is indeed generally ascribed to Pope Hyginus, as an invention of his; but the genuineness of the epistles attributed to him and others, is called in question by learned men, and are condemned by them as spurious; but were they genuine, neither his office nor his age would have much weight and authority with us, who are not to be determined by the decrees of popes and councils; the powers spoken of in the scriptures referred to, were Heathen magistrates, who surely had no authority to enact any thing relating to gospel-worship and ordinances; nor can it be reasonably thought they should; and submission and obedience to them, are required in things of a civil nature, not ecclesiastical, as the scope of the passages, and their context manifestly shew; nor has God given power and authority to any let of men whatever, to enact laws and ordinances of religious worship; nor are we bound to submit to all ordinances of men in religious matters, that are not contrary to the appointments of God, that is, that are not expressly forbidden in his word; for by this means, all manner of superstition and will worship may be introduced. Oil and spittle in baptism are no where forbidden, nor is the baptizing of bells; yet there ordinances of men are not to be submitted to, and a multitude of others of the like kind: we are not only to take care to do what God has commanded, but to reject what he has not commanded; remembering the care of Nadab and Abihu, who offered strange fire to the Lord, which he commanded not. And whereas it is suggested, that this practice would be very serviceable were the engagements of sureties fulfilled, it is not practicable they should; it is impossible to do what they engage to do, even for themselves, and much less for others, as is observed in the Reasons, before referred to. But

passing these things, I shall chiefly attend to the twenty arguments, which this writer has advanced in favor of infant-baptism, pages 41-45. The first argument runs thus: "Baptism, which is a seal of the covenant of grace, should not be forbid to the children of believers, seeing they are under condemnation through the covenant of works; and if they are left without an interest in the covenant of grace, they then would be, to their parents great distress, under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation, without any sign or promise of the mercy of God, or of an interest in Christ; being by nature children of wrath as others, and consequently without any hope of salvation, if they die in their infancy." In which there are some things true, and others false, and nothing that can be improved into an argument in favor of infant-baptism.

1. It is true that the infants of believers, as well as others, are by nature the children of wrath, and under condemnation through the covenant of works; so all mankind are as considered in Adam, and in consequence of his sin and fall (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:18). But,

2. It is not baptism that can save them from wrath and condemnation; a person may be baptized in water, and yet not saved from wrath to come, and still lie under the sentence of condemnation, being notwithstanding that, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, as the case of Simon Magus shews. Though this writer seems to be of opinion, that baptism is a saving ordinance, and that a person cannot be fared without it; and indeed he expressly says, p. 27. that "in general it is necessary to salvation;" as if salvation was by it, (which is a popish notion) and there was none without it; but the instance of the penitent thief, is a proof to the contrary: the text does not say, he that is baptized shall be saved, but he that BELIEVETH and is baptized; nor is it any where suggested, that a person dying without baptism shall be damned. It is CHRIST only, and not baptism, that fares from wrath and condemnation.

3. Being unbaptized, does not leave without an interest in the covenant of grace, or exclude from the hope of salvation, or the mercy of God, or an interest in Christ; persons may have an interest in all these, and yet not be baptized. See the strange contradictions men run into when destitute of truth; one while the covenant of grace is said to be made with believers, and their seed, as in the next argument, and so their infants being in it, have a right to baptism; at another time it is baptism that puts them into the covenant; and if they are not baptized they are left without interest in it, and, to the great grief of their parents, under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation. But,

4. as the salvation of an infant dying in its infancy is one of the secret things which belong unto the Lord, a judicious Christian parent will leave it with him; and find more relief from his distress, by hoping in the grace and mercy of God through Christ, and in the virtue and efficacy of his blood and righteousness, which may be applied unto it without baptism, than he can in baptism; which he may observe, may be administered to a person, and yet be damned. For,

5. baptism is no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does it give any person an interest in it, or seal it to them; a person may be baptized, and yet have no interest in the covenant, as Simon Magus and others, and to whom it was never sealed; and on the other hand, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and it may be sealed to him, and he assured of his interest in it, and not yet be baptized: the blood of Christ is the seal of the covenant, and the Spirit of Christ is the sealer of the saint’s interest in it. And, after all, if baptism has such virtue in it, as to give an interest in the covenant of grace, to be a sign and promise of mercy, and of our interest in Christ, and furnish out hope of salvation, and secure from wrath and condemnation, why should not compassion be

shewn to the children of unbelievers, who are in the same state and condition by nature? for, I observe all along, that in this and the following arguments, baptism is wholly restrained to the children of believers; upon the whole, the argument from the state of infants to their baptism is impertinent and fruitless; since there is no such efficacy in baptism, to deliver them from it.[2] The second argument is: "The children of believers should be admitted to baptism, since as the covenant of works, and the real of it belonged to Adam and his children, so the covenant of grace, and the real thereof belongs, through Christ, to believers and their children:" to which it may be replied,

1. That it is indeed true, that the covenant of works belonged to Adam and his posterity, he being a federal head unto them; but then it does not appear, that that covenant had any seal belonging to it, since it needed none, nor was it proper it should have any, seeing it was not to continue. And if the tree of life is intended, As I suppose it is, whatever that might be a sign of, it was no real of any thing, nor did it belong to Adam’s children, who were never suffered to partake of it.

2. There is a great disparity between Adam and believers, and the relation they stand in to their respective offspring: Adam stood as a common head and representative to all his posterity; not so believers to theirs: they are no common heads unto them, or representatives of them; wherefore though the covenant of works belonged to Adam and his posterity, it does not follow, that the covenant of grace belongs to believers and their children, they not standing in the same relation he did. There never were but two covenant-heads, Adam and CHRIST, and between them, and them only, the parallel will run, and in this form; that as the covenant of works belonged to Adam and his seed, so the covenant of grace belongs to Christ and his seed.

3. As it does not appear there was any real belonging to the covenant of works, so we have seen already, that baptism is not the real of the covenant of grace; wherefore this argument in favor of infant-baptism is weak and frivolous; the reason this author adds to strengthen the above argument, is very lamely and improperly expressed, and impertinently urged; "for we are not to imagine, that there is more efficacy in the covenant of works, to bring condemnation on the children of the unbelieving, through the fall of Adam; than there is virtue in the covenant of grace, through the mediation of the son of God, the second Adam, to bring salvation to the seed of those that believe" (Romans 5:15; Romans 5:18). For the covenant of works being broken by the fall of Adam, brought condemnation, not on the children of the unbelieving only, but of believers also, even on all his posterity, to whom he stood a federal head; and so the covenant of grace, of which Christ the second Adam is the mediator, brings salvation, not to the seed of those that believe, many of whom never believe, and to whom salvation is never brought, nor they to that; but to all Christ’s spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he stands a federal head; which is the sense of the passages of scripture referred to, and serves no ways to strengthen the cause of infant baptism. The third argument runs thus: "The seed of believers are to be baptized into the same covenant with themselves; seeing infants, while infants, as ha-aural parts of their parents, are included in the same threatenings, which are denounced against wicked parents, and in the same promises as are made to godly parents, being branches of one root" (Romans 11:16; Deuteronomy 4:37; Deuteronomy 4:40; Deuteronomy 28:1-4; Deuteronomy 30:6; Deuteronomy 30:19; Psalms 102:28; Proverbs 11:21; Proverbs 20:7; Jeremiah 32:38-39; Exodus 20:5; Exodus 34:7; Deuteronomy 28:15; Deuteronomy 28:18; Deuteronomy 28:45-46; Psalms 21:10; Psalms 19:9-10; Isaiah 14:20-21; Jeremiah 22:28; Jeremiah 36:31). Here let it be observed,

1. that it is pleaded that infants should be baptized into the same covenant with their parents, meaning no doubt the covenant of grace; that is, should by baptism be brought into the covenant as it is expressed in Argument 7th, or else I know not what is meant by being baptized into the same covenant; and yet in the preceding argument it is urged, that the covenant of grace belongs to the infants of believers, that is, they are in it, and therefore are to be baptized: an instance this of the glaring contradiction before observed.

2. Threatenings indeed are made to wicked parents and their children, partly to shew the heinousness of their sins, and to deter them from them; and partly to express God's hatred of sin, and his punitive justice; and also to point out original sin and the corruption of nature in infants, and what they must expect when grown up if they follow the examples of their parents, and commit the same or like sins; but what is all this to infant-baptism; Why,

3. In like manner promises are made to godly parents and their children, and several passages are referred to in proof of it; some of these are of a temporal nature, and are designed to stir up and encourage good men to the discharge of their duty, and have no manner of regard to any spiritual or religious privilege; and such as are of a spiritual nature, which respect conversion, sanctification, etc. when these take place on the seed of believers, then, and not till then, do they appear to have any right to Gospel-ordinances, such as baptism and the Lord's supper; wherefore the argument from promises to such privileges, before the things promised are bestowed, is of no force. The fourth argument is much of the same kind with the foregoing, namely, "There are many examples recorded in scripture wherein the infants of ungodly men are involved with their parents in heavy judgments; therefore as the judgment and curse which belong to the wicked, belong also to their seed, so the privileges of the faints belong also to their offspring, unless they reject the God of their fathers. The justice and wrath of God, is not more extensive to destroy the offspring of the wicked, than his grace and mercy is to fare those of the faithful; therefore baptism, the sign of the promises of God's mercy, is not to be denied to such infants" (Numbers 14:33; 2 Kings 5:27; Joshua 7:24-25; Jeremiah 22:28). The answer given to the former may suffice for this: to which may be added,

1. That the inflicting judgments on the children of some wicked men, is an instance of the sovereign justice of God; and his bellowing privileges on the children of some good men, is an instance of his sovereign grace, who punishes whom he will, and has mercy on whom he will: for,

2. God does not always proceed in this method; he sometimes bellows the blessings of his grace on the children of the wicked, and inflicts deserved punishment on the children of good men; the seed of the wicked do not always inherit their curses, nor the seed of the godly their blessings; wherefore such dispensations of God can be no rule of conduct to us; and particularly with respect to baptism. And,

3. Whatsoever privileges belong to the seed of believers, we are very desirous they should enjoy; nor would we deprive them of any; let it be shewn that baptism belongs to them as ruth (compassion, ed.), and we will by no means deny it to them. But,

4. Whereas it is said that the privileges of faints belong to their offspring, adding this exceptive clause, "unless they reject the God of their fathers;" it seems most proper, prudent and advisable, particularly in the care before us, to wait and see whether they will receive or reject, follow or

depart from the God of their fathers. The fifth argument is formed thus: "The children of believers are to be baptized now, as those of the Jews were circumcised formerly; for circumcision was then the real of the covenant, as baptism is now, which Christ has appointed in lieu thereof. Abraham and his son Ishmael, and all that were born in his house, were circumcised the same day; and God commanded all Israel to bring their children into the covenant with them, to give them the real of it, and circumcise them" (Genesis 17:1-27; Deuteronomy 29:10-12; Colossians 2:11-12). To all which I reply,

1. that circumcision was no real of the covenant of grace; if it was, the covenant of grace from Adam to Abraham was without a real. It is called a sign in Genesis 17:1-27 : the passage referred to, but not a real: it is indeed in Romans 4:11 said to be a seal of the righteousness of the faith, not to infants, not to Abraham’s natural seed, only to himself; assuring him, that he should be the father of many nations, in a spiritual sense, and that the righteousness of faith he had, should come upon the Gentiles: wherefore this mark or sign continued until the gospel, in which the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, was preached unto the Gentiles, and received by them; to which may be added, that there were many living who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, and yet it was not ordered to them; as it would have been, had it been a seal of that covenant; and on the other hand, it was enjoined such who had no interest in the covenant of grace, and to whom it could not be a real of it, as Ishmael, Esau, and others. And, 2. it has been shewn already, that baptism is no seal of the said covenant. Nor,

3. is it appointed by Christ in lieu of circumcision, nor does it succeed it; there is no agreement between them in their subjects, use, and manner of administration; and what most clearly shews that baptism did not come in the room of circumcision, is, that it was in force and use before circumcision was abolished; which was not till the death of Christ; whereas, years before that, multitudes were baptized, and our Lord himself; and there-tore it being in force before the other was out of date, cannot with any propriety be said to succeed it. This writer, p. 28. has advanced several things to prove that baptism came in the room of circumcision.

1st, He argues from the Lord’s supper being instead of the paschal lamb, that therefore baptism must be in the room of circumcision, which is ceased; or else there must be a deficiency. But it does not appear that the Lord’s supper is in the room of the passover; it followed that indeed, in the institution and celebration of it by Christ, but it was not instituted by him to answer the like purposes as the passover; nor are the same persons admitted to the one as the other; and besides, was the Lord’s supper in the room of the passover, it does not follow from thence that baptism must be in the room of circumcision: but then it is said there will be a deficiency; a deficiency of what? all those ceremonial rites, the passover and circumcision, with many others, pointed at thrift, and have had their fulfillment in him; he is come, and is the body and substance of them; and therefore there can be no deficiency, since he is in the room of them, and is the fulfilling end of them: nor can any other but he, with any propriety, be said to come in the room of them. And there can be no deficiency of grace, since he is full of it, nor of ordinances, for he has appointed as many as he thought fit.

2dly, This author urges, that it is proper there should be two sacraments under the gospel, as there were two under the law, one for adult persons, the other for their children, as were the paschal lamb and circumcision. But if every thing that was typical of Christ, as those two were,

were sacraments, it might as well be said there were two and twenty sacraments under the law, as two; and, according to this way of reasoning, there should be as many under the gospel. Moreover, of these two, one was not for adult persons only, and the other for their children; for they were, each of them, both for adult persons and children too; they that partook of the one had a right to the other; all that were circumcised might eat of the passover, and none but they; and if this is a rule and direction to us now, if infants have a right to baptism, they ought to be admitted to the Lord's supper.

3dly, Baptism, he says, is appointed for a like end as circumcision; namely, for the admission of persons into the church, which is not true; circumcision was appointed for another end, and not for that: the Jewish church was national, and as loon as an infant was born, it was a member of it, even before circumcision; and therefore it could not be admitted by it; nor is baptism for any such end, nor are persons admitted into a visible church of Christ by it; they may be baptized, and yet not members of a church: what church was the eunuch admitted into, or did he become a member of, by his baptism?

4thly, This writer affirms, that "the holy Spirit calls baptism circumcision, that is, the circumcision made without hands, having the same spiritual design; and is termed the Christian circumcision, or that of Christ; it answering to circumcision, and being ordained by Christ in the room of it." To say that baptism is ordained by Christ in the room of circumcision, is begging the question, nor is there any thing in it that answers to circumcision, nor is it called the circumcision of Christ, in Colossians 2:11, which I suppose is the place referred to; for not that, but internal circumcision, the circumcision of the heart is meant, which Christ by his Spirit is the author of, and therefore called his; and the same is the circumcision made without hands, in opposition to circumcision in the flesh; it being by the powerful and efficacious grace of God, without the assistance of men; nor can baptism with any shew of reason, or appearance of truth, be so called, since that is made with the hands of men; and therefore can never be the circumcision there meant.

5thly, He infers that baptism is appointed in the room of circumcision, from their signifying like things, as Original corruption, regeneration, or the circumcision of the heart (Deuteronomy 30:6; Titus 3:5), being seals of the covenant of grace (Ezekiel 16:21; Matthew 16:26), initiating ordinances, and alike laying men under an obligation to put off the body of sin, and walk in newness of life (Romans 4:11) and also being marks of distinction between church-members and others (Romans 6:4; Romans 6:6). But baptism and circumcision do not signify the like things; baptism signifies the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, which circumcision did not; nor does baptism signify original corruption, which it takes not away; nor regeneration, which it does not give, but pre-requires it; nor is baptism meant in the passage referred to, Titus 3:5, nor are either of them seals of the covenant of grace, as has been shewn already; nor initiating ordinances, or what enter persons into a church-state: Jewish infants were church-members, before they were circumcised; and persons may be baptized, and yet not be members of churches; and whatever obligations the one and the other may lay men under to live in newness of life, this can be no proof of the one coming in the room of the other. Circumcision was indeed a mark of distinction between the natural seed of Abraham and others; and baptism is a distinguishing badge, to be wore by those that believe in Christ, and put him on, and are his spiritual seed; but neither of them distinguish church-members from others; the passages referred to are impertinent. But I proceed to consider— The sixth argument in favor of infant-baptism, taken

from "the sameness of the covenant of grace made with Jews and Gentiles, of which circumcision was the seal; from the seal and dispensation of which, the Jews and their children are cut off, and the Gentiles and their seed are engrafted in" (Galatians 3:14; Acts 15:11; Romans 4:11; Romans 11:15; Romans 11:17). In answer to which, let it be observed,

1. That the covenant of grace is indeed the same in one age, and under one dispensation, as another; or as made with one sort of people as another, whether Jews or Gentiles; the same blessings of it that came upon Abraham, come upon all believers, Jews or Gentiles; and the one are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the other; but then,

2. The covenant of grace was not made with Abraham and his natural seed, or with all the Jews as such; nor is it made with Gentiles and their natural seed as such; but with Christ and his spiritual seed, and with them only, be they of what nation., or live they in what age they will.

3. Circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does Romans 4:11. prove it, as has been shewn already; and therefore nothing can be inferred from hence with respect to baptism.

4. The root or stock from whence the unbelieving Jews were cut off, and into which the believing Gentiles are engrafted, is not the covenant of grace, from which those who are interested in it can never be cut off; but the gospel church-state, from which the unbelieving Jews were rejected and left out, and the believing Gentiles took in, who partook of all the privileges of it (Romans 11:17-25): though no mention is made throughout the whole of the passage of the children of either; only of some being broken off through unbelief, and others standing by faith; and therefore can be of no service in the cause of infant-baptism. The seventh argument is taken from "the extent of the covenant of grace being the same under the New Testament, as before the coming of Christ, who came not to curtail the covenant, and render worse the condition of infants; if they were in the covenant before, they are so now; no spiritual privilege given to children or others can be made void" (Romans 11:29; Jeremiah 30:20). To which may be replied,

1. That the extent of the covenant, as to the constitution of it, and persons interested in it, is always the same, having neither more nor fewer; but with respect to the application of it, it extends to more persons at one time than at another; and is more extensive under the gospel-dispensation than before; it being applied to Gentiles as well as Jews: and with respect to the blessings and privileges of it, they are always the same, are never curtailed or made void, or taken away from those to whom they belong; which are all Christ’s spiritual seed, and none else, be they Jews or Gentiles. But,

2. It should be proved that the infant-seed of believers, or their natural seed as such, were ever in the covenant of grace; or that any spiritual privileges were given to them as such; or it is impertinent to talk of curtailing the covenant, or taking away the privileges of the seed of believers.

3. If even their covenant-interest could be proved, which it cannot, that gives no right to any ordinance, or to a positive institution, without a divine direction; there were many who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, who yet had nothing to do with that ordinance.

4. baptism not being allowed to infants, does not make their condition worse than it was under the former dispensation; for as then circumcision could not save them, so neither would baptism, were

it administered to them; nor was circumcision really a privilege, but the reverse; and therefore the abrogation of it, without substituting any thing in its room, does not make the condition of infants the worse; and certain it is, that the condition of the infants of believing Gentiles, even though baptism is denied them, is much better than that of the infants of Gentiles before the coming of Christ; yea, even of the infants of Jews themselves; since they are born of Christian parents, and so have a Christian education, and the opportunity and advantage of hearing the gospel preached, as they grow up, with greater clearness, and in every place[3] where they are. The text in Romans 11:29 regards not external privileges, but internal grace; that in Jeremiah 30:20 respects not infants, but the posterity of the Jews; adult persons in the latter day. The eighth argument is taken from the everlastingness of the covenant of grace, and runs thus; "The example of Abraham and the Israelites in circumcising their children according to the command of God, should oblige us to baptize our children; because circumcision was then a real of the everlasting covenant, a covenant that was to last for ever, and not cease as the legal ceremonies; which God hath confirmed with an oath; and therefore can have suffered no alteration for the worse in any thing with respect to infants" (Genesis 7:17; Hebrews 6:13; Hebrews 6:18; Micah 7:18; Micah 7:20; Galatians 3:8.) The answer to which is,

1. That the covenant of grace is everlasting, will never cease, nor admit of any alteration, is certain; but the covenant of circumcision, which is called an everlasting covenant, Genesis 17:7, was only to continue during the Mosaic dispensation, or unto the times of the Messiah; and is so called for the same reason, and just in the same sense as the covenant of the priesthood with Phinehas is called, the covenant of an everlasting Priesthood (Numbers 25:13). Though the covenant of grace is everlasting, and whatever is in that covenant, or ever was, will never be altered; yet it should be proved there is any thing in it with respect to infants, and particularly which lays any foundation for, or gives them any claim and right to baptism.

2. Though circumcision was a sign and token of the covenant made with Abraham, and his natural seed, it never was any real of the covenant of grace. And,

3. The example of Abraham and others, in circumcising their children according to the command of God, lays no obligation upon us to baptize ours, unless we had a command for their baptism, as they had for their circumcision. The ninth argument is formed thus: "baptism is to be administered to the seed of believers, because it is certainly very dangerous and blameworthy, to neglect and despise a valuable privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people." But it must be denied, and should be proved, that baptism is a privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people; let it be shewn, if it can, when and where it was appointed by him. This argument is illustrated and enforced by various observations; as that "that soul was to be cut off that neglected circumcision; and no just excuse can be given for neglecting infant-baptism, which is ordained to be the seal of the covenant instead of circumcision:" but we have seen already, that baptism does not come in the room of circumcision, nor is it a real of the covenant of grace; and there is good reason to be given for the neglect of infant-baptism, because it never was ordained and appointed of God. Moreover it is said, "that the seed of believers were formerly, under the Old Testament, in the covenant together with their parents; and no one is able to shew that they have been cast out under the New, or that their condition is worse, and their spiritual privileges less, under the gospel, than under the law:" but that believers with their natural seed as such, were together in the covenant of grace under the Old Testament, mould not be

barely affirmed, but proved, before we are put upon to shew that they are cast out under the New; though this writer himself, before in the sixth argument, talks of the Jews and their children being cut off from the real and dispensation of the covenant; which can never be true of the covenant of grace; nor do we think that the condition of infants is worse, or their privileges less now, than they were before, though baptism is denied them, as has been observed already. It is further urged, that "it is not to be imagined, without presumption, that Christ ever intended to "cut them off from an ordinance, which God had given them a right unto;" nor do we imagine any such thing; nor can it be proved that God ever gave the ordinance of baptism to them. As for what this writer further observes, that had Christ took away circumcision, without ordaining baptism in the room of it, for the children of believers; the Jews would have cried out against it as an excommunication of their children; and would have been a greater objection against him than any other; and would now be a hindrance of their conversion; and who, if they were converted, would have baptism or circumcision to be a seal of the covenant with them and their children, it deserves no answer; since the clamors, outcries, and objections of the Jews, and their practice on their legal principles, would be no rule of direction to us, were they made and gave into, since they would be without reason and truth; for though Christ came not to destroy the moral law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17); yet he came to put an end to the ceremonial law, of which circumcision is a part, and did put an end to it[4]: the text in Jeremiah 30:20 respects the restoration of the Jews in the latter day, but not their old ecclesiastical polity, which shall not be established again, but their civil liberties and privileges. The tenth argument stands thus: "Children are to be baptized under the covenant of grace, because all the covenants which God ever made with men were made not only with them, but also with their children;" and instances are given in Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Levi, Phinehas, and David. The covenant of works was indeed made with Adam and his seed, in which covenant he was a federal head to his offspring; but the covenant of grace was not made with him and his seed, he was no federal head in that; nor is that made with all mankind, as it must, if it had been made with Adam and his seed: this is an instance against the argument, and shews that all the covenants that ever God made with men, were not made with them and their seed; for certainly the covenant of grace was made with Adam, and made known to him (Genesis 17:19-21), and yet not with his seed with him; nor can any instance be given of the covenant of grace being made with any man, and his natural seed. There was a covenant made with Noah and his posterity, securing them from a future deluge, but not a covenant of grace securing them from everlasting destruction; for then it must have been made with all mankind, since all are the posterity of Noah; and where then is the distinction of the seed of believers and of unbelievers? Besides Ham, one of Noah’s immediate offspring, was not interested in the covenant of grace. As for the covenant made with Abraham, his son Ishmael was excluded from it"; and of Isaac’s two sons one of them was rejected (Romans 9:10-13) and all were not Israel that were of Israel, or of Jacob, Genesis 17:6. The covenant of the priesthood was indeed made with Levi and Phinehas, and their posterity; and though it is called an everlasting one, it is now made void; nor is there any other in its room with the ministers of the word and their posterity; and yet no outcry is made of the children of gospel-ministers being in a worse condition, and their privileges less than those of the priests and Levites: and as for David, the sad estate of his family, and the wicked behavior of most of his children, shew, that the covenant of grace was not made with him and his natural offspring; and whatever covenants those were that were made with there persons, they furnish out no argument proving the covenant of grace to be made with believers and their carnal seed, and still

less any argument in favor of infant-baptism.[5] The eleventh argument is: "The seed of believers ought to be baptized under the covenant of grace, otherwise they would be reckoned pagans, and the offspring of infidels and idolaters, to whom there is neither a promise nor any sign of hope; whereas the scripture makes a difference, calling them holy on account of their relation to the holy covenant, when either their father or mother believe (1 Corinthians 7:14), disciples (Acts 15:10); reckoning them among them that believe, because of their relation to the household of faith (Matthew 18:6) styling them the seed of the blessed, and their offspring with them (Isa. 115:23); accounting them for a generation to the Lord (Psalms 22:30) as David says; who, Psalms 22:10 observes, that God was his God from his mother's belly; and also calling them the children of God (Ezekiel 16:20-21); therefore they ought to be dedicated to him by that ordinance which he has appointed for that purpose." To all which may be replied,

1. That the children of believers are by nature children of wrath even as others; and are no better than others; and were they baptized, they would not be at all the better Christians for it. Though,

2. It will be allowed that there is a difference between the offspring of believers, and those of infidels, pagans and idolaters; and the former have abundantly the advantage of the latter, as they have a Christian education; and consequently as they are brought up under the means of grace, there is hope of them; and it may be expected that the promise of God to such who use the means will be accomplished. But,

3. the characters mentioned either do not belong to children, or not for the reason given; and those that do, do not furnish out an argument for their baptism. Children are said to be holy, born in lawful wedlock (1 Corinthians 7:14); not on account of their relation to the holy covenant, but on account of the holiness of a believing parent, which surely cannot be a federal holiness, but a matrimonial one; the marriage of a believer with an unbeliever being valid, or otherwise their children muff be unclean or illegitimate, and not holy or legitimate. The disciples in Acts 15:10 are not young children, but adult persons, the converted Gentiles, on whom the false teachers would have put the yoke of the ceremonial law, and particularly circumcision. The little ones reckoned among those that believe in Christ, Matthew 18:6 were not infants in age, but the apostles of our Lord, who were little in their own account, and in the account of others, whom to offend was criminal, highly provoking to Christ, and of dangerous consequence. The text, Isaiah 65:23, speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not the carnal seed of believers,[6] and therefore are the same who are accounted to the Lord for a generation; even a spiritual seed that shall serve him, Psalms 22:30 and the words in verse 10 are the words, not of David, but of Christ. And the sons and daughters born to God, and whom he calls his children, Ezekiel 16:20-21 were so, not by grace or by covenant, but by creation. And from the whole there is not the least reason why the children of believers should be dedicated to God by baptism, which is an ordinance that never was appointed by him for any such purpose. The twelfth argument is: "The seed of believers are to be baptized, because church-relation belongs to them, as citizenship belongs to the children of freemen; and it is by baptism that they are first admitted into the visible church, and there is neither covenant nor promise of salvation out of the church, for the church of Christ is his kingdom on earth, and Christ says this belongs to the children" (Mark 10:13-14). In answer to which.

1. There is a manifest contradiction in the argument. Church-relation belongs to infants, that is, they are related to the church, and members of it, and therefore should be baptized; and yet they

are first admitted into the church by baptism; what a contradiction this! in it, and out of it, related, and not related to it, at one and the time.

2. Church-membership does not pass from father to son, nor is it by birth, as citizenship, or the freedom of cities; the one is a civil, the other an ecclesiastical affair; the one is of nature, the other of grace; natural birth gives a right to the one, but the spiritual birth or regeneration only entitles to the other.

3. Church-membership gives no right to baptism, but rather baptism to church-membership, or however is a qualification requisite to it; persons ought to be baptized before they are church-members; and if they are church members, and not regenerate persons and believers in Christ, for such may be in a church, they have no right to baptism.

4. To talk of there being no covenant or promise of salvation out of the church, smells rank of popery. The covenant and promise of salvation are not made with and to persons as members of churches, or as in a visible church-state, but with and to the elect of God in Christ, and with persons only considered in him; who have an interest in the covenant and promise of salvation, though they may not be in a visible church-state; and doubtless many are saved who never were members of a visible church.

5. The kingdom of God, in Mark 10:13-14 be it the church of Christ on earth, or eternal glory in heaven, only belongs to such persons who are like to little children for their meekness and humility, and freedom from malice and rancor, as Mark 10:15 shows.

6. Could infants in age, or the seed of believers as such be here meant, and the kingdom of God be understood of Christ's visible church, and they as belonging to it, it would prove more than this writer chooses; namely, that they have a right to all church-privileges, and particularly and especially to the Lord's supper. The thirteenth argument is: "Children are the lambs of Christ's flock and sheep; and the lambs ought not to be kept out of Christ's fold, nor hindered from the washing that is in his blood; he particularly promises to be their shepherd; and his Spirit has declared, that little children should be brought to him under the gospel, in the arms, and on the shoulders of their parents" (Isaiah 40:11; Isaiah 49:22; Song of Solomon 6:6; John 21:15). On which may be observed,

1. That there is indeed mention made of the lambs of Christ in Isaiah 40:11 and John 21:15 which he gathers in his arms, and ordered Peter to feed; yet not infants in age are intended in either place, but adult persons, weak believers, who, in comparison of others, because of their small degree of knowledge and strength, are called lambs; and are to be gently and tenderly dealt with; and such as these are not kept out of Christ's fold, but are received into it, though weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations; and are fed with knowledge and understanding, which infants in age are not capable of.

2. The infant-seed of believers are no where called the sheep of Christ, nor has he promised to be the shepherd of them; let the passages be directed to, if it can be, where this is said.

3. Those who are truly the lambs and sheep of Christ, am not hindered from the washing of his blood; though that is not to be done, nor is it done by baptism; persons may be washed with water, as Simon Magus, and yet not warned in the blood of Christ: Song of Solomon 6:6 does not intend

washing in either sense; but either the regenerating grace of the spirit, or the purity of conversation, and respects not infants at all.

4. Nor is it declared by the Spirit of God, that parents should bring their children to Christ in their arms, and on their shoulders; the passage in Isaiah 49:22 brought in support of it, speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not of the carnal seed of believers; and of their being brought, not in the arms and on the shoulders of their natural parents, but of the Gentiles; and not to Christ, but to the church, through the ministry of the word in the latter day, in which the Gentiles would be very assisting. The fourteenth argument runs thus: "The seed of the faithful ought to be baptized, because they were partakers of all the former baptisms mentioned in scripture, as the children of Noah in the ark (1 Peter 3:20); the Israelites at the Red Sea, and in the cloud (1 Corinthians 10:1-2; Exodus 12:37); Several children were baptized with the baptism of the Spirit, for several were filled with the holy Ghost from their mother's womb; all the children of Bethlehem under two years old, with the baptism of martyrdom (Matthew 2:1); and many children with John's baptism, since he baptized the whole country." But,

1. It unhappily falls out, for the cause of infant-baptism, that Noah's children in the ark were all adult and married persons (Genesis 7:7).

2. That there were children among the Israelites when they were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea, is not denied; but then it should be observed, that they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; and therefore, if this does not give a sufficient claim to infants to partake of the Lord's supper, neither will the other prove their right to baptism: moreover, if any arguments can be formed from this and the former instance, for the administration of baptism under the New Testament, they will clearly shew, that it ought to be administered by immersion; for, as in the former, when the fountains of the great deep were broke up under them, and the windows of heaven were opened over them, they were as persons immersed in water; so when the waters of the Red Sea stood up on each side, and the cloud was over the Israelites, they were, as it were overwhelmed in water.

3. Though this writer says, that several children were filled with the holy Ghost from their mother's womb, yet we read but of one that was so, John the Baptist, a very extraordinary person, and extraordinarily qualified for extraordinary work, an instance not to be mentioned in ordinary cases; betides, it is a rule in logic, a particulari ad univer-salem non valet consequentia, "from a particular to an universal, the consequence is not conclusive." Moreover, in what sense John was filled with the holy Ghost so early, is not easy to say; and be it what it will, the same cannot be proved of the seed of believers in general; and could it, it would give no right to baptism, without a positive institution; it gave no right to John himself.

4. That the infants at Bethlehem were murdered, will be granted, but that they suffered martyrdom for Christ, will not easily be proved; since they knew nothing of the matter, and were not conscious on what account their lives were taken away.

5. That many or any children were baptized with John's baptism we deny, and call upon this writer to prove it, and even to give us one tingle instance of it; what he suggests is no evidence of it, as that the whole country in general were baptized by him, who could not be all childless; but I hope he does not think, that every individual person in the country of Judea was baptized by John; it is

certain, that there were many even adult persons that were refused by him, and such as were baptized by him, were such as confessed their sins, which infants could not do (Matthew 3:5-7) and as to the probability of the displeasure of Jewish parents, suggested if their children had not been baptized by John, since they were used, and under a command of God, to bring their children to the covenant and ordinances of God (Genesis 17:1-27; Deuteronomy 29:10; Deuteronomy 29:13; Joel 2:16), it deserves no regard, since whatever probability there was of their displeasure, though I see none, there could be no just ground for it; since in the instances given, they had the command of God for what they did, for this they had none. The fifteenth argument is: "It is contrary to the apostle's practice, to leave any unbaptized in Christian families; for they baptized whole families when the heads of them believed; as the families of Lydia, the Jailor, and Stephanas; and it is evident, that the words, family and household, in scripture, mean chiefly children, sons, daughters, and little ones."[7] To which I reply, that whatever there words signify in some places of scripture, though in the passages mentioned they do not chiefly intend new-born infants, but grown persons; it should be proved, that there were infants in families and households that were baptized, and that there were baptized together with the head of the family; for it is certain, there are many families and households that have no little children in them; and as for those that are instanced in, it is not probable that there were any in them; and it is manifest, that such as were baptized, were adult persons and believers in Christ. It is not evident in what station of life Lydia was, whether married or unmarried, and whether one had young children or not; and if one had, it is not likely they should be with her, when at a distance from her native place, and upon business; it is most probable, that those that were with her, called her household, were her servants, that assisted her in her business; and it is certain, that when the apostles entered her house, those that were there, and who doubtless are the same that were baptized, were called brethren, and such as were capable of being comforted (Acts 16:15; Acts 16:40) and the Jailor's household were such as had the word of God spoken to them, and received it with joy, took pleasure in the company and conversation of the apostles, and believed in God together with him, and so were adult persons, believers, and very proper subjects of baptism (Acts 16:32-34). Stephanas is by some thought to be the same with the Jailor; but if he was another person, it is plain his household consisted of adult persons, men called by grace, and who were made use of in public work; they were the first-fruits of Achaia, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.[8] The sixteenth argument is: "None that truly fear God, can seriously and with certainty say, that there were not many infants among the three thousand baptized by the apostles at once; for the Jews were not content with any ordinances without having their children with them. The apostle directs those who were at age to repent, but he commands every one of them to be baptized, and objects nothing against their children; because, as he says, the promise was unto them and their children also; and this is a plain command for infant-baptism to all that will judge impartially." But,

1. A man that carefully reads the account of the baptism of the three thousand, having the fear of God before his eyes, may with the greatest seriousness and strongest assurance affirm, not only that there were not many infants, but that there were not one infant among the three thousand baptized by the apostles; for they were all of them such as were pricked to the heart, and cried out, Men and brethren what shall we do? they gladly received the word of the gospel, joined to the church, and continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine, in fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayer; all which cannot be said of infants.

2. What this author suggests, agreeable to what he elsewhere says, that the Jews were not pleased with any ordinance unless they had their children with them, is without foundation; what discontent did they ever shew at a part of their children being left out of the ordinance of circumcision, and no other appointed for them in lieu of it? And had they been discontented, what argument can be formed from it?

3. The distinction between those that were of age, whom the apostle directed to repent, and the every one of them whom he commanded to be baptized, has no ground nor reason for it, yea is quite stupid and senseless; and even, according to this writer himself, is a distinction without any difference, since the every one to be baptized are supposed by him to have children, and so to be at age; since he adds, "and objects nothing against their children." And a clear case it is, that the self-same persons that were exhorted to be baptized, were exhorted to repent, and that as previous to their baptism; and therefore must be adult persons, for infants are not capable of repentance, and of giving evidence of it.

4. Those words, the promise is unto you and to your children, are so far from being a plain command for infant-baptism, that there is not a word of baptism in them, and much less of infant-baptism; nor do they regard intents, but the posterity of the Jews, who are often called children, though grown up, to whom the promise of the Messiah, and remission of sins by him, and the pouring out of the holy Ghost, was made; and are spoken for the encouragement of adult persons only, to repent and be baptized; and belong only to such as are called by grace, and to all truth, whether Jews or Gentiles. The seventeenth argument is: "The seed of believers should be baptized, be-cause the privileges and blessings which are signified and sealed in baptism are necessary to their salvation, and there is no salvation without them; namely, an interest in the covenant of grace, the remission of original sin,. union with Christ, sanctification of the holy Spirit, and regeneration, without which none can be saved" (John 3:5). The answer to which is,

1. That the things indeed mentioned are necessary to salvation, and there can be none without them; but then baptism is not necessary to the enjoyment of these things, nor to salvation; a person may have an interest in these blessings, and be saved, though not baptized; there are things necessary to baptism, but baptism is not necessary to them; and indeed a person ought to have an interest in these, and appear to have one, before he is baptized. Wherefore,

2. There things are not signified in baptism, and much less sealed by it; other things, such as the sufferings, death, and the resurrection of Christ, are signified in it; there, as regeneration, etc. are prerequisites unto baptism, and are not communicated by it, or sealed up to persons in it, who may be baptized, and yet have no share and lot in this matter, witness the care of Simon Magus. The eighteenth argument is: "The children of the faithful ought to be baptized, because this lays them under strong obligation to shun the works of Satan; and many have received much benefit from hence in their youth. Comfortable symptoms, or signs of a work of grace, have appeared very early in several, though perhaps bad company has afterwards corrupted them. Betides infant-baptism keeps up a general profession of faith and religion, and makes the word and means of grace of more virtue and efficacy, than if men had utterly renounced Christianity, and declared themselves infidels; and further, it says a powerful obligation on their parents and others, to teach them their duty, which is a main end of all the ordinances God has instituted" (Psalms 78:5-6). But,

1. Is there nothing betides baptism, that can lay persons under strong obligation to shun the works of the Devil? certainty there are many things: if so, then it is not absolutely necessary on this account; besides, though the baptism of adult persons does lay them under obligation to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4), yet the baptism of infants can lay them under no such obligation as infants, and while they are such, because they are not conscious of it, nor can it take any such effect upon them.

2. What that much benefit or advantage is, that many have received from infant-baptism, I am at a loss to know, and even what is intended by this writer, unless it be what follows, that signs of a work of grace have appeared very early in several, which may be, and yet not to be ascribed to baptism; baptism has no such virtue and influence, as to produce a work of grace in the soul, or any signs of it; betides, a work of grace has appeared very early in several, and has been carried on in them, who have never been baptized at all.

3. Infant-baptism keeps up no public or general profession of faith or religion, since there is no profession of faith and religion made in it by the person baptized; nor is it of any avail to make the word and means of grace powerful and efficacious, which only become so by the Spirit and grace of God; and a wide difference there is between the diffuse of infant-baptism, and renouncing Christianity, and professing infidelity; these things are not necessarily connected together, nor do they go together; persons may deny and disuse infant-baptism, as it is well known many do, and yet not renounce the Christian faith, and declare themselves infidels.

4. Parents and others, without infant-baptism, are under strong obligations to teach children their duty to God and men, and therefore it is not necessary on that account. The nineteenth argument is: "The seed of believers are to be baptized, though they have not actual faith, since Christ speaks not of there but of adult persons, Mark 16:16. And certain it is they have as much fitness for baptism as for justification and eternal life, without which they must all perish; the Spirit of God knows how to work this tithers in them, as well as in grown persons: Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and several others, were sanctified from their mother’s womb" (John 3:8-9; Ecclesiastes 11:5; Luke 1:15; Luke 1:44; Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 44:3; Psalms 8:2). To which may be returned for answer,

1. That if the text in Mark 16:16 speaks not of infants, but of adult persons only, as it certainly does, I hope it will be allowed to be an instruction and direction for the baptism of adult believers, and to be a sufficient warrant for our practice.

2. If the infants of believers have no more fitness for baptism than they have for justification and eternal life, they have none at all, since they are by nature children of wrath, even as others; and therefore can have none, but what is given them by the Spirit and grace of God.

3. We dispute not the power of the Spirit of God, or what he is able to do by the operations of his grace upon the fouls of infants; we deny not but that he can and may work a work of grace upon their hearts, and clothe them with the righteousness of Christ, and so give them both a right and meetness for eternal life; but then this should appear previous to baptism; actual faith itself is not sufficient for baptism, without a profession of it; the man that has it ought to declare it to the satisfaction of the administrator, ere he admits him to the ordinance (Acts 8:36-37).

4. Of the several children said to be sanctified from their mother’s womb, no proof is given but of one, John the Baptist, who was filled with the holy Ghost from thence, which has been considered in the answer to the fourteenth argument; as for Jeremiah, it is only said of him that he was sanctified, that is, set apart, designed and ordained, in the purpose and counsel of God to be a prophet, before he was born; and is no proof of internal sanctification so early, Isaiah 44:3 speaks of the Spirit of God being poured down, not upon the carnal seed of believers, but upon the spiritual seed of the church; and Psalms 8:2. is a prophecy, not of new-born infants, but of children grown up, crying Hosanna in the temple (Matthew 21:15-16) no argument from a particular instance or two, were there more than there are, is of avail for the sanctification of infants in general; it should be proved, that all the infant-seed of believers are sanctified by the Spirit of God; for if some only, and not all, how shall it be known who they are? let it first appear that they are sanctified, and then it will be time enough to baptize them. The twentieth argument is: "The children of believers are to be baptized, because their right to the covenant and church of God is established from the first, much clearer than several other necessary ordinances; there is no express command nor example of women receiving the Lord’s supper; no particular command in the New Testament for family-worship, and for the observation of the first day of the week as a sabbath; and yet none dare call them in question; and there is no objection against infant-baptism, but the like might formerly have been made against circumcision; and may now be objected against many other ordinances and commands, of God." To which I reply,

1. That with respect to women, receiving the Lord’s supper, it is certain, that not only they were admitted to baptism (Acts 8:12), and became members of churches (Acts 1:14-15; Acts 4:37; Acts 5:9; Acts 5:14; 1 Corinthians 11:5-6; 1 Corinthians 11:13; Acts 14:34, 35). but there is an express command for their receiving the Lord’s supper in 1 Corinthians 11:29 where a word is used of the common gender, and includes both men and women; who are both on in Christ, and in a gospel church-state, and have a right to the same ordinances (Galatians 3:28).

2. As to family-worship, that is not peculiar to the New Testament-dispensation, as baptism is; it was common to the saints in all ages, and therefore needed no express command for it under the New; though what else but an express command for it is Ephesians 6:4? for can children be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, without family-worship?

3. As to the observation of the first day, though there is no express command for it, there are precedents of it; there are instances of keeping it (John 20:19; John 20:26; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2): now, let like instances and examples of infant-baptism be produced if they can: though no express command can be pointed at, yet if any precedent or example of any one infant being baptized by John, or Christ, or his apostles, can be given, we should think ourselves obliged to follow it.

4. That the same objections might be made against circumcision formerly, as now against infant-baptism, is most notoriously false; it is objected, and that upon a good foundation, that there is neither precept nor precedent for infant-baptism in all the word of God; the same could never be objected against circumcision, since there was such an express command of it to Abraham, Genesis 17:1-27, and so many instances of it are in the sacred writings; let the same be shewn for infant-baptism, and we have done.

5. What the other ordinances and commands of God are, to which the same objections may be made as to infant-baptism, is not said, and therefore no reply can be made. I have nothing more to do, than to take some little notice of what this writer says, concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, page 33. We are no more fond of contentions and strifes about words, than this author, and those of the same way of thinking with himself can be; but surely, modestly to inquire into, and attempt to fix the true manner of administering an ordinance of Christ, according to the scriptures, and the instances of it; according to the signification of the words used to express it, and agreeable to the end and design of it; can never be looked upon as a piece of impertinence, or be traduced as cavil and wrangling. And,

1st, Since this writer observes, that he does not find that either the sacred scripture or the church of England, have expressly determined, whether baptism is to be performed by plunging or sprinkling, but have left the one and the other indifferently to our choice; I hope he will not be displeased, that we choose the former, as most agreeable to the sacred writings, and the examples of baptism in them; as those of our Lord and others in Jordan (Matthew 3:6; Matthew 3:16) and in AEnon, where John was baptizing, because there was much water (John 3:23) and of the Eunuch (Acts 8:36-38) and as best representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), as well as best suits with the primary sense of the Greek word, baptizw, which signifies to plunge or dip. And,

2dly, Since, according to this writer, one mode is not more essential to the ordinance than another, but a reverential receiving of the sign; it may be asked, what of this nature, namely, a reverential receiving of the sign, the application of the water to the body, signifying the spiritual application of Christ and his gifts to the soul, can be observed in an infant when sprinkled, which is not conscious of what is done to it?

3dly, Whereas, he says, "it is not improbable but the apostles baptized by sprinkling, since several were baptized in their houses, Acts 9:17-18 and Acts 16:33 and others, in former times, sick in their beds:" it may be replied, that it is not probable that the apostle Paul was baptized by sprinkling (Acts 9:17-18) since had he, he would have had no occasion to have arose in order to be baptized, as he is said to do, Acts 9:18. It is most probable, that when he arose off of his bed or chair, he went to a bath in Judas's house; or out of the house, to a certain place fit for the administration of the ordinance by immersion; and since there was a pool in the prison, as Grotius thinks, where the Jailor washed the apostles' stripes, it is most probable, that here he and his household were baptized; or since they were brought out of the prison, and after baptism brought into the Jailor's house, Acts 9:33-34, it is most likely they went out to the river near the city where prayer was wont to be made, and there had the ordinance administered to them, Acts 9:13. As for the baptism of sick persons in their beds, this was not in the times of the apostles, but in after-times, when corruptions had got into the church; and so deserves no regard.

4thly, In favor of sprinkling, or pouring water in baptism, he urges that "it is a sign of the pouring or sprinkling of the holy Ghost, and of the blood of Christ" (Ezekiel 36:25; Hebrews 12:24), but it should be observed, that baptism is not a sign or significative of the sprinkling of clean water, or the grace of the Spirit in regeneration, or of the blood of Christ on the conscience of a sinner, all which ought to precede baptism; but of the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ; which cannot be represented in any other way than by covering a person in water, or an immersion of

him.

01.08. An Answer To A Welsh Clergyman's Twenty contd

5thly, "Water in baptism, he says, is but a sign and seal; a little of it is sufficient to signify the gifts which Christ has purchased, as a small quantity of bread and wine does in the other sacrament, and as a small seal is as much security as a larger one." But as baptism is no sign of the things before-mentioned, so it is no seal, as we have seen, of the covenant of grace; wherefore these similitudes are impertinent to illustrate this matter: and though a small quantity of bread and wine is sufficient in the other sacrament, to signify our partaking of the benefits of the death of Christ by faith; yet a small quantity of water is not sufficient to signify his sufferings and death, with his burial and resurrection, themselves. (The Sermon is incomplete beyond this point . . . ed.)

ENDNOTES:

[1] 1 Peter 2:13; Romans 13:1-2; Titus 3:1-2.

[2] See the Introduction to the Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. to which this is an answer.

[3] This also is an answer to what the author of The baptism of Infants a reasonable Service suggests in p. 7, 12, 16.

[4] Which may likewise be an answer to the same thing hinted by the author of The baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, p. 28. Genesis 3:15.

[5] Let this also be observed, together with the answer to the first argument of the author of The baptism of Infants a reasonable Service. etc. p. 14.

[6] Vide Ibid, p. 24.

[7] Compare Exodus 1:1; Exodus 1:7 with Genesis 46:5 and Genesis 45:18-19; compare 1 Samuel 27:3 with 1 Samuel 30:6; 1 Timothy 3:3; Genesis 30:30; Numbers 3:15.

[8] 1 Corinthians 16:15. Let this be observed, in answer to what the author of The baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. has advanced in p. 43.

01.09. Antipedobaptism; or Infant-Baptism, an

Antipaedobaptism; or Infant-Baptism an innovation: Being a Reply To A Late Pamphlet, Entitled, PAEDOBAPTISM;

Or, A Defence of Infant-baptism, in point of Antiquity, etc. A pamphlet being published some time ago by a nameless author, entitled, The baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. I wrote an answer to it, chiefly relating to the antiquity of infant-baptism, called, The argument from Apostolic tradition, in favor of Infant-baptism, etc. considered; and of late another anonymous writer has started up in defense of the antiquity of it, from the exceptions made by me to it; for it seems it is not the same author, but another who has engaged in this controversy; but be he who he will, it does not greatly concern me to know; though methinks, if they judge they are embarked in a good cause, they should not be ashamed of it, or of their names, and of letting the world know who they are, and what share they have in the defense of it: but just as they please, it gives me no uneasiness; they are welcome to take what method they judge most agreeable, provided truth and righteousness are attended to. In my answer, I observe that apostolic tradition at most and best is a very uncertain and precarious thing, not to be depended upon; of which I give an instance so early as the second century, which yet even then could not be settled; and that it is doubtful whether there is any such thing as apostolic tradition, not delivered in the sacred writings; and demand of the Gentleman, whole performance was before me, to give me one single instance of it; and if infant-baptism is of this kind, to name the apostle or apostles by whom it was delivered, and to whom, when, and where; to all which no answer is returned; only I observe a deep silence as to undoubted apostolic tradition, so much boasted of before. The state of the controversy between us and the Paedobaptists, with respect to the antiquity of infant-baptism, lies here; and the question is, whether there is any evidence of its being practiced before the third century; or before the times of Tertullian. We allow it began in the third century, and was then practiced in the African churches, where we apprehend it was first moved; but deny there was any mention or practice of it before that age; and affirm that Tertullian is the first person known that spoke of it, and who speaks against it: I have therefore required of any of our learned Paedobaptists to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before Tertullian, in which infant-baptism is expressly mentioned, or clearly hinted at, or plainly supposed, or manifestly referred to: if this is not done, the controversy must remain just in the same state where it was, and infant-baptism carried not a moment higher that it was before; and whatever else is done below this date, is all to no purpose. How far this Gentleman, who has engaged in this controversy, has succeeded, is our next business to inquire. The only Christian writers of the first century, any of whose writings are extant, are Barnabas, Clemens Romanus, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius; nothing out of Barnabas, Polycarp, and Ignatius, in favor of infant-baptism, is pretended to. "The most ancient writer that we have (says this Gentleman, in the words of Mr. Bingham) is Clemens Romanus, who lived in the time of the apostles; and he, though he doth not directly mention infant-baptism, yet says a thing that by consequence proves it; for he makes infants liable to original sin, which is in effect to say that they have need of baptism to purge it away, etc." The passage or passages in Clemens, in

which he lays this thing, are not produced; I suppose they are the same that are quoted by Dr Wall, in neither of which does he say any such thing; it is true, in the first of them he makes mention of a passage in Job 14:4 according to the Greek version, no man is free from pollution, no not though his life is but of one day; which might be brought indeed to prove original sin, but is not brought by Clemens for any such purpose, but as a self-accusation of Job; shewing, that though he had the character of a good man, yet he was not free from sin: and the other only speaks of men coming into the world as out of a grave and darkness, meaning out of their mother's womb; and seem, not to refer to any moral death and darkness men are under, or to the sinful state of men as they come into the world: but be it so, that in these passages Clemens does speak of original sin, what is this to infant-baptism, or the necessity of it? is there no other way to purge away original sin, but baptism? nay, is there any such virtue in baptism as to purge it away? there is not; it is the blood of Christ, and that only, that purges away sin, whether original or actual. Should it be said that this was the sense of the ancients in some after-ages, who did ascribe such a virtue to baptism, and did affirm it was necessary to be administered, and did administer it to infants for that purpose, what is this to Clemens? what, because some persons in some after-ages gave into this stupid notion, that baptism took away original sin, and was necessary to infants, and ought to be given them for that reason, does it follow that Clemens was of that mind? or is there the least hint of it in his letter? What though he held the doctrine of original sin, does it follow therefore that he was for infant-baptism? how many Antipaedobaptists are there who profess the same doctrine? will any man from hence conclude that they are for and in the practice of infant-baptism? It follows in the words of the same writer; "Hermes pastor (Hermas I suppose it should be) lived about the same time with Clemens; and hath several passages to shew the general necessity of water, that is, baptism, to save men:" the passages referred to are those Dr Wall has produced. Hermas had a vision of a tower built on water; inquiring the reason of it, he is told, it was "because your life is, and will be saved by water:" and in another place, "before any one receives the name of the Son of God, he is liable to death; but when he receives that seal, he is delivered from death, and is assigned to life; and that seal is water."

Now by water Hermas is supposed to mean baptism; but surely he could not mean real material water, or the proper ordinance of water-baptism, since he speaks of the patriarchs coming up through this water, and being sealed with this seal after they were dead, and so entering into the kingdom of God: but how disembodied spirits could be baptized in real water, is not easy to conceive; it must surely design something mystical; and what it is, I must leave to those who better understand these visionary things: but be it so, that baptism in water is meant, salvation by it may be understood in the same sense as the apostle Peter ascribes salvation to it, when he says, that baptism saves by the resurrection of Christ from the dead; that is, by directing the baptized person to Christ for salvation, who was delivered for his offenses, and rose again for his justification; of which resurrection baptism by immersion is a lively emblem; and Hermas is only speaking of adult persons, and not of infants, or of their baptism, or of the necessity of it to their salvation: in another place indeed he speaks of some that were as infants without malice, and so more honorable than others; and, adds he, all infants, are honored with the Lord, and accounted of first of all; that is, all such infants as before described: but be it that infants in age are meant, they may be valued and loved by the Lord; he may shew mercy to them, choose, redeem, regenerate, and save them, and yet not order them to be baptized; nor has he ordered it: however Hermas has not a word about the baptism of them, and therefore these passages are impertinently referred to.

Now these are all the passages of the writers of the first century brought into this controversy; in which there is so far from being any express mention of infant-baptism, that it is not in the least hinted at, nor referred unto; nor is any thing of this kind pretended to, till we come to the middle of the next age; and yet our author upon the above passages concludes after this manner: "thus—we have traced up the practice of infant baptism to the time of the apostles;" when those writers give not the least hint of infant-baptism, or have any reference to it, or the practice of it. It is amazing what a face some men have!

Let us now proceed to the second century. The book of Recognitions, this writer seems to be at a loss where to place it, whether after or before Justin; however, Mr. Bingham tells him, "it is an ancient writing of the same age with Justin Martyr, mentioned by Origen in his Philocalia, and by some ascribed to Bardesanes Syrus, who lived about the middle of the second century." It is indeed mentioned by Origen, though not under that name, and is by him ascribed to Clemens, as it has been commonly done; and if so, might have been placed among the testimonies of the first century; but this Gentleman's author says it is ascribed by some to Bardesanes Syrus: it is true, there is inserted in it a fragment out of a dialogue of his concerning fate, against Abydas an astrologer; but then it should rather be concluded from hence, as Fabricius observes,[1] that the author of the Recognitions, is a later writer than Bardesanes: but be it so that it is him, who is this Bardesanes? an arch-heretic, one that first fell into the Valentinian heresy; and though he seemed afterwards to change his mind, he was not wholly free, as Eusebius says,[2] from his old heresy; and he became the author of a new sect, called after his name Bardesanists; who held that the devil was not a creature of God; that Christ did not assume human flesh; and that the body rises not.[3] The book of Recognitions, ascribed to him, is urged by the Papists, as Mr. James observes[4] to prove the power of exorcists, free-will, faith alone insufficient, the chrysm in baptism, and Peter's succession; though the better sort of writers among them are ashamed of it. Sixtus Senensis says[5] that "most things in it are uncertain, many fabulous, and some contrary to doctrines generally received." And Baronius[6] has these words concerning it: "Away with such monstrous lies and mad dotages, which are brought out of the said filthy ditch of the Recognitions, which go under the name of Clemens:" but all this is no matter, if infant-baptism can be proved out it; but how? "This author speaks of the necessity of baptism in the same stile as Justin Martyr did—was undeniably an assertor of the general necessity of baptism to salvation:" wherever this wretched tenet, this false notion of the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation is met with, the Paedobaptists presently smell out infant-baptism, one falsehood following upon another; and true it is, that one error leads on to another; and this false doctrine paved the way for infant-baptism; but then the mystery of iniquity worked by degrees; as soon as it was broached infant-baptism did not immediately commence: it does not follow, because that heretic asserted this notion, that therefore he was for or in the practice of infant-baptism; besides this book, be the author of it who will, is not made mention of before the third century, if so soon; for the work referred to by Origen has another title, and was in another form; he calls it the circuits of Peter, an apocryphal, fabulous and romantic writing; and though the passage he quotes is in the Recognitions, which makes some learned men conclude it to be the same with that; yet so it might be, and not be the same with it. But I pass on to a more authentic and approved writer of the second century: Justin Martyr, who lived about the year 150; and the first passage produced from him is this:[7] "We bring them (namely, the new converts) to some place where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of regeneration by which we were regenerated; for they are washed with water in the

name of God the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit." In this passage, it is owned, "Justin is describing the manner of adult baptism only; having no occasion to descend to any farther particulars; nor is it alleged, it is said, as a proof of infant-baptism directly; but only to shew, that this ancient writer used the word regeneration so as to connote baptism—yet his words cannot be thought to exclude the baptism of infants in these days:" but if infant-baptism had been practiced in those days, it is not consistent with that sincerity and impartiality which Justin sets out with, when he proposed to give the Roman Emperor an account of Christian baptism, not to make any mention of that; for he introduces it thus: "We will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God, lest omitting this we should seem to act a bad part (prevaricate or deal unfairly) in this declaration;" whereas it was not dealing fairly with the Emperor, and not giving him a full and fair account of the administration of the ordinance of baptism to all its proper subjects, if infants had used to be baptized; which he could easily have introduced the mention of, and one would think could not have omitted it: betides, as Dr. Gale[8] observes, he had an occasion to speak of it, and to descend to this particular, had it been used; since the Christians were charged with using their infants barbarously; which he might have removed, had this been the case, by observing the great regard they had to them in devoting them to God in baptism, and thereby initiating them into their religion, and providing for the salvation of their souls: but Justin is so far from saying any thing of this kind, that he leaves the Emperor and every body else to conclude that infants were not the subjects of baptism in this early age; for as the above writer observes, immediately follow such words as directly oppose infant-baptism; they are these: "And we have been taught by the apostles this reason for this thing; because we being ignorant of our first birth, were generated by necessity, etc. that we should not continue children of that necessity and ignorance, but of will (or choice) and knowledge; and should obtain forgiveness of the sins in which we have lived, by water:" so that in order to obtain these things by water or baptism, which Justin speaks of, there must be free choice and knowledge, which infants are not capable of: but it seems the main thing this passage is brought to prove, is, that the words regenerated and regeneration are used for baptized and baptism; and this agreeing with the words of Christ in John 3:5 shews that this construction of them then obtained, that baptism is necessary to salvation. Now, it should be observed, that the persons Justin speaks of are not represented by him as regenerated by baptism, because they are spoken of before as converted persons and believers; and it is as clear and plain that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and is not the same thing; for Justin uses the former as an argument of the latter; which if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized because they were baptized; whereas his sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is; that there persons, when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons; as was manifest from their being admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism; and from hence it appears, that, then no such construction of John 3:5 obtained, that baptism is necessary to salvation: and this now seems to be the passage referred to, in which Justin is said to speak of the necessity of baptism, in a stile the author of the Recognitions agreed with him in; but without any reason. The next passage out of Justin is in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew; where he says that "concerning the influence and effect of Adam’s sin upon mankind, which the ancient writers represent as the ground and reason of infant-baptism—" The words, as cited by Dr Wall, to whom our author refers us, are there: Justin, speaking of the birth, baptism, and crucifixion of Christ, says[9] "he did this

for mankind, which by Adam was fallen under death, and under the guile of the serpent; beside the particular cause which each man had of sinning."

Now, allowing that this is spoken of original sin, as it seems to be, what is this to infant-baptism? I have already exposed the folly of arguing from persons holding the one, to the practice of the other. It is added by our author, "in the same book, he (Justin) speaks of baptism being to Christians in the room of circumcision, and so points out the analogy between those two initiatory rites." The passage referred to is this:[10] "We also who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch, and those like him, have observed; and we have received it by baptism by the mercy of God, because we were sinners; and it is enjoined to all persons to receive it the same way." Now let be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever Justin means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch Enoch, and others like him, observed it: and since Christians are said to receive it by baptism, and therefore must be different from baptism itself: nor does Justin say any thing of the analogy between baptism and circumcision, or of the one being in the room of the other; but opposes the spiritual circumcision to carnal circumcision; and speaks not one word of infants, only of the duty of adult persons, as he supposes it to be. The last passage, and on which this Gentleman intends to dwell awhile, is this:[11] "Several persons (says Justin) among us of both sexes, of sixty and seventy years of age, oi ek paidwn emaqhteuqh san tw Crisw, "who were discipled to Christ in their childhood, etc." which I have observed should be rendered, "who from their childhood were instructed in Christ;" and which I have confirmed by several passages in Justin, in which he uses the word in the sense of instruction; and from whom can we better learn his meaning than from himself? all which this author takes no notice of; but puts me off with a passage out of Plutarch, where Antiphon the son of Sophilus, according to his version, is said to be discipled or proselyted to his father: I leave him to enjoy his own sense; for I do not understand it; and should have thought that maqhteusav de tw patri, might have been rendered more intelligibly, as well as more truly, "instructed by his father;" since, as it follows, his father was an orator. He thinks he has catched me off of my guard, and that I suppose the word disciple includes baptism; because in my commentary on Acts 19:3 I say, "the apostle takes it for granted that they were baptized, since they were not only believers, but disciples;" but had he read on, or transcribed what follows, my sense would clearly appear; "such as not only believed with the heart, but had made a profession of their faith, and were followers of Christ:" nor is the sense of the word disciple, as including the idea of baptism, confirmed by Acts 14:21 where it is said, when they had preached the gospel to that city, ki maqhteusanteV , "and taught many, or made them disciples;" which may be interpreted without tautology, and yet not include the idea of baptism; since the first word, preached, expresses the bare external ministry of the word; and the latter, taught, or made disciples, the influence and effect of it upon the minds of men; the former may be where the latter is not; and both, where baptism is not as yet administered. The reason why ekpaidwn must be rendered in, and not from their childhood, because the baptism of any persons being not a continued, but one single transient act, to speak of their being baptized from their childhood would be improper, is merry indeed; when Justin is not speaking of the baptism of any person at all; but of their being trained up in the knowledge of Christ, and the Christian religion from their childhood, in which they had persevered to the years mentioned. Upon the whole, in all there passages of Justin quoted, there is no express mention of infant-baptism, nor any hint given of it, nor any reference unto it. Proceed we now to the next writer in this century, brought into this controversy:

Irenaeus; who lived towards the close of it, and wrote about the year 180; the only passage in him, and which has been the subject of debate a hundred years past, is this; speaking of Christ, he says,[12] "he came to save all, all I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, "who by him are born again unto God;" infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now not to insist upon the works of Irenaeus we have being mostly a translation, and a very poor one, complained of by learned men; nor upon this chapter wherein this passage is, being reckoned spurious by others; which weaken the force of this testimony, and will have their weight with considering persons; I shall only take notice of the sense of the phrase, born again unto God; and the injury done to the character of Irenaeus, to make it signify baptism, or any thing else but the grace of regeneration. Our author begins his defense of this passage in favor of infant-baptism, with a remark of the learned Feuardentius, as he calls him; "that by the name of regeneration, according to the phrase of Christ: and his apostles, he (Irenaeus) understands baptism, clearly confirming the apostolical tradition concerning the baptism of infants." As for the learning of this monk, I cannot discern it, unless his lies and impudence against the reformers, which run through his notes, are to be so called. Whether our author is a junior or senior man, I know not; by his writing he seems to be the former, but the advice of Rivet, who was without doubt a man of learning, is good; only, says he,[13] "I would have the younger, that shall light on the works of Irenaeus advised, to beware of those editions, which that most impudent monk Feuardentius, a man of large assurance, and uncommon boldness, and of no faith nor faithfulness, has in many things foully corrupted and defiled with impious and lying annotations:" and a false gloss this of his is, which is quoted; for Christ and his apostles no where call baptism by the name of the new birth. I have observed, that as yet, that is, in Irenaeus' time, it had not obtained among the ancients, to use the words regenerated or regeneration for baptized or baptism; nor is this author able to prove it. The passage in Justin before-mentioned falls short of it, as has been shewn; and the passages in Tertullian and Clemens of Alexandria, concerning being born in water, and begotten of the womb of water, are too late; and beside, the one is to be interpreted of the grace of God compared to water; this is clearly Tertullian's sense; for he adds[14] "nor are we otherwise safe or saved, than by remaining in water;" which surely can never be understood literally of the water of baptism and as for Clemens,[15] he is speaking not of regeneration, but of the natural generation of man, as he comes out of his mother's womb, naked, and free from sin, as he supposes; and as such, converted persons ought to be. To have recourse to heathens to ascertain the name of Christian baptism, is monstrous; though this, it is said, there is no need of, "since several Christian writers, who lived with or before Irenaeus, speak the same language, as will be seen hereafter:" and yet none are produced but Barnabas and Justin; the latter of which has been considered already, and found not to the purpose; and his reasoning upon the former is beyond my comprehension; for whatever may be said for the giving of milk and honey to persons just baptized, being a symbol of their being born again, it can be no proof of the words regeneration and regenerated being used for baptism and baptized; when there words neither the one nor the other are mentioned by Barnabas; so that I have no reason to retract what I have said on that point. And now we are returned to Irenaeus himself; and two passages from him are produced in proof of the sense of the word contended for; and one is where he thus speaks[16] "and again giving the power of regeneration unto God to his disciples, he said unto them, Go and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc." By which power or commission is meant, not the commission of baptizing, but more plainly the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit of God, and the

necessity of that to salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles commission, as the order of the words shew; and it is molt reasonable to think, that he should so call the commission, not from its more remote and less principal part, but from the first and more principal one. The other passage is where Irenaeus mentions[17] by name "the baptism of regeneration to God:" but this rather proves the contrary, that baptism and regeneration are two different things, and not the same; just as the scriptural phrase, the baptism of repentance, and which seems to have led the ancients to such a way of speaking, means something different from repentance, and not the same: baptism is so called, because repentance is a prerequisite to it, in the subjects of it; and for the same reason it is called the baptism of regeneration, because regeneration is absolutely necessary in order to it: to all which I only add, that Irenaeus not only uses the word regeneration in a different sense from baptism elsewhere,[18] but most clearly uses it in another sense in this very passage; since he says, Christ came to save all who by him are born again unto God; who are regenerated by Christ, and not by baptism; and which is explained both before and after by his sanctifying all sorts of persons, infants, little ones, young men, and old men; which cannot be understood of his baptizing them, for he baptized none; and therefore they cannot be said to be regenerated by him in that sense: and I say again, to understand Irenaeus as speaking of baptism, is to make him speak what is absolutely false; that Christ came to save all and only such who are baptized unto God. It seems LeClerc is of the same sentiment with me, an author I am a stranger to; whom this writer lets pass without any reasoning against him, only with this chastisement; "he should have understood (being an ecclesiastical historian) the sentiments and language of the primitive fathers better;" but what their language and sentiments were, we have seen already; and let them be what they will, Irenaeus must express a downright falsehood, if he is to be understood in the sense contended for: on the one hand, it cannot be true that Christ came to save all that are baptized; no doubt but Judas was baptized, as well as the other apostles, and yet it will not be said Christ came to save him; Simon Magus was certainly baptized, and yet was in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, and by all the accounts of him continued so till death; there were many members of the church at Corinth, who doubtless were baptized, and yet were unworthy receivers of the Lord’s supper, and eat and drank damnation to themselves, for which reason there were many weak, sickly, and asleep;[19] and it is to be feared, without any breach of charity, that this has been the case of thousands besides: and on the other hand, it cannot be with truth suggested, that Christ came to save only such as are baptized; he came to die for the transgressions that were under the First Testament, or to save persons under that dispensation, who never received Christian baptism; he said to one and to another, unbaptized persons, thy sins are forgiven thee; (Matthew 9:5; Luke 7:48) and no doubt there are many saved, and whom Christ came to save, who never were baptized in water; and the Paedobaptists themselves will stand a bad chance for salvation, if this was true; for they will find it a hard task to prove that any one of them, only sprinkled in infancy, was ever truly baptized; and yet as uncharitable as we are said to be, we have so much charity to believe that every good man among them, though unbaptized, shall be saved. And now since the words of Irenaeus taken in this sense contain a manifest falsehood, and they are capable of another sense, agreeable to truth, without straining them; as that thrift: came to save all that are regenerated by himself, by his spirit and grace, we ought in a judgment of charity to believe that this latter sense is his, and not the former; and the rather, since his words in their proper and literal sense have this meaning; and since they are expressed with so much caution; lest it should be thought it was his meaning that Christ came

to save all men, good and bad, he describes the patrons he came to save, not by their baptism, which is a precarious and uncertain evidence of salvation, but by their regeneration, which is a sure proof of it; and since this sense of his words is agreeable to his use of the phrase elsewhere, and to the context likewise, and is suited to all sorts of persons of every age here mentioned; and indeed to depart from this clear literal sense of his words, which establishes a well-known truth, and fix a figurative, improper one upon them, which makes him to say a notorious untruth, to serve an hypothesis, is cruel usage of the good old father, and is contrary to all the rules of honor, justice, truth, and charity. To put our Lord's words in Mark 16:16 upon a level with the false sense of Irenaeus, is mean and stupid; they need no qualifying sense; the meaning is plain and easy; that every baptized believer shall be saved, and leave no room to suggest that unbaptized believers shall not; but that every unbeliever, be he who he will, baptized or unbaptized, shall be damned. And now what a wretched cause must the cause of infant-baptism be, that requires such managing as this to maintain it? what a wretched cause is it, that at its first setting out, according to the account of the advocates of it; for Dr Wall says,[20] "this is the first express mention that we have met with of infants "baptized?" I say again, what a wretched cause must this be, that is connected with lies and falsehood at its first appearance, as pleaded for; is established upon downright injustice to a good man's character, and supported by real injury to it? and yet notwithstanding all this, our author has the front to say, "so much then for the testimony, the plain, unexceptionable testimony, of Irenaeus, for the practice of infant-baptism." And now we are come to the close of the second century; but before we pass to the next, we must stop a little, and consider a passage our author, after Dr. Wall, has produced out of Clemens of Alexandria, who lived at the latter end of this century, about the year 190; and it is this: speaking of rings worn on the fingers, and the seals upon them, advises against every thing idolatrous and lascivious, and to what is innocent and useful; "let our seals," says he,[21] "be a dove, or a fish, or a ship running with the wind, or a musical harp—or a mariner's anchor,—and if any one is a fisherman, Aposolou memnhsetai ki tan ex udatov anaspwmenwn paidiwn, let him remember the apostle, and the children drawn out of the water." This passage was sent by two Gentlemen from different places to Dr Wall, after he had published two editions of his history; and he seems to have been ashamed of himself for not having observed it, and fancies that this refers to the baptizing of a child, and the taking, drawing, and lifting it out of the water. Now, though I do not pretend to support my conjecture by any manuscript or printed copy, nor do I think it worth while to search and inquire after it, whether there is any various reading or no, but shall leave it to others who have more leisure and opportunity; yet I persuade myself my conjecture will not be condemned as a groundless one by any man of sense and learning, especially out of this controversy: my conjecture then is, that it should be read not paidiwn, "children," but icquwn, "fishes;" for who ever heard of a draught of children; when a draught of fishes is common? and why should a fisherman, more than any other, remember an apostle and a draught of children? surely a draught of fishes is more proper to him: the words I think therefore should be read, "let him remember the apostle, and the fishes drawn out of the water;" and the sense is, let him remember the apostle Peter, and the draught of fishes taken by him, recorded either in Luke 5:6; Luke 5:9 or in John 21:6; John 21:8; John 21:11; for the words manifestly refer to some particular and remarkable fact, which should be called to mind, and not to a thing that was done every day; which must be the case, if infant-baptism now obtained: besides, the word used cannot with any decency and propriety be applied to the baptizing of a child; a wide difference there is in the expression, between taking and

lifting a child out of the font, and a drawing or dragging it out of the water; the word is expressive of strength and force necessary to an action (Luke 14:15; Acts 11:10), and well agrees with the drawing or dragging of a net full of fishes. However, if this instance is continued to be urged, I hope it will be allowed that baptism in those early times was performed by immersion; since these children are said to be drawn out of the water, and therefore must have been in it: moreover, let it be what it will that Clemens refers unto, it must be something that was not common to every man, but peculiar to a fisherman; as he afterwards says, a sword or a bow are not proper for those that pursue peace; nor cups for temperate persons; and I insist upon it, that it be said what that is which is peculiar to such a one, except it be that which I have suggested: and after all, he must have a warm brain, a heated imagination, and a mind prepossessed, that can believe that infant-baptism is here referred to. Upon the whole, it does not appear from any authentic writer of the second century, that there is any express mention of infant-baptism in it, nor any clear hint of it, or manifest reference to it; and therefore it must be an innovation in the church, whenever it afterwards took place. I proceed now to, The third century, at the beginning of which Tertullian lived; who is the first person that ever gave any hint of infant-baptism, or referred unto it, or made express mention of it, that is known; and he argued against it, and that very strongly, from the more usual delay of the administration of it, according to every one's age, condition, and disposition; from the danger sureties might be brought into by engaging for infants; from the necessity of first knowing and understanding what they were about; from their innocent age, as it comparatively is, not being yet conscious of sin, standing in no need of the application of pardoning grace, which the ordinance of baptism leads adult believers to; from the propriety of their first asking for it; and from a different method being taken in worldly affairs: his words are these, and as they are translated by Dr. Wall himself; "therefore according to every one's condition and disposition, and also their age, the delaying of baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of little children; for what need is there that the godfathers should be brought into danger? because they may either fail of their promises by death, or they may be mistaken by a child's proving of a wicked disposition. Our Lord says indeed, Do not forbid them to come to me: therefore let them come when they are grown up: let them come when they understand: when they are instructed whither it is that they come: let them be made Christians when they can know Christ; what need their guiltless age make such haste to the forgiveness of sins? Men will proceed more warily in worldly things; and he that should not have earthly goods committed to him, yet shall have heavenly. Let them know how to desire this salvation, that you may appear to have given to one that asketh."[22]

It is observed by our author, after Dr Wall, that in the clause about sponsors, in the older editions, there words come in, si non tam necesse, which are rendered, except in case of necessity. But these older editions are but one Gagnaeus, whose reading is rejected by Rigaltius as a foolish repetition; censured by Grotius, as affording no tolerable sense;[23] received by Pamelius for no other reason that he gives, but because it softens the opinion of the author about the delaying of baptism to infants;[24] and it is for this reason it is catched at by the Paedobaptists; and yet they do not seem to be quite easy with it, because of the nonsense and impertinence of it; "what need is there, except there is a need?" wherefore our author attempts an emendation, and proposes to read tamen for tam, which does not make it a whit the better, but rather increases the nonsense; "what need is there, except notwithstanding there is need?" but what is of more importance is, it is said, "these words of Tertullian seem fairly to imply that infant baptism was not only moved for, but

actually practiced in his time:" to which I answer, that they neither do imply, nor seem to imply any such thing, at least not necessarily; for supposing the baptism of infants moved for, and sureties promised to be engaged for them, which seems likely to be the case as soon as mentioned, the better to get it received; Tertullian might say all that he does, though as yet not one infant had ever been baptized, or any sureties made use of: and indeed it would have been very strange, if nothing of this kind had been said previous to the observance of them; the bare motion of these things was sufficient to bring our the arguments against them: and what though Tertullian might have some odd notions and singular opinions, about which he talked wrong and weakly, does it follow that therefore he so did about these points? Nor is there any reason to interpret his words of the infants of infidels, since he makes no distinction in the passage, nor gives the least hint of any; and what he elsewhere says of the children of believers being holy, he explains of their being designed for holiness;[25]and says men are not born, but made Christians:[26] nor does he any where allow of the baptism of infants, in case of necessity, which is only established upon that impertinent reading before-mentioned: and with respect to his notion of the necessity of baptism to salvation, it is sufficient to observe what he says; "if any understand the importance of baptism, they will rather fear the having it, than the delaying it: true faith is secure of salvation."[27] And the reason why he does not produce infant-baptism among his unwritten customs, is very easy to observe, because as yet no such custom had obtained, and as yet the apostolical tradition of it had never been heard of: the first that speaks of that, if he does at all, is the following person;

Origen, who flourished about the year 230, and comes next under consideration: and three passages are usually cited out of him in favor of infant-baptism; shewing not only that infants should be baptized; but that this was an ancient usage of the church, and a tradition of the apostles. Now there things are only to be met with in the Latin translations of this ancient writer; and though there is much of his still extant in Greek, yet in these his genuine works there is not the least hint of infant-baptism, nor any reference to it; and much less any express mention of it; and still less any thing did of it, being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition: This has justly raised a suspicion, that he has not been fairly used in the translations of him by Ruffinus and Jerome: and upon inquiry, this is found to be the truth of the matter; and it is not only Erasmus, whom Dr. Wall is pleased to represent as angrily saying, that a reader is uncertain whether he reads Origen or Ruffinus; for Scutetus[28] says the same thing; and it is the observation of many others, that it was the common custom of Ruffinus to interpolate whatever he translated. The learned Huctius, who has given us a good edition of all Origen’s commentaries of the scripture in Greek, and who was as conversant with his writings, and understood them as well as any man whatever, was very sensible of the foul play he has met with, and often complains of the perfidy and impudence of Ruffinus; he says of him, that whatever he undertook to translate, he interpolated; that he so distressed and corrupted the writings of Origen by additions and detractions, that one is at a loss to find Origen in Origen: that whereas he undertook to translate his commentary on the Romans, at the instance of Heraclius, yet he asks, with what faithfulness did he do it? namely, with his own, that is, which is the worst; and when Huetius produces any thing out of there translations, it is always with diffidence, as not to be depended upon and sometimes he adds when he has done, "but let us remember again the perfidy of Ruffinus;" and speaking particularly of his commentaries on the Romans, he says; "Let the learned reader remember that Origen is not so much to be thought the author of them, as Ruffinus, by whom they are not so much interpreted, as new coined and interpolated."[29] But what need I produce these

testimonies? Ruffinus himself owns, not only that he used great freedom in translating the homilies on Leviticus, and added much of his own to them, as I have observed; but also in his translation of the commentary on the Romans, he grants the charge against him, "that he added some things, supplied what was wanting, and shortened what were too long;"[30] and it is from there two pieces that the two principal passages which assert infant-baptism to be the custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, are taken: and now of what use is this Gentleman's quotation from Marshall? it is good for nothing. The other passage, which stands in Jerome's translation of Origen's homilies on Luke, speaks indeed of the baptism of infants, and the necessity of it; but not a word of its being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, as in the other; and betide, his translations being no more exact than Ruffinus', and which appears by his other versions; in which he takes the same liberty as Ruffinus did, are no more to be depended upon than his. And now, where is his highest probability and moral certainty, that there are no additions and interpolations in Origen? I appeal to the whole world, whether such fort of writings as there, so manifestly corrupted, so confessedly interpolated, would be admitted an evidence in any civil affair in any court of judicature whatever; and if not, then surely these ought not to be admitted as an evidence in religious affairs, respecting an ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it is said, "supposing all this, what does it signify in the present case, unless it could be proved that the particular passages under consideration were additions or interpolations?" To which I answer; since the whole is so interpolated, and so deformed, that it can scarcely be known, as has been observed, what dependence can there be on any part of it? I have observed, that the passage in the homilies on Leviticus, is by Vossius thought to be of the greater authority against the Pelagians, because of the interpolations of Ruffinus. This Gentleman says, I have unluckily observed this; I do not see any unluckiness in it; it is lucky on my side, that Vossius, a Paedobaptist, should suggest that this passage is interpolated, however unlucky Ruffinus was in doing it; and it is no. unusual thing for a writer to infect that in his works, which makes or may be improved against himself: beside, what makes these very passages suspected of interpolation, is, not only that no contemporary of Origen's, nor any writer before him, nor any after him, till the times of Ruffius and Jerome, ever speak of infant-baptism as a custom of the church, or an apostolic tradition; but neither Cyprian who came after him, and pleaded for infant-baptism, ever refers to Origen as saying these things, or uses such language as he is said to do; nor does Austin, who made such a bluster about infant-baptism being an apostolical tradition, ever appeal to Origen's testimony of it; which one would think he would have done, had there been any such testimony: our author, because I have said that many things may be observed from the Greek of Origen in favor of adult-baptism, hectors most manfully; "the assertion, he says, is either false, or very impertinent;" but surely he must be a little too premature to pass such a censure before the things are produced. I greatly question whether he has ever read the writings of Origen, either the Latin translations of him, or his works in Greek; and indeed there are scarce any of his quotations of the fathers throughout his whole work, but what seem to be taken at second hand from Dr Wall, or others: I say more than I should have chose to have said, through his insulting language. I am quite content he should have all the credit his performance will admit of; only such a writer, who knows his own weakness, ought not to be so pert and insolent: however, to stop the mouth of this swaggering blade, whoever he is, I will give him an instance or two out of the Greek of Origen, in favor of adult-baptism, to the exclusion of infant-baptism, and as manifestly against it. Now, not to take notice of Origen's[31] interpretation of Matthew 19:14 as not of infants literally, but metaphorically; which, according to his sense,

destroys the argument of the Paedobaptists from thence, in favor of infant-baptism: "It is to be observed, says Origen, that the four evangelists saying that John confessed he came to baptize in water, only Matthew adds unto repentance; teaching, that he has the profit of baptism who "is baptized of his own will and choice:"

Now if the profit of baptism is tied to "a person baptized of his own will and choice,' according to Origen, then baptism mutt: be unprofitable and insignificant to infants, because they are not baptized of their own will and choice: and a little after he says; "The laver by the water is a symbol of the purification of the soul washed from all the filth of wickedness; nevertheless also of itself it is the beginning and fountain of divine gifts, because of the power of the invocation of the adorable Trinity, "to him that gives up himself to God;"[32] which last clause excludes infants, since they do not and cannot give up themselves to God in that ordinance. Let this Gentleman, if he can, produce any thing out of those writings of Origen, in favor of infant-baptism; the passage Dr. Wall[33] refers to has not a syllable of it, nor any reference to it; and though he supposes Jerome must some where or other have read it in his writings, what Jerome says[34] supposes no such thing; since the passage only speaks of Origen's opinion of sins in a pre-existent state, being forgiven in baptism, but not a word of the baptism of infants, or of their sins being forgiven them in their baptism: and now where is the clear testimony of the great Origen, not only for the practice of infant-baptism in his own days, but for the continual use of it all along from the time of the apostles? and where is our author's vaunt of the superior antiquity of infant-baptism to infant-communion? which, as we shall see presently, began together.

Cyprian is the next, and the only remaining writer of this century, quoted in favor of infant-baptism; who lived about the middle of it, and is the first pleader for it that we know of. We allow it was practiced in his time in the African churches, where it was first moved; and at the same time infant-communion was practiced also, of which we have undoubted and incontestable evidence; and it is but reasonable that if infants have a right to one ordinance, they should be admitted to the other; and if antiquity is of any weight in the matter, it is as early for the one as for the other: but though infant-baptism now began to be practiced, it appears to be a novel business; not only the time of its administration, being undetermined; which made Fidus, a country bishop, who had a doubt about administering it before the eighth day, apply to the council under Cyprian for the resolution of it; but the exceeding weakness of the arguments then made use of for baptizing new-born infants, of which the present Paedobaptists must be ashamed, shew that Paedobaptism was then in its infant-state: the arguments used by Cyprian, and his brethren for it, were taken from the grace of God being given to all men; and from the equality of the gift to all; and this proved from the spiritual equality of the bodies of infants and adult persons; and both from the prophet Elisha's stretching himself on the Shunamite's child; they argue the admission of all to baptism from the words of Peter, who says he was shewn, that nothing is to be called common or unclean; and reason, that infants ought to be more easily admitted than grown persons, because they have less guilt; and their weeping and crying are to be interpreted praying; yea, they suggest that baptism gives grace, and that a person is lost without it: but that it may appear I do not wrong them, I will transcribe their own words; and that as they are translated by Dr. Wall, so far as they relate to this matter: "All of us judged that the grace and mercy of God is to be denied to no person that is born; for whereas our Lord in his gospel says, the Son of Man came not to destroy men's souls, (or lives) but to save them; as far as lies in us, no soul, if possible, is to be lost. The

scripture gives us to understand the equality of the divine gift on all, whether infants or grown persons: Elisha, in his prayer to God, stretched himself on the infant-son of the Shunamite woman, that lay dead, in such manner, that his head, and face, and limbs, and feet, were applied to the head, face, limbs, and feet of the child; which, if it he understood according to the quality of our body and nature, the infant would not hold measure with that grown man, nor his limbs fit to reach to his great ones; but in that place a spiritual equality, and such as is in the esteem of God, is intimated to us by which persons that are once made by God are alike and equal; and our growth of body by age, makes a difference in the sense of the world, but not of God; unless you will think that the grace itself which is given to baptized persons, is greater or less according to the age of those that receive it; whereas the holy Spirit is given, not by different measures, but with a fatherly affection and kindness, equal to all; for God, as he accepts no one person, so not his age; but with a just equality shews himself a Father to all, for their obtaining the heavenly grace—so that we judge that no person is to be hindered from the obtaining the grace by the law that is now appointed; and that the spiritual circumcision ought not to be restrained by the circumcision that was according to the flesh; but that all are to be admitted to the grace of Christ; since Peter, speaking in the Acts of the Apostles, says, the Lord has shewn me, that no person is to be called common or unclean. If any thing could be an obstacle to persons against their obtaining the grace, the adult, and grown, and elder men, would be rather hindered by their more grievous sins. If then the graceless offender, and those that have grievously sinned against God before, have, when they afterwards come to believe, forgiveness of their sins; and no person is kept off from baptism and the grace; how much less reason is there to refuse an infant, who, being newly born, has no sin, save the being descended from Adam according to the flesh: he has from his very birth contracted the contagion of the death anciently threatened; who comes, for this reason, more easily to receive forgiveness of sins, because they are not his own, but others sins that are forgiven him. This therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the assembly, that it is not for us to hinder any man from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and affectionate to all; which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants, and persons newly born; to whom our help, and the divine mercy, is rather to be granted; because by their weeping and wailing, at their first entrance into the world, they do intimate nothing so much as that they implore compassion."[35]

Every one that compares what Cyprian and his colleagues say for infant-baptism, and what Tertullian says against it, as before related, will easily see a difference between them, between Tertullian the Antipaedobaptist, and Cyprian the Paedobaptist; how manly and nervous the one! how mean and weak the other! no doubt, as is known, being railed about infant-baptism at this time, or any objection made to it, does not prove it then to be an ancient custom; since the same observation, which may be made, would prove infant-communion to he equally the same. Now as we allow that henceforward infant-baptism was practiced in the African churches, and prevailed in, The fourth century, here the controversy might stop: and indeed all that we contend for in this century, is only that there were some persons that did call it in question and oppose it; and if this will not be allowed, we are not very anxious about it, and shall not think it worth while to contest it. This writer would have it observed, that I have given up the greatest lights of the church in this century as vouchers for infant-baptism, and particularly St Jerom, Ruffinus, and Augustin; they are welcome to them; they have need of them to enlighten them in this dark affair: we do not envy their having them, especially that persidious interpolater Ruffinus; nor that arch-heretic Pelagius, whom

this Gentleman takes much pains to retain, as ignorant as he either was, or would be, or is thought to be; as that he never heard that any one whatever denied baptism to infants, and promised the kingdom of heaven without the redemption of Christ, or refused that unto them. This ignorance of his was either affected or pretended, in order to clear himself from the charge of those things against him; as men generally do run into high strains and extravagant expressions, when they are at such work; or it was real ignorance, and who can help that? It does not follow that therefore none had, because he had never heard of it; one would think his meaning rather was, that he had never heard of any that denied the kingdom of heaven and the common redemption to infants, who think they ought to be baptized, dum putat, while he is of opinion, that in baptism they are regenerated in Christ; but about this I shall not contend; truth does not depend upon his hearing and knowledge, judgment and observation. I think it is not insisted upon that Austin should say, he never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism; however, it seems he could say it if he did not, and that notwithstanding the reasons I alledged; as,

1. Austin must know that Tertullian had opposed it. Here our author quibbles about the terms opposing and denying, and distinguishes between them; and observes, that whatever Tertullian said against it, he did not properly deny it. He may say the same of me, or any other writer against infant-baptism, that though we speak against it, contradict and oppose it, and use arguments against it, yet we do not deny it. Dr Wall indeed thinks neither Austin nor Pelagius had seen Tertullian’s book of baptism, or they could not have said what he thinks they did.

2. Austin presided at the council of Carthage, when a canon was made that anathematized those who denied baptism to new-born infants; and therefore mull know there were some that denied it. This Gentleman says, it is demonstrably certain, that this canon was not made against persons that denied infant-baptism, because it was made against Pelagius and Celesius. It is true, the latter part of the canon was made against them; but the former part respected a notion or tenet of some other persons, who denied baptism to new-born infants. Dr Wall saw this, and says, this canon mentions the baptism of infants, condemning two errors about it; the one respecting the baptism of new-born infants; the other the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for forgiveness of sins, denied by the Pelagians; but the former he supposes was the opinion of Fidus, embraced by some persons now, which he had vented a hundred and fifty years before, that infants should not be baptized till they were eight days old; whereas Fidus is represented as having been alone in his opinion; and if he retained it, which is doubtful, it does not appear he had any followers; nor is there any evidence of there being any of his sentiment in this age;[36] and were there, it is unreasonable to imagine, that a council of all the bishops in Africa should agree to anathematize them, because they thought proper to defer the baptizing of infants a few days longer than they did; and besides, infants only eight days old may be properly called newly-born infants; and therefore such could not be said to deny baptism to them; and it would have been a marvelous thing, had they been anathematized for it: though this writer says, wonder who will; a council, consisting of all the bishops of Africa, did in fact agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of. infant-baptism with themselves." It is true, they did anathematize the Pelagians, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves in general; though I question whether they reckoned them their own brethren; but then not on account of any difference about the time of baptism, a few days odds between them, the thing to be wondered at; but their denial of original sin, and the baptism of infants to be on account

of that: and now since the Pelagians are distinct from those in the canon that denied baptism to new-born infants; and it is unreasonable to suppose any who were of the sentiments of Fidus are intended; it remains, that there must be some persons different both from the one and the other, who denied baptism to babes, and are by this canon anathematized for it, which Austin must know.

3. It is observed by me, that Austin himself makes mention of some that argued against it, from the unprofitableness of it to infants; since for the most part they die before they have any knowledge of it. These men our author does not know what to make of; sometimes it is questionable whether they were Christians, and suggests that they were men of atheistical principles; and then again they are supposed to be Christians, and even might be Paedobaptists, notwithstanding this their manner of arguing. I am content he should reckon them what he pleases; but one would think they could not be any good friends to infant-baptism, that questioned the profitableness of baptism to infants, and brought so strong an objection to it.

4. It is further observed by me, that according to Austin the Pelagians denied baptism to the infants of believers, because they were holy. This is represented by this Gentleman as a mistake of mine, understanding what was spoken hypothetically, to be absolutely spoken. I have looked over the passage again, and am not convinced upon a second reading of it, nor by what this writer has advanced, of a mistake: the words are absolutely expressed and reasoned upon; "but, says the apostle, your children would be unclean, but now they are holy; therefore, say they (the Pelagians) the children of believers ought not now to be baptized." The observation our author makes, though he does not insist upon it, is very impertinent; that not infants but children are mentioned, and so may include the adult children of believers, and consequently make as much against adult-baptism as infant-baptism; since children in the text, on which the argument is grounded, are always by themselves understood of infants. Austin wonders that the Pelagians should talk after this manner, that holiness is derived from parents, and reasons upon it, when they deny that sin is originally derived from Adam: it is true, indeed, he presses them with an argument this Gentleman calls ad hominem, taken from their shutting up the kingdom of God to unbaptized infants; for though they believed that unbaptized infants would not perish, but have everlasting life, yet not enter the kingdom of God; absurdly distinguishing between the kingdom of God, and eternal life. What they were able to answer, or did answer to this, it is not easy to say; "it is a disadvantage, as our author says, that we have none of their writings entire, only scraps and quotations from them:" Perhaps as they had a singular notion, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, though the infants of others should; they would, in answer to the above argument, say, that the infants of believers unbaptized enter the kingdom, though the unbaptized infants of others do not. I only guess this might be their answer, consistent with their principles: however, if I am mistaken in this matter, as I think I am not, it is in company with men of learning I am not ashamed to be among. The learned Daneus says[37] "the Pelagians deny that baptism is to be administered to the children of believers," having plainly in view this passage of Austin's; and the very learned Forbesius[38] brings in this as an objection to his sense of 1 Corinthians 7:14, "the Pelagians abused this saying of the apostle, that they might say, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, as we read in Augustin."[39]

5. The words quoted by me out of Jerome, I own, are spoken by way of supposition; but then they suppose a case that had been, was, and might be again; and it should be observed, that the

supposition Jerome makes, is not a neglect of the baptism of infants, as this Gentleman suggests, but a denial of it to them, a refusing to give it to them; which is expressive of a rejection of it, and of an opposition to it. So that from all there instances put together, we cannot but conclude that there were some persons that did oppose and reject infant-baptism in those times, and think it may be allowed, which is all we contend for; however, as I have said before, we are not very anxious about it. Mr. Marshall[40] a favorite writer of our author's, says, some in those times questioned it (infant-baptism) as Augustin grants in his sermons de verbis Apostol, but does not refer us to the particular place; it seems to be his fourteenth sermon on that subject, entitled, Concerning the baptism of infants, against the Pelagians; where Austin tells us how he was led to the subject; and though he had no doubt about it, "yet some men raised disputes, which were now become frequent, and endeavored to subvert the minds of many;"[41] by whom he seems to mean persons distinct from the Pelagians, since he represents them as having no doubt about it: and this is further confirmed by a passage out of the same discourse; "that infants are to be baptized, let no one doubt (which is an address to others, and implies, that either they did doubt of infant-baptism, or were in danger of it) since they doubt not, who in some respect contradict it;" which our author has placed as a motto in his title-page.

01.09. Antipedobaptism; or Infant-Baptism, an contd

Austin, we allow, in this age, frequently speaks of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, and as an apostolical tradition; but what proof does he give of it? what testimonies does he produce? does he produce any higher testimony than Cyprian? not one; who, it is owned, speaks of infant-baptism, but not as an apostolical tradition; Cyprian uses no such language: those phrases, which were understood and believed from the beginning, and what the church always thought, or anciently, held, are Austin's words, and not Cyrian's; and only express what Austin inferred and concluded from him: and betides, his testimony is appealed to, not so much for infant-baptism, the thing itself, as for the reason of it, original sin, which gave rise unto it in Cyprian's time: and it is for the proof of this, and not infant-baptism, that Austin himself refers to the manifest faith of an apostle; namely, to shew that not the flesh only, but the soul would be lost, and be brought into condemnation through the offense of Adam, if not quickened by the grace of Christ, for which he refers to Romans 5:18 and yet our author insinuates, that by this he did not consider the baptism of infants for original sin as a novel thing in Cyprian's time, but refers it to the authority of an apostle: and by the way, since Cyprian, the only witness produced by Austin, speaks not of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, or an apostolic tradition, there is no agreement between his language and that of Origen, he is made to speak in his Latin translations, as this author elsewhere suggests; and it confirms the proof of his having been dealt unfairly with, since Cyprian, coming after him, uses no such language, nor does Austin himself ever refer unto him.

I have observed that there are many other things, which by Austin; and other ancient writers, are called apostolic traditions; such as infant-communion, the sign of the cross in baptism, the form of renouncing the devil and all his works, exorcism, trine immersion, the consecration of the water, anointing with oil in baptism, and giving a mixture of milk and honey to the baptized persons: and therefore if infant-baptism is received on this foot, these ought likewise; since there is as early and clear proof of them from antiquity, as of that: and my further view in mentioning these, was to observe, not only how early, but how easily these corruptions got into the church, as infant-baptism did. This writer has thought fit to take notice only of one of these particulars, namely, infant-communion; and the evidence of this, he says, is not so full and so early as that of infant-baptism. Now, let it. be observed, that there is no proof of infant-baptism being practiced before Cyprian's time; nor does Austin refer to any higher testimony than his for the practice of it for original sin; and in his time infant-communion was in use beyond all contradiction: there is an instance of it given by himself, which I have referred to; and that is more than is or can be given of infant-baptism, which can only be deduced by consequences from that instance, and from Cyprian and his colleagues reasoning about the necessity of the administration of it to new-born children, he suggests that Austin expresses himself differently, when he is speaking of the one and of the other as an apostolic tradition; but if he does, it is in higher strains of infant-communion; for thus begin the passages, "if they pay any regard to the apostolic authority, or rather to the Lord and Master of the apostles, etc. and no man that remembers that he is a Christian, and of the catholic

faith, denies or doubts that infants, without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them, etc:" The Punici Christiani, which Austin speaks of, are not to be restrained, as they are by our author, to the Christians of Carthage, but take in other African Christians, particularly at Hippo, where Austin was bishop, and where they spoke the Punic language, and in many other places: and surely if Austin is a good witness for an apostolical tradition, who lived at the latter end of the fourth century; he must know what was the sense of the African Christians in his time, among whom he lived, and upon what they grounded their practice of infant-communion; which he says was upon an ancient and apostolic tradition. The other rites and usages, he says, I make mention of, are spoken of by Basil as unwritten traditions; and infant-baptism is not mentioned among them, and so was considered as standing upon a better evidence and testimony: now, not to observe that I produce earlier authorities than Basil, for there apostolical traditions so called, even as early as Tertullian, the first man that spoke of infant-baptism; neither are infant-communion, sponsors at baptism, exorcism in it, and giving milk and honey at that time, mentioned by Basil among them; does it therefore follow that they stand upon a better foot than the rest? besides, since Apostolic tradition is distinguished from Scripture, by the author of The baptism of infants a reasonable Service, with whom I had to do; it can be considered in the controversy between us, no other than as an unwritten tradition. This writer further observes, that it does not appear that there unwritten traditions were ever put to the test, and stood the trial, particularly in the Pelagian controversy, as infant-baptism: it is manifest that the exorcisms and exsufflations used in baptism, and the argument from them, as much pinched, puzzled, and confounded the Pelagians, as ever infant-baptism did: and it is notorious, that signing with the sign of the cross has stood the test in all ages, from the beginning of it, and is continued to this day; and prevails not only among the Papists, but among Protestant churches. Upon the whole then, it is clear there is no express mention of infant-baptism in the two first centuries, no nor any plain hint of it, nor any manifest reference to it; and that there is no evidence of its being practiced till the third century; and that it is owned, it prevailed in the fourth: and so rests the state of the controversy.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Bibliothec. Graec. I. 5. c. 1. f. 12. p. 36.

[2] Eccl. Hist. 1. 4. c. 30.

[3] Ittigius de Heresiarchis, sect, z. c. 6. p. 133. Vid. Epiphan. Haeres. 56. August. de Hares. c. 35.

[4] Corruption of the Father, part I. p. 6.

[5] Apud Rivet. Critic. Sacr. 1. I. c. 7. p. 130.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Apolog. 2. p. 93, 94.

[8] Reflections, etc. p. 455.

[9] Dialog. cum Trypho p. 316. Ed. Paris.

[10] Ib. p. 261.

[11] Ib. Apolog. p. 62.

[12] Adv. Haeres. 1. 2. c. 39.

[13] Juniores qui in opera Irenaei incident monitos volo, at cavcant ab illis editionibus quas impudenitimus ille monachus Feuardentius, homo projectae audaciae, & nullias fidei, faede in multis corrupit & annotationibus impiis & mendacibus conspurcavit, Rivet. Critic. Sacr. 1. 2. c. 6. p. 188, 189.

[14] Nos pisciculi in aqua nascimur. Nec aliter quam in aqua permanendo salvi sumus, Tertullian, de baptismo, c 1.

[15] Stromat 1. 4. p. 538. Ed. Paris.

[16] Adv. Haeres. 1. 3. c. 19.

[17] Ibid. 1. 1. c. 18.

[18] Vid. 1. 4. c. 59. and 1. 5. c. 15.

[19] 1 Corinthians 11:29-30.

[20] History of Infant-baptim, part I, c. 3. § 6.

[21] Paedagog. l.. 3. c. 11. p. 246, 24.7.

[22] Tertullian. de baptismo, c. 18.

[23] See Dr Gale's Reflections, etc. p. 511. 31.

[24] Ex eodem Gagnaeo iterum adjicio, si non tam necesse; nam illud mitigat auctoris opinionem, etc Pamelii. adnot, p. 348.

[25] Designatos sanctitati, Tertull. de anima, c. 39.

[26] Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani, Apologet. c. 18.

[27] Si qui pondus intelligant baptismi, magis timebunt consecutionem qaam dilationem: sides integra lecura est de salute. Ibid. de baptismo, c. 18.

[28] Medulla Patrum, part I. I. 6. c. 2. p. 124.

[29] Interpolare enim omnia Ruffinus quaecunque suscepit interpretanda—solenne habuit. Huetii Origeniana, 1. 2. p. 116. nam ejus scripta interpretans, ita additamentis & detractionibus vexavit & corrupit ut Origenem in Origene desideres, ibid. 1. 3. c. 1. p. 233. Ruffinus Heraclii impulsu viginti tomos commentariotum Origenis in epistolam ad Romans Latinae linguae donandos suscepit: sed qua side? Sua nempe, hoc est, pessima, Ibid. p. 253. Sed Ruffini tamen persidiam denno recordemur. Ibid. 1. 2. p. 59. vide etiam, p. 35. Memincrit eruditus lector non tam illorum auctorem exislimandum esse Origenem quam Ruffinum, a quo non tam interpretati, quam recusi & interpolati sunt. Ibid. p. 124.

[30] Addere aliqua, videor, & explere quae desunt, aut breviare quae longa sunt, Ruffini Peroratio in Ep. act Romans fol. 224. C.

[31] Orig. Comment. in Matthew p. 372, 375. Ed. Huet.

[32] Parathrhteon de oti twn tessarwn oernkotwn to en udati omoloyoin Iwannhn eleluqenai bactizein, monoV MatqaiioV toutw proteqhke to ois metanoian didaskwn to apo tou baptismatoV wfeleian eceoqai tnV tou baptizomenou. & Paulo post to dia tou udatoV loutron empariconti eavton th qeiothti caaoismatwn qeiwn arch kiphyh. Origen. Comment. in Joannen p. 124.

[33] Comment. in Matthew p. 391, 392.

[34] Adv. Pelag. 1. 3. fol. 202; tom. z.

[35] Cyprian. ad Fidum. Ep. 59. p. 317.

[36] History of Infant, baptism, p. 1. ch. 4. p. 13.

[37] Baptismom parvulis fidelium negant dandam Pelagiani. Danaeus de sacramentis ad cl!cem August. de Hares.

[38] Abutebantur hoc Apostoli dido, at dicerent infantes fidelium baptizari minime deberi, ut legimus apud Aug. de peccator, merit. & remiss. 1. 2. c. 25. Forbes. Instruct. Histor, Theolog. l. 10. c. 10. p. 5.

[39] L. 2. de Peccator. merit. & remiss, c. 25.

[40] Sermon on baptizing of Infants, p. 5.

[41] Sed dlsputationes quorundam, quae modo crebrescere, & multorum animos evertere moliuntur, Aug. de verb Apostol. Serm. 14.

01.10. A Reply to a Book, entitled, A Defense

A Reply to a Defense of the Divine Right of Infant Baptism, By Peter Clark, A.M. Minister at Salem In A Letter To A Friend At Boston In New-England. To Which Are Added, Some Strictures On A Late Treatise, Called, A Fair And Rational Vindication Of The Right Of Infants To The Ordinance Of Baptism.

Written by David Bostwick, A.M.

Late Minister of the Presbyterian Church in the City of New-York The Preface

It is necessary that the reader should be acquainted with the reason of the republication of the following treatise. In the year 1746, a pamphlet was printed at Boston in New England, called, "A brief Illustration and Confirmation of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism," written by Mr.. Dickinson; which being industriously spread about in great numbers, to hinder the growth of the Baptist-Interest in those parts, it was sent over to me by some of our friends there, requesting an answer to it; which I undertook, and published in the year 1749, entitled, "The Divine Right of Infant-baptism examined and disproved." Upon which Peter Clark, A.M. Minister at Salem in New England, was employed to write against it, and which he did; and what he wrote was printed and published at Boston in 1752, called, "A Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism." This being sent over to me, I wrote a Reply, in a letter to a friend at Boston, in the year 1753, as the date of my letter shews, giving leave to make use of it, as might be thought fit; and which was printed and published at Boston in 1734, together with a Sermon of mine on Baptism preached at Barbican, 1750. The controversy lying beyond the seas, I chose it should continue there, and therefore never reprinted and republished my Reply here, though it has been solicited; but of late Mr. Clark’s Defense has been sent over here, and published, and advertised to be sold; which is the only reason of my reprinting and republishing the following Reply; to which I have added some scriptures on a treatise of Mr. Bostwick’s on the same subject, imported from America, with the above Defense, and here reprinted. The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of Infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of Popery; that by which antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches, and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and the world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough reformation in religion, until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when Infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive luster and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper will be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord, and his name one. A REPLY, ETC. IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

SIR,

I Acknowledge the receipt of your Letter on the 22d of last March, and with it Mr. Clark's Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism, etc. which I have since cursorily read over; for I thought it a too great waste of time to give it a second reading. Nor will my engagement in a work of greater importance permit me to write a set and labored answer to it; nor am I willing to bestow so much time and pains as are necessary to cleanse that Augean stable, and remove all the dirt and rubbish this writer has collected together. The remarks I made in reading, I here send you. At first setting out, I soon found I must expect to be dealt rudely and roughly with, and accordingly prepared myself for it; and I assure you, Sir, I was not disappointed. The first chapter of my book, which the above Gentleman has undertook to answer, is short, and only an introduction, observing the author's title, method, and occasion of writing the pamphlet before me. In Mr. Clark's Reply to which I observe;

1. That he is displeased at calling the ordinance of baptism as truly and properly administered, Believer's-baptism, and the pretended administration of it, to infants, Infant-sprinkling; whereas this is calling things by their proper names: it is with great propriety, we call baptism as administered to believers, the proper subjects of it, Believer's-baptism; and with the same propriety we call that which is administered to infants, Infant-sprinkling; from the nature of the action performed, and the persons on whom it is performed. Does this Gentleman think, we shall be so complaisant to suit our language and way of speaking to his mistaken notion and practice? though indeed we too often do, through the common use of phrases which obtain.

2. He is unwilling to allow of any increase of the Baptist interest in New England, either at Boston or in the country; whereas I am credibly informed, and you, Sir, I believe, can attest the truth of it, that there have been considerable additions to the Baptist interest at Boston; and that many hundreds in the country have been baptized within a few years

3. He says, it is an egregious mistake, that the ministers of New England applied to Mr. Dickinson (the author of the pamphlet I wrote against) to write in favor of Infant-sprinkling; and he is certain that not one of the ministers in Boston made application to him, (which was never affirmed,) and is persuaded it was not at the motion of any ministers in New England, that he wrote his Dialogue, but of his own mere motion; and yet he is obliged to correct himself by a marginal note, and acknowledge that it was wrote through ministerial influence.

4. This writer very early gives a specimen of his talent at reasoning; from the rejection of Infant-baptism, as an human invention, he argues to the rejection of baptism itself, as such; that if Infant-baptism is entirely an human invention, and a rite not to be observed, then baptism itself is an human invention, and not to be observed: this is an argument drawn up secundum artem, like a master of arts; and to pretend to answer so strong an argument, and set aside such a masterly way of reasoning, would be weakness indeed!

5. It being observed of the Dialogue-writer, "that he took care, not to put such arguments and objections into the mouth of his antagonist as he was not able to answer;" this Gentleman rises up, and blusters at a great rate, and defies the most zealous, learned, and subtle of the Antipaedobaptists to produce any other arguments and objections against Infant-baptism, for matter or substance, different from, or of greater weight, than those produced in the Dialogue; but afterwards lowers his topsail, and says, that the design of the author of that pamphlet was to represent in a few plain words, the most material objections against Infant-baptism, with the proper

answers to them; and at last owns, that a great deal more has been said by the Antipaedobaptists. The second chapter, you know, Sir, treats of "the consequences of embracing Believer's-baptism; such as, renouncing Infant-baptism, vacating the covenant, and renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel;" that Christ must have forsaken his church for many ages, and not made good the promise of his presence, and that there now can be no baptism in the world. In Mr. Clark's Reply to what I have said on those heads, I observe the following things. The first consequence is the renunciation of Infant-baptism; which consequence, to put him out of all doubt and pain, about my owning or not owning it, I readily allow, follows upon a person's being sprinkled in infancy, embracing adult-baptism by immersion; in which he is to be justified, the one being an invention of man's, the other according to the word of God; nor is there any thing this Gentleman has said, that proves such a renunciation to be an evil.

1. He is very wrong in supposing it must be my intention, that the age of a person, or the time of receiving baptism, are essential to the ordinance. The Antipaedobaptists do not confine this ordinance to any age, but admit old or young to it, if proper subjects; let a man be as old as Methuselah, if he has not faith in Christ, or cannot give a satisfactory account of it, he will not be admitted to this ordinance by reason of his age; on the other hand, if a little child is called by grace, and converted, and gives a reason of the hope that is in it, of which there have been instances; such will not be refused this ordinance of baptism. The essentials to the right administration of baptism, amongst other things, are, that it be performed by immersion, without which it cannot be baptism; and that it be administered upon a profession of faith; neither of which are to be found in Infant sprinkling.

2. It is in vain and to no purport in this writer to urge, that infants are capable of baptism; so are bells, and have been baptized by the Papists. But it is said, infants are capable of being cleansed by the blood of Christ; of being regenerated; of being entered into covenant, and of having the seal of it administered to them. And what of all this? are they capable of understanding the nature, design, and use of the ordinance, when administered to them? are they capable of professing faith in Christ, which is a pre-requisite to this ordinance? are they capable of answering a good conscience towards God in it? are they capable of submitting to it in obedience to the will of Christ, from a love to him, and with a view to his glory? they are not. But,

3. It seems, in baptism, infants are dedicated unto God; wherefore to renounce Infant baptism, is for a man to renounce his solemn dedication to God; and much is said to prove that parents have a Right to dedicate their children to him. It will be allowed, that parents have a right to devote or dedicate their children to the Lord; that is, to give them up to him in prayer; or to pray for them, as Abraham did for Ishmael, that they may live in his light; and it is their duty to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but they have no direction to baptize them, nor warrant to dedicate them by baptism; nor is baptism an ordinance of dedication, either of a man's self, or of others; a dedication ought to be previous to baptism; and Believers first give up themselves to the Lord, and then are baptized in his name.

4. After all, a renunciation of baptism in infancy must be a matter of great impiety, because witches are solicited by the Devil to renounce it, in order to their entering into confederacy with them. I thought, Sir, your country of New-England had been cured of these fooleries about witchcraft, and diabolical confederacies long ago, but I find the distemper continues. This argument, I own, is

unanswerable by me; I must confess myself quite a stranger to this dark business.

5. What the story of Mr. Whiston is told for, is not easy to say; since it seems, he did not renounce his Infant-baptism: it looks, by the reference, as if it was intended to suggest, that an Antitrinitarian could not so well shelter himself among a people of any denomination, as the Baptists; whereas the ordinance as administered by them, as strongly militates against such a principle, as it does by being administered by Paedobaptists: but it may be, it is to recommend a spirit of moderation among us, to receive unbaptized persons into our communion by this example; but then unhappy for this writer, so it is, that the congregation Dr. Foster was pastor of, and Mr. Whiston joined himself to, is, and always was of the Paedobaptist denomination, and have for their present minister one of the Presbyterian persuasion. The second consequence of receiving the principle of adult-baptism, and acting up to it, is, vacating the covenant between God and the person baptized in infancy, into which he was brought by his baptism. Now you will observe, Sir,

1. That Mr. Clark has offered nothing in proof of infants being brought into covenant with God, by baptism; and indeed I cannot see how he can consistently with himself undertake it; since he makes covenant relation to God, the main ground of infants right to baptism; and therefore they must be in it before their baptism, and consequently are not brought into it by it; wherefore since they are not brought into covenant by it, that cannot be vacated by their renouncing of it.

2. It being observed, that no man can be brought into the covenant of grace by baptism, since it is from everlasting, and all interested in it were so early in covenant, and consequently previous to their baptism; this writer lets himself with all his might and main to oppose this sentiment, that the covenant of grace was from everlasting; this, he says, is unscriptural, irrational, and contrary to scripture. But if Christ was set up from everlasting as mediator; for only as such could he be set up (Proverbs 8:12); if there was a promise of eternal life made before the world began, and this promise was in Christ, who then existed as the federal head and representative of his people, in whom they were chosen so early, to receive all promises and grace for them (Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:1); and if grace was given to them in him before the world was, and they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him so early (2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:3-4); then, surely, there must be a covenant transaction between the Father and the Son on their account so early; for could there be all this and no covenant subsisting? The distinction between a covenant of redemption and a covenant of grace, is without any foundation in the word of God. Nor is this notion irrational; two parties were so early existing, when the covenant was made; Jehovah the Father was one, and the Son of God the other, in the name of his people; who, though they had not then a personal, yet had a representative being in Christ their head; and this was sufficient for them to have grace given them in him before the world was. His metaphysical arguments from eternal acts being imminent, will equally militate against eternal election, as against an eternal covenant; and perhaps this writer has as little regard to the one, as he has to the other: nor is this notion contrary to scripture; for though the covenant is called a new and second covenant, yet only with respect to the former administration of it, under the legal dispensation; and both administrations of it, under the law and under the gospel, are only so many exhibitions and manifestations of the covenant under different forms, which was made in eternity. The scriptures which promise the making of a covenant, only intend a clearer manifestation and application of the covenant of grace to persons to whom it belongs; things are said in scripture to be made, when they are made manifest or declared (Acts 2:36): it is a previous interest in the covenant of grace that gives persons a right to

the blessings of it; and the application of there blessings, such as pardon of sin, etc. flows from this previous interest: nor does this notion render the ministry of the word and the operation of the Spirit for that end useless, and superfluous; but on the contrary so early an interest in the covenant of grace is the ground and reason of the Spirit being sent down in time to make the word effectual to salvation. Nor is the state of unregeneracy, the elect of God are in by nature, inconsistent with this eternal covenant; since that covenant supposes it, and provides for, promises, and secures the regeneration and sanctification of all interested in it; assuring them that the heart of stone shall be taken away, and an heart of flesh given them; a new heart and a new Spirit, yea the Spirit of God shall be put into them, and the laws of God written in their minds. The text in Ephesians 2:12. describes the Gentiles only, who were strangers from the covenants of promise; the covenant of circumcision, and the covenant at Sinai; covenants peculiar to the Jews; as well as strangers to the scriptures, which contain the promise of the Messiah; all which might be, and was, and yet be interested in the covenant of grace. If this is to be an Antinomian, I am quite content to be called one; such bug-bear names do not frighten me. It is not worth while to take notice of this man's Neonomian rant; of the terms and conditions of the covenant; of its being a rule of moral government over man in a flare of unregeneracy, brought hereby into a state of probation; which turns the covenant into a law, and is what the Neonomians call a remedial law, (as this writer calls the covenant a remedial one) a law of milder terms; nor of his Arminian strokes in making the endeavors and acts of men to be the turning point of their salvation, and conversion, as being foreign to the controversy, in hand.

3. This writer makes a distinction between a man's being in covenant in respect of the spiritual dispensation of the grace of it, and in respect of the external administration of it: by the spiritual dispensation of it, I apprehend, he means the application of spiritual blessings in the covenant to persons regenerated and converted, by which they must appear to be in it; and in this sense, all the persons, I have instanced in, must be manifestly in the covenant of grace, previous to baptism: and consequently not brought into it by it. By the external administration of it, I suppose, he means the administration of the ordinances of the gospel, particularly baptism; and then it is only saying a man is not baptized before he is baptized; which no body will contest with him.

4. No man, I observe, is entered into the covenant of grace by himself, or others; this is an act of the sovereign grace of God, who says, I will be their God, and they shall be my people; which this writer owns, though not exclusive of human endeavors; as if God could not take any into his covenant without their own endeavors; such wretched divinity deserves the utmost contempt. Since the above phrase, I will be their God, etc. is a proof of the sovereign grace of God in bringing men into covenant; he hopes it will be allowed that a like phrase, I will be the God of thy seed, will be admitted as strongly to conclude the reception of the Infant-children of believers into covenant. I answer, whenever it appears that there is such an article in the covenant of grace, that so runs, that God will be the God of the natural Seed of believers as such, it will be admitted; and whereas I have observed, that the phrase of bringing into the bond of the covenant, which the Paedobaptists often make use of, is but once mentioned in scripture, and then ascribed to God; this, as it no ways contradicts a being in covenant from everlasting, so it fails not of being a proof of the sovereign grace of God in that act. By the bond of the covenant, is not meant faith and repentance on man's part; which some stupidly call the terms and conditions of the covenant, when they are parts and blessings of it; but the everlasting love of God, which is the force and security of it, and which says

men under obligation to serve their covenant-God; and to be brought into it, is to be brought into a comfortable view of interest in it, and to an open participation of the blessings of it; which is all according to, and consistent with the eternal constitution of it.

5. The covenant of grace can never be vacated, since it is everlasting, ordered in all things and sure: this is owned by our author in respect of its divine constitution, and of the immutability of the divine promise, to all under the spiritual dispensation of it; but there are others who are only in it by a visible and baptismal dedication; and these may make void the covenant between God and them; and this it seems is the case of the greatest part of infants in covenant. Now let me retort this Gentleman's argument upon himself, which he makes use of against the covenant being from everlasting. "Those, whom God admits into the covenant of grace, have an interest in the benefits of that covenant, pardon of sin, the gift of the Spirit, reconciliation, adoption, etc. for it is a sort of contradiction to say, that any man is admitted into the covenant, and yet debarred from an interest in all the privileges of it." Now, either infants are admitted into the covenant of grace, or they are not; if they are, then they have an interest in the benefits of it, pardon of sin, and the other blessings, and so shall all certainly be saved with an everlasting salvation, and not apostatize, as it seems the greatest part of them do; for to say they are in the external, but not in the spiritual part of the covenant, is to make a poor business of their covenant-interest indeed. The instance of Simon Magus, which he thinks I have forgot, will not make for him, nor against me; it is a clear proof, that a man is not brought into covenant by baptism; since though baptism was administered to this person in the pure, primitive way, by an apostolic man, yet he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity.

3dly, The other three consequences following upon the renouncing of Infant-baptism, as renouncing all other ordinances, the promise of Christ's presence not made good, and no baptism now in the world, are in some fort given up, and are allowed not to be clear, at least not alike clear; and are only adverted to in a general way, and some expressions of mine catched at, and remarked upon, and these mistaken or perverted.

1. I observe, this author repeats his former mistake, that we make age essential to baptism, which is but circumstantial; and then uses an argument from the lesser to the greater, as he thinks, that if a defect in such a circumstance nullifies the ordinance, then much more the want of proper administrators: but it is not age that we object to, but a want of understanding, and faith, and an incapacity to make a profession of it, as well as the mode of administration; things of greater importance in this ordinance; at least they are so with us. However, it is kind in this Gentleman to direct us how we may avoid this inconvenience his argument has thrown us into, by exercising a little more moderation and charity for Infant-baptism; and upon this foot he seems to be willing to compound the matter with us.

2. As to the presence of Christ with his church and ministers, it is sufficient to make that good, that he grants it where his Church is, and wheresoever he has a people, be they more, or fewer, and wheresoever his ordinances are administered according to his direction; but he has no where promised, that he will have a continued succession of visible congregated churches. Certain indeed it is, that he will have a number of chosen ones in all ages; that his invisible church, built on Christ the rock, shall not fail; and he will have a seed to serve him, or some particular persons, whom he will reserve to himself from a general corruption; but that there shall be gathered always

into a visible gospel church-state, is no where promised; and for many hundreds of years it will be hard to find any one such church, unless the people in the valleys of Piedmont are allowed to be such.

3. This writer is not willing to admit such a supposition, that any of the laws and institutions of Christ have failed, ceased, or been annulled in any one age, and much more for several ages together; but, besides the ordinance of baptism, which through the change of mode and subjects, together with the impure mixtures of salt, oil, and spittle, and other superstitious rites, which became quite another thing than what was instituted by Christ, and practiced by his apostles; the ordinance of the Lord's-supper was so sadly perverted and corrupted, as to be a mere mass indeed of blasphemy and idolatry; in the communion of which the gracious presence of Christ cannot be thought to be enjoyed: and yet this continued some hundreds of years; only now and then some single persons rose up, and bore a testimony against it, who for a while had their followers.

4. He seems to triumph from Dr. Wall's account of things, that there never was, nor is, to this day, any national church in the world but Paedobaptists, either among the Greeks, or Roman Catholics, or the Reformed; and that Antipaedobaptism never obtained to be the established religion of any country in the world. We do not envy his boast; we know that national churches are good for nothing, as not being agreeable to the rule of the divine word; one small church or congregation, gathered out of the world by the grace of God, according to gospel-order, and whole principles and practices are agreeable to the word of God, is to be preferred before all the national churches in the world.

5. According to this Gentleman's own account of the English Antipaedobaptists, there could be none to administer the ordinance to them in their way; since those that came from Holland, it seems, gained no proselytes, but were soon extinct, being cruelly persecuted and destroyed; so that it was necessary they should send abroad for an administrator, or make use of an unbaptized one: but which way soever they took, they are able to justify their baptism on as good a foundation as the Reformers are able to justify theirs received from the Papists, with all the fooleries, corruptions, and superstitious rites attending it. My third chapter, you will remember, Sir, is concerning The Antiquity of Infant-baptism, and the practice of the Waldenses.

I. The enquiry is, whether Infant-baptism constantly and universally obtained in the truly primitive church, which truly pure and primitive church must be the church in the times of Christ and his apostles; since towards the close of those times, and in the two following Ages, there arose such a see of impure men, both for principle and practice, under the Christian name, as never were known in the world: now by an induction of particular instances of churches in this period of time, it does not appear, that Infant-baptism at all obtained. In Mr. Clark's reply to which, I observe,

1. That he says, the evidence of Infant-baptism is not pretended to lie in the history of fact, or in any express mention of it in the New Testament. That the penman of the Acts of the Apostles did not descend to so minute a particular, as the baptizing of infants,—and that the baptism of the adult was of the greatest account to be recorded.

2. Yet he thinks there are pretty plain intimations of it in most of the characters instanced in, and particularly in the church at Jerusalem; which he endeavors to make good by a criticism on Acts

2:41. And it is pleasant to observe, how he toils and labors to find out an antecedent to a relative not expressed in the text; for the words, to them, are not in the original; it is only and the same day there were added about three thousand souls; or, the same day there was an addition of about three thousand souls; and all this pains is taken to support a whimsical notion, that this addition was made, not to the church, but to the new converts; and by a wild fancy he imagines, that infants are included among the three thousand souls that were added: his argument from verse 39. and the other instances mentioned, as well as some other passages alleged, such as Luke 18:16; Acts 15:10 and 1 Corinthians 7:14 as they come over in the debate again, are referred to their proper places. But,

3. It must not be forgotten, what is said, that this may be a reason why Infant-baptism is so sparingly mentioned, (not mentioned at all) because the custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselytes to their religion with their parents, was well known; and there can be little doubt, that the apostles proceeded by the same rule in admitting the infants of Christian proselytes into the Christian covenant by baptism. This is building Infant-baptism on a bog indeed; since this Jewish custom is not pretended to be of divine institution; and so a poor argument in the Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism; and at most and best, is only a tradition of the elders, which body of traditions was inveighed against by Christ and his apostles; and besides, this particular tradition does not appear to have obtained so early among the Jews themselves, as the times of the apostles, and therefore could be no rule for them to proceed by; and about which the first reporters of it disagree, the one affirming there was such a custom, and the other denying it; and had it then obtained, it is incredible the apostles should make this the rule of their procedure in administering an ordinance of Christ and after all, was this the case, this would be a reason for, and not against the express mention of Infant-baptism by the divine historian; since it is necessary that in agreement with this Jewish custom, some instance or instances of Christian proselytes being baptized with their children should be recorded, as an example for Christians in succeeding ages to go by. But,

4. A supposition is made of some Paedobaptists sent into an heathen country to preach, and giving an account of their success, declaring that some families were baptized, such a man and all his, such another and his household; upon which a question is asked, who could raise a doubt whether any infants were baptized in those several families? To which I answer, there is no doubt to be made of it, that Paedobaptists would baptize infants; and if the apostles were Paedobaptists, which is the thing to be proved, they no doubt baptized infants too; but if no other account was given of the baptizing of households, than what the apostles give of them, Infant-baptism would still remain a doubt. For who can believe, that the brethren in Lydia’s house whom the apostles comforted, and of whom her household consisted, or that the Jailor’s household, that believed and rejoiced with him, or the household of Stephanas, who addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, were infants? however it seems, as there is no evidence of fact for Infant-baptism in the New Testament, it is referred to the testimony of the ancient fathers; and to them then we must go.

II. The testimony of the fathers of the three first centuries is chiefly to be attended to; and whereas none in the first century are produced in favor of Infant-baptism, we must proceed to the second. In it, I observe, there is but one writer, that it is pretended speaks of Infant-baptism, and that is Irenaeus, and but one passage in him; and this is at best of doubtful meaning, and by some learned men judged spurious; as when he says, Christ "came to save all, all, I say, who are

regenerated (or born again) unto God; Infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now, admitting the chapter in which this passage stands, is genuine and not spurious, which yet is not a clear case; it is objectionable to, as being a translation, as the most of this author's works are, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one it is, as learned men observe; wherefore there is reason to believe that justice is not done him; and it lies not upon us, but upon our antagonists that urge this passage against us, to produce the original in support of it: but allowing it to be a just translation, yet what is there of Infant-baptism in it? Not a word. Yes, to be regenerated, or born again, is to be baptized; this is the sense of the ancients, and particularly of Irenaeus, it is said; but how does this appear? Dr. Wall has given an instance of it out of Lib. 3 chap. 19 where this ancient writer says, "when he gave the disciples the commission of regenerating (or rather of regeneration) unto God, he said unto them, Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," where the commission of regenerating, adds Dr. Wall, plainly means the commission of baptizing; whereas, it more plainly means the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the spirit, and the necessity of that unto salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles' commission, as the very order of the words shews; and certain it is, that Irenaeus uses the word Regeneration in a different sense from baptism,[1] as an inward work, agreeable to the scriptures; and besides, such a sense of his words contended for, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false, as if Christ came to save all, and only such, who are baptized unto God; whereas he came to save baptized and unbaptized ones, Old and New Testament saints; and many no doubt are saved by him who never were baptized at all, and some baptized not saved; but on the other hand nothing is more true than that he came to save all, and only those, who are regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age; and which is clearly this ancient writer's sense, and so no proof of Infant-baptism. To support this notion of regeneration signifying baptism so early, our author urges a passage cited by me from Justin; who, speaking of converted persons, says, "they are brought by us where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water in the name of the Father, etc."

Now, it is evident, that those persons are not represented as regenerated by baptism; because they are spoken of before as believers and converted ones; and it is as clear, that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and not the same thing; for Justin uses the former, as an argument of the latter; which, if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized, because they were baptized; which is making him guilty of what Logicians call proving Idem per Idem: whereas, Justin's sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is, that those persons when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons, as is manifest from their being admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism: and that Justin speaks of the baptism of the adult, is owned by this writer; though he thinks it is unquestionable, that he speaks only of such who were converted from Heathenism; and is sure of it, that there were none among them born of Christian parents; this he will find a hard talk, with all his confidence, to prove. And he has ventured to produce a passage out of Justin, as giving suffrage to Infant-baptism in the second century; and it is this from Dr. Wall; "We also, who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch and those like him observed; and we have received it by baptism, by the mercy of God, because we were sinners, and it is enjoined to all persons to

receive it the same way."

Now let it be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever Justin means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch Enoch, and others like him, observed it; and since with Christians it is received by baptism, he says; and therefore must be different from it: and, after all, not a word of infants in the passage; nor is baptism called a spiritual circumcision; nor, as our author elsewhere stiles it, Christian circumcision, in Colossians 2:11 since the circumcision there spoken of, is called a circumcision made without hands, which surely cannot be said of baptism. In short, I must once more triumph, if it may be so called, and say, this is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of Infant-baptism from the fathers of the two first centuries. Proceed we to The third century; and the fathers of this, brought into the controversy about baptism are Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian. The first of these, is the first writer we know of that ever made mention of Infant-baptism; and he dissuades from it, and advises to defer baptism to riper years; and is therefore claimed on our side of the question: nor can he be made to unsay what he has said; and therefore is traduced as a man of heterodox notions, and of odd and strange opinions; and, it seems, afterwards turned Montanist; and all this is said, to weaken the credit of his testimony, when not a word is said of Origen's gross errors and monstrous absurdities: the reason is, because it seems he was a Paedobaptist, and Tertullian an Antipaedobaptist; though it is some comfort to this writer, that he was not quite so bad as the present Antipaedobaptists are. As to Origen, there are three passages quoted out of him; to which we object, not only, that they are translations, the fidelity of which cannot be depended upon, when there is much of this writer still extant in the language in which he wrote, and yet nothing from thence produced; but that there are interpolated, and confessedly so. His homilies on Leviticus and exposition of the epistle to the Romans, from whence two of the passages are taken, were translated by Ruffinus, who owns he took liberty to add of his own to them; so that, as Erasmus[2] observes, it is uncertain whether one reads Origen or Ruffinus; and Scultetus[3] says the same thing; and Huetius, who has given us a good edition of the Greek commentaries of this father, and well understood him, says,[4] that "his writings are so corrupted by him, that you are at a loss to find Origen in Origen, and so deformed and unlike the original, they can scarce be known;" and one of there particular passages Vossius[5] takes to be an interpolation, and so of the greater force against the Pelagians, because Ruffinus the translator and interpolator was inclined to them: the homilies on Luke, out of which is the other passage, are said to be translated by Jerom, of whom Du Pin says,[6] that his versions are not more exact than the other's; so no credit is to be given to them, nor are they to be depended on. Cyprian is the next that is produced, and it will be allowed that Infant-baptism began to be practiced in his time in some churches, though it seems to be an upstart notion; since it was not till then determined at what time it should be administered; and also at the same time, and in the same churches, Infant-communion was practiced; of which Cyprian gives an instance; and that is more than is, or can be given of the practice of Infant-baptism so early; and if his testimony is of any weight for the one, it ought to be of the same for the other; and if infants are admitted to baptism, it is but reasonable they should partake of the Lord's-supper, and especially as there is as early antiquity for the one as for the other. The quotations out of Gregory Nazianzen, Optatus, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Austin, fathers of the fourth century, which Mr. Clark has collected from Dr. Wall, might have been spared; seeing this does not come into his own account of the truly primitive church; and since it is not denied, Infant-baptism obtained in it; and yet it is certain, there were persons in this age against it, as will be observed hereafter; nor was Pelagius, in this age, so

pressed and puzzled with the argument taken from it in favor of original sin; since it was not contrary to his doctrine, who allowed baptism to be administered to them "on account of the kingdom of God, but not for forgiveness of sin;" and the controversy did not lead to dispute about the subject, but the end of baptism. The next thing, you will remember, Sir, brought into the controversy, is, whether the practice of Infant-baptism was called in question before the mad-men of Munster let themselves against it. As to the troubles in Germany, and in Munster itself, it is certain beyond all contradiction, that they were begun by Paedobaptists, and whilst they were such; and as for the German Anabaptists, as they are called, who joined with them, they were Sprinklers, and not Baptists, and so belong rather to this writer's party, than to us; but be this as it will, nothing in the controversy, depends upon that; the state of the case is, whether Infant-baptism was called in question, or made matter of doubt of before there men opposed it; and here I observe,

1. That it is allowed there were debates about Infant-baptism before the affair of Munster, and between that and the reformation; by which it appears that it was quickly opposed after the reformation begun.

2. The letter to Erasmus out of Bohemia shews, that there were a people there near one hundred years before the reformation, who baptized anew, in mere water, such as came over to their sect: this those people did, as our author would have it, not because they judged baptism in infancy invalid, but what was received in the corrupt way of the church of Rome. This he says after Dr. Wall, (though with the Doctor it is uncertain which was the case) inclining to the latter. But it should be observed, that there is no proof from any ancient history, that these people, or any Protestants and reformers that retained Infant-baptism, did, upon leaving the church of Rome, reject the baptism of that church, and receive a new one; and besides, Thomas Waldensis,[7] who lived and wrote at this very time, affirms, that there were a people in Bohemia then, that maintained that "believers children were not to be baptized, and that baptism was to no purpose administered to them;" to which I would add the testimony of Luther,[8] who says, "the Waldenses in Bohemia, ground the sacrament of baptism upon the person's faith; and for that reason, they annihilate the baptizing of children; for they say, children must be taught before they be baptized."

2. This Gentleman is not well pleased with Dr. Wall in making this concession, that the Petrobrusians were Antipaedobaptists; though it is some comfort to him, that he tells him, that their opinion seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten. But this opinion of theirs not only continued among Henry and his followers, who succeeded the Petrobrusians, but among the people afterwards called Waldenses; who to this day own Peter Bruis for one of their Barbs or Parrots, as will be seen hereafter. However, that we may have no credit from these people, they are branded as denying the other ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and as saying, it is not to be administered since Christ's time. But what Dr. Wall[9] afterwards cites from the abbot of Clugny, will serve to explain this, and shew, that their meaning is only, that the real presence of Christ in the supper, was only at the time when it was administered by him to the disciples; who makes them to say, "the body of Christ was only once made by himself the supper, before his passion, and was only, namely at this time, given to his disciples; since that time it was never made by any one, nor given to any one;" or as it is expressed from the same popish writer by Dr. Allix,[10]

"The fourth (article ascribed by the abbot to the Petrobrusians) consisted not only in denying the truth of the body and blood of our Lord, which is offered up every day, and continually by the sacrament of the church; but also in maintaining, that it was nothing, and ought not to be offered." Upon which the Doctor makes this remark: "The fourth heresy is expressed in very odious terms, and after the popish manner, who own nothing to be real in the sacrament, if the flesh of Jesus Christ and his blood be not there in substance; and who do not believe he is present at the sacrament upon any other account, but as he is offered up to God before he is eaten." It was the real presence in the supper, and not that itself, these people denied; so that they were brave champions for the purity of both ordinances, equally rejecting Infant-baptism and the doctrine of transubstantiation.

3. As for the other instances of persons denying Infant-baptism after Peter Bruis, produced by me; this writer, from Dr. Wall, would fain fasten the charge of Manicheism upon them, and so as denying all water-baptism; I say, from Dr. Wall, for what he here says, and indeed there is scarce any thing in this whole chapter about the antiquity of Infant-baptism, but what is borrowed from him, this Gentleman having no stock of his own; that, in fact, instead of answering Mr. Clark, I am answering Dr. Wall. As for those Evervinus writes of to Bernard, about the year 1140, there he observes, from Dr. Wall, held a tenet which shews them to be Manichees; though Evervinus[11] distinguishes them from the Manichees, namely, "all marriage they call fornication, except that which was between two virgins;" but this was not one of the principles of the Manichees, who condemned all marriage; whereas these allowed of the marriage of persons who had never been married before; they only condemned second marriage; a notion which had prevailed with some of the Christian fathers before the Manichees were in being; and this was the notion of some of the apostolics, and very probably of them all, the same Bernard makes mention of; and who, very likely, as I have observed, were the followers of Henry; and against these, this author has nothing of Manicheism: Here Dr. Wall fails him; and here it may be remarked what Mezeray says, "in the year 1163, there were two sorts of heretics; the one ignorant and loose, who were a sort of Manichees; the other more learned, and remote from such filthiness, who held much the same opinions as the Calvinists, and were called Henricians;" so that the followers of Henry were a distinct people from the Manichees; but as for those the Bishop of Arles takes notice of, our author’s remark upon them is, "it may be said, these heretics might be some of "the Manichean sect;" fine proof indeed! what he farther adds is more probable, "as perhaps they were some remains of the Petrobrusians;" so that it appears, that their opinion, which seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten, continued however to the year 1215. As for the Gascoiners, that came over into England in the year 1158, and asserted, that infants ought not to be baptized till they come to the age of understanding; this, our author says, is no more than what a Manichee might say then, and a Quaker now; though they both disown all water-baptism. What! to say, that infants ought not to be baptized till they come to the age of understanding? is this talking like a Manichee or a Quaker? Does not this suppose that they may be baptized, when they come to the age of understanding, and know what they do? But this writer adds, it appears that these rejected both the sacraments of the New Testament, detecting holy baptism, and the Eucharist: so they did, they detested Infant-baptism as an human invention, and transubstantiation as an idol of the Pope of Rome.

4. To what I have said concerning Bruno and Berengarius, and their opposition to Infant-baptism 100 years before the Petrobrusians, I would only add; that Peter Bruis was not the author of a new sect, though his followers were so called by the Papists, to suggest that they were so; whereas, they were the same with the Berengarians, and held the same principles as the Berengarians did, both with respect to baptism and the Lord's-Supper; and what were their sentiments concerning these are well known.

5. Gundulphus and his followers, another instance of persons denying Infant-baptism as early as the year 1025, are represented as Manichees and Quakers, in the point of baptism; and both Mr. Stennett and myself are charged with great unfairness, partiality and disingenuity, in leaving out what Dr. Allix has said concerning these men, namely, "that in the same examination, being further interrogated, these men confessed, that they thought water-baptism of no use or necessity to any one, infants or adult."[12] This is cited from Dr. Wall, an author not always to be depended upon, and particularly here; for Dr. Allix gives no account of any further interrogation of these men, by Gerard bishop of Cambray, as is suggested; nor are these words to be found in him; for though the men at their first, and only interrogation, speak of the non-necessity and unavailableness of baptism to salvation; and, as Dr. Allix observes, said some things slightly of baptism, in opposition to the prevailing notions of those times, about the absolute necessity and efficacy of baptism to salvation; yet he is quite clear, that they were for the thing itself: "It is easy to judge, says he,[13] that they looked upon baptism only as a mystical ceremony, the end of which was to express the engagement of him who is baptized, and the vow he makes to live holy." Gundulphus, adds he, "seeing them, (the popish priests) assert, that whosoever was baptized could never be damned, falls to an indifference for baptism; thinking it sufficient to keep to the essentials of that sacrament." From whence it is plain, he did not deny it, nor disuse it; and upon the whole it is evident, Dr. Wall has abused Mr. Stennett, and this Gentleman both him and myself.

6. It is observed, that a large stride is taken by me from the Eleventh to the Fourth century, not being able in the space of more than 600 years to find one instance of an opposer of Infant-baptism: this will not seem so strange to those who know what a time of ignorance this was; partly through the prevalence of popery, and partly through the inundation of the barbarous nations, which brought a flood of darkness upon the empire; and very few witnesses arose against the superstitions of the church of some; yet there were some in the valleys of Piedmont, even from the times of the apostles, and during this interval, as learned men have observed, that bore their testimony against corruptions in doctrine and practice; among which, this of Infant-baptism must be reckoned one; and whole successors, as we have seen already in the Berengarians, and the Petrobrusians, and will be seen again in the Waldenses, bore witness against this innovation.

7. Though I did not insist upon the Pelagians and others being against Infant-baptism, which some have allowed; this writer is pleased to reproach me with a good-will to admit such heretics, as our predecessors; and this is not the only instance of this sort of reflection; whereas truth is truth, let it be espoused by whom it will; and it might be retorted, that Infant-baptism has been practiced by the worst of heretics, and retained by the man of sin and his followers in all the Antichristian states; and this writer thinks it worth his pains to rescue the above heretics and schismatics out of our hands; and yet, after all, some of the followers of Pelagius at least argued, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized; and that for this reason, because they were holy, as[14] Austin affirms; and who also observes,[15] that some other patrons argued against it, and the

unprofitableness of it to infants, who for the most part died before they knew any thing of it; and Jerom,[16] his contemporary, supposes it, and reasons upon it, that some Christians refused to give baptism to their children. So that even in the fourth century, though Infant-baptism greatly prevailed, yet it was not so general, as that not one man contemporary with Austin can be produced, as setting himself against it, as our author avers; nay Stephen Marshall, a great stickler for Infant-baptism, in his famous sermon on this subject,[17] owns, that some in the times of Austin questioned it, and refers to a discourse of his in proof of it; and the canon of the council at Carthage, produced by me, notwithstanding all that this writer says, is a full proof of the same. For surely, no man in his senses can ever think, that a council consisting of all the bishops in Africa, should agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion with them about Infant-baptism; only thought it should not be administered to them as soon as born, but be deferred till they were eight days old; they that can believe this, can believe any thing; and besides, is not a child of eight days old a child newly born? Lastly, after all, Tertullian, in the beginning of the third century, as he was the first we know of that made mention of Infant-baptism, did oppose it, and dissuade from it; so that it must be once more said, it was called in question, debated and opposed twelve or thirteen hundred years before the madmen of Munster, as well as in some of the intervening centuries. It remains now, Sir, to defend what I have said concerning the Waldenses; and it should be observed,

1. That these people had not their name from Waldus, as the first founder of their sect: this Dr. Allix has undertook to make out beyond all possible contradiction, and he has done it. These people were before his time called Vaudois, Vallenses or Wallenses, from their inhabiting the valleys; which name was afterwards changed to Waldenses, when the design was said to make men believe that Valda or Waldus was their first founder, that they might be taken for a new and upstart people; whereas they were in being long before Waldus, who received his light and doctrine from them, and whose followers joined them; and this observation sets aside the exceptions of our author to the testimonies of Peter Bruis, their confession of faith in 1120, and their noble lesson 1100, as being before the times of the Waldenses; that is, before the times of Waldo, more properly speaking; and by how much the more ancient these testimonies are, by so much the greater is their evidence in point of antiquity, as to these peoples denial of Infant-baptism; and more strongly prove that the ancient Vallenses, afterwards corruptly called Waldenses, were against it, and for adult baptism. These people were not divided into various sects, but were a body of people of one and the same faith and practice, which they retained from father to son, as their usual phrase is, time out of mind.

2. It is true, they were called by different names, by their adversaries; some given them by way of reproach, others from their leaders and teachers, as Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, Waldensians, Etc. from Peter Bruis, Henry, Arnold, Waldus; but still they were the same people; just as the Papists, at the Reformation, made as many heads of distinct parties, as these were men of note in that work. Thus for instance, the Petrobrusians were not a distinct sect of this people, but the very people called Vallenses, afterwards Waldenses; and the same may be said of the rest: nor were there any sect among them of the Manichean principle, or any of them tinctured with that heresy, as Dr. Allix has abundantly proved. The care, as he makes it appear, was this; that there were Manichees in the places where the Valdenses and Albigenses lived, but not that joined them; their enemies took the advantage of this, and called them by the same name, and

ascribed the same opinions to them, especially if they could find any thing in them familiar to them: thus for instance, because they denied Infant-baptism, therefore they were against all Water-baptism, and so Manichees; for as Dr. Allix[18] observes, "in those barbarous and cruel ages, a small conformity of opinions with the Manichees, was a sufficient ground to accuse them of Manicheism, who opposed any doctrine received by the church of some: Thus would they have taken the Anabaptists for downright Manichees, says he, because they condemned the baptism of infants:" and Mr. Clark cannot object to this observation, since he himself argues from the denial of Infant-baptism, to the denial of baptism itself; and has represented me as a Manichee, or a Quaker, for no other reason, but for the denial of Infant-baptism; and if his book lives to the next age, and is of any authority, and can find people foolish enough to believe it, I must be set down for a Manichee or a Quaker. Indeed I must confess, I once thought, giving too much credit to Dr. Wall, that there were different sects among the Waldenses, and some of them Manichees, and of other erroneous principles, which I now retract.

3. It is not true what this writer from Dr. Wall affirms; "This is certain, that no one author, that calls the people he writes of Waldenses, does impute to them the denial of Infant-baptism;" for Claudius Couffard, writing against them, under this name, gives an extract of their errors out of Raynerius, and this is one of them; "They say, then first a man is baptized, when he is received into their sect; some of them hold that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot yet actually believe;" and concludes this extract thus, "from whence you may see, courteous reader, that this sect of the Waldenses, and the chief, yea almost all heretics now in vogue, are not of late invention, etc." and were this true, yet it is a mere evasion, and a foolish one; since the names of Henricians, Arnoldists, Cathari, Apostolici, etc. under which they are represented, as opposers of Infant-baptism, are the names of the Waldenlses, as Perrin[19] observes, a writer whom our author says he has read.

4. It is a most clear case, that the ancient barbs or pastors of the Waldensian churches, so called, were opposers of Infant-baptism. Sir Samuel Moreland, as I have observed, reckons Peter Bruis and Henry among their ancient pallors; to does Perrin likewise, though he is mistaken in making them to follow Waldo; and these are allowed to be Antipaedobaptists by several Paedobaptists themselves. Arnoldus, another of their parrots, according to the above writer, from whence they were called Arnoldists, was out of all doubt a denier of Infant-baptism, for which he was condemned by a council, as Dr. Wall owns. Lollardo was another of their pastors, according to the same authors, and from whole name, Perrin says, the Waldenses were called Lollards; and so Kilianus says,[20] a Lollard is also called a Waldensian heretic. These were not the followers of Wickliff, as our author wrongly asserts; for they were, as Dr. Allix[21] observes, more ancient than the Wicklifites; and though this name was afterwards given to the latter, Lollardo was here in England, and had his followers before Wickliff's time; and so he had in Flanders and Germany; and of the Lollards there, Trithemius[22] says, they derided the sacrament of baptism; which cannot be understood of their deriding baptism in general, but of their deriding Infant-baptism; which was common among the Papists to say; and the same is the sense of the Lollards in England, who are charged with making light of the sacrament of baptism. Now since these were the sentiments of the ancient pastors of the Waldenses, it is reasonable to believe the people themselves were of the same mind with them; nor are there any confessions of their faith, which make any mention of Infant-baptism; nor any proofs of its being practiced by them until the

sixteenth century, produced by our author, or any other.

5. The Albigenses, as Perrin[23] says, differ nothing at all from the Waldenses, in their belief; but are only so called of the country of Albi; where they dwelt, and had their first beginning; and who received the belief of the Waldenses by means of Peter Bruis, Henry and Arnold; who, as it clearly appears, were all Antipaedobaptists; and Dr. Allix[24] observes, that the Albigenses have been called Petrobrusians; owned to be a sect of the Waldenses, that denied Infant-baptism: and that the Albigenses denied it, at least some of them, yea the greatest part of them, is acknowledged by some Paedobaptists themselves. Chassanion in his history of these people says;[25] "some writers have affirmed, that the Albigeois approved not of the baptism of infants. —I cannot deny that the Albigeois for the greatest part were of that opinion. —The truth is, they did not reject this sacrament, or say it was useless, (as some, he before observes, asserted they did) but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, or capable of giving evidence of their faith." Which is another proof of the ancient Waldenses being against Infant-baptism, these being the same with them. Upon the whole, if I have been too modest, in saying that the ancient Waldenses practiced Infant-baptism, wants proof, I shall now use a little more boldness and confidence, and alarm, that the ancient Vallenses, or as corruptly called Waldenses, were opposers of Infant-baptism; and that no proof can be given of the practice of it among them till the sixteenth century; and that the author of the dialogue had no reason to say, that their being in the practice of adult baptism, and denying Infant-baptism, was a mere chimaera and a groundless figment. My fourth chapter, you know, Sir, respects the argument for Infant-baptism, taken from the covenant made with Abraham, and from circumcision. Here our author runs out into a large discussion of the covenant of grace, in his way; in which he spends about fourscore pages, which I take to be the heads of some old sermons, he is fond of, and has taken this opportunity of publishing them to the world, without any propriety or pertinence. For, 1. not to dispute the point with him, whether there are two distinct covenants of redemption and grace, or whether they are one and the same, which is foreign to the argument; be it that they are two distinct ones, the spiritual seed promised to Christ, or the people given him in the one, are the same that are taken into the other; they are of equal extent; there are no more in the one, than there are concerned in the other; and this writer himself allows, "that the salvation of the spiritual seed of Christ is promised in both covenants." Now let it be proved, if it can, that there are any in the covenant of grace but the spiritual seed of Christ; and that the natural seed of believers, and their infants as such, are the spiritual seed: and if they are, then they were given to Christ, who undertook to save them, and whose salvation was promised to him, and to whom in time the communications of grace according to the covenant are made; then they must be all of them regenerated, renewed, and sanctified, justified, pardoned, adopted, persevere in grace, and be eternally saved; all which will not, cannot be said of all the infants of believers; and consequently cannot be thought to be in the covenant of grace.

2. As to what he says concerning the conditionality of the covenant, it is all answered in one word; let him name what he will, as the condition of this covenant, which God has not absolutely promised, or thrift: has not engaged to perform, or to see performed in his people, or by them. Are the conditions, faith and repentance? These are both included in the new heart, and spirit, and heart of flesh, God has absolutely promised in the covenant, Ezekiel 36:26. Is new, spiritual, and evangelical obedience, the condition? This is absolutely promised as the former, verse 27. Or is it

actual consent? Thy people shall be willing (Psalms 110:3). And after all, if it is a conditional covenant, how do infants get into it? Or is it a conditional covenant to the adult, and unconditional to them? If faith and repentance are the conditions of it, and these must be, as this author says, "the sinner's own voluntary chosen acts, before he can have any actual saving interest in the privileges of the covenant;" it follows, that they cannot be in it, or have interest in the privileges of it, till they repent and believe, and do these as their own voluntary chosen acts; and if "man's consent and agreement bring him into covenant with God," as this writer says; it should be considered, whether infants are capable of this consent, or no; and if they are not, according to this man, they stand a poor chance for being in the covenant.

3. Whereas the covenant of grace, as to the essence of it, has been always the same, as is allowed, under the various forms and administrations of it, both under the Old and New Testament; so the subjects of it have been, and are the same, the spiritual seed of Christ, and none else; and not the carnal seed of men as such: and if the conditions of it are the same, faith and obedience, as our author observes, then infants must stand excluded from it, since they can neither believe nor obey.

01.10. A Reply to a Book, entitled, A Defense contd

4. That the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, or a revelation and application of it to him; that the gospel was revealed to him, and he was justified in the same way believers are now; and that he had spiritual promises made to him, and spiritual blessings bestowed upon him; and that gospel-believers, be they Jews or Gentiles, who are the spiritual seed of Abraham, are heirs of the same covenant-blessings and promises, are never denied; —this man is fighting with his own shadow. What is denied and should be proved, is, that the covenant of grace is made with Abraham's carnal seed, the Jews, and with the carnal seed of gospel-believers among the Gentiles; and that spiritual promises are made to them; and that they are heirs of spiritual blessings, as such: and let it be further observed, that the covenant in Genesis 17:1-27 is not the covenant referred to in Galatians 3:17 said to be confirmed of God in Christ, and which could not be disannulled by the law 430 years after; since the date does not agree, it falls short twenty-four years; and therefore must refer, not to the covenant of circumcision, but to some other covenant, and time of making it.

5. It is false, that children have been always taken with their parents into the covenant of grace, under every dispensation. The children of Adam were not taken into the covenant of grace with him, which was made known to him immediately after the fall; for then all the world must be in the covenant of grace. The covenant made with Noah and his sons, was not the covenant of grace; since it was made with the beasts of the field as well as with them; unless it will be said, that they also are in the covenant of grace. Nor were all Abraham's natural seed taken into the covenant of grace with him. Ishmael was by name excluded, and the covenant established with Isaac; and yet Ishmael was in the covenant of circumcision; which by the way proves, that, that and the covenant of grace are two different things: nor were all Abraham's natural seed in the line of Isaac taken into the covenant of grace, not Esau; nor all in the line of Jacob and Israel; for as the apostle says, they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:6-8). The covenant at Horeb was indeed a national covenant, and took in all, children and grown persons; and which was no other than a civil contract, and not a covenant of grace, between God and the people of Israel; he asking, and they as subjects; he promising to be their protector and defender, and they to be his faithful subjects, and obey his laws; which covenant has been long ago abolished, when God wrote a Loammi upon them: nor is there any proof of infants under the New Testament being taken into covenant with their parents. Not Matthew 19:14, 1 Corinthians 7:14 which make no mention of any covenant at all, as will be considered hereafter; nor Hebrews 8:8 since the house of Israel, that new covenant is said to be made with, are the spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles, even the whole household of faith, and none but them nor are their infants spoken of, nor can they be included; for have they all of them the laws of God written on their hearts? Do they all know the Lord? or have they all their sins forgiven them? which is the care with all those with whom this covenant is made, or to whom it is applied. Nor are there any

predictions of this kind in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 30:6, Psalms 22:30, Isaiah 9:21 speak only of a succession of converted persons, either in the gospel-church among the Gentiles, or in the same among the Jews, when that people shall be converted in the latter day.

6. The distinction of an inward and outward covenant, is an Utopian business, mere jargon and nonsense; it has no foundation in scripture, reason, nor common sense. And here I cannot but observe what Mr. Baxter, a zealous Paedobaptist, says on this subject.[26] "Mr. Blake's common phrase is, that they are in the outward covenant, and what that is, I cannot tell; in what sense is that (God's covenant-act) called outward? It cannot be, as if God did as the dissembling creature, Oretenus, with the mouth only, covenant with them, and not with the heart, as they deal with him. I know therefore no possible sense but this, that it is called outward from the blessings promised, which are outward; here therefore, I should have thought it reasonable for Mr. Blake to have told us what these outward blessings are, that this covenant promiseth; and that he would have proved out of the scriptures that God hath such a covenant distinct from the covenant of grace. I desire therefore that those words of scripture may be produced, where any such covenant is contained. And let Mr. Clark tell us what he means by the outward covenant, or the outward part of it, in which infants are; if any thing can be collected from him, as his meaning, it is, that it designs the outward administration of the covenant by the word and ordinances: but if it means the outward ministry of the word, newborn infants are not capable of that to any profit; if it designs the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, then they should be admitted to one as well as the other; and if baptism only is intended by this outward covenant, or the outward part, here is the greatest confusion imaginable; then the sense is, they are under the outward administration of the covenant, that is baptism; and this gives them a right to be baptized, that is to be baptized again, or in other words to be made Anabaptists of; and after all it is a poor covenant, or a poor part of it assigned for infants, in the bond of which, as this author says, are many real hypocrites.

7. That covenant-interest, and an evidence of it, give right to the real of the covenant, which was circumcision formerly, and baptism now, is false; and this writer has not proved it, nor infants covenant-interest, as we have seen already. He should have first proved that circumcision was a seal of the covenant of grace formerly, and baptism the real of it now, before he talked of covenant-interest giving a right to either. Admitting that circumcision was a real of the covenant of grace formerly, (though it was not) yet interest in that covenant and evidence of interest in it, did not give right to all in it to the seal of it, as it is called; since there were many who had evidently an interest in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was first appointed, and yet had no right to it; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others; and even many who were in the covenant made with Abraham, as this writer himself will allow, who had no right to this seal, even all his female offspring: to say, they were virtually circumcised in the males, is false and foolish; to have a thing virtually by another, is to have it by proxy, who represents another; but were the males the proxies and representatives of the females? had they been so, then indeed when they were circumcised, the females were virtually circumcised with them; and so it was all one as if they had been circumcised in their own persons; which to have been, would have been unlawful and sinful, not being by the appointment of God: as for its being unlawful for uncircumcised persons to eat of the passover, this must be understood of such who ought to be circumcised, and does not affect the females, who ought not, and so might eat, though they were really uncircumcised; nor had the males themselves any right to it till the eighth day; and so it was not covenant-interest, but a

command from God, that gave them a right; and such an order is necessary to any person's right to baptism.

Again, admitting for argument-sake, that baptism is a seal of the covenant, does not this Gentleman also believe, that the Lord's-supper is a seal of it likewise? and if covenant-interest gives a right to the seals, why not to one seal as well as the other? and why are not infants admitted to the Lord's table, as well as to baptism? Moreover, it is evidence of interest, this writer says, that gives a right to the seal; and what is that evidence? Surely if faith and repentance are the conditions of the covenant, as before asserted, they must be the evidence? and therefore, according to his own argument, it should first appear, that infants have faith and repentance as the evidence of their covenant interest, before they are admitted to the seal of it; and such only according to the injunction of Christ, and the practice of his apostles, were admitted to baptism; as the passages below shew (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38-39; Acts 10:47), which our author refers us to. And now, Sir, after a long ramble, we are come to Abraham's covenant itself, and to the questions concerning it; as, of what kind it is; with whom made; and whether circumcision was the real of the covenant of grace; and whether baptism is come in its room, and is the seal of it. Now as to the

I. First of these, of what kind was the covenant with Abraham, Genesis 17:1-27? I have asserted, that it was not the pure covenant of grace, but of a mixed kind; consisting partly of promises of temporal things, and partly of spiritual ones; and you will easily observe, Sir, that the exceptions of this writer to the arguments I make use of in proof of it, are for the most part founded on his mistaken notions of the conditionality of the covenant of grace, and on that stupid and senseless distinction of the inward and outward covenant, before exploded; wherefore since these are groundless conceits and sandy foundations, what is built upon them must necessarily fall.

II. The same may be observed with respect to that part of the question, which relates to the covenant being made with all Abraham's seed according to the flesh, as a covenant of grace; by the help of which unscriptural and irrational distinction, he can find a place in the covenant of grace for a persecuting Ishmael, a profane Esau, and all the wicked Jews in all ages, in all times of defection and apostasy; but if he can find no better covenant to put the infants of believers into, nor better company to place them with, who notwithstanding their covenant-interest, may be lost and damned, it will be a very insignificant thing with considerate persons, whether they are in this Utopian covenant or no.

III. As to that part of the question which relates to the natural seed of believing Gentiles being in Abraham's covenant, or to that being made with them as a covenant of grace, it is by me denied. This writer says, I add a stroke, as he calls it, that at once cuts off all Abraham's natural seed, and all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, from having any share in the covenant; since I say, "That to none can spiritual blessings belong, but to a spiritual seed, not a natural one." But he might have observed, that this is explained in the same page thus, "not to the natural seed of either of them as such." He says, it is not requisite to a person's visible title and claim to the external privileges of the covenant, that he should be truly regenerate, or a sincere believer;" and yet he elsewhere says, "that to repent and believe must be the sinner's own voluntary chosen acts, before he can have any actual saving interest in the privileges of the covenant:" let him reconcile these together. He has not proved, nor is he able to prove, that the natural seed of believing

Gentiles, as such, are the spiritual seed of Abraham; since only they that are Christ's, or believers in him, or who walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, are his spiritual seed; which cannot be said of all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, or of any of them as such. That clause in Abraham's covenant, A father of many nations have I made thee (Genesis 17:4-5) is to be understood only of the faithful, or of believers in all nations; and not of all nations that bear the Christian name, as comprehending all in them, grown persons and infants, good and bad men; and only to such who are of the faith of Abraham does the apostle apply it (Romans 4:16); the stranger, and his male seed, that submitted to circumcision, may indeed be said to be in the covenant of circumcision; but it does not follow, that these were in the covenant of grace; there were many of Abraham's own natural seed that were in the covenant of circumcision, who were not in the covenant of grace; and it would be very much, that the natural seed of strangers, and even of believing Gentiles, should have a superior privilege to the natural seed of Abraham. Those, and those only, in a judgment of charity, are to be reckoned the spiritual seed, who openly believe in Christ, as I have expressed it; about which phrase this man makes a great pother, when the sense is plain and easy; and that it designs such who make a visible profession of their faith, and are judged to be partakers of the grace of the covenant; which certainly is the best evidence of their interest in it; and therefore it must be best to wait till this appears, before any claim of privilege can be made; and is no other than what this writer himself says in the words before referred to. Though, after all, I stand by my former assertion, that covenant-interest, even when made out clear and plain, gives not right to any ordinance without a positive order or direction from God; and he may call it a conceit of mine if he pleases; he is right in it, that according to it, no person living is capable of (that is, has a right unto) the ordinances and visible privileges of the church upon any grounds of covenant-interest, without a positive direction from God for it; as there was for circumcision, so there should be for baptism; as, with respect to the former, many who were in the covenant of grace had no concern with it, having no direction from the Lord about it; so though persons may be in the covenant of grace, yet if they are not pointed out by the Lord, as those whom he wills to be the subjects of it, they have no right unto it. To say, that Lot and others were under a former administration of the covenant, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, is saying nothing; unless he can tell us what that former administration of it was, and wherein it differed from the administration of it to Abraham and his seed; to instance in circumcision, would be begging the question, since that is the thing instanced in; by which it appears that covenant-interest gives no right to an ordinance, without a special direction; and the same holds good of baptism. His sense of Mark 16:16 is, that infants are included in the profession of their believing parents, and why not in their baptism too? and so there is no necessity of their baptism; the text countenances one as much as it does the other, and both are equally stupid and senseless.

IV. The next inquiry is, whether circumcision was the seal of the covenant of grace to Abraham's natural seed. It is called a token or sign, but not a seal; this writer says, though a token, simply considered, does not necessarily imply a seal, yet the token of a covenant, or promise, can be nothing else: if it can be nothing else, it does necessarily imply it; unless there is any real difference between a token simply considered, and the token of a covenant, which he would do well to shew circumcision was nothing else but a sign or mark in the flesh, appointed by the covenant; and therefore that is called the covenant in their flesh; and not because circumcision was any confirming token or seal of the covenant to any of Abraham's natural seed: it was a sign

and seal of the righteousness of faith to Abraham; that that righteousness which he had by faith before his circumcision, should come upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; but was no seal of that, nor any thing else, to any others: and according to our author's notion of it, it was neither a seal of Abraham's faith, nor of his righteousness; then surely not of any others; and yet in contradiction to this, he says, it is "a seal of the covenant of grace, wherein this privilege of justification by faith is confirmed and conveyed to believers;" and if to believers, then surely not to all Abraham's natural seed, unless he can think they were all believers; though his real notion, if I understand him right, is, that it is no confirming sign, or seal of any spiritual blessings to any; since the subjects of it, as he owns, may have neither faith nor righteousness; but of the truth of the covenant itself; that God has made one; but this needs no such sign or seal; the word of God is sufficient, which declares it and assures of it.

V. The next thing that comes under consideration, is, whether baptism succeeds circumcision; and is the seal of the covenant of grace to believers, and their natural seed.

1. This author endeavors to prove that baptism succeeds circumcision from Colossians 2:11, but in vain; for the apostle is speaking not of corporal, but of spiritual circumcision, of which the former was a typical resemblance; and so shewing, that believing Gentiles have that through Christ which was signified by it; and which the apostle describes, by the manner of its being effected, without hands, without the power of man, by the efficacy of divine grace; and by the substance and matter of it, which lay in the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; and without a tautology, as this writer suggests, by the author of it, Christ, who by his Spirit effects it, and therefore is called the circumcision of Christ; and is distinguished from baptism, described in the next verse: and as weak and insignificant is his proof from the analogy between baptism and circumcision; some things said of baptism and circumcision are not true; as that they are sacraments of admission into the church: Not so was circumcision; not of the Gentiles, who had it not, nor were admitted by it, and yet were in the church; nor even of the males, for they were not circumcised till eight days old, yet were of the Jewish church, which was national, as loon as born; and persons may be baptized, and yet not be entered into any visible church: Nor are they badges of relation to the God of Israel; since on the one hand, persons might have one or the other, yet have no spiritual relation to God; and on the other hand, be without either, and yet be related to him: nor are either of them seals and signs of the covenant of grace, as before shewn: nor is baptism absolutely requisite to a person's approach to God with confidence and acceptance in any religious duty, private or public. Baptism serves not to the same use and purpose in many things that circumcision did; it is not the middle wall of partition; nor does it bind men to keep the whole law, as circumcision; and though there may be some seeming agreement, arguments from analogy are weak and dangerous: so from the priest's offering a propitiatory sacrifice, wearing the linen ephod, and one high priest being above all other priests, the Papists argue for a minister's offering a real propitiatory sacrifice, for wearing the surplice, and for a Pope, or universal Bishop; and others from the same topic argue for tithes being due to ministers, and for the inequality of bishops and presbyters, there being an high priest and inferior ores: and to this tends our author's third argument, that either baptism succeeds circumcision, or there is nothing at all instituted in its room; nor is there any necessity that there should, any more than that there should be a Pope in the room of an high priest, or any thing to answer to Easter, Pentecost, etc. all which, as circumcision, had their end in Christ nor does the Lord's-supper come in the room of the passover; what answers to that is,

Christ the passover sacrificed for us; and did it, by this argument from analogy, infants ought to be admitted to the Lord's-supper, as they were to the passover: by this way of arguing, and at this door, may be brought in all the Jewish rites and ceremonies, under other names: and after all, what little agreement may be imagined is between them, the difference is notorious in many things; some of which this author is obliged to own; as in the subjects of them, the one being only males, the other males and females; the one being by blood, the other by water; and besides they differ as to the persons by whom, and the places where, and the uses for which, they are performed; wherefore from analogy and resemblance is no proof of succession, but the contrary. My argument from baptism being in force before circumcision, to prove that the one did not succeed the other, is so far from being allowed by our author a proof of it, that he will not allow it to be a bare probability, unless I could prove they had been all along contemporary: but if I cannot do it, he and his brethren can, who give credit to the Jewish custom of baptizing their proselytes and children; and which they make to be a practice, for which the Jews fetch proof as early as the times of Jacob; and I hope, if he will abide by this, he will allow that baptism could not come in the room of circumcision.

2. He next attempts to prove that baptism is a real of the covenant of grace to believers and their seed, by a wretched perversion of several passages of scripture (John 3:33; Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 Corinthians 12:13), in which no mention is made of the covenant of grace, and much less of baptism as a real of it; and which only speak of believers, and not a syllable of their infants; and all of them clear proofs, that believers, and they only, are the proper subjects of baptism; as may easily be observed by the bare reading of them.

3. My sentiment of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper not being seals of the covenant of grace, he thinks, is borrowed from the Socinians. These have no better notion or' the covenant of grace than himself, nor of the efficacy of the blood of Christ for the ratification of it, nor of the sealing work of the spirit of God upon the hearts of his people. My sentiment is borrowed from the scriptures, and is established by them; the blood of Christ confirms and ratifies the covenant, the blessings and promises of it, and is therefore called the blood of the everlasting covenant; the blessed spirit is the sealer of believers interest in it, or assures them of it (Hebrews 13:20; Ephesians 1:13) So that there are not two seals of the covenant of grace, as he wrongly observes. The blood of Christ makes the covenant itself lure, and is in this sense the seal of that; the spirit of God is the seal of interest in it to particular persons; and in neither sense do or can ordinances seal.

4. Upon the whole, what has this author been doing throughout this chapter? has he proved that the natural seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace? he has not. The covenant he attempts to prove they are in, according to his own account of it, is no covenant of grace. Does it secure any one spiritual blessing to the carnal seed of believers? it does not. Does it secure regenerating, renewing, sanctifying grace, or pardoning grace, or justifying grace, or adopting grace, or eternal life? it does not. And if so, I leave it to be judged of by such that have any knowledge of the covenant, if such a covenant can be called the covenant of grace; or what spiritual Caving advantage is to be had from an interest in such a covenant, could it be proved. He would have his readers believe, that the covenant, he pleads infants have an interest in, is the same under all dispensations, and in all ages: the covenant of grace is indeed the same, but the covenant he puts the infant-seed of believers into, is only an external administration; and this, he

himself being judge, cannot have been always the same. This external administration, according to himself, was first by sacrifices, and then by circumcision, and now by baptism; for what else he means by an external administration, than an administration of ordinances, cannot be conceived; and then by infants being in the covenant, is no other than having ordinances administered to them; and so their being in the covenant now, is no other than their being baptized; and yet he says, "the main foundation of the right of infants to baptism, is their interest in the covenant;" that is, the external administration they are under, or the administration of baptism to them, is the main foundation of their right to baptism. They are baptized, therefore they are and ought to be baptized; such an account of covenant-interest, and of right to baptism from it, is a mere begging the question, and proving idem per idem, yea is downright nonsense and contradiction: and so, when baptism is said to be the seal of the covenant, that is, of the external administration, which administration is that of baptism, the sense is, baptism is the seal of baptism. This senseless jargon is the amount of all the reasonings throughout this chapter: Such mysterious stuff, such glaring contradictions, and stupid nonsense, I leave him and his admirers to please themselves with.

5. From hence it appears, that the clamorous out-cry of cutting off infants from their covenant-right, and so abridging and lessening their privileges, is all a noise about nothing; since it is in vain to talk about cutting off from the covenant of grace, when they were never in it; as the natural seed of believers, as such, never were, under any dispensation whatever; and even what is pleaded for, is only an external administration, which neither conveys grace, nor secures any spiritual blessings; wherefore what privileges are infants deprived of by not being baptized? Let it be shewn if it can, what spiritual blessings infants said to be baptized have, which our infants unbaptized have not; to instance in baptism itself, would be begging the question; it would still be asked, what spiritual privilege or profit comes to an infant by its baptism? If our infants have as many, or the same privileges under the gospel-dispensation, without baptism, as others have with it; then their privileges are not abridged or lessened, and the clamor must be a groundless one. To say, that baptism admits into the Christian church, as circumcision into the Jewish church, are both false, as has been proved already; our author, it seems, did not know, that a national church was a carnal one; whereas a national church can be no other, since all born in a nation are members of it, and become so by their birth, which is carnal; for, whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh. Whereas a gospel-church, gathered out of the world, does, or should consist, only of such who are born again, and have an understanding of spiritual things. This writer seems to suggest, that if infants are not admitted to this external administration, and real of the covenant he pleads for, their condition is deplorable, and there is no ground of hope of their eternal salvation; and does their being admitted into this external administration make their condition better with respect to everlasting salvation? not at all; since, according to our author, persons may be in this, and yet not in the covenant of grace, as hypocrites may be; and he distinguishes this visible and external administration from the spiritual dispensation and efficacy of the covenant of grace; so that persons may be in the one, and yet be everlastingly lost; and therefore what ground of hope of eternal salvation does this give? or what ground of hope does non-admission into it deprive them of? Is salvation inseparably connected with baptism? or does it ensure it to any? How unreasonable then, and without foundation, is this clamorous outcry? And now, Sir, we are come to The fifth chapter of my treatise, which considers the several texts of scripture produced in favor of Infant-baptism; and the first is Acts 2:38-39. Now, not to take notice of this author’s foolish

impertinencies, and with which his book abounds, and would be endless to observe; for which reason I mention them not, that I might not swell this letter too large, and impose upon your patience in reading it; you will easily observe, Sir, the puzzle and confusion he is thrown into to make the exhortation to repent, urged in order to the enjoyment of the promise, to agree with infants; and which is mentioned as previous to baptism, and in order to it. That this passage can furnish out no argument in favor of Infant-baptism, will appear by the plain, clear, and easy sense of it; Peter had charged the Jews with the sin of crucifying Christ; their consciences were awakened, and loaded with the guilt of it; in their distress, being pricked to the heart, they inquire what they should do, as almost despairing of mercy to be shewn to such great sinners; they are told, that notwithstanding their sin was so heinous, yet if they truly repented of it, and submitted to Christ and his ordinances, particularly to baptism, the promise of life and salvation belonged to them, nor need they doubt of an interest in it: and whereas they had imprecated his blood, not only upon themselves, but upon their posterity, more immediate and more remote, for which they were under great concern; they are told this promise of salvation by Christ reached to them also, provided they repented and were baptized; and which is the reason that mention is made of their children; yea, even to them that were afar off, their brethren the Jews in distant countries, that should hear the gospel, repent and believe, and be baptized; or should live in ages to come in the latter day, and should look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn; and so has nothing to do with the covenant with Abraham and his natural seed, and much less with the Gentiles and theirs: and be it so, that the Gentiles are meant by those afar off, which may be admitted, since it is sometimes a descriptive character of them; yet no mention is made of their children; and had they been mentioned, the limiting clause, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, plainly points at, and describes the persons intended; not among the Gentiles only, but the Jews also, as agreeable to common sense and the rules of grammar; and is to be understood only of the Jews that are called by grace, and of their children, that are effectually, called, and of the Gentiles called with an holy calling, as the persons to whom the promise belongs; and which appears evident by their repentance and baptism, which this is an encouraging motive to; and therefore can be understood only of adult persons, and not of infants; and of whole baptism not a syllable is mentioned, nor can it be inferred from this passage, or established by it.

II. The next passage of scripture produced in favor of Infant-baptism, and to as little purpose, is Matthew 19:14 it is owned by our author, that these children were not brought to Christ to be baptized by him; and that they were not baptized by him; these things, he says, they do not affirm. For what then is the passage produced? why, to shew, that infants become proselytes to Christ by baptism; and is not this to be baptized? what a contradiction is this? And afterwards another self-contradiction follows: he imagines these infants had been baptized already, and yet were commanded to become proselytes by baptism, and so Anabaptists; but how does it appear that it was the will of Christ they should become proselytes to him this way? from the etymology of the Greek word, which signifies to come to; so, wherever the word is used of persons as coming to Christ, it is to be understood of their becoming proselytes to him by baptism: it is used in Matthew 16:1 the Pharisees also with the Sadducees—pro selqonteV , "came tempting him." Did they become proselytes to him by baptism? what stupid stuff is this? nay the Devil himself is said to come to him, and when the Tempter— proselqwn, came to him, he said, etc. Matthew 4:3. our author surely does not think he became a proselyte to him. That it was the custom of the Jews, before the times of Christ, to baptize the children of proselytes, is not a fact so well attested, as is

said; the writings from whence the proof is taken, were written some hundreds of years after Christ's time; and the very first persons that mention it, dispute it; one alarming there was such a custom, and the other denying it; and were it far, since it was only a tradition of the elders at best, and not a command of God, it is not credible that our Lord should follow it, or enforce such a practice on his followers: the coming of these children was merely corporal, whatever it was for, and temporary; there is no other way of coming to Christ, or becoming proselytes to him, but by believing in him, embracing his doctrines, and obeying his commands; and when children are capable of these things, and do them, we are ready to acknowledge them the proselytes of Christ, and admit them to baptism: nor does the reason given in the text, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, prove their right to baptism; for not to insist on the metaphorical sense of these words, which yet Calvin gives into; but supposing infants literally are meant, the kingdom of heaven cannot be understood of the gospel-church-state; which is not national but congregational, consisting of men gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and who make a public profession of Christ, which infants are not capable of, and so not taken into it; and were they, they must have an equal right to the Lord's supper as to baptism, and of which they are equally capable; for does the Lord's supper require in the receivers of it a competent measure of Christian knowledge, the exercise of reason and understanding, and their active powers, as this writer says, so does baptism. But by the kingdom of heaven, is meant the heavenly glory; and we deny not, that there are infants that belong to it, though who they are, we know not; nor is this any argument for their admission to baptism; it is one thing what Christ does himself, he may admit them into heaven; it is another thing what we are to do, the rule of which is his revealed will: we cannot admit them into a church-state, or to any ordinance, unless he has given us an order so to do; and besides, it: is time enough to talk of their admission to baptism, when it appears they have a right unto, and a meetness for the kingdom of heaven.

III. Another passage brought into this controversy is Matthew 18:16; this is owned to be less convictive, because interpreters are divided about the sense of it; some understanding it of children in knowledge and grace, others of children in age, to which our author inclines, for the sake of his hypothesis; though he knows not how to reject the former: my objections to the latter sense, he says, have no great weight in them; it seems they have some. I will add a little more to them, shewing that not little ones in a literal, but figurative sense, are meant, even the disciples of Christ, that actually believed in him: the word here used is different from that which is used of little children, verse 3. and is manifestly used of the disciples of Christ (Matthew 10:42), and the parallel text in Mark 9:41-42 most clearly shews, that the little ones that believed in Christ, which were not to be offended, were his apostles, that belonged to him; quite contrary to what this writer produces it for; who has most miserably mangled and tortured this passage: Moreover there was but one little child, Christ took and set in the midst of his disciples, whereas he has regard to several little ones then present, and whom, as it were, he points unto; one of which to offend, would be resented; and plainly designs the apostles then present, who not only had the principle of faith, but exercised it, as the word used signifies; and who were capable of being scandalized, and of having stumbling-blocks thrown in their way, and taking offense at them; which infants in age are not capable of: that senseless rant of cutting off infants from their right in the covenant of salvation, and from the privileges of the gospel, (I suppose he means by denying baptism to them) being an offense and injury to them, and the whining cant upon this, are mean and despicable: his reasons, why the apostles of Christ cannot be meant, because contending for pre-eminence, they

discovered a temper of mind opposite to little children, has no force in it; for Christ calls them little ones, partly because they ought to be as little children, verse 3, and in some sense were so; and partly to mortify their pride and vanity, as well as to express his tender affection and regard for them, see verse 10, and since infants are not meant, it is in vain to dispute about their faith, either as to principle or act, and what right that gives to baptism; and especially since profession of faith, and consent to be baptized, are necessary to the administration of that ordinance, and to the subjects of it.

IV. Next we have his remarks on the exceptions to the sense of 1 Corinthians 7:14 contended for: the sense of internal holiness derived from parents to children is rejected by him; but there is another, which he seems to have a good will unto: he says there are some reasons to support it, and he does not object to it; yet chooses not to adhere to it, though if established, would put an end to the controversy; and that is, that the word sanctified signifies baptized, and the word holy, Christians baptized; and then the sense is, "the unbelieving husband is baptized by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is baptized by the believing husband; else were your children unbaptized, but now they are baptized Christians;" the bare mention of which is confutation sufficient. The sense our author prefers is a visible federal holiness: but what that holiness is, for any thing he has said to clear it, remains in the dark: covenant-holiness, or what the covenant of grace promises, and secures to all interested in it, is clear and plain, internal holiness of heart, and outward holiness of life and conversation flowing from that (Ezekiel 36:25-27); But are the infants of believers, as such, partakers of this holiness? or is such holiness as this communicated unto, or does it appear upon all the natural seed of believers? This will not be said; experience and facts are against it; they are born in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, as others; and many of them are never partakers of real holiness, and are as profligate as others; and on the other hand, some of the children of unbelievers are partakers of true holiness: if it be said, and which seems to be our author's meaning, that it is such a holiness the people of the Jews had in distinction from the Heathens, and therefore are called an holy seed; this cannot be, since the holiness of the Jewish seed lay in the lawful issue of a Jewish man and a Jewish woman: if a Jewish man married an Heathen woman, their issue was not holy, as appears from Ezra and Nehemiah; whereas, according to the apostle, if a Christian man married an Heathen woman, or a Christian woman an Heathen man, their issue were holy: should it be said, as it is suggested by our author, that so indeed it was in Ezra's times, according to the Jewish law; but now, since the coming of Christ, the national difference is abolished; which he makes to be the sense of the apostle, and therein betrays his ignorance of the apostle's argument and method of reasoning; for the particle now, as Beza observes, is not in this place an adverb of time, but a conjunction, which is commonly used in assumptions of argument, which destroys our author's argument, and lets aside his method of reasoning, which he seems fond of, and afterwards repeats: it remains therefore, that only a matrimonial holiness is here intended; and surely marriage may be said to be holy, as it is by the apostle honorable, and for that reason (Hebrews 13:4), without savoring strong of popery, or savoring the notion of marriage being a sacrament, as this writer insinuates; who has got a strange nose, and a stranger judgment: whether he is a single or a married man, I know not; he appears to have a bad opinion of marriage. That infants born in lawful wedlock cannot be called holy, being legitimate, without favoring of popery. As he is not able to set aside the sense of the word sanctified given by me, as signifying espoused; he requires of me to prove that the word holy means legitimate; for which I refer him to Ezra 9:2 where those born of parents, both Jewish, are

called an holy seed; that is, a lawful one; in opposition to, and in distinction from a spurious and illegitimate issue, born of parents, the one Jewish and the other Heathen: and this is the same with the godly seed, in Malachi 2:15. which Calvin interprets legitimate, in distinction from those that are born in polygamy: nor will any other sense suit with the care proposed to the apostle; nor with his answer and manner of reasoning about it; who says not one word era covenant whereby an unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified to a believing one, or of the federal holiness of the children of both; but argues, that if their marriage, being unequal, was not valid, which was their scruple, their children must be unclean, as bastards were accounted (Deuteronomy 23:2); whereas it being good, their children were legitimate, and so might be easy, and continue together as they ought. The passage out of the Talmud, which he has at second-hand from Dr. Lightfoot, designs by Holiness, Judaism, and not Christianity, and is quite impertinent to the purpose; nor can it be thought to be alluded to, since the holiness the Jews speak of, respects the parents, as both proselytes to Judaism; whereas the apostle's case supposes one an Heathen, and the other a Christian: and he might have observed by a tradition quoted by the Doctor, in the same place, that such a marriage the apostle was considering, is condemned by the Jews as no marriage, and the issue of it as illegitimate; which asserts, that a son begotten of a Heathen woman is not a son, his lawful son; just the reverse of what the apostle suggested: and after all, our author himself seems to make this holiness no other than a civil holiness, and which secures a civil relation, by which "the unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified, so far as concerns the believing party; that is, for lawful cohabitation, conjugal society, and the propagation of a holy covenant-seed;" for all which purposes, lawful marriages may be allowed to sanctify, if only instead of a holy covenant-seed, a legitimate feed is put. So that upon the whole, this passage does not furnish out the least shew of argument for Infant-baptism. Come we to

V. The next passage produced in favor of Infant-baptism, which are the words of the commission in Matthew 28:19-20, one would think there should be no difficulty in understanding these words; and that the plain and easy sense of them is, that such as are taught by the ministry of the word, should be baptized, and they only; and if there was any doubt about this, yet it might be removed by comparing the same commission with this, as differently expressed in Mark 16:15-16 from whence it clearly appears, that to teach all nations, is to preach the gospel to every creature; and that the persons among all nations, that may be said to be taught, or made disciples by teaching, are believers, and being so, are to be baptized; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. It is observed by this writer, that the acts of discipling and baptizing are of equal extent: it is agreed to, provided it be allowed, as it ought, that the word, teach, or make disciples, describes and limits the persons to be baptized; for such only of all nations are to be baptized, who are made disciples by teaching; not all the individuals of all nations; no, not even where the gospel comes, and is preached; for many hear it, and more might, who are not taught by it; and even when the seventh trumpet shall sound, and all nations shall serve the Lord, this will not be true of every individual of all nations, only of such, who are qualified for, and capable of serving the Lord; and so of adult persons only, and not of infants at all: and was this the care, that all nations in the commission are under no limitation and restriction, then not only the children of Pagans, Turks, and Jews, but even all adult persons, the most vile and profligate, should be baptized; wherefore the phrase, all nations to be baptized, must be restrained and limited to those who are made disciples out of all nations; who are the antecedent to the relative, them that are to be baptized, and not all nations; and though there is a frequent change of gender in the Greek language, which is owned; yet as

Piscator, a learned Paedobaptist, on the text observes, "the syntax (of them) is referred to "the sense, and not to the word, since nations went before;" and the same observation he makes on the passage our author has produced as parallel (Romans 2:14), but in order to bring infants to this restrictive and qualifying character for baptism, it is said, they are made disciples with their parents, when they become so, as parts of themselves: and why may they not be said to be baptized with them, when they are baptized, as parts of themselves, and so have no need of baptism? No doubt, if Christ had continued the use of circumcision under the New-Testament, and had bid his apostles to go and disciple the nations, circumcising them, they would have needed no direction as to infants, as is suggested; and that for this plain reason, because there had been a previous express command for the circumcision of them; but there is no such command to baptize infants previous to the commission, and therefore could not be understood in like manner. But it seems the known custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselytes with them, was a plain and sufficient direction as to the subjects of baptism, and is the reason why no express mention is made of them in the commission: But it does not appear there was any such custom among the Jews, when the commission was given; had it been so early, as is pretended, even in the times of Jacob, it is strange there should be no hint of it in the Old Testament: nor in the apocryphal writings; nor in the writings of the New Testament; nor in Josephus; nor in Philo the Jew; nor in the Jewish Misnah; only in the Talmud; which was not composed till five hundred years after Christ; and this custom is at first reported by a single Rabbi, and at the same time denied by another of equal credit and authority: and admitting that this was a custom that then obtained, since it was not of divine institution, but of human invention, had our Lord thought fit (which is not reasonable to suppose) to take it into his New Testament ordinance of baptism; yet it would have been necessary to have made express mention of it, as his will that it should be observed, in order to remove the scruple that might arise from its being a mere Jewish custom and tradition. But to proceed: though this writer may be able to find in the schools within his knowledge, such ignorant disciples and learners, that have learned nothing at all; CHRIST has none such in his school: Christ says, none can be a disciple of his, but who has learned to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him (Luke 14:26-27; Luke 14:33), and forsake all for him; and this man says, they may be called disciples, that have learned nothing, and be enrolled among the disciples of Christ, who are incapable of outward teaching: but who are we to believe, Christ, or this man? He suggests, that it would be impracticable to put the commission in execution, if none but true disciples and believers are to be baptized, since the heart cannot be inspected, and man may be deceived; and observes, that the apostles baptized immediately upon profession, and waited not for the fruits of it, and some of which are not true disciples, but hypocrites: this is what he often harps upon; and to which I answer, the apostles had no doubt a greater spirit of discerning, and so could observe the signs of true faith and discipleship in men, without long waiting; but they never baptized any whom they did not judge to be true disciples and believers, and who professed themselves to be such: and though they were in some few instances mistaken; this might be suffered, that ministers and churches might not be discouraged, when such instances should appear in following times; and this is satisfaction enough in this point, when men keep as close as they can to the divine rule, and make the best judgment of persons they are able; and when, in a judgment of charity, they are thought to be true disciples of Christ, baptize them; in which they do their duty, though it may fall out otherwise; and in which they are to be justified by the word of God; which they could not, were they to administer the ordinance to such who have no appearance of the grace of God, and the

truth of it in them. The text in Acts 15:10 is far from proving infants disciples; they are not designed in that place, nor included in the character; for though no doubt the Judaizing preachers were for having the Gentiles, and their infants too, circumcised; yet it was not circumcision, the thing itself, that is meant by the intolerable yoke, attempted to be put upon the necks of the disciples; for that was what the Jewish fathers and their children were able to bear, and had borne in ages past; but it was the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other rites of Moses to salvation; and which could not be imposed upon infants, but upon adult persons only. Next we proceed to

VI. The passages concerning the baptism of whole households, as an explanation of the commission, and of the apostles understanding it: Now since Infant-baptism, as we have seen, cannot be established by Abraham's covenant, nor by circumcision, nor by any command of Christ, nor by his commission, nor by any instances of infants baptized in the times of John the Baptist, or of Christ; if any instances of infants baptized by the apostles are proposed, they should be clear and plain: Since there is no express precept, which might justly be demanded; if any precedent is produced, it ought to be quite unexceptionable; if it is expected, such a practice should be given into by thinking people. Three families or households we read of, that were baptized, and these are the precedents proposed; yet no proof is made of any one infant in these families, or of the baptism of any in them; which should be done, if the former could be proved: but instead of this, the advocates for this practice are drove to this poor and miserable shift, to put us on proving the negative, that there were no infants in them. Our author thinks it utterly incredible, that in three such families there should be no infants, when, in so large a country as Egypt, there was not a family without a child (Exodus 12:30); and is so weak as to believe, or however hopes to find readers weak enough to believe, that all the first-born of the Egyptians that were slain were infants; whereas there might be many of them twenty, thirty, or forty years of age; so that there might be hundreds and thousands of families in Egypt that had not an infant in them, and yet not an house in which there was not a dead person. But let us attend to these particular families: as for Lydia and her household, so far as a negative in such a care as this is capable of being proved; this is certain, that no mention is made of any infants in her family; it is certain, that there were brethren in her house, who were capable of being comforted by the apostles, and were; for it is expressly said, that they entered into the house of Lydia, and comforted the brethren; which is a proof of what, he says, cannot be proved, that they law the brethren at her house; and nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were of her household; and if there were any other besides them, that were baptized by the apostles, it lies upon those that will affirm it, to prove it; without which, this instance cannot be in favor of Infant-baptism. As for the Jailor's family, it is owned by our author, that there were some adult persons in it, who believed, and were baptized at the same time with the Jailor; but he asks, how does this argue that there were no others baptized in it, who were in the infantile state? It lies upon him to prove it, if there were: The word of God was spoken to all that were in his house, and all his house believed in God, and rejoiced in the conversation of the apostles, who must be all of them adult persons; and if he can find persons in his house, besides those all that were in it, I will see him down for a cunning man. Who those expositors are, that reader the words, believing in God, he rejoiced all his house aver, I know not, any more than I understand the nonsense of it. Erasmus and Vatablus join the phrase with all his house, with believing, as we do, and Pricaeus makes it parallel with Acts 18:8 but however, this writer has found a text to prove, that the children of believers are in their infancy accounted believers, and numbered with them, it is in Acts 2:44 if he can find any wise-acres that will give credit to him. As

to the household of Stephanas, he says, that it seems probable that it was large and numerous, which renders it more likely that there were some infants in it: how large and numerous it was, does not appear; but be those of it more or fewer, it is a clear case they were adult persons, that we have any account of; since they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints: and now upon what a tottering foundation does Infant-baptism stand, having no precept from God for it, nor any one single precedent for it in the word of God? Come we now,

VII. To the last text in the controversy, Romans 11:17; Romans 11:24 and which is the decisive one, and yet purely allegorical; when it is an axiom with divines, that symbolical or allegorical divinity is not argumentative: there is nothing, says Dr. Owen,[27] "so sottish, or foolish, or contradictious in and to itself, as may not be countenanced from teaching parables to be instructive, and proving in every parcel, or expression, that attends them;" of this we have an instance in our author, about engrafting buds with the cyon, and of breaking off and grafting in branches with their buds, which he applies to parents and their children; though the apostle has not a word about it: and indeed he is speaking of an engrafture, not according, but contrary to nature; not only of an engrafture of an olive-tree, which is never done, but of engrafting a wild cyon into a good stock; whereas the usual way is to engraft a good cyon into a wild stock. The general scope and design of the allegory is to be attended to which is to shew the rejection of the unbelieving Jews from, and the reception of the believing Gentiles into the gospel-church; for though God did not call away the people among the Jews whom he foreknew; or the remnant according to the election of grace, of which the apostle was one; yet there was a calling-away of that people as a body politic and ecclesiastic, which now continues, and will till the fullness of the Gentiles are brought in; and then there will be a general conversion of the Jews, of which the conversion of some of them in the times of Christ and his apostles were the root, first-fruits, pledge, and earnest; and which led on the apostle to this allegorical discourse about the olive-tree; which I understand of the gospel church-state, in distinction from the Jewish church-state, now dissolved. This writer will not allow, that the Jewish church, as to its essential constitution, is abolished, only as to its outward form of administration: but God has wrote a Loammi upon that people, both as a body politic and ecclesastic (Hosea 1:9); he has unchurched them; he has broke his covenant with them, and their union with each other in their church state, signified by his breaking his two staffs, beauty and bands (Zechariah 11:10; Zechariah 11:14); and if this is not the care, the people of the Jews are now the true church of God, notwithstanding their rejection of the Messiah; and if the Gentiles are incorporated into that church, the gospel-church is, and must be national, as that was, and the same with it; whereas it differs from it, both as to matter and them, consisting of persons gathered out of the world, and enjoying different ordinances, the former being utterly abolished. Our author objects to my interpretation of the good olive-tree being the gospel church state, from the unbelieving Jews being said to be broken-off, and the olive-tree called their own olive-tree, and they the natural branches: to which I answer, that the breaking of them off, verse 17 is the same with the carting away of them, verse 15 and the allegory is not to be stretched beyond its scope. The Jewish church being dissolved, the unbelieving Jews lay like broken, withered, scattered branches, and so continued, and were not admitted into the gospel church state, which is all the apostle means: if I have used too soft a term, to say they were left out of the gospel-church, since severity is expressed, I may be allowed to use one more harsh, and severe; as that they were cast away and rejected, they were cut off from all right, and excluded from admission into the gospel church, and not suffered to partake of the ordinances of it: and as

to the gospel church being called their own olive-tree, that is, the converted Jews in the latter day, of whom the apostle speaks; with great propriety may it be called their own, not only because of their right of admission to it, being converted, but because the first gospel-church was set up in Jerusalem, was gathered out from among the Jews, and consisted of some of their nation, which were the first-fruits of those converted ones; and so in other places, the first gospel churches consisted of Jews, into which, and not into the national church of the Jews, were the Gentiles engrafted, and became fellow-heirs with them, and of the same body, partaking of gospel-ordinances and privileges: and the natural branches are not the natural branches of the olive-tree, but the natural branches or natural seed of Abraham, or of the Jewish people, who in the latter day will be converted, and brought into the gospel-church, as some of them were in the beginning of it. This sense being established, it is a clear and plain case, that nothing from hence can be concluded in favor of Infant-baptism; of which there is not the least hint, nor any manner of reference to it. This chapter, you will remember, Sir, is concluded with proofs of women's right to the ordinance of the Lord's supper: and which are such, as cannot be produced, and supported, to prove the right of infants to baptism. It is granted by our author, that my arguments are in the main conclusive, and he "must be a wrangler that will dispute them;" and yet he disputes them himself, and so proves himself a wrangler, as indeed he is nothing else throughout the whole of his performance. However, he is confident, there are as good proofs of the baptism of infants; as, from their being accounted believers and disciples (Matthew 8:6; Acts 2:44; Acts 15:10); from their being church-members (Luke 18:16; 1 Corinthians 7:14; Ephesians 5:15; Ephesians 5:26); from the probability of some infants baptized in the whole households mentioned; all which we have seen are weak, foolish, impertinent, and inconclusive. This author does wonderful feats in his own conceit, in his knight errantry way; he proves this, and confutes that, and baffles the other; and though he brings the same arguments, that have been used already; as he owns, and I may add, baffled too already, to use his own language; yet he has added fume new illustration and enforcement to them, and such as have not occurred to him in any author he has seen; so that he would have his reader believe, he is some extraordinary man, and has performed wonderful well; and in this vainglorious shew, I leave him to the ridicule and contempt of men of modesty and good sense, as he justly deserves, and proceed to The sixth and last chapter of my treatise, which is concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, whether by immersion, or sprinkling; and here, Sir, I observe,

1. That our author represents the controversy about this as one of the most trifling controversies that ever was managed: but if it is so trifling a matter, whether baptism is administered by immersion or sprinkling, why do he and his party write with so much heat and vehemence, as well as with so much scorn and contempt against the former, and so heavily load with calumnies those that defend it, and charge them with the breach of the sixth and seventh commands, as it has been often done? But if it is so indifferent and trifling a matter with this writer, it is not so with us, who think it to be an affair of great importance, in what manner an ordinance is to be administered; and who judge it essential to baptism, that it be performed by immersion, without which it cannot be baptism; nor the end of the ordinance answered, which is to represent the burial of Christ; and which cannot be done unless the person baptized is covered in water.

2. It is allowed that the word baptizw, with the lexicons and critics, signifies to dip; but it is also observed, that they render it to wash: which is not denied, since dipping necessarily includes

washing; whatever is dipped, is washed, and therefore in a consequential sense it signifies washing, when its primary sense is dipping. Our author does not attempt to prove, that the lexicons and critics ever say it signifies to pour or sprinkle; which ought to be done, if any thing is done to purpose: indeed he says, with classical writers, it has the signification of persuasion, or sprinkling; but does not produce one instance of it. He charges me with partiality in concealing part of what Mr. Leigh says in his Critica Sacra; which I am not conscious of, since my edition, which indeed is one of the former, has not a syllable of what is quoted from him; and even that is more for us than against us. Hence with great impertinence are those passages of scripture produced (Mark 7:3-4; Luke 11:30; Hebrews 9:10), which are supposed to have the signification of washing; since these do not at all militate against the sense of dipping, seeing dipping is washing; and to as vain a purpose are those scriptures referred to (Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Peter 1:9; Acts 22:16), which call baptism a washing of water, and the washing of regeneration, etc. even supposing they are to be understood of baptism; which, at least in several of them, is doubtful; since nobody denies, that a person baptized, may be said to be washed, he being dipped in water.

3. It is affirmed that we do not read of one instance of any person who repaired to a river, or conflux of water, purely on the design of being baptized therein. But certain it is, that John repaired to such places for the convenient administration of that ordinance; and many repaired to him at those places, purely on a design of being baptized by him in them; and particularly it is said of Christ, then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him (Matthew 3:13); and I hope it will be allowed, that he repaired to Jordan, on a pure design of being baptized in it; and though it was in a wilderness where John was, yet such an one in which were many villages, full of inhabitants, as our author might have learned from Dr. Lightfoot;[28] where John might have had the convenience of vessels for bringing water, had the ordinance been performed by him in any other way, than by immersion.

01.10. A Reply to a Book, entitled, A Defense contd1

4. The use of the words, baptize and baptism, in scripture, comes next under consideration; and,

(1.) the word is used in Acts 1:5 of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, which is called a being baptized with the holy Ghost; and the house in which the apostles were, being filled with it, had in it a resemblance to baptism by immersion; and hence the use of the phrase. The main objection our author makes to this, is, that the disciples were in the house before it was filled with the holy Ghost; whereas it should have been first filled, and then they enter into it, to carry any resemblance in it to immersion: but it matters not, whether the house was filled before or after they entered, inasmuch as it was filled when they were in, whereby they were encompassed and covered with it; which is sufficient to support the allusion to baptism, performed by immersion; or covering the person in water: it is represented as dissonant from common sense, to say, Ye shall be poured with the holy Ghost? and is it not as dissonant from common sense to say, Ye shall be poured with the Holy Ghost?

(2.) The sufferings of Christ are called a baptism (Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50); and a very apt word is used to express the abundance of them, as that signifies an immersion into water; and though the lesser sufferings of men, and God's judgments on them, may be expressed by the pouring out of his wrath, and the vials of it on them; yet since the holy Ghost has thought fit not to make use of such a phrase, but a very peculiar word to express the greater sufferings of Christ, this the more confirms the sense of the word contended for. The phrase in Psalms 22:14. I am poured out like water, doth not express the sufferings of Christ, but the effect of them, the faintness of his spirits under them. The passages in Psalms 69:1-2 which represent him as overwhelmed with his sufferings, as in water, do most clearly illustrate the use of the word baptism in reference to them, and strongly support the allusion to it, as performed by immersion, which this writer has not been able to let aside.

(3.) Mention is made in Mark 7:4 of the Jews washing, or baptizing themselves, when they come from market, before they eat; and of the washing, or baptizing of their cups, pots, brazen vessels, tables or beds; all which was done by immersion. This writer says, I am contradicted by the best masters of the Jewish learning, when I say, that the Jews upon touching common people, or their clothes, at market, or in any court of judicature, were obliged by the tradition of the elders to immerse themselves in water, and did. To which I reply, that Vatablus and Drusius, who were great masters of Jewish learning, affirm, that according to the tradition of the elders, the Jews washed or immersed the whole body before they ate, when they came from market; to whom may be added the learned Grotius, who interprets the words the same way; and which seems most reasonable, since washing before eating, Mark 7:4 is distinguished from the washing of hands, Mark 7:3. But not to rest it here; Maimonides,[29] that great matter of Jewish learning, assures us, that "if the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled, all one as if they had touched a profluvious person, and needed immersion," and were obliged to it: and though Dr. Lightfoot, who was a great man in this kind of learning, yet not always to be depended

upon, is of opinion, that the plunging of the whole body is not here understood; yet he thinks, that plunging or immersion of the hands in water, is meant, done by the Jews being ignorant and uncertain what uncleanness they came near unto in the market; and observes, the Jews used the washing of the hands, and the plunging of the hands; and that the word wash in the Evangelist, seems to answer to the former, and baptize to the latter; and Pococke[30] himself, whom this writer refers to, confesses the same, and says, that the Hebrew word ■■■ to which baptizeqai answers in Greek, signifies a further degree of purification, than ■■■ or cerniptein (the words used for washing of hands) though not so as necessarily to imply an immersion of the whole body; since the greatest and most notorious uncleanness of the hands reached but to the wrist, and was cleansed by immersing or dipping up to it; and though he thinks the Greek word used in the text does not only and necessarily signify immersion, which yet he grants, specially agrees to it, as he thinks appears from Luke 11:38. To this may be opposed what the great Scaliger[31] says; "the more superstitious part of the Jews, not only dipped the feet but the whole body, hence they were called Hemerobaptists, who every day before they sat down to food, dipped the body; wherefore the Pharisee, who had invited Jesus to dine with him, wondered he sat down to meat before he had washed his whole body, Luke 11:1-54," and after all, be it which it will, whether the immersion of the whole body, or only of the hands and feet, that is meant in these passages; since the washing of either was by immersion, as owned, it is sufficient to support the primary sense of the word contended for: and so all other things, after mentioned, according to the tradition of the elders, of which only the text speaks, and not of the law of God, were washed by immersion; particularly brazen vessels; concerning which the tradition is,[32] "such as they use for hot things, as cauldrons and kettles, they heat them with hot water, and scour them, and dip them, and they are fit to be used." This writer says, I am strangely besides my Text, when I add, that "even beds, pillows, and bolsters, when they were unclean in a ceremonial sense, were to be washed by immersion, or dipping them into water;" but I am able to produce chapter and verse for what I affirm, from the traditions of the Jews, which are the only things spoken of in the text, and upon which the proof depends: for beds, their canons run thus; "a bed that is wholly defiled, if a man dips it part by part, it is pure."[33] Again, if he dips the bed in it, (a pool of water) though its feet are plunged into the thick clay, (at the bottom of the pool) it is clean."[34] As for pillows and bolsters, thus they say; "a pillow or a bolster of skin, when a man lifts up the mouth of them out of the water, the water which is in them will be drawn; what shall we do? he must dip them, and lift them up by their fringes."[35] Thus, according to the traditions of the elders, our Lord is speaking of, these several things mentioned were waffled by immersion; which abundantly confirms the primary sense of the word used.

(4.) The passage of the Israelites through the Red-sea, and under a cloud, is represented as a baptism, 1 Corinthians 10:1-2 and very aptly, as performed by immersion; since the waters stood up on both sides of them, and a cloud covered them; which very fitly represented persons immersed and covered with water in baptism: but what our author thinks will spoil this fine fancy, and some others, as he calls them, is, that one observation of Moses often repeated; that the children of Israel went on dry ground through the midst of the sea. To which I reply, that we are not under any necessity of owning that the cloud under which the Israelites were, let down any rain: it is indeed the sentiment of a Paedobaptist, I have referred to, and therefore am not affected with this observation; besides, it should be considered, that this equally, at least, spoils the fine fancy of the rain from the cloud bearing a much greater resemblance to sprinkling or affusion, as is

asserted by the writer of the dialogue; and out author says, there was a true and proper ablution with water from the cloud, in which the Israelites were baptized, and concludes that they received baptism by sprinkling or affusion; how then could they walk on dry ground?

(5.) The last text mentioned is Hebrews 9:10 which speaks of diverse washings or baptisms of the Jews, or different dippings, as it may be rendered without any impropriety, as our author asserts; though not to be understood of different sorts of dipping, as he foolishly objects to us; nor of different sorts of washing, some by sprinkling, some by affusion, others by bathing or dipping, as he would have it; but the Jewish washings or baptisms are so called, because of the different persons, or things washed or dipped, as Grotius on the place says; there was one washing of the Priests, another of the Levites, and another of the Israelites, when they had contracted any impurity; and which was done by immersion; nor do any of the instances this writer has produced disprove it. Not Exodus 29:4 thou shalt wash them with water; but whether by immersion or affusion he knows not. The Jews interpret it of immersion; the Targum of Jonathan is, "thou shalt dip them in forty measures of living water:" nor Exodus 30:19 which mentions the washing of the priest’s hands and feet at the brazen laver of the tabernacle; the manner of which our author describes from Dr. Lightfoot, out of the Rabbins; but had he transcribed the whole, it would have appeared, that not only washing the hands and feet, but bathing of their whole body, were necessary to the performance of their service; for it follows, "and none might enter into the court to do the service there, till he hath bathed; yea, though he were clean, he must bathe his body in cold water before he enter." And to this agrees a canon of theirs;[36] "no man enters into the court for service, though clean, till he has dipped himself; the high-priest dips himself five times on the day of atonement." And the Priests and Levites, before they performed any part of the daily service, dipped themselves: nor 2 Chronicles 4:6 which says, the molten sea in Solomon’s temple was for the priests to wash in; where they washed not only their hands and their feet, but their whole bodies, as Dr. Lightfoot says;[37] "and for the bathing of which; they went down into the vessel itself; and to which agrees the Jerusalem Talmud,[38] which says, "the molten sea was a dipping-place for the priests:" Nor Numbers 8:6-7 which, had the passage been wholly transcribed, it would appear, that not only the water of purifying was sprinkled on the Levites, but their bodies were bathed; for it: allows: "and let them shave all their flesh, and wash their clothes, and so "make themselves clean;" that is, by bathing their whole bodies, which, as the Targum on the place says, was done in forty measures of water. Sprinkling the water of purification was a ceremony preparatory to the bathing, but was itself no part of it; and the same is to be observed of the purification by the ashes of an heifer, on the third and seventh days, Numbers 19:19 which was only preparatory to the great purification by bathing the body, and washing the clothes on the seventh day, which was the closing and finishing part of the service; for that it was the unclean person, and not the priest, that was to wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, Numbers 19:19 is clear; since it is a distinct law, or statute, from that in Numbers 19:21 which enjoins the priest to wash his clothes, but not to bathe himself in water; and indeed, the contrary sense is not only absurd, and interrupts and confounds the sense of the words; but, as Dr. Gale also observes, it cannot be reasonably imagined that the priest, by barely purifying the unclean, should need so much greater a washing and purification than the unclean himself; this sprinkling of the ashes of the heifer, therefore, was not part of the Jewish washings, or baptisms, or any exemplification of them; so that from the whole, I see no reason to depart from my conclusion, that "the words baptize and baptism, in all the places mentioned, do from their signification make dipping or

plunging the necessary mode of administering the ordinance of baptism." I proceed now,

6. To vindicate those passages of scripture, which necessarily prove the mode of baptism by immersion. And, The first passage, is in Matthew 3:6 and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. We argue from hence, not merely from these persons being baptized, to their being dipped; though this is an argument that cannot be answered, seeing those that are baptized, are necessarily dipped; for the word baptize signifies always to dip, or to wash by dipping, and never to pour or sprinkle; but the argument is frill more forcible from these persons being baptized in the river Jordan: for either the persons said to be baptized were in the river, or they were not; if they were not in the river, they could not be baptized in it; if they were in it, they went in it in order to be baptized by immersion; since no other end could be proposed, agreeable to the common sense of mankind: to say they went into it to have a little water sprinkled or poured on them, which could have been done without it, is ridiculous, and an imposition on common sense; wherefore this necessarily proves the mode of baptizing by immersion; since no other mode is compatible with this circumstance. The instances of the blind man's washing in Siloam, and the layers of the temple being to wash in, as disproving the necessity of immersion, I say, are impertinent; since the word baptize is used in neither of them; and besides, there is nothing appears to the contrary, that the blind man dipped himself in Siloam, as Naaman the Syrian did in Jordan; and the things that were washed in the layers, were dipped there, since they held a quantity of water sufficient for that purpose. The author of the dialogue asks, "Do not we commonly wash our face and hands in a basin of water without dipping in it?" But common practice proves the contrary; men commonly dip their hands into a basin, when they wash either hands or face; the instance of Elisha pouring water on the hands of Elijah, doth not prove it was common to wash hands by pouring water on them; since this is not said to be done to wash his hands with; and some interpreters have thought that washing of hands is not intended, but some miracle which followed the action of pouring water, which gave Elisha a character, and by which he is described. The second passage, is John 3:23. John was baptizing in Enon near Salim, because there was much water there. Here is not the least hint of John's choosing of this place, and being here, for any other reason, but for baptizing; not for drink for men and cattle, as suggested; besides, why did he not fix upon a place where the people could be provided with food for themselves, and provender for their cattle? Why for drink only? This is a wild fancy, a vain conjecture. The reason of the choice is plain, it was for the convenience of baptizing, and that because there was much water, suitable to the manner of baptizing used by John; and if this reason given agrees with no other mode of baptizing, but by immersion, as it does not, since sprinkling or pouring requires not much water; it follows, that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism by immersion. The third text is Matthew 3:16. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. The author of the dialogue suggested, that the Greek preposition apo, always signifies from, never out of: our author is obliged to own, that it may sometimes admit to be rendered out of: a great condescension to the learned translators of our Bible! Well, if Jesus came up out of the water, he must have been in it, where it is certain he was baptized; and the evangelist Mark says, he was baptized into Jordan; not into the banks of Jordan; but into the waters of Jordan; now seeing such an expression as this will not suit with any other mode of baptism but immersion, and it cannot be said with any propriety, that Christ was sprinkled into Jordan, or poured into Jordan, but with great propriety may be said to be dipped or plunged into Jordan; it follows, that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism as administered to our Lord, to be by

immersion. The fourth passage, is concerning Philip's baptizing the Eunuch in Acts 8:38-39. they went down both into the water, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, etc. The dialogue writer would have it, that this proves no more than that they went down to the water, and came from it: but that this was not the case, I have observed, that previous to this, they are said to came to a certain water, to the water-side; and therefore after this, it cannot be understood of any thing else, but of their going into it; and so, consequently, the other phrase, of their coming out of it. Here our author has got a new fancy in his head; that turning to a certain water is not coming to the water-side, or to the water itself, but to the sight of it; which sense he does not pretend to confirm by any parallel place, either in sacred or profane writings, and is very absurd, improper and impertinent; since a person may come to the sight of a water, when he is at a great distance from it, and cannot be said with any propriety to be come so it: what he thinks will add strength to this fancy, and destroy the observation I made, is, that after this, the chariot is still going on, and several questions and answers passed before it was bid to stand still: all which is easily accounted for, supposing them to be come to the water itself; since the road they were now in, might be by the water-side, and so they traveled along by it, while the questions and answers passed, till they came to a proper and convenient place for baptism, at which they alighted; besides, why should the sight of a certain water, or confluence of water, put the Eunuch in mind of baptism, if it was not performed by immersion, of the mode of which he was doubtless acquainted? It is highly probable, that this treasurer was provided both with wine and water for his journey, which, mixed, was the usual drink of those countries; and a bottle of his own water would have done for sprinkling, or pouring, had either of them been the mode of baptism used; nor would there have been any occasion for going out of the chariot and to the water, and much less into it, which the text is express for; and seeing these circumstances of going down into the water, and coming up out of it, at the administration of baptism, agree with no other mode than that of immersion, not with sprinkling, nor pouring water, it necessarily proves immersion to be the mode of baptism. The last text is Romans 6:4 we are buried with him by baptism into death; where baptism is called a burial, a burial with Christ, and a resemblance of his; which only can be made by immersion: but our author says, if it is designed to represent it, there is no necessity it should be a resemblance of it; but how it can represent it without a resemblance of it, is not easy to say: he suggests, that though the Lord's supper represents the death of Christ, it is no resemblance of it. Strange! that the breaking of the bread should not be a resemblance of the body of Christ broken, and the pouring out of the wine not a resemblance of his blood shed. Baptism by immersion, according to our author, is no resemblance of the burial of Christ; since his body was laid in a sepulcher cut out of a rock on high, and not put under ground, or covered with earth: this arises from a mistaken notion of the Jewish way of burial, even in their sepulchres, hewed out of rocks; for in every sepulcher of this kind, according to the nature of the rock, there were eight graves dug, some say thirteen, and which were dug seven cubits deep:[39] in one of these graves, within the sepulcher, lay the body of our Lord. So that it had a double burial, as it were, one in the sepulcher, and another in one of the graves in it: besides, how otherwise could our Lord be said to be three days and nights in the heart of the earth? (Matthew 12:40). Again, our author says, "there is no more resemblance of a common burial in baptism by immersion, than by sprinkling, or pouring on water; since a corpse above ground may be properly said to be buried by having a sufficient quantity of earth cast upon it."

True; but then a corpse can never be said to be buried, that has a little dust or earth sprinkled or poured on its face; from whence it is evident, that sprinkling or pouring cannot bear any resemblance of a common burial. In short, seeing no other mode but immersion, not sprinkling, nor pouring, has any resemblance of a burial, this passage necessarily proves the mode of baptism by immersion: and yet, after all, this writer inclines to that opinion, that both modes were used in scripture-times; though it appears by all accounts that the manner was uniform, one and the same word being always used in the relation of it; and yet he wrangles at every instance of immersion, and will not allow of one; what must be said of such a man! that he must be let down for a mere wrangler; a wrangler against light and conscience; a wrangler against his own opinion and sentiment; and what a worthless writer must this be! I go on,

7. To consider the instances, which, it is said, shew it improbable that the ordinance of baptism was performed by dipping. The first is the baptism of the three thousand, Acts 2:41 which, to be done by immersion, is represented as improbable; from the shortness of the time, and the want of convenience on a sudden, for the baptizing of such a multitude. As to the time, I shall not dispute it with our author, whether Peter's sermon was at the beginning of the third hour, or nine o'clock, or at the close of it, and about noon: I am willing to allow it might be noon before the baptism of these persons came on; nay, I will grant him an hour longer if he pleases, and yet there was time enough between that and night for the twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, in all fourscore and two, to baptize by immersion three times three thousand persons. I pass over his foolish remarks on a person's being ready for baptism, as I have done many others of the same stupid kind, as deserving no notice, nor answer: As to the want of convenience for the baptizing such a number, I have observed the great number of baths in private houses in Jerusalem, the several pools in it, and the many conveniences in the temple: this writer thinks, the mention of the last is a piece of weakness in me, to imagine that the Jewish priests, in whose hands they were, the mortal enemies of Christ, should be on a sudden so good-natured as to grant the use of their baths for such a purpose: but how came they to allow the Christians the use of their temple, where they met daily? And besides, it is expressly said, they had favor with all the peop1e (Acts 2:46-47). The second instance, is the baptism of Paul (Acts 9:18); here only the narrative is directed to, as representing his baptism to be in the house of Judas: but there is nothing in the account that necessarily concludes it was done in the house, but rather the contrary; since he arose from the place where he was, in order to be baptized: and supposing it was done in the house, it is not at all improbable that there was a bath in this house, where it might be performed; since it was the house of a Jew, with whom it was usual to have baths to wash their whole bodies in, on certain occasions: So that there is no improbability of Paul's baptism being by immersion; besides, he was not only bid to arise and be baptized, which would found very oddly, be sprinkled or poured (Acts 22:16); but says himself, that he was buried by baptism (Romans 6:4). The third instance, is the baptism of Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:47). The sense of the words given, "can any man forbid the use of his river, or bath, or what convenience he might have, for baptizing;" is objected to, as not being the apostle's words, but a strained sense of them: the same objection may be made to this writer's sense, that the phrase imports the forbidding water to be brought; since no such thing is expressed, or hinted at: the principal thing, no doubt, designed by the apostle, is, that no one could, or at least ought, to object to the baptism of those who had so manifestly received the holy Ghost: but what is there in all this account, that renders their baptism by immersion improbable, for which it is produced? The fourth instance is the baptism of the Jailor and his

household; (Acts 16:33) in the relation of which, there is nothing that makes it probable, much less certain, that it was performed by sprinkling or pouring water on them; nor any thing that makes it improbable that it was done by immersion: according to the account given, it seems to be a clear case, that the Jailor, upon his conversion, took the apostles out of prison into his own house, where they preached to him and his family, Acts 16:32, and that after this, they went out of his house, and were baptized; very probably in the river without the city, where the oratory was, Acts 16:13, for it is certain, that after the baptism of him and his household, he brought the apostles into his house, and set meat before them (Acts 16:33-34), nor is it any unreasonable and incredible thing, that he with his whole family should leave the prison and prisoners, who no doubt had servants that he could trust, or otherwise he must have been always little better than a prisoner himself: and whether the earthquake reached any farther than the prison, to alarm others, is not certain, nor any great matter of moment in this controversy to be determined; and the circumstances of the whole relation shew it more likely, that the Jailor and his family were baptized without the prison, than in it, and rather in the river without the city, than with the water out of the vessel, with which the Jailor had washed the apostle's stripes: upon the whole, these instances produced fail of shewing the improbability of the mode of baptism by immersion; which must appear clear and manifest to every attentive reader, notwithstanding all that has been opposed unto it.

There remains nothing but what has been already attended to, or worthy of regard; but the untruth he charges me with, in saying that "the dialogue writer only attempts to mention allusive expressions in favor of sprinkling:" our author will be ashamed of himself, and his abusive language, when he looks into the dialogue again; since the writer of that never mentions the words of the institution, for any such purpose, and much less argues from them; nor does he ever shew that the word baptize is in the sacred pages applied to sprinkling, or that it so signifies; nor does he any where argue from the good appearance there is of evidence, that in the apostles times, the mode of sprinkling was used; he never attempts to prove that the word baptizw, signifies to sprinkle, or is so used; nor mentions any one instance of sprinkling in baptism; what he contends for is, that the signification of the word, and the scripture instances of baptism, do not make dipping the necessary mode of administering that ordinance; and what he mentions in favor of sprinkling, are only resemblances, and allusive expressions.

There, Sir, are the remarks I made in reading Mr. Clark's book; which I have caused to be transcribed, and here send you for the use of yourself and friends, either in a private or in a public way, as you may judge necessary and proper.

I am with all due respects, Yours, etc.

JOHN GILL LONDON, July 26, 1753.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vid Irenaeum adv. Haeres, 1. 1. c. 18. and l. 4. c. 59. and 1. 5 c. 15.

[2] Apud Rivet. Critic. Sacr. 1, 2 c. 12. p. 202.

[3] Medulla Patrum, par. 1. 1. 6. c. 2. p. 124.

[4] Origeniana. 1. 2. p. 116. 1. 3. c. t. p. 233, 253.

[5] Hist. Pelag. par. 1. l. 2. p. 147.

[6] Hist. Eccl. vol. 2. p. 132.

[7] Tom. 3:tit. 5. c. 53.

[8] Mensalla Colloqu. C. 17. p. 254.

[9] Hist. par. 2.c.7, t.8.

[10] Remarks on the ancient churches of the Albigenses, c. 14. P. 123.

[11] Apud Allix's Remarks on the ancient church of Piedmont, c. 16. p. 143.

[12] Apud Allix's Remarks on the ancient churches of the Albigenses, c. 14. p. 130. c. 20. p. 189.

[13] Remarks on the ancient church of Piedmont, ch.11. p. 91, 100.

[14] De peccator, merit. 1. 2. c. 25.

[15] Ep. as Laetam. 1. 1. fol. 19.

[16] De Libero Arbkio, l. 2. c. 23.

[17] Sermon, page 5.

[18] Remarks on the ancient church of'Piedmont, c. 15. p. 138.

[19] History of the Waldenses. p. 8, 9.

[20] Apud Allix's Remarks on the ancient churches of the Albigenses, c. 22. p. 202.

[21] Ibid. p. 201.

[22] Apud Ailix, ibid. p. 202.

[23] History of the Albigenses, l. 1. c. 1. p. 1, 2.

[24] Ut supra, c. 14. p. 121.

[25] Apud Stennett, p. 81, 82.

[26] Baxter's answer to Blake, Sect. 39. 64.

[27] On Perseverance, p. 416.

[28] Vol. II. p. 113. 297.

[29] In Misnah Chagigah, c. 2. p. 7.

[30] Not. Miscell. 390, 397.

[31] De Emend. temp. l. 6. p. 271.

[32] Maimon. Maacolot Asurot, c. 17. 1. 3.

[33] Ib. Celim, c. 26.14.

[34] Misnah Mikvaot, c. 7. S. 7.

[35] Ib. S. 6.

[36] Misnah Yoma, c. 3. S. 3.

[37] Vol. I. p. 2047.

[38] Yoma, fol. 41. 1.

[39] Misnah Bava Bathra, c. 6. S. 8.

01.11. Some Strictures on a late Treatise, called, A

Some Strictures on Mr. Bostwick’s Fair and Rational Vindication of the right of infants to the ordinance of baptism

Along with Mr. Clark’s Defense of the divine Right of Infant-baptism, to which what is written above is a Reply, there has been imported from America a treatise called, A fair and rational Vindication of the Right of Infants to the Ordinance of Baptism; being the substance of several discourses from Acts 2:39, by David Bostwick, A.M. late minister of the Presbyterian church in the city of New York, which has been reprinted and published here; and as it comes in company with the former, it is but a piece of civility to take some notice of it, and make some few strictures (severe criticisms, ed.) upon it, though there is nothing in it but what is answered in the above Reply; to which I shall greatly refer the reader. There is scarce a single thought through the whole of it, that I can discern, is new; nothing but crambe repetita, old stale reasonings and arguments, which have been answered over and over; and yet this, I understand, has been cried up as an unanswerable performance; which I do not wonder at, that any thing that has but an appearance of reasoning, candor, and ingenuity, as this will be allowed to have, should be so reckoned by those of that party; when the most miserable pamphlet that comes out on that side of the question, has the same epithet bellowed upon it. And,

First, This Gentleman has mistook the sense of his text, on which he grounds his discourse concerning the Right of infants to baptism (Acts 2:39), for the promise is unto you, and to your children; and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call; by which promise, he says, p. 14, 15, must be understood," the covenant-promise made to Abraham, which gave his "infant-children a right to the ordinance of circumcision;" when there is not the least mention made of Abraham, nor of any covenant-promise made to him in it; nor was ever any covenant-promise made to him, giving his infant-children a right to the ordinance of circumcision, but the covenant of circumcision; and that can never be meant here by the promise; since this is said to be to all that are afar off; by whom, according to this Gentleman, Gentiles are meant; to whom the covenant of circumcision belonged not; nor did it give to them any right to the ordinance of circumcision, except they became proselytes to the Jewish religion: besides, be the promise here what it may, it is observed, not as giving any right or claim to any ordinance whatever; but as an encouraging motive to persons in distress under a sense of sin, to repent of their sin, and declare their repentance, and yield a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism; when they might hope that remission of sin would be applied to them, and they should receive a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit; and therefore can only be understood of adult persons; and the promise is no other than the promise of life and salvation by Christ, and of remission of sins by his blood, and of an increase of grace from his Spirit: and whereas the persons addressed had imprecated the blood of Christ, they had shed, upon their posterity, as well as on themselves, which greatly distressed them; they are told, for their relief, that the same promise would be made good to their posterity also, provided they did as they were directed to do; and to all their brethren the Jews, in distant parts; and even to the Gentiles, sometimes described as afar off, of the same

character with themselves, repenting and submitting to baptism; yea, to all, in all ages and places, whom God should now, or hereafter call by his grace; see my Reply to Mr. Clark, p. 50, 51.[1] This text is so far from being an unanswerable argument for the right of infants to baptism, as it is said to be, that there is not the least mention of Infant-baptism in it; nor any hint of it; nor any thing from whence it can be concluded. The baptism encouraged to by it is only of adult persons convinced of sin, and who repented of it. The passage in Acts 3:25, brought for the support of the author's sense of his text, is foreign to his purpose; since it refers not to the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham (Genesis 17:1-27), but to the promise of the Messiah of Abraham's seed, and of the blessing of all nations in him (Genesis 22:18), and which was fulfilled in the mission and incarnation of Christ, and in the ministration f his gospel to Jews and Gentiles; which same promise of Christ, of life and salvation by him, is meant in Acts 13:26; Acts 13:32-33, and which is also a proof, that the children to whom it belongs, are to be understood, not of infant-children, but of the adult posterity of the Jews; since the apostle says, God hath fulfilled the same to us their children; for surely the apostle Paul must not be reckoned an infant-child.

Secondly, The ground on which the right of infants to baptism is founded by this author is a false one; which is the covenant made with Abraham, that which gave his infant-children a right to circumcision, and is said to be the covenant of grace, the same under which believers now are. This he looks upon to be the grand turning point, on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; that it is the main ground on which the right of infants to baptism is asserted; and he freely confesses, that if this covenant is not the covenant of grace, the main ground of infants right to baptism is taken away, and consequently, that the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned (pp. 18, 19). Now that this ground and foundation is a false and sandy one, and will not bear the weight of this superstructure laid upon it, will appear by observing,

1. That the covenant of grace gives no right to any positive institution; either circumcision or baptism: not to circumcision; the covenant of grace was in being, was made, manifested, and applied to many, from Adam to Abraham, both before and after the flood, who had no right to circumcision, nor knowledge of it; the covenant of grace did not give to Abraham himself a right to circumcision; he was openly interested in it, it was made, manifested, and applied unto him, many years before circumcision was enjoined him; and when it was, it was not the covenant of grace, but the express command of God, that gave him and his male seed a right to circumcision; I say his male seed, for his female seed, though no doubt many of them were interested in the covenant of grace, yet their covenant-interest gave them no right unto it: as there were also many, at the same time that circumcision was enjoined Abraham and his natural seed, who were interested in the covenant of grace, and yet had no right to circumcision; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others: and on the other hand, it may easily be observed, that there were many who had a right to circumcision, and on whom it was practiced, who, without any breach of charity, it may be concluded, had no interest in the covenant of grace; not to mention particular persons, as Ishmael, Esau, etc. many of the idolaters and rebels among the Israelites in the wilderness, of those that bowed the knee to Baal in the times of Ahab, and of the worshippers of Jeroboam's calves; those that are called the rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah in the times of Isaiah, and that worshipped the queen and host of heaven in the times of Jeremiah; and those whose characters are given in the prophecy of Malachi, as then living; with the Scribes and Pharisees, who committed the unpardonable sin in the times of Christ; these cannot be thought to be in the covenant of grace. In

short, all were not Israel that were of Israel, and circumcised: it is therefore clear to a demonstration, that interest in the covenant of grace did not give right to circumcision, but the special, particular, and express command of God: nor does it give right to baptism; it gave the Old Testament-saints no right unto it, who were four thousand years without it, and yet in the covenant of grace; and since baptism is enjoined as an ordinance of the New Testament, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and yet not known to be so by himself or others; and while he is in such a state, and in such circumstances, he cannot be thought to have any right to baptism. It is a command of God, that those that repent and believe, be baptized; the covenant of grace provides faith and repentance for those interested in it, and bestows them on them; whereby they are qualified for baptism according to the divine command. But it is not the covenant of grace, nor these qualifications, that give the right to baptism; but the command of God to persons so qualified, to profess the same, and be baptized: for men may have faith and repentance, yet if they do not make a profession of them, they have no right to baptism, nor a minister any authority to administer it to them. No doubt but the apostle Peter was satisfied that the three thousand pricked in their hearts were truly penitents; yet insisted on the profession of their repentance, as antecedent to baptism; and Philip, I make no question, was satisfied of the Eunuch's being a believer in Christ by the conversation he had with him; yet required a confession of his faith in him, in order to his baptism; for with the mouth confession is to be made unto salvation. Nor even according to our author's sentiment does the covenant of grace give a right to baptism; since, according to him, persons are not in covenant before they are baptized; for he expressly says, pp. 12, 30. that by baptism they enter into the covenant, and are taken into the covenant by baptism; and therefore baptism rather gives them a right to the covenant, than the covenant a right to baptism, according to this Gentleman: so far is it from being true what he elsewhere says (p. 32), that the covenant of grace gave Abraham and his children a right to circumcision under the law; and that this it is that gives parents and children a right to baptism under the gospel.

2. The covenant of circumcision, or the covenant which gave Abraham's infant-children a right to circumcision, is not the covenant of grace; for the covenant of circumcision must be most certainly, in the nature of it, a covenant of works, and not of grace. It will be freely allowed, that the covenant of grace was at certain times made, and made manifest, and applied to Abraham, and he interested in it; and that God was the God of him, and of his spiritual seed; and that the spiritual seed of Abraham, both among Jews and Gentiles, are interested in the same covenant; but not his carnal seed, nor theirs as such: and that Abraham was justified by faith, as believers now are; and that the same gospel was preached to him as now; and that at the same time the covenant of circumcision was given unto him, there was an exhibition of the covenant of grace unto him: the account of both is mixed together; but then the covenant of circumcision, which was a covenant of peculiarity, and belonged only to him and his natural male seed, was quite a distinct thing from the covenant of grace, since it included some that were not in the covenant of grace, and excluded others that were in it: nor is that the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ 430 years before the law was; since the covenant of circumcision falls 24 years short of that date, and therefore it refers not to that, but to an exhibition of the covenant of grace to Abraham, about the time of his call out of Chaldea; besides the covenant of circumcision is abolished, but the covenant of grace continues, and ever will; see my reply (pp. 35, 36). Now as this covenant, which gave Abraham's infant-children a right to circumcision, is not the covenant of grace, the main ground on which the right of infants to baptism is asserted, is taken away, and so no foundation left for it; and

consequently the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned, as this Gentleman freely confesses; and as everyone should, who is in the same way of thinking and reasoning. If the covenant of circumcision is not the covenant of grace, here of right the controversy should be closed, since this is the turning point on which the issue of it very much depends; for if this be false, all that follows as argued from it, must be so too; for,

Thirdly, If the covenant of circumcision is not the covenant of grace, then circumcision is not the seal of the covenant of grace it is said to be (p. 22). If it was, the covenant of grace must be without such a seal near two thousand years, before the covenant of circumcision was given; and why not then always without one? besides, it must be with a seal and without a seal at one and same time, which is absurd; for there were some interested in the covenant of grace as before observed, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, and so without this seal, when it was enjoined on Abraham and his natural seed, and there were such afterwards; and circumcision also must have been the seal of itself, which is another absurdity. Circumcision was a token and sign, or mark in the flesh, which Abraham's natural posterity were to bear until the coming of the Messiah; but is never called a seal throughout the whole Old Testament; and much less is it any where said to be a seal of the covenant of grace: and indeed what blessing of grace could it seal, assure of, and confirm, to any of Abraham's natural seed as such, or any other man's natural seed? It is indeed in the New Testament called a seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised (Romans 4:11.) but then it was no seal of that, nor of any thing else to others, but to Abraham only; namely, that that righteousness which he had by faith before he was circumcised, would come upon, or be imputed to the uncircumcised Gentiles; and accordingly this mark continued in the flesh of his posterity, until the gospel, publishing justification by the righteousness of faith, was ordered to be preached to the Gentiles.[2] Wherefore,

Fourthly., Seeing circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace, baptism, which it is pretended was instituted in the room of it, can be no seal of it neither, and so not to be administered as such to the children of professed believers, as is said (p. 25). The text in Colossians 2:11, falls short of proving that baptism is instituted in the room of circumcision; since the apostle is speaking, not of circumcision in the flesh, but in the Spirit; and by which he means not the outward ordinance of baptism, that is distinguished from it,[3] but an inward work of grace upon the heart; spiritual circumcision, called the circumcision of Christ; which to understand as the same, is not to make an unreasonable tautology; it makes none at all, and much less nonsense, as this writer suggests; but beautifully completes the description the apostle gives of spiritual circumcision; first, by the manner of its performance, without hands; then by the matter and substance of it, the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; and lastly, by the author of it, Christ, who by his spirit produces it. The argument from analogy is weak and insufficient; though some little agreement between circumcision and baptism may be imagined, and seem to be in the signification of them, yet the difference between them is notorious; they differ in their subjects, uses, manner of administration, and the administrators of them; nor is it true, what is suggested, that they are both sacraments of admission into the church; nor are they badges of relation to God or Christ, nor signs and seals of the covenant of grace. Nor need we be under any concern about any ordinance coming in the room of circumcision, and answering to that Jewish rite. Nor is there any necessity of any, no more than of a pope in the room of an high priest, or of any festivals to answer to those of the Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles; nor does the Lord's supper answer to the passover, and

come in the room of it; it is Christ that answers to it, and is the passover sacrificed for us: but what makes it quite clear and plain, that baptism does not succeed circumcision, or come in the room of it, is, that it was in force and use before circumcision was abolished, which was not until the death of Christ, whereas John administered baptism, and Christ himself was baptized, and many others, some years before that time; and therefore baptism cannot be said, with any propriety, to succeed circumcision, when it was in force before the other was out of date: besides, if it did, it is no seal of the covenant of grace, nor to be administered to infants for such an use; for what spiritual blessing, what blessing of grace in the covenant, does baptism seal, or can seal, assure of, and secure unto the carnal seed of believers? Let it be named if it can.[4]

Fifthly, It is not indisputably evident, as this Gentleman says (p. 29), but indisputably false, that the apostles acknowledged and allowed the covenant-relation and interest of children, under the gospel, as well as under the law; by which I take it for granted he means, their relation and interest in the covenant of grace: that relation and interest, the natural seed of Abraham, as such, had not under the law; nor have the natural seed of believers, as such, the same under the gospel. This is not to be proved from his text, as has been shown already: nor from Romans 11:16-17, where by the root and branches, are not meant Abraham and his posterity, or natural seed; nor by the olive-tree the Jewish church; but the gospel church-state in its first foundation, out of which were left the Jews that believed not in Christ, meant by the branches broken off; and which church was constituted of those that believed in him; and these were the root and first-fruits, which being holy, are the pledge and earnest of the future conversion and holiness of that people the apostle is speaking of in the context; and into which church state the Gentiles that believed were received, and are the branches grafted in, which partook of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; that is, of the goodness and fatness of the house of God, the ordinances and privileges of it: and in this passage not a word is said of the covenant-relation, and interest of children under the gospel; not a syllable about baptism, much less of Infant-baptism; nor can anything in favor of it be inferred from it;[5] nor can anything of this kind be proved from 1 Corinthians 7:14, real internal holiness is rejected by our author, as the sense of this and the preceding passage; but he pleads for a federal holiness; but what that is, as distinct from real holiness, let it be said if it can: the only holiness which the covenant of grace promises and provides for, and which only is proper federal holiness, is real holiness of heart and life:[6] no other than matrimonial holiness, or lawful marriage, can be meant in the Corinthian text; it is such a holiness with which the unbelieving parent is sanctified, husband or wife; and if it is a federal holiness, the unbeliever ought to be allowed to be in covenant; and if this gives a right to baptism, ought to be baptized, as well as their carnal issue; and have as good a right to it, surely, as they who have their holiness from them, and which even depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent. I am able to prove, from innumerable instances in Jewish writings, that the words sanctify and sanctified, are used for espouse and espoused, and the apostle, being a Jew, adopts the same language; and let men wriggle and wrangle as long as they can, no other sense can be put upon the words, than of a legitimate marriage and offspring; nothing else will suit with the case proposed to the apostle, and with his answer and reasoning about it; and which sense has been allowed by many learned Paedobaptists; and I cannot forbear transcribing, what I have elsewhere done, the honest confession of Musculus: "Formerly, says he, I have abused this place against the Anabaptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for the parents faith, which, though true, the present place makes nothing for the purpose."[7]

Sixthly, From what has been observed, it is not proved, as our author asserts (p. 32), that the apostles looked on the children of believing parents as having an interest in the covenant of grace; and false is it, to the last degree of falsehood, what he infers from thence, that "then we have undeniable evidence that "they did in fact baptize the children of all professing believers; and that they "understood their commission as authorizing them so to do" (Matthew 28:19). Let one single fact be produced, one undeniable instance of the apostles baptizing an infant of any, professor or profane, and we will give up the cause at once, and say no more. Nor did the apostles, nor could the apostles understand the commission as authorizing them to baptize infants. What this Gentleman observes, that the word teach is in the original to make disciples, or learn: Be it so, it is not applicable to newborn babes, who are not capable of learning anything, and much less of divine and spiritual things, of Christ and his gospel, and the doctrines of it; of which kind of learning only can the commission be understood: nor are the children of believing parents called disciples (Acts 15:10), adult persons are meant; and by the yoke attempted to be put on their necks, not circumcision, which was not intolerable, but the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other Mosaic rites, and even of keeping the whole law in order to salvation; this was intolerable. This author further observes, that children must be included in the words all nations, mentioned in the commission. If they are included so as to be baptized, and if this phrase is to be understood without any limitation or restriction, then not only the children of Christian parents, but the children of Pagans, Jews, and Turks; yea, all adult persons, be they who they may, ever so vile and profligate, since these are included in all nations; but the limitation is to those that are taught, and learn to become the disciples of Christ, and believe in him, as appears from Mark 16:15-16.[8] Nor does it appear from the scripture-accounts, that there is any probability, and much less the highest probability, as this writer says (p. 33), that it was the general practice of the apostles to baptize infants, and which he concludes from Lydia, the Jailor, and Stephanas; which instances do not afford the least probability of it.[9] To make it probable that there might be infant-children in those families, he observes, we read, when God smote the first-born in Egypt, there was not an house in which there was not one dead, consequently not an house in Egypt in which there was not a child: but he did not consider, that all the first-born of Egypt slain, were not infant-children; but many of them might be men grown, of twenty, or thirty years of age, or more; and of these, with those under such an age, and in infancy, it is not strange that there should be found one in every house.[10] Our author adds, "suppose it had been said of one proselyted to the Jewish religion, that "he and his household, or that he and all his were circumcised, would any doubt "whether his infant-children were circumcised? I believe not:" and so do I too; but not for the reason given, which is a false one; for it never was a practice, either before or since Abraham’s covenant, to receive children with their parents into a covenant-relation, if by that relation is meant relation to, and interest in the covenant of grace; but for this very good reason, because the Jews and their proselytes were commanded to circumcise their Infant-children; but God has no where commanded any to baptize their Infant-children; and therefore when households are said to be baptized, this cannot be understood of infants, and especially when those in these households are represented as hearers of the word, believers in it, and persons possessed of spiritual joy and comfort.

Seventhly, The evidence this author gives of the practice of Infant-baptism, from those that lived in the first, second, and third centuries (pp. 34-40), comes next. He produces no evidence from any writer of the first century, though there are several whose writings are extant, as Barnabas,

Clemens Remanus, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius. He begins with Irenæus, as he is twice called; Irenaeus is meant, of whom he says, that he only mentions Infant-baptism transiently; but he does not mention it at all: it is not once mentioned in all his writings, as corrupted as they be; being some spurious, and for the most part translations, and these barbarous, and but few original pieces: the passage produced for his use, of the word regeneration for baptism, is not to the purpose; since by the command of regenerating, Christ gave to his disciples, is not meant the command of baptizing, but of teaching the doctrine of regeneration, and the necessity of it to salvation, and in order to baptism, the first and principal part of the commission of the apostles, as the order of the words shows. The other testimony which, he says, is plain for the baptism of infants, there is not a syllable of it in it: Irenaeus only says, "Christ came to save all; all I say, that "are born again unto God; infants, and little ones, and children, and young "men, and old men." Which is most true; for Christ came to save all of every age that are regenerated, and of which persons of every age are capable; but to interpret this of Christ's coming to save all that are baptized, is false; and is to make this ancient writer to speak an untruth: to prove that regeneration is used by him for baptism, a passage is produced out of Justin Martyr, said to be his contemporary, though Justin lived before him, in the middle of the second century, and should have been first mentioned; but will not serve his purpose: for Justin is speaking of the manner of adult-baptism, and not a word of infants; and of adult persons, not as regenerated by or in baptism; for he speaks of them before as converted and believers, and consequently regenerated; and their baptism is plainly distinguished from regeneration. Of the sense of the passages of these two writers, see more in the Reply, p. 16-18. The argument from apostolic Tradition (pp. 13, 14). Antipaedobaptism (pp. 9-20). The next testimony produced is Origen, placed in the beginning of the third century, though it was rather towards the middle of it that he wrote and flourished in, and should have been mentioned after Tertullian. The passages quoted from him are, the first out of his eighth homily on Leviticus, though the last clause in it does not belong to that, but is in the fourteenth homily on Luke, and the other is out of his epistle to the Romans: Now these are all taken out of Latin translations, full of interpolations, additions, and detractions; so that, as many learned men observe, "one knows not when he "reads Origen, and is at a loss to find Origen in Origen." Now whereas there are genuine works of his still extant in Greek in them there is not the least hint of Infant-baptism, nor any reference to it, much less any express mention of it, not even as an apostolical tradition, as in the last passage produced; for so it should be rendered, not order, but tradition; on which I shall just observe what Bishop Taylor says: "A tradition apostolical, if it be not consigned with a fuller testimony than of one person (Origen) whom all after-ages have condemned of many errors, will obtain so little reputation among those, who know that things have, upon greater authority, pretended to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely; that it will be a great argument, that he is credulous and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation in a matter of so great concernment."[11] Tertullian is the next writer quoted as giving plain proof that Infant-baptism was the constant practice of the church in his day: he is the first person known to have made any mention of it; who, as soon as he did, argued against it, and dissuaded from it; and though it will be owned, that it was moved in his day, and debated; yet that it was practiced, and much less constantly practiced, has not yet been proved. The next evidence produced is Cyprian, who lived in the middle of the third century; and it will be allowed that it was practiced in the African churches in his time, where it was first moved, and at the same time Infant-communion was practiced also; of the practice of which we have as early proof as of Infant-baptism; and this

furnishes with an answer to this author’s questions (p. 42). When Infant-baptism was introduced, and by whom? It was introduced at the time Infant-communion was, and by the same persons. As for the testimonies of Ambrose, Austin, and Pelagius, they might have been spared, since they wrote in the fourth century, when it is not denied that Infant-baptism very much prevailed; of Austin, and particularly of what Pelagius says, see Argument from apostolic tradition (pp. 19-26). Antipaedobaptism (pp. 33-37). And from hence it appears, that it is not true what this author suggests (pp. 42, 52), that infant-baptism was the universal practice of the primitive churches in the three first centuries, called the purest times; when it does not appear to have been practiced at all until the third century, when sad corruptions were made in doctrine and practice.

Eighthly, This author proposes to answer some of the most material objections against Infant-baptism (p. 43), etc. as,

1. "That there is no express "command for it in scripture, and therefore unwarrantable." To which the answer is; that if there is no express command, there are virtual and implicit ones, which are of equal force with an express one, and no less than four are observed; one command is enough, this is over-doing it, and what is overdone is not well done: but let us hear them; the first is God’s command to Abraham to circumcise his infant-children, which is a virtual and implicit command to believers to baptize theirs! The reason is, because they are Abraham’s spiritual seed, and heirs according to the promise; but the command to Abraham only concerned his natural, not his spiritual seed; and if there is any force in the reason given, or the command lays any obligation on the latter, their duty is not to baptize, but circumcise their children; since the sacramental rite commanded, it seems, has never been repealed, and still remains in full force. The next virtual and implicit command is in Matthew 19:14, but Christ’s permission of children to come, or to be brought unto him, there spoken of, was not for baptism, or to be baptized by him, but for him to pray for them, and touch them, in order to cure them of diseases.[12] Another implicit, if not express command, to baptize infants, is in Matthew 28:19. This has been considered, and disproved already; (see p. 99). The fourth and last implicit command, the author mentions, is the exhortation in his text, Acts 2:38-39, in which, as has been shown, there is not the least hint of Infant-baptism, nor anything from whence it can be concluded. This author observes, that since virtual and implicit commands are looked on as sufficient to determine our conduct in other things, then why not in this? such as keeping the first-day-sabbath, attendance on public worship, and the admission of women to the Lord’s-Supper. To which I reply, he has not proved any virtual and implicit command to baptize infants; and as to the cases mentioned, besides implications, there are plain instances in scripture of the practice of them; and let like instances of Infant-baptism be produced, and we shall think ourselves obliged to practice it. As to what this author says of an express, irrepealable command to children, to receive the seal of the covenant, and the constant practice of the church to administer the seal of it to them; if by the covenant is meant the covenant of grace, it never had any such seal as is suggested, which has been proved; nor has it any but the blood of Christ, called the blood of the everlasting covenant.

2. Another objection to Infant-baptism is; there is no express instance in all the history of the New-Testament of an Infant-child being baptized, and therefore is without any scripture-example. To which is replied, by observing that whole households were baptized; as there were, and which have been already considered; and these were baptized, not upon the conversion of the parent, or head of the family, but upon their own faith; and so were not infants, but adult persons; though this

author thinks that such accounts would easily be understood to include children, had the same been said of circumcision. They might so, when circumcision was in force and use; for this very good reason, because there was a previous express command extant to circumcise children, when there is none to baptize infants. He further observes, that from there being no express mention of Infant-baptism in the New Testament, it should not be concluded there was none, anymore than that the churches of Antioch, Iconium, of the Romans, Galatians, Thessalonians and Colossians, were not baptized, because there is no express account of it in the history of the New Testament: but of several of those churches there is mention made of the baptism of the members of them, of the Romans, Galatians and Colossians (Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12), but what this author might imagine would press us hard, is to give a scripture-example of our own present practice. Our present practice, agreeable to scripture-examples, is not at all concerned with the parents of those baptized by us, whether believers or unbelievers, Christians or not Christians, Jews or Heathens, this comes not into consideration; it is only concerned with the persons themselves to be baptized, what they are. It seems, if we give a scripture-example of our practice, it must be of a person born and brought up of Christian or baptized parents, that was baptized in adult years; but our present practice is not limited to such persons. We baptize many whose parents we have no reason to believe are Christians, or are baptized persons; and be it that we baptize adult persons, who are born and brought up of Christian or baptized parents, a scripture-example of such a person might indeed be required of us with some plausible pretext, if the history of the Acts of the Apostles, which this writer says continued above thirty years, had given an account of the yearly or of frequent additions of members to the churches mentioned in it, during that space of time; whereas that history only gives an account of the first planting of those churches, and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; wherefore to give instances of those that were born of them, and brought up by them as baptized in adult years, cannot be reasonably required of us: But, on the other hand, if Infant-children were admitted to baptism in those times, upon the faith and baptism of their parents, and their becoming Christians; it is strange! exceeding strange! that among the many thousands that were baptized in Jerusalem, Samaria, Corinth, and other places, that there should be no one instance of any of them bringing their children with them to be baptized, and claiming the privilege of baptism for them upon their own faith, or of their doing this in any short time after; this is a case that required no length of time; and yet not a single instance can be produced.

3. A third objection is, that "infants can receive no benefit from baptism, "because of their incapacity; and therefore are not to be baptized." To which our author answers; that they are capable of being entered into covenant with God, of the seal of the covenant, of being cleansed by the blood of Christ, and of being regenerated by his Spirit: And be it so; what of all this! as I have observed in the Reply (p. 4). Are they capable of understanding the nature, design, and use of the ordinance of baptism? Are they capable of professing faith in Christ, which is a prerequisite to it, and of exercising it in it? Are they capable of answering a good conscience to God in it? Are they capable of submitting to it in obedience to the will of Christ, from love to him, and with a view to his glory? They are not: what benefit then can they receive by baptism? and to what purpose is it to be administered to them? If infants receive any advantage, benefit, or blessing by baptism, which our infants have not without it, let it be named, if it can; if none, why administered? why all this zeal and contention about it? A mere noise about nothing.

4. A fourth and most common objection, it is said, is, that "faith and repentance, or a profession of them at least, are mentioned in the New Testament as the necessary prerequisites of baptism, of which children are incapable, and therefore of the ordinance itself." To this it is answered; that children are capable of the habit and principle of faith: which is not denied, nor is it in the objection; and it is granted by our author, that a profession of faith is a prerequisite to baptism in adult persons, who embrace Christianity; but when they have embraced it, and professed their faith, in the apostles times, not only themselves, but their households, and all that were theirs, were baptized. It is very true, those professing their faith also, as did the household of the Jailor, of whom it is said, that he was believing in God with all his house: His family believed as well as he, which could not have been known, had they not professed it. The instance of a professing stranger embracing the Jewish religion, in order to his circumcision, which, when done, it was always administered to his family and children, makes nothing to the purpose; since it is no rule of procedure to us, with respect to a gospel-ordinance.

Ninthly, The performance under consideration is concluded with observing many absurdities, and much confusion, with which the denial of Infant-baptism, as a divine institution, is attended. As,

1. It is saying the covenant made with Abraham is not an everlasting one; that believers under the gospel are not Abraham’s seed, and heirs of his promise; that the engrafted Gentiles do not partake of the same privileges in the church, from which the Jews were broken off; and that the privileges of the gospel-dispensation are less than those of the law: all which are said to be flat contradictions to scripture. To all which I reply, that the covenant of grace made with, and made known to Abraham, is an everlasting covenant, and is sure to all the seed; that is, the spiritual seed; and is not at all affected by Infant-baptism, that having no concern in it. The covenant of circumcision, though called an everlasting covenant (Genesis 17:7), was only to continue unto the time of the Messiah; and is so called, just in the same sense, and for the same reason, the covenant of priesthood with Phineas has the same epithet (Numbers 25:13). Believers under the gospel are Abraham’s spiritual seed, and heirs of the same promise of spiritual things; but these spiritual things, and the promise of them, do not belong to their natural seed as such; the believing Gentiles, engrafted into the gospel church-state, partake of all the privileges of it, from which the unbelieving Jews are excluded, being for their unbelief left out of that state. The privileges of the gospel-dispensation are not less, yea far greater than those of the law; to believers, who are freed from the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the law, have larger measures of grace, a clearer ministration of the gospel, and more spiritual ordinances; nor are they less to their infants, who are eased from the painful rite of circumcision, have the advantage of a Christian education, and of hearing the gospel as they grow up, in a clearer manner than under the law; which are greater privileges than the Jewish children had under the former dispensation; nor are all, nor any of these affected, or to be contradicted, by the denial of Infant-baptism.

2. It is observed, that to deny the validity of Infant-baptism, is saying that "there was no true baptism in the church for eleven or twelve hundred years after Christ; and that the generality of the present professors of Christianity "are now a company of unbaptized heathens" (p. 52, so p. 10). To which I reply, that the true baptism continued in the church in the first two centuries; and though Infant-baptism was introduced in the third, and prevailed in the fourth, yet in both these centuries there were those that opposed it, and abode by the true baptism. Besides, in the valleys of Piedmont, as many learned men have observed, there were witnesses from the times of the

apostles, who bore their testimony against corruptions in doctrine and practice, and among whom Infant-baptism did not obtain until the sixteenth century; so that the true baptism continued in the church till that time, and it has ever since; (see the Reply, pp. 31, 32). As for the generality of the present professors of Christianity, it lies upon them to take care of their character, and remove from it what may be thought disagreeable; and clear themselves of it, by submitting to the true baptism according to the order of the gospel. As to the salvation of persons in or out of the visible church, which is the greater number, this author speaks of, I know nothing of; salvation is not by baptism in any way, but by Christ alone.

3. It is said, if Infant-baptism is a divine institution, warranted by the word of God, then they that are baptized in their adult age necessarily renounce a divine institution, and an ordinance of Jesus Christ, and vacate the former covenant between God and them. If it be; but it is not a divine institution, nor an ordinance of Jesus Christ, as appears from all that has been said about it in the foregoing pages; wherefore it is right to renounce and reject it, as an human invention: and as for any covenant between God and them vacated thereby, it will not, it need not give the renouncers of it any concern; being what they know nothing of, and the whole a chimerical business. Nay, it is farther observed, that renouncing Infant-baptism, and making it a nullity, is practically saying there are no baptized persons, no regular ministers, nor ordinances, in all professing churches but their own, and as elsewhere (p. 41), no gospel-church in the world; and that the administrations of the ministers of other churches are a nullity, and the promise of Christ to be with his ministers in the administration of this ordinance to the end of the world, must have failed for hundreds of years, in which Infant-baptism was practiced. But be it so: to whom is all this owing? to whose account must it be put? to those who are the corrupters of the word and ordinances. Is it suggested by all this, that "God "in his providence would never suffer things to go such lengths?" Let it be observed, that he has given us in his word reason to expect great corruptions in doctrine and worship; and that though he will always have a seed to serve him, more or fewer, in all ages, yet he has no where promised that these shall be always in a regular gospel-church-state; and though he has promised his presence in his ordinances to the end of the world, it is only with those ministers and people among whom the ordinances are administered according to his word; and there was for some hundreds of years, in the darkness of popery, such a corruption in the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord’s supper, in the administration of which the presence of God cannot be thought to be; nor were there any regular ministers, nor regular ordinances, nor a regular gospel-church, but what were to be found in the valleys of Piedmont; and with whom the presence of God may be supposed to be; who bore a testimony against all corruptions, and among the rest, against Infant-baptism.[13] This writer further urges, that "if Infant-baptism is a nullity, there can be now no regular baptism in the world, nor ever will be to the end of it; and so the ordinance must be lost, since adult baptism cannot be traced to the apostles times, and as now administered, is derived from those that were baptized in infancy; wherefore if Infant-baptism is invalid, that must be so too" (so in p. 42)." To which it may be answered, that the first English Antipaedobaptists, when determined upon a reformation in this ordinance, in a consultation of theirs about it, had this difficulty started about a proper administrator to begin the work, when it was proposed to send some to foreign churches, the successors of the ancient Waldenses in France and Germany; and accordingly did send some, who being baptized, returned and baptized others: though others were of opinion this too much favored of the popish notion of an uninterrupted succession, and a right through that to administer ordinances; and therefore judged, that in an extraordinary case, as this

was, to begin a reformation from a general corruption, where a baptized administrator could not be had, it might be begun by one unbaptized, otherwise qualified to preach the word and ordinances; which practice they were able to justify upon the same principles the other reformers justified theirs; who without any regard to an uninterrupted succession, let up new churches, ordained pastors, and administered ordinances. Nor is it essential to the ordinance of baptism, that it be performed by one regularly baptized, though in ordinary cases it should; or otherwise it could never have been introduced into the world; the first administrator of it must be an unbaptized person, as John the Baptist was. All which is a sufficient answer to what this writer has advanced on this subject.[14]

ENDNOTES:

[1] The Octavo Edit. he referred to all along.

[2] See the divine Right of Infant-baptism examined, etc. p. 56, etc. and the Reply, p. 43.

[3] Verse 12.

[4] See Reply. p. 44-47.

[5] See the Reply, p. 64, 65.

[6] See Jeremiah 31:33 and Ezekiel 36:26-27.

[7] See the divine Right of Infant-baptism examined, p. 73-78, and the Reply, p. 55-58.

[8] See the Reply, page 58, 59, 62.

[9] See the Reply, p. 63, 64.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Liberty of prophesying, p. 320. See the Reply, page 19. 20. Argument from apostolic Tradition, page 16, 17. Antipaedobaptism, p. 24-29.

[12] Matthew 19:13 and Mark 10:13, of the sense of this text see the Reply, page 50-52.

[13] See Reply, p. 11, 12.

[14] See the Divine Right of Infant-baptism examined, etc. page 13-15, 8th vol. Edit.

01.12. Infant Baptism: A Part and Pillar of Popery

INFANT BAPTISM: A Part & Pillar Of Popery Being called upon, in a public manner, to give proof of what I have said concerning infant-baptism, in a preface to my reply to Mr. Clarke's Defense, etc. or to expunge it, I readily agree to the former, and shall endeavor to explain myself, and defend what I have written; but it will be proper first to recite the whole paragraph, which stands thus: "The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough reformation in religion; until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive luster and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when "The Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one." Now the whole of this consists of several articles or propositions, which I shall reconsider in their order. That infant-baptism is a part and pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations: I use the phrase infant-baptism here and throughout, because of the common use of it; otherwise the practice which now obtains, may with greater propriety be called infant-sprinkling. That unwritten traditions with the Papists are equally the rule of faith and practice as the holy Scriptures will not be doubted of by any conversant with their writings. The Council of Trent asserts that "Traditions respecting both faith and manners orally delivered and preserved successfully in the Catholic church, are to be received with equal affection of piety and reverence as the books of the Old and New Testaments;" yea the Popish writers prefer traditions to the Scriptures. Bellarmine says, "Scriptures without tradition, are neither simply necessary, nor sufficient, but unwritten traditions are necessary. Tradition alone is sufficient, but the Scriptures are not sufficient." Another of their writers asserts, that "The authority of ecclesiastic traditions is more fit than the scriptures to ascertain anything doubtful, even that which may be made out from scripture, since the common opinion of the church and ecclesiastical tradition are clearer, and more open and truly inflexible; when, on the contrary, the scriptures have frequently much obscurity in them, and may be drawn here and there like a nose of wax; and, as a leaden rule, may be applied to every impious opinion." Bailey the Jesuit, thus expresses himself, "I will go further and say, we have as much need of tradition as of scripture, yea more; because the scripture ministers to us only the dead and mute letter, but tradition, by means of the ministry of the church, gives us the true sense, which is not had distinctly in the scripture; wherein, notwithstanding, rather consists the word of God than in the alone written letter; it is sufficient for a good Catholic, if he understands it is tradition, nor need he to inquire after anything else;" and by tradition, they mean not tradition delivered in the Scripture, but distinct from it and out of it;

unwritten tradition, apostolical tradition, as they frequently call it, not delivered by the apostles in the sacred Scriptures, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches; that we may not mistake them. Andradius tells us, "That of necessity those traditions also must be believed, which can be proved by no testimony of scripture:" and Petrus a Soto still more plainly and openly affirms: "It is," says he, "a rule infallible and catholic, that whatsoever things the church of Rome believeth, holdeth and keepeth, and are not delivered in the scriptures, the same came by tradition from the apostles; also all such observations and ceremonies, whose beginning, author, and original are not known, or cannot be found, out of all doubt they were delivered by the apostles." This is what is meant by apostolic tradition.

Now the essentials of popery, or the peculiarities of it, are all founded upon this, even upon apostolic and ecclesiastic tradition; this is the Pandora from whence they all spring; this is the rule to which all are brought, and by which they are confirmed; and what is it, be it ever so foolish, impious and absurd, but what may be proved hereby, if this is admitted of as a rule and test? It is upon this foot the Papists assert and maintain the observation of Easter, on the Lord's Day following the 14th of March, the fast of Quadragesima or Lent, the adoration of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the worship of the sign of the cross, the sacrifices of the mass, transubstantiation, the abrogation of the use of the cup in the Lord's Supper, holy water, extreme unction or the chrism, prayers for the dead, auricular confession, sale of pardons, purgatory, pilgrimages, monastic vows, etc.

Among apostolical traditions infant-baptism is to be reckoned, and it is upon this account it is pleaded for. The first person that asserted infant-baptism and approved it, represents it as a tradition from the apostles, whether he be Origen, or his translator and interpolator, Ruffinus; his words are, "For this (i.e., for original sin) the church has received a tradition from the apostles, even to give baptism unto infants." Austin, who was a warm advocate for infant-baptism, puts it upon this footing, as a custom of the church, not to be despised, and as an apostolic tradition generally received by the church; he lived in the fourth century, the same Ruffinus did; and probably it was from his Latin translation of Origen, Austin took the hint of infant-baptism being an apostolic tradition, since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it before as such; so that, as Bishop Taylor observes, "This apostolical tradition is but a testimony of one person, and he condemned of many errors; so that, as he says, to derive this from the apostles on no greater authority, is a great argument that he is credulous and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in a matter of so great concernment.;" and yet it is by this that many are determined in this affair: and not only Popish writers, as Bellarmine and others make it to be an apostolical tradition unwritten; but some Protestant-Paedobaptists show a good will to place infant-baptism among the unwritten sayings and traditions of Christ or His apostles, and satisfy themselves therewith. Mr. Fuller says, "We do freely confess that there is neither express precept nor precedent in the New Testament for the baptizing of infants;" yet observes that St. John saith, (John 21:25), "And there are also many other things, which Jesus did, which are not written; among, which for ought appears to the contrary, the baptizing of these infants (those whom Christ took in his arms and blessed) might be one of them." In like manner, Mr. Walker argues, "It doth not follow our Savior gave no precept for the baptizing of infants, because no such precept is particularly expressed in the scripture; for our Savior spoke many things to his disciples concerning the kingdom of God, both before his passion, and also after his resurrection, which are

not written in the scriptures; and who can say, but that among those many unwritten sayings of his, there might be an express precept for infant-baptism?" And Mr. Leigh, one of the disputants in the Portsmouth-Disputation , suggests, that though infant-baptism is not to be found in the writings of the apostle Paul extant in the scriptures, yet it might be in some writings of his which are lost, and not now extant; all which is plainly giving up infant-baptism as contained in the sacred writings, and placing it upon unwritten, apostolical tradition, and that too, conjectural and uncertain.

Now infant-baptism, with all the ceremonies attending it, for which also apostolical tradition is pleaded, makes a very considerable figure in the Popish pageantry; which according to pretended apostolical tradition, is performed in a very pompous manner, as by consecration of the water, using sponsors, who answer to the interrogatories, and make the renunciation in the name of the infant, exorcisms, exsufflations, crossings, the use of salt, spittle, and oil. Before the party is baptized, the water is consecrated in a very solemn manner; the priest makes an exorcism first; three times, he exsufflates or breathes into the water, in the figure of a cross, saying, "I adjure thee, O creature of water;" and here he divides the water after the manner of a cross, and makes three or four crossings; he takes a horn of oil, and pours it three times upon the water in the likeness of a cross, and makes a prayer, that the font may be sanctified, and the eternal Trinity be present; saying, "Descend from heaven and sanctify this water, and give grace and virtue, that he who is baptized according to the command of thy Christ, may be crucified, and die, and be buried, and rise again with him." The sponsors, or sureties, instead of the child, and in its name, recite the creed and the Lord’s prayer, make the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and answer to questions put in the name of the child: the form, according to the Roman order, is this:

"The name of the infant being called, the presbyter must say, Dost thou renounce Satan? A. I do renounce; and all his works? A. I do renounce; and all his pomps? A. I do renounce: three times these questions are put, and three times the sureties answer." The interrogations are sometimes said to be made by a priest, sometimes by a presbyter, and sometimes by an exorcist, who was one or the other, and to which the following question also was added: "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, etc.? A. I believe." Children to be baptized are first exsufflated or breathed and blown upon and exorcised, that the wicked spirit might be driven from them, that they might be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ: the Roman order is, "Let him (the minister, priest, deacon or exorcist) blow into the face of the person to be baptized, three times, saying, Go out thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter." The form, according to St. Gregory, is, "I exorcise thee, O unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou go out and depart from this servant of God." Salt also is put into the mouth of the infant, after it is blessed and exorcised, as a token of its being seasoned with the salt of wisdom; and that it might be preserved from the corruption and ill savor of sin: the priest first blesses the salt after this manner: "I exorcise thee, O creature of salt; and then being blessed, it is put into the mouth of the infant saying, Receive the salt of wisdom unto life everlasting." The nose and ears of infants at their baptism are touched with spittle by the priest, that they may receive the savor of the knowledge of God, and their ears be opened to hear the commands of God; and formerly spittle was put upon the eyes and upon the tongue, though it seems now disused as to those parts; and yet no longer than the birth of King James the First, it seems to have been in use; since at his baptism his mother sent word to the archbishop to forbear the use of the spittle, saying, "She would not have a

pocky priest to spit in her child’s mouth,;" for it seems the queen knew that the archbishop, who was Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, then had the venereal disease . And so in the times of the martyrs in Queen Mary’s days; for Robert Smith, the martyr, being asked by Bonner, in what point do we dissent from the word of God? meaning as to baptism; he answered, "First, in hallowing your water, in conjuring of the same, in baptizing children with anointing and spitting in their mouths, mingled with salt, and many other lewd ceremonies, of which not one point is able to be proved in God’s word." All which he calls a mingle mangle. Chrism, or anointing both before and after baptism, is another ceremony used at it; the parts anointed are the breast and shoulders; the breast, that no remains of the latent enemy may reside in the party baptized; and the shoulders, that he may be fortified and strengthened to do good works to the glory of God: this anointing is made in the form of a cross; the oil is put on the breast and beneath the shoulders, making a cross with the thumb; on making the cross on the shoulders, the priest says, "Flee, thou unclean spirit, give honor to the living and true God;" and when he makes it on the breast, he says, "Go out, thou unclean spirit, give place to the Holy Ghost:" the form used in doing it is "I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, that thou mayest have life everlasting." The next ceremony is that of signing the infant with the sign of the cross: this is made in several parts of the body, especially on the forehead, to signify that the party baptized should not be ashamed of the cross of Christ, and not be afraid of the enemy Satan, but manfully fight against him. After baptism, in ancient times, honey and milk, or wine and milk, were given to the baptized, though now disused; and infants were admitted to the Lord’s Supper, which continued some hundreds of years in the Latin church, and still does in the Greek church. Now for the proof of the use of these various ceremonies, the reader may consult Joseph Vicecomes, a learned Papist as Dr. Wall calls him, in his Treatise de Antiquis Baptismi Ritibus ac Ceremoniis, where and by whom they are largely treated of, and the proofs of them given. All which are rehearsed and condemned by the ancient Waldenses in a treatise of theirs, written in the year 1120. It may be asked to what purpose is this account given of the ceremonies used by Papists in the administration of baptism to infants by them, since they are not used by Protestant-paedobaptists? I answer, it is to show what I proposed, namely, what a figure infant-baptism, with these attending ceremonies, makes in popery, and may with propriety be called a part of it; besides though all these ceremonies are not used, yet some of them are used in some Protestant-paedobaptist churches, as sureties, the interrogations made to them, and their answers in the name of infants; the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and signing with the sign of the cross; and since these and the others, all of them claim apostolic authority, and most, if not all of them, have as good and as early a claim to it as infant-baptism itself; those who admit that upon this foot, ought to admit these ceremonies also. See a treatise of mine, called The Argument from Apostolic Tradition in Favor of Infant-baptism Considered. Most of the above ceremonies are mentioned by Basil, who lived in the 4th century, and as then in use, and which were had from apostolic tradition as said, and not from the scriptures; and says he, "Because this is first and most common, I will mention it in the first place, as that we sign with the sign of the cross; —Who has taught this in Scripture? We consecrate the water of baptism and the oil of unction as well as him who receives baptism; from what scriptures? Is it not from private and secret tradition? Moreover the anointing with oil, what passage in scripture teaches this? Now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived or delivered? Also the rest of what is done in baptism, as to renounce Satan and his angels, from what scripture have we it? Is not this from private and secret tradition?" And so Austin speaks of exorcisms and exsufflations used in

baptism, as of ancient tradition, and of universal use in the church. Now whoever receives infant-baptism on the foot of apostolic tradition, ought to receive those also, since they stand upon as good a foundation as that does. The Papists attribute the rise of several of the above ceremonies to their popes, as sponsors, chrisms, exorcisms, etc., though perhaps they were not quite so early as they imagine, yet very early they were; and infant-baptism itself, though two or three doctors of the church had asserted and espoused it, yet it was not determined in any council until the Milevitan Council in 418, or thereabouts, a provincial of Africa, in which was a canon made for Paedobaptism and never till then: So says Bishop Taylor , with whom Grotius agrees , who calls it the Council of Carthage; and who says in the councils no earlier mention is made of infant-baptism than in that council; the canons of which were sent to Pope Innocent the First , and confirmed by him: And Austin, who must write his book against the Donatists before this time, though he says the church always held it (infant-baptism) and that it is most rightly believed to be delivered by apostolic tradition; yet observes that it was not instituted, or determined and settled in or by councils; that is, as yet it was not, though it afterwards was in the above council confirmed by the said pope; in which council Austin himself presided, and in which is this canon, "Also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized, --- let him be anathema," and which is the first council that established infant-baptism, and anathematized those that denied it; so that it may justly be called a part of popery: besides baptism by immersion, which continued 1300 years in the Latin church, excepting in the case of the Clinicks, and still does in the Creek church, was first changed into sprinkling by the Papists; which is not an indifferent thing, whether performed with much or a little water, as it is usually considered; but is of the very essence of baptism, is that itself, and without which it is not baptism; it being as Sir John Floyer says, no circumstance, but the very act of baptizing; who observes that aspersion, or sprinkling, was brought into the church by the Popish schoolmen , and our dissenters, adds he, had it from them; the schoolmen employed their thoughts how to find out reasons for the alteration to sprinkling, brought it into use in the 12th century: and it must be observed, to the honor of the Church of England, that they have not established sprinkling in baptism to this day; only have permitted pouring in case it is certified the child is weakly and not able to bear dipping; otherwise, by the Rubric, the priest is ordered to dip the child warily: sprinkling received only a Presbyterian sanction in times of the civil war by the Assembly of Divines; where it was carried for sprinkling against dipping by one vote only, by 25 against 24, and then established by an ordinance of Parliament, 1644: and that this change has its rise from the authority of the Pope, Dr. Wall himself acknowledges , and that the sprinkling of infants is from popery. "All the nations of Christians," says he, "that do now, or formerly did, submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring or sprinkling; and though the English received not this custom till after the decay of Popery, yet they have since received it from such neighbor-nations as had began it in the times of the pope’s power; but all other Christians in the world, who never owned the pope’s usurped power, do, and ever did, dip their infants in their ordinary use;" so that infant-baptism, both with respect to subjects and mode, may with great propriety be called a part and branch of popery. But it is not only a part of popery, and so serves to strengthen it, as a part does the whole; but it is a pillar of it, what serves greatly to support it; and which furnishes the Papists with one of the strongest arguments against the Protestants in favor of their traditions, on which, as we have seen, the essentials of popery are founded, and of the authority of the church to alter the rites of divine worship: they sadly embarrass Paedobaptist Protestants with the affair of

infant-baptism, and urge them either to prove it by scripture, both with respect to mode and subjects, or allow of unscriptural traditions and the authority of the church, or give it up; and if they can allow of unwritten traditions, and the custom and practice of the church, as of authority in one point, why not in others? This way of arguing, as Mr. Stennet observes , is used by Cardinal Du Perron, in his reply to the answer of King James the First, and by Mr. John Ainsworth, against Mr. Henry Ainsworth, in the dispute between them, and by Fisher the Jesuit, against Archbishop Laud; a late instance of this kind, he adds, we have in the controversy between Monsieur Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, and a learned anonymous writer, said to be Monsieur de la Roque, late pastor of the Reformed church at Roan in Normandy. The Bishop, in order to defend the withholding the cup in the Lord's Supper from the laity, according to the authority of the church, urged that infant-baptism, both as to mode and subject, was unscriptural, and solely by the authority of tradition and custom, with which the pretended Reformed complied, and therefore why not in the other case; which produced this ingenuous confession from his antagonist, that to baptize by sprinkling was certainly an abuse derived from the Romish church, without due examination, as well as many other things, which he and his brethren were resolved to correct, and thanked the bishop for undeceiving them; and freely confessed, that as to the baptism of infants, there is nothing formal or express in the gospel to justify the necessity of it; and that the passages produced do at most only prove that it is permitted, or rather, that it is not forbidden to baptize them. In the times of King Charles the Second, lived Mr. Jeremiah Ives, a Baptist minister, famous for his talent at disputation, of whom the king having heard, sent for him to dispute with a Romish priest; the which he did before the king and many others, in the habit of a clergyman: Mr. Ives pressed the priest closely, showing the whatever antiquity they pretended to, their doctrine and practices could by no means be proved apostolic; since they are not to be found in any writings which remain of the apostolic age; the priest, after much wrangling, in the end replied, that this argument of Mr. Ives was as of much force against infant-baptism, as against the doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome: to which Mr. Ives answered, that he readily granted what he said to be true; the priest upon this broke up the dispute, saying, he had been cheated, and that he would proceed no further; for he came to dispute with a clergyman of the established church, and it was now evident that this was an Anabaptist preacher. This behavior of the priest afforded his majesty and all present not a little diversion: and as Protestant Paedobaptists are urged by this argument to admit the unwritten traditions of the Papists; so dissenters of the Paedobaptist persuasion are pressed upon the same footing by those of the Church of England to comply with the ceremonies of that church, retained from the church of Rome, particularly by Dr. Whitby; who having pleaded for some condescension to be made to dissenters, in order to reconcile them to the church, adds: "and on the other hand", says he, "if notwithstanding the evidence produced, that baptism by immersion, is suitable both to the institution of our Lord and his apostles; and was by them ordained to represent our burial with Christ, and so our dying unto sin, and our conformity to his resurrection by newness of life; as the apostle doth clearly maintain the meaning of that rite: I say, if notwithstanding this, all our dissenters (i.e. who are Paedobaptists, he must mean) do agree to sprinkle the baptized infant; why may they not as well submit to the significant ceremonies imposed by our church? for, since it is as lawful to add unto Christ's institutions a significant ceremony, as to diminish a significant ceremony, which he or his apostles instituted; and use another in its stead, which they never did institute; what reason can they have to do the latter, and yet refuse submission to the former? and why should not the peace and union of the

church be as prevailing with them, to perform the one, as is their mercy to the infant's body to neglect the other?" Thus infant-baptism is used as the grand plea for compliance with the ceremonies both of the church of Rome and of the church of England.

I have added in the preface referred to, where stands the above clause, that infant-baptism is "that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations;" which is abundantly evident, since by the christening of children through baptism, introduced by him, he has made whole countries and nations Christians, and has christened them by the name of Christendom; and thereby has enlarged his universal church , over which he claims an absolute power and authority, as being Christ's vicar on earth; and by the same means he retains his influence over nations, and keeps them in awe and in obedience to him; asserting that by their baptism they are brought into the pale of the church, in which there is salvation, and out of which there is none; if therefore they renounce their baptism, received in infancy, or apostatize from the church, their damnation is inevitable; and thus by his menaces and anathemas, he holds the nations in subjection to him: and when they at any time have courage to oppose him, and act in disobedience to his supreme authority, he immediately lays a whole nation under an interdict; by which are prohibited, the administration of the sacraments, all public prayers, burials, christenings, etc., church-doors are locked up, the clergy dare not or will not administer any offices of their function to any, but such as for large sums of money obtain special privileges from Rome for that purpose: now by means of these prohibitions, and particularly of christening or baptizing children, nations are obliged to comply and yield obedience to the bishop of Rome; for it appears most dreadful to parents, that their children should be deprived of baptism, by which they are made Christians, as they are taught to believe, and without which there is no hope of salvation; and therefore are influenced to give-in to anything for the sake of what is thought so very important. Once more, the baneful influence spread by Antichrist over the nations by infant-baptism, is that poisonous notion infused by him, that sacraments, particularly baptism, confer grace ex opere operate, by the work done; that it takes away sin, regenerates men, and saves their souls; this is charged upon him, and complained of by the ancient Waldenses in a tract of theirs, written in the year 1120, where speaking of the works of Antichrist, they say, "the third work of Antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the Holy Spirit unto the dead, outward work, baptizing children in that faith, and teaching that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had; and therein he confers and bestows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is against the Holy Spirit": and which popish notion is argued against and exposed by Robert {Smith} the martyr; on Bonner's saying "if they (infants) die, before they are baptized, they be damned;" he asked this question, "I pray you, my lord, shew me, are we saved by water or by Christ?" to which Bonner replied, "by both;" "then," said Smith, "the water died for our sins, and so must ye say, that the water hath life, and it being our servant, and created for us, is our Savior; this my lord is a good doctrine, is it not?" And this pernicious notion still continues, this old leaven yet remains, even in some Protestant churches, who have retained it from Rome; hence a child when baptized is declared to be regenerate; and it is taught, when capable of being catechized to say, that in its baptism it was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, which has a tendency to take off all concern, in persons when grown up, about an inward work of grace, in regeneration and sanctification, as a meetness for heaven, and to encourage a presumption in them, notwithstanding their apparent want of grace, that they are members of Christ, and shall never perish; are children and heirs of God, and shall

certainly inherit eternal life. Wherefore Dr. [John] Owen rightly observes "That the father of lies himself could not easily have devised a doctrine more pernicious, or what proposes a more present and effectual poison to the minds of sinners to be drank in by them." The second article or proposition in the preface is, as asserted by me, that infant-baptism "is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together;" than which nothing is more evident: if a church is national, it consists of all in the nation, men, women, and children; and children are originally members of it, either so by birth, and as soon as born, being born in the church, in a Christian land and nation, which is the church, or rather by baptism, as it is generally put; so according to the order of the Church of England, at the baptism of a child, the minister says, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock." And by the Assembly of Divines, "Baptism is called a sacrament of the New Testament, whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church." And to which there is a strange contradiction in the following answer, where it is said, that "baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church;" but if by baptism the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church, then before baptism by which they are admitted, they must be out of it: one or other must be wrong; either persons are not admitted into the visible church by baptism, or if they are, then before baptism they are out of it, and have baptism administered to them in order to their being admitted into it; and Calvin says, according to whose plan of church-government at Geneva, that of the Scotch church is planned, that baptism is a solemn introduction to the church of God. And Mr. Baxter argues, that "if there be neither precept nor example of admitting church-members in all the New Testament but by baptism; then all that are now admitted ought to come in by baptism; but there is neither precept nor example in all the New Testament of admitting church members but by baptism; therefore they ought to come in the same way now." So then infants becoming members of a national church by baptism, they are originally of it; are the materials of which it consists; and it is by the baptism of infants it is supplied with members, and is supported and maintained; so that it may be truly said, that infant-baptism is the basis and foundation of a national church, and is indeed the sinews, strength, and support of it: and infants being admitted members by baptism continue such when grown up, even though of the most dissolute lives and conversations, as multitudes of them are; and many, instead of being treated as church members, deserve to be sent to the house of correction, as some are, and others are guilty of such flagitious crimes that they die an infamous death; yet even these die in the communion of the church; and thus the church and the world are united and kept together till death doth them part. The Independents would indeed separate the church and the world according to their principles; but cannot do it, being fettered and hampered with infant-church-membership and baptism, about which they are at a loss and disagreed on what to place it; some place it on infants' interest in the covenant of grace; and here they sadly contradict themselves or one another; at one time they say it is interest in the covenant of grace that gives infants a right to baptism, and at another time, that it is by baptism they are brought and entered into the covenant; and sometimes it is not in the inward part of the covenant they are interested, only in the external part of it, where hypocrites and graceless persons may be; but what that external part is no mortal can tell: others not being satisfied that their infant-seed as such are all interested in the covenant of grace, say, it is not that, but the church-covenant that godly parents enter into, which gives their children with them a right to church membership and baptism: children in their minority, it is said, covenant with their parents, and so become church members, and this entitles them to baptism; for according to

the old Independents of New England, none but members of a visible church were to be baptized; though Dr. [Thomas] Goodwin is of a different mind: hence only such as were children of members of churches, even of set members , as they call them, were admitted, though of godly and approved Christians; and though they may have been members, yet if excommunicated, their children born in the time of their excommunication might not be baptized; but those children that are admitted members and baptized, though not confirmed members, as they style them, till they profess faith and repentance; yet during their minority, which reaches till they are more than thirteen years of age, according to the example of Ishmael, and till about sixteen years of age, they are real members to such intents and purposes, as, that if their parents are dismissed to other churches, their children ought to be put into the letter of dismission with them; and whilst their minority continues, are under church-watch, and subject to the reprehensions, admonitions, and censures thereof for their healing and amendment as need shall require; though with respect to public rebuke, admonition, and excommunication, children in their minority are not subject to church-discipline, only to such as is by way of spiritual watch and private rebuke. The original Independents, by the covenant-seed, who have a right to church membership and baptism, thought only the seed of immediate parents in church-covenant are meant, and not of progenitors. Mr. Cotton says infants cannot claim right unto baptism but in the right of one of their parents or both; where neither of the parents can claim right to the Lord’s Supper, there their infants cannot claim right to baptism; though he afterwards says it may be considered whether the children may not be baptized where either the grandfather or grandmother have made profession of their faith and repentance before the church, and are still living to undertake for the Christian education of the child; or if these fail, what hinders but that if the parents will resign their infant to be educated in the house of any godly member of the church, the child may be lawfully baptized in the right of its household-governor, But Mr. Hooker, as he asserts, that children as children have no right to baptism, so it belongs not to any predecessors, either nearer or farther off removed from the next parents to give right of this privilege to their children; by which predecessors, he says, he includes and comprehends all besides the next parent; grandfather, great grandfather, etc.. So the ministers and messengers of the congregational churches that met at the Savoy declare "that not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to he baptized, and those only": and the commissioners for the review of the Common Prayer, in the beginning of the reign of King Charles the Second; those of the Presbyterian persuasion moved on the behalf of others, that "there being divers learned, pious, and peaceable ministers, who not only judge it unlawful to baptize children whose parents both of them are Atheists, Infidels, Heretics, or unbaptized; but also such whose parents are excommunicate persons, fornicators, or otherwise notorious and scandalous sinners; we desire, say they, they may not be enforced to baptize the children of such, until they have made open profession of their repentance before baptism.": but now I do not understand that the present generation of dissenters of this denomination adhere to the principles and practices of their predecessors, at least very few of them; but admit to baptism, not only the children of members of their churches, but of those who are not members, only hearers, or that apply to them for the baptism of their infants, whether gracious or graceless persons: and were only the first sort admitted, children of members, what are they? No better than others, born in sin, born of the flesh, carnal and corrupt, are of the world, notwithstanding their birth of religious persons, until they are called out of it by the effectual grace of God; and as they grow up, appear to be of the world as

others, and have their conversation according to the course of it; and many of them are dissolute in their lives, and scandalous in their conversation; and yet I do not understand, that any notice is taken of them in a church-way, as to be admonished, censured, and excommunicated; but they retain their membership, into which they were taken in their infancy, and continue in it to the day of their death: and if this is not uniting and keeping the world and church together, I know not what is.

Moreover all the arguments that are made use of to prove the church of Christ under the gospel-dispensation to be congregational, and against a national church, are all destroyed by the baptism and membership of infants. It is said in favor of the one, and against the other, that the members of a visible church are saints by calling, such, as in charitable discretion may be accounted so; but are infants who are admitted to membership and baptized, such? The holiness pleaded for as belonging to them, is only a federal holiness, and that is merely chimerical: are they called to be saints, or saints by effectual calling? Can they in charitable discretion, or in rational charity be thought to be truly and really holy, or saints, as the churches of the New Testament are said to be? and if they cannot in a judgment of charity, be accounted real saints, and yet are admitted members of churches, why not others, of whom it cannot be charitably thought, that they are real saints? Besides, it is said by the Independents, "that members of gospel churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing by their profession and walk their obedience to that call; who are further known to each other by their confession of faith wrought in them by the power of God; and do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves to the Lord and to one another by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the gospel": now are infants such? Do they manifest and evidence by a profession and walk their obedience to a divine call? And if they do not, and yet are admitted members, why not others, who give no more evidence than they do? Do they make a confession of faith wrought in them? Does it appear that they have such a faith? and in a confession made, and so made as to be known by fellow-members? and if not, and yet received and owned as members, why not others that make no more confession of faith than they do? Do infants consent to walk with the church of Christ, and give up themselves to the Lord and one another, and profess to be subject to the ordinances of the gospel? and if they do not, as most certainly they do not, and yet are members, why may not others be also members on the same footing? It is objected to a national church, that persons of the worst of characters are members of it; and by this means the church is filled with men very disreputable and scandalous in their lives. And is not this true of infant members admitted in their infancy, who when grown up are very wicked and immoral, and yet their membership continues? and why not then national churches be admitted of, notwithstanding the above objection? So that upon the whole, I think, I have good reason to say, "that there cannot be a full separation of the one from the other, that is, of the church from the world, nor a thorough reformation in religion, until it (infant-baptism) is wholly removed." In the said preface, I express my firm belief of the entire cessation of infant-baptism, in time to come: my words are, "though it (infant-baptism) has so long and largely obtained (as it has from the 4th century till now, and over the greater part who have since borne the Christian name) and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world," I mean in the spiritual reign of Christ; for in His personal reign there will be no ordinances, nor the administration of them; and this is explained by what I farther say, "when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive purity and lustre;

when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered; all which will be accomplished, when 'the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one;"' that is, when there shall be one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, acknowledged by all Christians; and they will be all of one mind with respect to the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel. And as it becomes every man to give a reason of the faith and hope he has concerning divine things, with meekness and fear; the reasons of my firm belief, that infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the latter day and spiritual reign of Christ, are, some of them suggested in the above paragraph, and others may be added, as

FIRST, Because churches in the time referred to, will be formed on the plan churches were in the time of the apostles; that this will be the case, see the prophecies in Isaiah 1:25-26; Jeremiah 30:18; Jeremiah 30:20; Revelation 11:19. Now the apostolic churches consisted only of baptized believers, or of such who were baptized upon profession of their faith; the members of the first Christian church, which was at Jerusalem, were first baptized upon their conversion, and then added to it; the next Christian church at Samaria, consisted of men and women baptized on believing the gospel, preached by Philip; and the church at Corinth, of such who hearing, believed and were baptized; and on the same plan were formed the churches at Rome, Philippi, Colosse, and others; nor is there one single instance of infant-baptism and of infant-church-membership in them; wherefore if churches in the latter day will be on the same plan, then infant-baptism will be no more practiced.

SECONDLY, Because, then the ordinances of the gospel will be administered, as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; this is what is meant by the temple of God being opened in heaven, on the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:19; Revelation 15:5), which respects the restoration of worship, discipline, doctrines and ordinances, to the free use of them, and to their original purity; when, as the ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be administered clear of all corruptions and ceremonies introduced by Papists and retained by Protestants; so likewise the ordinance of baptism both with respect to subject and mode, which as it was first delivered was only administered to persons professing faith and repentance, and that by immersion only; and if this will be universally administered in the latter day, as in the first ages of Christianity, infant sprinkling will be practiced no more.

THIRDLY, Because Christ will then be king over all the earth in a spiritual sense; one Lord, whose commands will be obeyed with great precision and exactness, according to His will revealed in His Word; and as baptism is one of His commands He has prescribed, as He is and will be acknowledged the one Lord and head of the church, and not the pope, who will be no more submitted to; so there will be one baptism, which will be administered to one sort of subjects only, as He has directed, and in one manner only, by immersion, of which His baptism is an example; and therefore, I believe that infant sprinkling will be no more in use.

FOURTHLY, At this same time the name of Christ will be one, that is, His religion; which will be the same, it was at first instituted by Him. Now it is various, as it is professed and practiced by different persons that bear His name; but in the latter day, it will be one and the same, in all its branches, as embraced, professed, and exercised by all that are called Christians; and as baptism is one part of it, this will be practiced in a uniform manner, or by all alike, that shall name the name of Christ; for since Christ's name or the Christian religion in all its parts, will be the same in all the professors of

it; I therefore firmly believe, that baptism will be practiced alike by all, according to the primitive institution, and consequently, that infant-baptism will be no more: for

FIFTHLY, As at this time, the watchmen will see eye to eye (Isaiah 52:8), the ministers of the gospel will be of one mind, both with respect to the doctrines and duties of Christianity; will alike preach the one, and practice the other; so the people under their ministrations will be all agreed, and receive the truths of the gospel in the love of them, and submit to the precepts and institutions of it, without any difference among themselves, and without any variation from the word of God; and among the rest, the ordinance of baptism, about which there will be no longer strife; but all will agree that the proper subjects of it are believers, and the right mode of it immersion; and so infant-sprinkling will be no more contended for; saints in this as in other things will serve the Lord with one consent (Zephaniah 3:9).

SIXTHLY, Another reason why I firmly believe, infant-baptism will hereafter be no more practiced, is, because Antichrist will be entirely consumed with the spirit or breath of Christ's mouth, and with the brightness of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8), that is, with the pure and powerful preaching of His word, at His coming to take to Himself His power, and reign spiritually in the churches, in a more glorious manner; when all Antichristian doctrines and practices will be entirely abolished and cease, even the whole body of Antichristian worship; not a limb of Antichrist shall remain, but all shall be consumed. Now as I believe, and it has been shown, that infant-baptism is a part and pillar of popery, a limb of Antichrist, a branch of superstition and will-worship, introduced by the 'man of sin, when he shall be destroyed, this shall be destroyed with him and be no more.

SEVENTHLY, Though the notion of infant-baptism has been embraced and practiced, by many good and godly men in several ages; yet it is part of the wood, hay and stubble, laid by them upon the foundation; is one of those works of theirs, the bright day of the gospel shall declare to be a falsehood; and which the fire of the word will try, burn up, and consume, though they themselves shall be saved; and therefore being utterly consumed, shall no more appear in the world: for

EIGHTHLY, When the angel shall descend from heaven with great power, and the earth be lightened with his glory, which will be at the fall of Babylon and ruin of Antichrist (Revelation 18:1-2), such will be the blaze of light then given, that all Antichristian darkness shall be removed, and all works of darkness will be made manifest and cast off, among which infant-baptism is one; and then the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9), even of the knowledge of the word, ways, worship, truths, and ordinances of God, and all ignorance of them vanish and disappear; and then the ordinance of baptism will appear in its former lustre and purity, and be embraced and submitted to in it; and every corruption of it be rejected, of which infant-baptism is one.

NINTHLY, Whereas the ordinances of the gospel, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are to continue until the second coming of Christ, or the end of the world (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26), and whereas there have been corruptions introduced into them, as they are generally administered, unless among some few; it is not reasonable to think, that those corruptions will be continued to the second coming of Christ, but that they will be removed before, even at His spiritual coming, or in His spiritual reign: and as with respect to baptism particularly, there must be a mistake on one side or the other, both with respect to subject and mode; and as this mistake I firmly believe is on the side of the Paedobaptists; so, I as firmly believe for the reason given, that it

will be removed, and infant-sprinkling for the future no more used.

TENTHLY, the Philadelphian church-state, which answers to and includes the spiritual reign of Christ in His churches, is what I refer unto in the preface, as the time when the practice of infant-baptism will cease; in which I am confirmed, by the characters given of that church and the members of it; as that it kept the word of Christ; that is, not only the doctrines of the gospel, which will be then purely preached and openly professed, but the ordinances of it, baptism and the Lord's Supper; which have been (particularly baptism) sadly corrupted in almost all the periods of the churches hitherto, excepting the apostolic one; but will in this period be restored to their pristine purity and glory; hence it is promised to this church, and that it represents, that because it kept the word of Christ's patience, truly and faithfully, it should be kept from the hour of temptation that should come on all the earth; and is exhorted to hold fast what she had, both the doctrines and ordinances, as they were delivered by Christ and His apostles, and as she now held them in the truth and purity of them. These are the reasons why I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is coming, and I hope will not be long, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world.

Since, now at this time, we are greatly and justly alarmed with the increase of popery; in order to put a stop to it, let us begin at home, and endeavor to remove all remains of it among ourselves; so shall we with the better grace, and it may be hoped, with greater success oppose and hinder the spread of it.

POSTSCRIPT The writer who lately appeared in a newspaper, under the name of Candidus, having been obliged to quit his mountebank-stage on which he held forth to the public for a few days; has, in his great humility, condescended to deal out his packets, in a less popular way; under the title of, The True Scripture-Doctrine of the Mode and Subjects of Christian Baptism, etc., in six letters. It is quite unreasonable that we should be put, by every impertinent scribbler, to the drudgery of answering, what has been answered over and over again in this controversy. However I shall make short work of this writer, and therefore I have only put him to, and shall only give him a little gentle correction at the cart's tail, to use the phrase of a late, learned professor, in one of our universities, with respect to the discipline of a certain Bishop. The first and second letters of Candidus, in the newspaper, are answered in marginal notes on my sermon upon baptism, and published along with it. His third letter is a mean piece of bufoonery and scurrility; it begins with a trite, vulgar proverb, in low language, fit only for the mouth of a hostler or a carman; and his friends seem to have spoiled one or other of these, by making him a parson. He goes on throughout the whole of the letter, as one that is in great haste, running after his wits, to seek for them, having lost them, if ever he had any; and it concludes with a poor, pitiful, foolish burlesque, mixed with slander and falsehood, on an innocent gentleman; quite a stranger to him, and could never have offended him, but by a conscientious regard to what he believed was his duty. However, by this base and inhumane treatment, it appears that his moral character is unimpeachable, or otherwise it would have been nibbled at. His fourth letter begins with representing the sermon published, as so mangled, changed, altered and added to, that it has scarce any remains of its original; in which he must be condemned by all that heard it: and he has most unluckily charged one clause as an addition, which, there cannot be one in ten but will remember it; it is this, "if any man can find any others in his (the jailer's) house, besides all that were in it, he must be reckoned a very sagacious person;" and he himself, in his first letter published before the sermon was, has an oblique glance

at it; calling me, in a sneering way, "the sagacious doctor." What he says in the following part of the letter, concerning the subjects of baptism, and what he intended to say concerning the mode in another letter, which was prevented, I suppose are contained in a set of letters now published; and which are addressed, not to Mr. Printer, who cast him off, but to a candid Anti-paedobaptist, and indeed the epithet of candid better agrees with that sort of people than with himself, of which he seems conscious, if he has any conscience at all; for it looks as if he had not, or he could never have set out with such a most notorious untruth, and impudent falsehood; affirming that I said in my sermon, that "the ten commandments, styled the moral law, were not binding on Christ's disciples:" a greater untruth could not well have been told: my writings in general testify the contrary, and particularly two sermons I have published, one called "The Law Established by the Gospel," and the other, "The Law in the Hand of Christ;" which are sufficient to justify me from such a wicked calumny; and the paragraph with which my sermon begins, attacked by him, and which I declare, are the words I delivered in the pulpit, that "the ten commandments, are the commands of God, and to be observed by Christians under the present dispensation;" for which I quoted 1 Corinthians 9:21, this I say, must stare him in the face, and awaken his guilty conscience, if not seared as with a red hot iron; which I fear is his case. As for his flings at eternal justification, which he has lugged into this controversy, and his grand concluding and common argument against it, that it is eternal nonsense, I despise; he has not a head for that controversy: and I would only put him in mind of what Dr. [John] Owen said to [Richard] Baxter, who charged him with holding it, "What would the man have me say? I have told him, I am not of that opinion; would he have me sware to it, that I am not? but though I am not, I know better and wiser men than myself that do hold it."

Somebody in the newspaper observing that this man was froward and perverse, and fearing he should do hurt to religion in general, in order to divert him from it, and guide him another way; complimented him with being a man of wit, and of abilities; and the vain young man fancies he really is one: and being a witty youth, and of abilities, he has been able to produce an instance of infant-baptism about 1500 years before Christian baptism was instituted; though he must not have the sole credit of it, because it has been observed before him: the instance is of the passage of the Israelites through the sea, at which time, he says, their children were baptized, as well as they: come then, says he, in very polite language, this is one scripture-instance; but if he had had his wits about him, he might have improved this instance, and strengthened his argument a little more; by observing that there was a mixed multitude, that came with the Israelites out of Egypt, and with them passed through the sea, with their children also. And since he makes mention of Nebuchadnezzar's baptism, it is much he did not try to make it out that his children were baptized also, then or at some other time. This is the true scripture doctrine, of the subjects of Christian baptism, according to his title. That the Jews received their proselytes by baptism, before the times of Christ, he says, I know; but if I do, he does not. I observe, he is very ready to ascribe great knowledge of things to me, which he himself is ignorant of; I am much obliged to him: the great names he opposes to me, don't frighten me; I have read their writings and testimonies, and know what they were capable of producing, and to what little purpose; though I must confess, it is amazing to me, that any men of learning should give into such a notion, that Christian baptism is founded upon a tradition of the baptism or dipping of proselytes with the Jews; of which tradition there is not the least hint, neither in the Old nor in the New Testament; nor in the Apocryphal writings between both; nor in Josephus; nor in Philo the Jew; nor in the Jewish Misnah, or book of

traditions; compiled in the second century, or at the beginning of the third, whether of the Jerusalem or Babylonian editions. I am content to risk that little reputation I have for Jewish learning, on this single point; if any passage can be produced in the Misnah, mentioning such a tradition of the Jews, admitting proselytes by baptism or dipping, whether adult or children. I own it is mentioned in the Gemara, both Jerusalem and Babylonian, a work of later times, but not in the Misnah; though Dr. Gale has allowed it without examination. The only passage in it which Dr. Wall refers to from Selden, though not fully expressed, is this "a female stranger, a captive, a maiden, which are redeemed and become proselytes, and are made free; being under (the next paragraph is above) three years and one day old, are allowed the matrimonial dowry;" i.e., at marriage: but not a tittle is here or anywhere else in the Misnah, of receiving either minors or adult as proselytes by baptism or dipping: and supposing such a Jewish tradition, five hundred, or three hundred, or two hundred years after Christ; or even so many years before Christ, of what avail would it be? He must be strangely bigoted to an hypothesis, to believe that our Lord, who so severely inveighed against the traditions of the Jews, and particularly those concerning their baptisms or dippings; should found His New Testament ordinance of baptism, on a tradition of theirs, without excepting it from the other traditions, and without declaring His will it should be continued, which He has not done; and yet this, as Dr. Hammond suggests, in the basis of infant-baptism: to what wretched shifts must the Paedobaptists be driven for a foundation to place infant-baptism on, as to place it on such a rotten one; a tradition of men, who at other times, are reckoned by them, themselves, the most stupid, sottish, and despicable of all men upon the face of the earth? For the farther confutation of this notion, see Sir Norton Knatchbull on 1 Peter 3:20-21; Stennett against Ruffen, p. 61; Gale’s Reflections on Wall’s History of Baptism, letters 9 and 10; Rees on Infant-Baptism, P. 17-29.

I shall not pursue this writer any farther, by giving particular answers to his arguments, objections, and queries, such as they are; but shall only refer the reader to the answers that have been already given to them: as to the threadbare argument, from Abraham’s covenant, and from circumcision; for Old Testament times and cases, are chiefly dealt in, to settle a New Testament ordinance, see Ewer’s Answer to Hitchin, Rees against Walker, and my answers to Dickinson, Clarke, and Bostwick. Of the unreasonableness of requiring instances of the adult baptism of children of Christian parents, in the scriptures, see my Strictures on Bostwick’s Fair and Rational Vindication, etc., p. 106. Of the testimonies of the ancient Christian writers, in favor of infant-baptism, see Gale’s Reflections, etc., letters 11, 12, 13; Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 150 and etc.; some treatises of mine, The Divine Right of infant-baptism Examined, etc., p. 20-25; The Argument from Apostolic Tradition, etc.; Antipaedobaptism; Reply to Clarke, p. 18-23; Strictures on Bostwick, p. 100-103.

I called upon this writer, in the notes on my sermon, to name any lexicographer of note, that ever rendered the word baptize by "perfundo" or "aspergo," "pour" or "sprinkle;" and behold! Leigh’s Critica Sacra, is the only book quoted! and he the only lexicographer mentioned, if he may be so called! a book which every one of our illiterate lay-preachers, as they are called, are capable of quoting, and of confronting this writer with it; by observing that Leigh says, that "the native and proper signification of the word, is to dip into water, or to plunge under water, John 3:22-23; Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:38." In proof of baptism by immersion, and of the true signification of the word, see Gale’s Reflections, etc., letters 3 and 4;

Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 121; and my treatises of The Ancient Mode of Baptizing and the Defense Of It, with The Divine Right of Infant-baptism Examined, etc., p. 90, etc.

I bid this writer adieu: God give him repentance for his sins, and the pardon of them; and this I am sure he cannot charge, neither with uncharitableness, nor with Antinomianism. When the Paedobaptists write again, it may be expected they will employ a better hand; or should they choose to fix upon one of their younger sort again; let them take care, first to wring the milk well out of his nose, before they put a pen in his hand.

02. Of Actual Sins and Transgressions

Of Actual Sins and Transgressions. From the sin of Adam arises the corruption of nature, with which all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, are infected; and from the corruption of nature, or indwelling sin, arise many actual sins and iniquities; which are called in scripture, "The works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19), or corrupt nature, in distinction from the fruits of the Spirit, or inward principles of grace and holiness; (see Galatians 5:17; Galatians 5:22). These are the same with the "lusts of the flesh", and "the desires" or "wills of the flesh" (Ephesians 2:3). The internal sinful actings of the mind will; even all manner of concupiscence, which lust or corrupt nature works in men, and which war against the soul: they are called sometimes, "the deeds of the body", of the body of sin; which, through the Spirit, are mortified weakened, kept under, so as not to be frequently committed, and be a course of sinning (Romans 8:13; Romans 6:6). And sometimes, the deeds of the old man, the old principle of corrupt nature, to be put off, with respect to the outward conversation, and not be governed by the dictates of it (Colossians 3:9 Ephesians 4:21). Sometimes they are represented by corrupt fruit, brought forth by a corrupt tree; such is man’s sinful heart and nature, and such the acts that spring from it: if the tree is not good, good fruit will not grow upon it: the heart must be made good ere good works can be done by men, (Matthew 7:16-20; Matthew 12:33). Those actual sins are the birth of corrupt nature, which is like a woman that conceives, bears, and brings forth; "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin" (James 1:15; Romans 7:5). Corrupt nature is the fountain, and actual sins, whether internal or external, are the streams that flow from it; "Out of the heart", as from a fountain, "proceed evil thoughts", &c. (Matthew 15:19), as is the spring, so are the streams; if water at the fountainhead is bitter, so are the streams; "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place, sweet water and bitter?" No.

Actual sins are deviations from the law of God; for "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Actions, as natural actions, are not sinful; for all actions, or motions, are from God, the first Cause; from whom nothing sinful comes; creatures depend on him in acting, as well as in subsisting; "In him we move"; or otherwise they would be independent of him; whereas, "all things are of him". But an action is denominated good or bad, from its agreement or disagreement with the law of God, its conformity or disconformity to it; it is the irregularity, obliquity, and aberration of the action from the rule of the divine law, that is sin; and this whether in thought, word, or deed; for actual sins are not to be restrained to outward actions, performed by the members of the body, as instruments of unrighteousness; but include the sinful actings of the mind, evil thoughts, carnal desires, the lusts of the heart, "heresies", errors in the mind, false opinions of things, and "envyings", are reckoned among the "works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:20-21). And when we distinguish actual sins from original sin, we do not mean thereby that original sin is not actual. The first sins of Adam and Eve were actual sins, transgressions of the law of God; "Eve was in the transgression"; that is, guilty of an act of transgression; and we read of "Adam’s transgression", which designs the first sin he committed (1 Timothy 2:14; Romans 5:14). And original sin, as derived from the sin of our first parents, is also actual; it is a want of conformity to the law of God,

and is very active and operative; as it dwells in men, it works in them all manner of concupiscence; it hinders all the good, and puts upon doing all the evil it can; and is itself exceeding sinful. But actual sins are second acts, that flow from the corruption of nature. My business is not now to enlarge on particular sins, by explaining the nature, and showing the evil of them; which more properly belongs to another part of my scheme that is to follow, even "Practical Divinity". I shall therefore only treat of actual sins very briefly, in a doctrinal way, by giving the distribution of sins into their various sorts and kinds, reducing them to proper classes, and ranging them under their respective heads.

1. First, With respect to the object of sin, it may be distinguished into sins against God; sins against others, our neighbours, friends, and those in connection with us; and against ourselves; for which distinction there seems to be some foundation in 1 Samuel 2:25. "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?"—

1a. There are some sins that are more immediately and directly against God; all sin, indeed, is ultimately against him, being contrary to his nature and will; a transgression of his law; a contempt and neglect, and indeed a tacit denial of his legislative power and authority; who is that "Lawgiver that is able to save and to destroy". The sins of David against Uriah are confessed by him to be against the Lord; "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned" (Psalms 51:4). But there are some sins more particularly pointed at him, committed against him, in an open, bold, and audacious manner; "Their tongues and their doings are against the Lord" (Isaiah 3:8). Such are they as Eliphaz describes, who "stretch out their hands against God" (Job 15:25-26), their carnal minds being enmity against God. Particularly sins against the first table of the law, are sins against God; such as atheism in theory and in practice; which is, a denying that there is a God, and strikes at the very Being of him: blasphemy of his name, his perfections, and providences; which is one of the things that proceed from the evil heart of man: idolatry, having other gods before him, and serving the creature besides the Creator; bowing down to, and worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone: to which may be added, sensuality, voluptuousness, making the belly a god, and covetousness, which is idolatry: taking the name of God in vain, using it on trifling occasions, and in a light and irreverent manner: cursing fellow creatures in the name of God, and swearing falsely by it, which is perjury: want of love to God, and of fear of him; having no regard to his worship, private and public; a profanation of the day of worship, and a neglect of the ordinances of divine service.

1b. Sins against others, are the violations of the second table of the law; as disobedience to parents; not giving that honour, showing that reverence and respect, and paying that regard to their commands that ought to be: to which head may be reduced, disobedience to all superiors; the king as supreme, the father of his country; subordinate magistrates; ministers of the word, masters, &c. Murder, or the taking away of the life of another, is a sin against the sixth command, as the former are against the fifth; of this there are divers sorts; as parricide, fratricide, &c. which last is the first actual sin we read of after the sin of our first parents: it seems as if the sin of murder greatly abounded in the old world, since at the beginning of the new, a special law respecting it was made; "Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6). All sins of unchastity, in thoughts, and by obscene words and filthy actions, are violations of the seventh command, which forbids adultery, fornication, incest, and all unnatural lusts: taking away a man’s property, privately or publicly, by force or fraud, by false accusations, and by circumventing and

overreaching in trade and business, are breaches of the eighth command; and not only doing injury to the persons and properties of others, but to their good name, credit, and reputation, comes under the name of actual sins against others; for taking away a man’s good name is as bad as taking away his money, and is next to taking away his life.

1c. There are sins against a man’s self; the apostle reckons fornication as sinning "against" a man’s "own body" (1 Corinthians 6:18), what is a pollution of it brings dishonor upon it, fills it with nauseous diseases, and weakens the strength of it. Drunkenness is another sin against a man’s self; it is what deprives him of the exercise of his reason, impairs his health, wastes his time, his substance, and at last his body. Suicide is a sin against a first principle of nature, self-preservation. The Stoics applaud it as an "heroic" action; but it is a base, mean, and cowardly one; and betrays want of fortitude of mind to bear up under present adversity, and to meet what is thought to be coming on. However, no man has a right to dispose of his own life; God is the giver, or rather lender, of it, and he only has a right to take it away.

2. Secondly, With respect to the subject of sin, it may be distinguished into internal and external; sins of heart, lip, and life; or of thought, word, and action.

2a. Internal sins, sins of the heart; the plague of sin begins there, that is the seat of it; it is desperately wicked, it is wickedness itself; and out of it all manner of sin flows; the thoughts of it are evil, they are abominable to God, and very distressing to good men, who hate vain thoughts; the very thought of foolishness or wickedness is sin [1]. The imagination of the thoughts of the heart is evil continually; the very substratum of thought, the motions of sin in the mind, work to bring forth fruit unto death; the desires and lusts of the mind are carnal and sinful, which are various; the lust of uncleanness in the heart; the lust of passion, wrath, and revenge; the lust of envy, which the object of it cannot stand before, and which slays the subject of it; the lusts of ambition and pride; and which are thus summed up by the apostle, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:15).

Errors in the mind, false opinions of things contrary to the word of God; all unreasonable doubts, even in saints themselves; and all the actings of unbelief, which proceed from an evil heart, come under this sort of sins, internal ones, or sins of the heart.

2b. Sins of the lip, or of words, which are external, openly pronounced, whether respecting God or man, and one another; as all blasphemy of God, evil speaking of men, cursing and swearing, lying one to another; all obscene and unchaste words, every sort of corrupt communication; all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking; all foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient; yea, every idle word, comes into the account of sin, and will be brought to judgment; see (Ephesians 4:25, Ephesians 4:29, Ephesians 4:31, Ephesians 5:4; Matthew 12:36-37).

2c. Outward actions of the life and conversation; a vain conversation, a course of sin, the garment spotted with the flesh, right eye and right hand sins, and all that the members of the body are used as instruments in the commission of.

3. Thirdly, With respect to the parts of sin: they may be divided into sins of omission and sins of commission; when some things are left undone which should be done, and which are done when they ought not to be; such a distinction may be observed in the words of Christ, or however a foundation for it there is in them (Matthew 23:23; Matthew 25:42-44), and both these sorts of sins

are very strongly expressed in Isaiah 44:22-24. Sins of omission are against affirmative precepts, not doing what is commanded to be done; sins of commission are against negative precepts, doing what is forbidden to be done; (see James 4:17).

4. Fourthly, Sin may be distinguished by the principle from whence it arises. Some sins arise from ignorance, as in the princes of the world, that crucified the Lord of life and glory; in the apostle Paul when unregenerate, in persecuting the saints, and doing many things contrary to the name of Jesus; and which he did ignorantly, and in unbelief; and in others who know not their master's will, and so do it not, and yet pass not uncorrected; especially whose ignorance is willful and affected, who know not, nor will understand, but reject and despise the means of knowledge, and say to God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; the sins of others are presumptuous ones, and are done willfully, knowingly, and of choice, and who are worthy of many stripes; (see Luke 12:47-48). Some sins are through infirmity of the flesh, the power of Satan's temptations, and the snares of the world, which men are betrayed into through the deceitfulness of sin, and are overtaken and overpowered at an unawares, and surprised into the commission of them; and which is the case oftentimes of the people of God.

5. Fifthly, Sins may be distinguished by the degrees of them into lesser and greater; for all sins are not equal, as the Stoics say [2]; and some are more aggravated than others, with respect to the objects of them; as sins against God are greater than those against men; violating of the first table of the law, greater than that of the second: and with respect to persons that commit them, and with respect to time and place when and where they are committed, with other circumstances; some are like motes in the eye, others as beams. Our Lord has taught us this distinction, not only in Matthew 7:3-5 but when he says, "He that delivered me unto thee, hath the greater sin" (John 19:11). And this appears from the different degrees of punishment of sin, which are allotted in proportion to it; so as our Lord speaks of some cities, where his doctrines were taught, and his miracles wrought, and repented not, that it would be "more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, than for them" (Matthew 11:20-24). According to the laws of Draco, all sins were equal, and all were punished with the same capital punishment; the stealing of an apple, as the murder of a man. Hence it was said, that Draco wrote his laws, not in ink, but in blood [3]. Not such are the laws of God; nor such the nature of sin according to them.

6. Sixthly, Sins may be distinguished by their adjuncts. As,

6a. Into secret and open sins. Secret sins are such as are secretly committed, or sins of the heart; which none but God, and a man's own soul, are privy to; and some pass through it unnoticed and unobserved by the good man himself; and are opposed to presumptuous sins; which distinction may be observed in Psalms 19:12-13. Others are done openly, publicly, before the sun, and in sight of all, without fear or shame. Some men's sins go beforehand to judgment; they are notorious ones; condemned by all, before the judgment comes; and others more secretly committed, they follow after; for all will be brought into judgment (1 Timothy 5:24; Ecclesiastes 12:14).

6b. The papists distinguish sin into venial and mortal: which cannot be admitted without a limitation or restriction; for though all sin is venial or pardonable, through the grace of God and blood of Christ, and is pardoned thereby, excepting one, that will be hereafter mentioned; yet none are pardonable in their own nature; or are so small and trifling as to be undeserving of death, only of some lesser chastisement; for all sin is mortal, and deserving of death; "The wages of sin", of any

and every sin, without distinction of greater and lesser, is death, eternal death, as it must be; for "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things", be they greater or lesser, "written in the book of the law to do them": if, therefore, every breach of the law subjects to the curse of it, which is death, then every sin is mortal. Yet,

6c. Sin may be distinguished into remissible and irremissible. All the sins of God's people are remissible, and are actually remitted. God forgives them all their iniquities, and heals all their diseases, their spiritual maladies: and on the other hand, all the sins of reprobates, of abandoned sinners, that live and die in final impenitence and unbelief, are irremissible; "He that made them will not have mercy on them", to forgive their sins; "And he that formed them will show them no favour that way (Isaiah 27:11). There is one sin which is commonly called, the "unpardonable sin", which is the sin, or blasphemy, against the Holy Ghost; and of which it is expressly said, that "it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come" (Matthew 12:31-32). But not every sin against the Holy Ghost is here meant; every sin committed against God is committed against the Holy Ghost, as well as against the Father and the Son; he, with them, being the one God, against whom all sin is committed: nor is it a denial of his deity, and of his personality, though sins against him, yet they arise from ignorance of him, and are errors in judgment; and from which persons may be recovered, and repent of, and renounce: nor is a denial of the necessity of the operations of his grace on the souls of men, in order to their regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, this sin, for the same reasons: men may, and good men too, grieve the Holy Spirit by their sins; yea, vex him, as the Israelites; and yet not sin the unpardonable sin: yea, a man may break all the Ten Commandments, and not sin the sin against the Holy Ghost; it is a sin not against the law, but against the gospel; it lies in the denial of the great and fundamental truth of the gospel, salvation by Jesus Christ, in all its branches; peace and pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, and justification by his righteousness; and this after he has received the knowledge of this truth, under the illuminations, convictions, and demonstrations of the Spirit of God; and yet, through the instigation of Satan, and the wickedness of his own heart, knowingly, and willfully, and maliciously denies this truth, and obstinately persists therein. So that as he never comes to repentance, he has no forgiveness, here nor hereafter. Not because the Holy Spirit is superior to the other divine Persons; for they are equal: nor through any deficiency in the grace of God, or blood of Christ; but through the nature of the sin, which is diametrically opposite to the way of salvation, pardon, atonement, and justification; for these being denied to be by Christ, there can be no pardon; for another Jesus will never be sent, another Saviour will never be given; there will be no more shedding of blood, no more sacrifice, nor another sacrifice for sin; nor another righteousness wrought out and brought in. And, therefore, there remains nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment and indignation, to come on such persons. Upon all which it may be observed, from what a small beginning, as the sin of our first parents might seem to be, what great things have arisen; what a root of bitterness that was which has brought forth so much unwholesome and pernicious fruit; such a vast number of sins, and of such an enormous size: what a virtue must there be in the blood of Christ, to cleanse from such sins as these, and all of them; and in his sacrifice to make atonement for them; and in his righteousness to justify from them! And how great is the superabounding grace of God, that where sin has thus abounded, grace should superabound!

ENDNOTES:

[1] Proverbs 24:9. This is a Christian doctrine; “apud nos et cogitare peccare est”, Minutius Felix in Octavio, p. 39. and yet an heathen poet asserts it, from whom one would not have expected it; “nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum, facti crimen habet----” Juvenal, Satire 13. v. 209. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 16.

[2] Laert. l. 7. Vita Zeno, p. 510.

[3] Plutarch in Solon. p. 87.

02. Of Adoption

Of Adoption

Some think that adoption is a part and branch of justification, and included in it; since that part of justification which lies in the imputation of the righteousness of Christ entitles to eternal life, hence called, "the justification of life", as adoption does; so that the children of God may be said to have a twofold title to eternal life; the one by the free grace of God making them sons, which entitles them to it; the other by justification in a legal way, and confirms the former, and opens a way for it; or that it may appear to be founded on justice as well as grace: the learned Dr. Ames [1] seems to have a respect to both these. And such that are justified by the grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, are "heirs" of it, as adopted ones be; "if children, then heirs" (Romans 5:18; Titus 3:7; Romans 8:17). Some consider adoption as the effect of justification; and Junius calls it, "via adoptionis", the way to adoption: it is certain, they have a close connection with each other, and agree in their author, causes, and objects; the "white stone" of absolution, or justification, and the "new name" of adoption, go together in the gift of Christ to the overcomer (Revelation 2:17). Though I am of opinion they are distinct blessings of grace, and so to be considered: adoption is a distinct thing from either justification or pardon. A subject may be acquitted by his sovereign from charges laid against him; and a criminal, convicted and condemned, may be pardoned, yet does not become his son; if adopted, and taken into his family, it must be by a distinct and fresh act of royal favour.

I have treated already, see on Adoption in 853, of adoption as an immanent act of the divine will, which was in God from eternity; hence the elect of God were not only predestinated to the adoption of children, to the blessing itself, openly and actually to enjoy it in time, and to the inheritance adopted to; but this blessing itself was provided and bestowed in the everlasting covenant of grace, in which the elect of God had not only the promise of this relation, but were in it given to Christ under this relation and character (Ephesians 1:5; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 2:13), hence they are spoken of as the children of God and Christ, previous to the incarnation of Christ, and to his sufferings and death; as well as to the mission of the Spirit into their hearts, as the Spirit of regeneration and adoption (Hebrews 2:14; John 11:52; Galatians 4:6). I shall therefore now consider it as openly bestowed upon believing in Christ, and as manifested, applied, and evidenced by the Spirit of God. And,

I. Shall consider, in what sense believers are the sons of God; which is by adoption, and the nature of that: they are not the sons of God in so high a sense as Christ is, who is God’s own Son, his proper Son, his only begotten Son; which cannot be said either of angels or men; for as "to which of the angels", so to which of the sons of men "said God at any time, Thou art son, this day have I begotten thee?" Nor in the sense that their fellow creatures are, whether angels or men, who are the sons of God by creation, as the former, so the latter; for they are all "his offspring": nor in the sense that magistrates be, who are so by office, and, on that account, called "the children of the most High", being his representatives: nor as professors of religion, who are called the sons of

God, in distinction from the children of men; but by adoption; hence we read of the adoption of children, these are predestinated unto, and which they receive, through redemption by Christ, and of which the Spirit of God is the witness; hence called the Spirit of "adoption": and even the inheritance to which they are entitled, bears the name of "adoption" (Ephesians 1:5; Galatians 4:5; Romans 8:15; Romans 8:23). There is a civil and a religious adoption. A civil adoption, and which obtained among all nations; among the Egyptians, so Moses was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter; and among the Hebrews, so Esther by Mordecai; and it obtained much among the Romans, to which, as used by them, the allusion is in the New Testament, in a religious sense; it is sometimes used of the whole people of the Jews, to whom belonged "the adoption" (Romans 9:4) and at other times, of some special and particular persons, both among Jews and Gentiles; for of the former all were "not the children of God"; and of the latter, if they were believers in Christ, they were Abraham's spiritual seed, "and heirs according to the promise", (Romans 9:7-8; Galatians 3:26; Galatians 3:29). Between civil and spiritual adoption, in some things there is an agreement, and in some things a difference.

First, In some things they agree.

1. In the name and thing, nioqesia, a putting among the children; so spiritual adoption is called (Jeremiah 3:19), or putting, or taking, one for a son, who was not so by nature and birth; which is the case of adoption by special grace; it is of such who are, "by nature, children of wrath", and "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"; and taking these from the family of the world, to which they originally belonged, into the family of God, and household of faith (Ephesians 2:3; Ephesians 2:12; Ephesians 2:19).

2. As civil adoption is of one to an inheritance who has no legal right to it; so is special and spiritual adoption. None, in a civil sense, are adopted, but to an inheritance of which they are made heirs; and so such who are adopted in sense are adopted to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and eternal; and as the one are adopted to an inheritance they had no natural right unto, nor any legal claim upon; so the other are such who have sinned, and come short of the eternal inheritance, and can make no legal pretension to it by works of the law, (Romans 4:14; Galatians 3:18).

3. Civil adoption is the voluntary act of the adopter. Among the Romans, when a man adopted one for his son, they both appeared before a proper magistrate, and the adopter declared his will and pleasure to adopt the person presented, he consenting to it. Special and spiritual adoption is an act of the sovereign goodwill and pleasure of God, who has predestinated his to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the "good pleasure of his will"; it is a pure act of his grace to make them his sons and heirs, and to give them the kingdom, the inheritance, even eternal life, which is the free gift of God, through Christ (Ephesians 1:5; Luke 12:32; Romans 6:23).

4. In civil adoption the adopted took and bore the name of the adopter: so the adopted sons of God have a new name, which the mouth of the Lord their God names, a new, famous, and excellent name, which no man knoweth, saving he that receives it; a name better than that of sons and daughters of the greatest earthly potentate; a name by which they are called the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty (Isaiah 62:2; Isaiah 56:5; Revelation 2:17; 1 John 3:1).

5. Such who are adopted in a civil sense are taken into the family of the adopter, and make a part of it; and stand in the relation, not of servants, but sons; so those who are adopted of God, are taken into that family, which is named of him in heaven and in earth, and are of his household; in which they are not as servants, nor merely as friends, but as the children of God and household of faith (Ephesians 3:15; Ephesians 3:19; John 15:15-16; Galatians 3:26; Galatians 6:10).

6. Persons adopted in a civil sense, as they are considered as children, they are provided for as such: provision is made for their education, their food, their clothing, their protection, and attendance, and for an inheritance and portion for them: all the children of God, his adopted ones, they are taught of God, by his Spirit, his ministers, his word and ordinances; they are trained up in the school of the church, and under the ministry of the word, and are instructed by the preaching of the gospel, and by precepts, promises, and providences; as for food, they are continually supplied with what is suitable for them, the sincere milk of the word for babes, and meat for strong men; they are fed with hidden manna, with marrow and fatness, with the finest of the wheat, with the richest dainties of the gospel feast: as for their clothing, it is change of raiment, clothing of wrought gold, raiment of needlework, a robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation; fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints: for their protection, they have angels to wait upon them and guard them, who encamp about them, to preserve them from their enemies, and have the care and charge of them, to keep them in their ways; yea, they are kept by the Lord himself, as the apple of his eye, being his dear sons and pleasant children: and the inheritance he has prepared for them, of which they are heirs, is among the saints in light; is incorruptible, undefiled, never fading, and eternal, and is even a kingdom and glory.

7. Such as are adopted by men, come under the power, and are at the command of the adopter, and are under obligation to perform all the duties of a son to a parent; as to honour, reverence, and obey, and be subject to his will in all things. All which are due from the adopted sons of God, to him, their heavenly Father; honour is what God claims as his due from his children; "a son honoureth his father; if I then be a father, where is mine honour?" (Malachi 1:6, obedience to all his commands highly becomes, and is obligatory on them; they ought to be obedient children, and imitate God in all his immutable perfections, particularly in holiness, benevolence, kindness, and goodness; and even should be subject to his corrections and chastisements, which are not merely for his pleasure, but for their profit and good (1 Peter 1:14-16; Ephesians 5:1; Matthew 5:45; Matthew 5:48; Luke 6:35-36; Hebrews 12:9-10).

Secondly, In some things civil and spiritual adoption differ.

1. Civil adoption could not be done without the consent of the adopted, his will was necessary to it. Among the Romans the adopter, and the person to be adopted, came before a proper magistrate, and in his presence the adopter asked the person to be adopted, whether he was willing to be his son; and he answered, I am willing; and so the thing was agreed and finished. But in spiritual adoption, though the believer, when he comes to be acquainted with the privilege of adoption he is favored with, and is highly delighted and pleased with it, and admires and adores the grace that has brought him into the relation; yet his will and consent were not necessary to the constitution of the act of adoption; it may be said of that as of every other blessing of grace, that "it is not of him that willeth"; such was the grace of God that he did not wait for the will of the creature to complete this act, but previous to it put him among the children; and such is his sovereign power, that he

had an uncontrollable right to take whom he would, and make his sons and daughters; and such the influence and efficacy of his grace, as to make them willing in the day of his power to acknowledge the relation with the greatest wonder and thankfulness, and to behave according to it.

2. Civil adoption was allowed of, and provided for the relief and comfort of such who had no children, and to supply that defect in nature; but in spiritual adoption this reason does not appear: God did not adopt any of the sons of men for want of a son and heir; he had one, and in a higher class of sonship than creatures can be; more excellent and divine, and suitable to the divine nature; his own proper Son, begotten of him, was as one brought up with him, and his daily delight; the dear Son of his love, in whom he was well pleased; and who always did the things that were pleasing to him, and who inherited all his perfections and glory.

3. In civil adoption there are generally some causes and reasons in the adopted which influence and move the adopter to take the step he does. There are two instances of adoption in scripture, the one of Moses, the other of Esther; in both there were some things that wrought upon the adopters to do what they did. Moses was a goodly child, exceeding fair, and lovely to look upon, which, with other things, moved the daughter of Pharaoh to take him up out of the water, to take care of him, and adopt him for her son; Esther was also a fair and beautiful maid, and besides was related to Mordecai, which were the reasons why he took her to be his daughter: but in divine adoption, there is nothing in the adopted that could move the adopter to bestow such a favour; no worth nor worthiness, no love nor loveliness, nothing attracting in them; children of wrath by nature, as others; transgressors from the womb, and rebels against God. There were so many objections to their adoption, and so many arguments against it, and none for it in themselves, that the Lord is represented as making a difficulty of it, and saying, "How shall I put them among the children?" (Jeremiah 3:19), such blackamoors and Ethiopians as these are? so abominable and so disobedient, enemies in their minds by wicked works, hateful and hating one another?

4. In civil adoption, the adopter, though he takes one into his family, and makes him his son and heir, and gives him the name and title of a son, and a right to an inheritance designed for him; he cannot give him the nature of a son, nor qualifications fitting him for the use and enjoyment of the estate he is adopted to; he cannot give him a suitable disposition and temper of mind, nor communicate goodness, wisdom, and prudence for the management of it; he may turn out a fool, or a prodigal: but the divine adopter makes his sons partakers of the divine nature, and makes them meet for the inheritance with the saints in light.

5. Persons adopted in a civil sense cannot enjoy the inheritance while the adoptive father is living, not till after his death: but in spiritual adoption the adopted enjoy the inheritance, though their father is the everlasting and ever living God; and Christ, the firstborn, lives for ever, with whom they are joint heirs.

6. In some cases civil adoption might be made null and void [2]; as among the Romans, when against the right of the pontifex, and without the decree of the college; but spiritual adoption is never made void on any account.

There is a difference also between adoption and regeneration, though, divines usually confound these two together. They both have the same author; the same God and Father adopts and

regenerates; they flow from the same love and grace; and the same persons that are adopted are regenerated; and they are adopted and begotten again unto the same inheritance: but adoption is before regeneration; the one is an act of God’s will in eternity, the other is an act and work of his grace in time; the one is the cause, the other the effect; men are not adopted because regenerated, which would seem unnecessary; but they are regenerated because adopted; "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts"; to regenerate, to sanctify, and testify their adoption (Galatians 4:6), regeneration is the fruit and effect of adoption, and the evidence of it (John 1:12-13), adoption gives the name of sons, and a title to the inheritance; and regeneration gives the nature of sons, and a meetness for the inheritance.

II. The causes of adoption.

First, The efficient cause, God; none can adopt any into the family of God but God himself; none can put any among the children of God but he himself; none but he can do it, who says, "I will be his God, and he shall be my Son" (Revelation 21:7). God, Father, Son, and Spirit, are concerned in the affair of adoption.

1. God the Father; "What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us"; the Father of Christ, the one God and Father of us all; "that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:2). The God and Father of Christ, who blessed and chose his people in him, he predestinated them to the adoption of children by him; both to the grace of adoption, and to the inheritance they are adopted to, and obtain in Christ, in virtue thereof (Ephesians 1:3-5; Ephesians 1:11), he also predestinated them "to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren"; he set him up as the pattern of their sonship, that as he partook of their nature, they should be partakers of the divine nature; and that as he was a Son and Heir of all things, they should be likewise; and which will more manifestly be seen when they shall appear to be what they are, as sons, and be like unto him (Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:2). Besides, God the Father has not only determined upon their adoption, and all things relative to it; but he has provided this blessing in covenant for them, and secured it there; this is one of the "all things" in which "it is ordered" and sure; it is one of the spiritual blessings of the covenant, which he has blessed his people with in Christ; which covenant runs thus; "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:18), yea, the act of adoption itself, or putting among the children, is his act; for though he says, "How shall I put thee among the children?" there being no difference between them and others by nature, they are as bad and as black as others; yet he did do it.

2. The Son of God has a concern in adoption; and there are several connections and relations he stands in to his people, which serve greatly to illustrate and confirm it. There is an union between them, a very near and mysterious one (John 17:21), and from this union flow all the blessings of grace to the saints; they are first of God in Christ, and then he is everything to them, and they have everything through him to make them comfortable and happy; and particularly, he and they being one, his God is their God, and his Father is their Father; he is a Son, and they are sons; he is an heir, and they are joint heirs with him. There is a marriage relation between Christ and his people; he has betrothed them to himself in righteousness, and that for ever; he is their husband, and they are his spouse and bride; and as when a man marries a king’s daughter, he is his son-in-law, as David was to Saul; so one that marries a king’s son becomes his daughter: and thus the church

being married to Christ, the Son of God, becomes the King’s daughter (Psalms 45:13), through the incarnation of Christ, he not only became the "Goel", the near kinsman, but even a brother to those whose flesh and blood he partook of; and because he and they are "of one", of one and the same nature, "he is not ashamed to call them brethren"; and if his brethren, then, as he is the Son of God, they must be sons of God too: and through the redemption wrought out by him, they come "to receive the adoption" of children, the blessing before prepared for them, in the purpose and covenant of God; yea, the actual donation of the blessing of adoption is bestowed by Christ; for "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). It is "the Son who makes free"; that is, by making them children; for the children only are free; not servants (John 8:36).

3. The Spirit of God has also a concern in adoption; he is the author of regeneration; which, though it is not adoption, it is the evidence of it; the sons of God are described as "born of God" (John 1:13) and this spiritual birth, which makes men appear to be the sons of God, is owing to the Spirit of God; for "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit", that is, of the grace of the Spirit, comparable to water, "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). It is by faith in Christ that men receive the adoption of children; hence believers are said to be "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus"; this receives and claims the privilege and blessing; which faith is of the operation of the Spirit of God, who is therefore called "the Spirit of faith" (Galatians 3:26; 2 Corinthians 4:13). Moreover, it is the Spirit who witnesses the truth of adoption; he bears witness to the spirits of believers that they are the children of God; they receiving him as the Spirit of adoption, who is sent into their hearts for that purpose; "for because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:6), to all which may be added, that the several operations of the Spirit on the souls of men, such as his leadings and teachings, confirm unto them the truth of their sonship; "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14), who are led out of themselves, and off of themselves, to Christ and his righteousness; who are led into all truth as it is in Jesus, and to the fulness of Christ; and who are led through him, the Mediator, by the Spirit, unto God, as their Father; and which Spirit is given, and abides, as an earnest in their hearts; even "the earnest of the inheritance" they are adopted to, "until the redemption of the purchased possession" (2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:14).

Secondly, The moving cause of adoption, is the love, grace, free favour, and goodwill of God. There was nothing in the creature that could move him to it; no agreeable disposition in them, no amiableness in their persons, nor anything engaging in their conduct and behavior; but all the reverse, as before observed: wherefore, considering these things, the apostle breaks forth in this pathetic expression, "What manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1), in which he points out the source and spring of this blessing of grace, the amazing love of God.

III. The objects of adoption. And they are such who are the objects of the love of God; for since adoption flows from the love of God, such who are the children of God must be interested in it; and they are "dear children", strongly interested in his affections, like Ephraim, dear sons and pleasant children, whom God loves dearly, and loves with a love of complacency and delight; they are the chosen of God; for such that are chosen of God in Christ, they are predestinated to the adoption of children by him; hence sons before calling. They are also redeemed from among men, out of every

kindred, tongue, people, and nation, being the children of God scattered abroad, Christ came to gather together; and who, through redemption by him, receive the adoption of children, previously provided for them; though, in their natural state, they are rebellious children, children that are corrupt, and that are corrupters; children of wrath by nature, as others, and in no wise better than others; but are only openly and manifestly the children of God, when they commence believers in Christ: till then they cannot be called the children of God by themselves, or by others; till then they have no claim to the blessing, nor have they the power, the privilege, the dignity, and honour, to become the sons of God. These are the characters of the adopted ones, both secretly and openly.

IV. The nature and excellency of this privilege.

1. It is an act of surprising and distinguishing grace; it is an act of God’s free grace to predestinate to the adoption of children; it is part of the grace of the covenant, and of the grace given in Christ before the world began; it is owing to the grace of God that Christ was sent to redeem any of the sons of men, that they might receive the adoption of children: it is an instance of grace in God to send his Spirit to manifest it, and bear witness of it; and everyone that has seen his own sinfulness and vileness by nature, must say, that if he is a child of God, it is by the grace of God: and it is an act of marvelous grace (1 John 3:1), considering all things; and it will appear so, when the adopter and the adopted are put in a contrast; the adopter is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the most high God; hence these his children are called, "the children of the Highest"; and they are, by nature, in the lowest and meanest circumstances that can be imagined; lost and undone, poor and miserable, beggars and bankrupts, the foolish things of this world, and things that are not; and yet such God is pleased to adopt and take into his family: and it is an act of distinguishing grace, both with respect to angels and men; for they are men, the posterity of fallen Adam, that become the sons of God; and not angels, who are ministering spirits, or servants, but not sons; and of men, not all, only some, are the children of God; who are distinguished from the world who are not so, and who know not them that are the children of God (1 John 3:1).

2. It is a blessing of grace, which exceeds other blessings; as redemption, pardon, justification, and sanctification; a man may be redeemed out of a state of slavery by a king’s ransom, may be pardoned by his prince, though he has been a rebel and traitor to him, and may be acquitted from high crimes laid to his charge, and yet not be a king’s son; if adopted, and taken into his family, it must be by another and distinct act of royal favour and it is more to be a son than to be a saint, as Zanchy [3] observes; who thinks, that to be predestinated to the adoption of children is something over and above, and what exceeds being chosen to be holy, and without blame: to which may be added, that angels are saints, or holy ones, even perfectly holy; "he came with ten thousands of his saints" (Deuteronomy 33:2), but they are not sons, at least in the sense that some of the sons of men are.

3. It is a blessing of grace, which makes men exceeding honorable. David observed, that it was "no light thing to be a king’s son-in-law"; it certainly cannot be, to be a son of the King of kings; the name of a son of God is a new name, a renowned and excellent one; a name which no man knows the grandeur and dignity of but he that receives it; it makes a man more honorable than Adam was in his state of honour, and than the angels are in their high estate in heaven; since, though these are sons, yet only by creation, not by adoption, as saints are.

4. It brings men into the highest connections, alliances, relations, and offices; such are not only the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; but they are the brethren of Christ, the Son of God, are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; yea, they become kings and priests unto God.

5. The inheritance they are adopted to exceeds all others: it is a most comprehensive one, it includes all things; "he that overcometh shall inherit all things"; the ground and foundation of which, lies in the relation between God and such persons, as follows; "and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7), all things are theirs, civil, ecclesiastic, spiritual, and eternal; they are heirs of the grace of life, and possess the blessings of it; and they are heirs of everlasting salvation, and shall certainly enjoy it (1 Corinthians 3:22-23; 1 Peter 3:7; Hebrews 1:14), yea, they are heirs "of God" himself; he is their portion, and their exceeding great reward, both in this life and that to come; they, in some sort or other, enjoy the benefit of all the perfections of God, and of his purposes, promises, and providences; the heavenly state, particularly, is their inheritance, which is sometimes called "glory, substance", and the "inheritance of the saints in light" (Proverbs 3:35; Proverbs 8:21; Colossians 1:12), and has such epithets given it, as show it to be superior to all other inheritances (1 Peter 1:4).

6. All other inheritances are subject to corruption, and have pollution written upon them, are fading things, and liable to be lost, and often are; but this is an incorruptible crown, a crown of glory, that fadeth not away; a crown of righteousness laid up in heaven, in the covenant of grace, and in the hands of Christ, the Surety of it; and who is the saints feoffee in trust, and so it is sure to all the seed.

7. Adoption is a blessing and privilege that always continues. The love of God, which is the source of it, always remains; predestination, which gives birth to it, is the purpose of God, that stands sure, which is never revoked nor repented of; and therefore adoption is one of those gifts of grace of his which are without repentance; the covenant of grace, in which it is secured, is sure, can never be broken, nor will ever be removed: union with Christ is indissoluble, the bond of which is everlasting love; the marriage knot can never be untied; saints are members of his body, and one spirit with him; and the relation between them as husband and wife, as children and brethren, will ever remain. The Spirit, as a spirit of adoption, abides for ever; and he is the never failing earnest of the heavenly inheritance, and by whom the saints are sealed up to the day of redemption: the children of God may be corrected for their faults, and chastised by their heavenly Father; but never turned out of doors, nor disinherited, much less disowned, which is impossible; the son abides in the house for ever; and such that are sons are never more servants; once a child of God and always so (John 8:35; Galatians 4:7), such who are the sons of God may judge themselves unworthy of the relation, as the prodigal did; and who proposed within himself to desire his father to make him one of his hired servants; but he was not suffered to ask it, because it was what could not be done (Luke 15:19; Luke 15:21), yea, they may conclude they are not the sons of God; because they may imagine their spots are not the spots of God’s children, and yet they are in such a relation in which they shall always continue.

V. The effects of adoption.

1. A share in the pity, compassion, and care of God, their heavenly Father; who, as a father pities his children, so he pities them that fear him, and reverence him as their Father; in all their

afflictions he is afflicted, and sympathizes with them, and delivers them out of all their troubles; when they are in want of whatsoever kind, and particularly of food, he supplies them, and for which they are encouraged to ask it of him, as children of their parents; so our Lord reasons, "If a son", &c. (Luke 11:11-13).

2. Access to God with boldness; they can come to him as children to a father, use freedom with him, tell him all their complaints and wants, and come boldly to the throne of grace, and ask grace and mercy to help them in their times of need.

3. Conformity to the image of Christ, the firstborn among many brethren; which is begun in this life, and will be perfected in that to come; when the sons of God shall be like him, and see him as he is.

4. The Spirit of adoption, given to testify their sonship to them; for "because they are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6).

5. Heirship; for "if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17), heirs of the grace of life, heirs of a kingdom, of an inheritance most glorious, to which they are entitled, and for which they are made meet by the grace of God.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Hinc omnes fideles duplici quasi titulo vitam aeternam expectant, titulo nempe redemptionis, quem habent ex justificatione, et titulo quasi filationis, quem habent ex adoptione", Ames. Medulla, Theol. l. 1. c. 28. s. 7.

[2] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 8.

[3] Comment. in Ephesians 1:5.

02. Of Christ the Covenant Head of the Elect

Of Christ, As The Covenant Head Of The Elect

There are various characters, relations, and offices, which Christ sustains in the covenant of grace; among which, that of a federal Head is one: Christ is often said to be the "Head of the Church"; not of any particular congregation of saints, in this or the other part of the world; but of the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, even of all the elect of God, that ever have been, are, or will be in the world, (Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18) and he is a Head to them in different senses; he is that to them as a natural head is to a natural body, and the members of it; which is if the same nature with it, superior to it, communicates life, sense, and motion to it, as well as overlooks and protects it; such an Head of influence is Christ to the church, the source of life to it, from whom nourishment is derived, and all the supplies of grace, (Ephesians 4:15-16; Colossians 2:19). He is an Head in a political sense, as a captain general is head of his army, and a king is head of his subjects, (Judges 10:18; Judges 11:11; Hosea 1:11) and in an economical sense, as the husband is the head of the wife, and a father the head of his children, and a master the head of his servants and of his whole family (Numbers 1:4; Ephesians 5:23-24; Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 23:10). The headship of Christ in these several senses, chiefly belongs to his Kingly office; but besides these, he is the representative head of his church, or of all the elect of God; they were all considered in him, and represented by him, when he covenanted with his Father for them; all that he engaged to do and suffer, was not only on their account, but in their name and stead; and all that he received, promises and blessings, were not only for them, but he received them as representing them. As Christ was given to be the covenant of the people, so to be an Head of them in it (Ephesians 1:22). And thus,

1. Christ was considered in election; he was chosen as Head, and his people as members in him, and so they had union to him, and a representative being in him before the world began; they did not then personally exist, but Christ did, who represented them, and therefore were capable of being chosen in him, as they were (Ephesians 1:4).

2. Such a relation Christ stood in to them in the covenant, that was made, not with him alone, but with all the elect of God, considered in him as their head and representative; hence we read of "the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ"; which was of God made sure and firm with his covenant people, in Christ, as their Head, before the foundation of the world; when as yet they had not an actual being, only a representative one in Christ, (Galatians 3:17) and hence the covenant was made sure to them in him, before the manifestation and application of it to Abraham, and his spiritual seed spoken of in the preceding verse; so that "the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after" that revelation and manifestation of the covenant to Abraham, "cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect"; for what commences in time, can never make void what was confirmed in eternity.

3. The promises of grace and glory, made to the elect of God in covenant, were made to them, as considered in Christ, their head and representative; for whereas these promises were made before

the world began, (Titus 1:2) they could not be made to them in their own persons, but as represented by Christ, and therefore were made to him their Head, and to them in him; and hence the promise of life is said to be "in" him, (2 Timothy 1:1) and indeed, all the promises are Yea and Amen "in him" (2 Corinthians 1:20). The apostle having said, that "to Abraham and his seed were the promises made", observes, "he saith not" and "to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ"; who is the head and representative of all his spiritual offspring, and in whom they are all collected and considered; all the promises made, manifested, and applied to Abraham, and his spiritual seed, were originally made to Christ, the everlasting Father of his spiritual offspring, the common Head and Parent of them (Galatians 3:16).

4. All the blessings of grace, and grants of them in the covenant of grace, given and made to the elect in it, were given and made to Christ first in their name, and as representing them, and to them in him, as considered in him, their head and representative; for when these grants were made, and blessings bestowed, they were not in actual being, only had a representative one in Christ their head; hence grace is said to be given them "in Christ Jesus", before the world began; and they to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places "in Christ", as they were chosen in him before the formation of the world (2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:3-4).

5. Christ, in the everlasting covenant, engaged in the name of his people, to obey and suffer in their stead; and accordingly he did both in time, as their Head and Representative. He obeyed the law, and fulfilled all righteousness, not as a single individual of human nature, and for himself, but as the federal Head of his people, as representing them; "That so the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us", says the apostle, (Romans 8:4) that is, in the elect of God, they being considered in Christ their Head, when he became the fulfilling End of the law for righteousness unto them; and so they were made, or accounted, the righteousness of God "in him" their Head, (Romans 10:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21) in like manner as he in their name engaged to suffer for them; so in time he suffered in their room and stead, as their head and representative; insomuch that they may be truly said to suffer with him; they were all gathered together, recollected in one Head, "in Christ", and sustained and represented by him when he hung upon the cross, and are said to be "crucified with" him (Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 2:12).

6. In consequence of Christ’s covenant engagements and performances, when he rose from the dead, he rose not as a private Person, but as a public Person, as the head and representative of all those for whom he obeyed and suffered; and therefore they are said to be quickened and raised together with him, as they were then also justified in him, when he himself, as their Head and Surety was (Ephesians 2:5-6; Colossians 3:1; 1 Timothy 3:16). Yea, Christ is also gone to heaven, not only as the Forerunner of his people, but as their Head and Representative; he has taken possession of heaven in their name, appears in the presence of God for them, and represents them, as the high priest did the children of Israel, in the holy of holies; and hence they are said to be made to sit together in heavenly places "in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6).

7. The federal headship of Christ, may be argued and concluded from Adam being a federal head and representative of all his natural offspring; in which he was "the figure of him that was to come", that is, Christ; for it was in that chiefly, if not solely, that he was a figure of Christ; at least, that is the chief, if not the only thing the apostle has in view, (Romans 5:14) as appears by his running the parallel between them, as heads and representatives of their respective offspring: Adam, through

his fall, conveying sin and death to all his natural descendants; and Christ, through the free gift of himself, communicating grace, righteousness, and life to all his spiritual seed, the elect, the children his Father gave him: and hence these two are spoken of as the first and last Adam, and the first and second man; as if they were the only two men in the world, being the representatives of each of their seeds, which are included in them (1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Corinthians 15:47).

Now, as Christ stands in the relation of an Head to the elect, he has all things delivered into his hands; in honour to him, and in love both to him and them, and for their good; God has given him to be "Head over all things" to the church, (Matthew 11:27; John 3:35; Ephesians 1:22) all persons and things are under his command, and at his dispose, to subserve his interest as Head of the church; even angels and men, good and bad, and all things in heaven and in earth; all power therein to protect and defend his people, and to provide for them; all fulness of grace, and the blessings of it to supply them; the government of the church, and of the world, is on his shoulders, who represents them; and therefore their persons, grace, and glory, must be safe in him; the covenant, and all its blessings and promises, are sure in him, the Head and Representative of his people in it.

02. Of Christ the Mediator of the Covenant

Of Christ, The Mediator Of The Covenant.

Another relation, or office, which Christ bears in the covenant, is that of Mediator; three times in the epistle to the Hebrews is he called the Mediator of the new, or better covenant or testament, (Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24) the same with the everlasting covenant, only so called in reference to a former administration of it. The apostle Paul asserts, that there is "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). Both Jews and Gentiles have a notion of a Mediator; the Jews [1] call the Messiah aeuma, the Mediator, or middle one; and so Philo the Jew [2], speaks of the most ancient Word of God, as mesov, a middle Person between God and men, not unbegotten as God, nor begotten as man, but the middle of the extremes, one between both. The Persians [3] call their God Mithras, mesithv, a Mediator; and the Demons, with the heathens, seem to be, according to them, mediators between the superior gods and men; but we have a more sure word of prophecy to direct us in this matter; Christ is the one and only Mediator. It will be proper to enquire,

1. First, In what sense Christ is the mediator of the covenant; not as Moses, who stood between God and the people of Israel, "to show" them "the word of the Lord", (Deuteronomy 5:5) to receive the law, the lively oracles, and deliver them to them, said to be ordained, or disposed by angels, in the hand of a mediator, supposed to be Moses (Galatians 3:19). Christ indeed is the revealer and declarer of his Father’s mind and will, and the dispenser of the covenant of grace in the different administrations of it, in each of the periods of time; but this more properly belongs to him as the "angel" or "messenger of the covenant", as he is called, (Malachi 3:1) than the mediator of it. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation; such an one as interposes between two parties at variance, in order to bring them together, and in some way or other reconcile them to each other. "A mediator is not of one", of one party; for where there is but one party there can be no difference, and so no need of a mediator; but "God is one", he is one party, the offended party, and man is the other, the offending party; and Christ is the mediator between them both to bring them together, who are through sin at as great distance as earth and heaven; and he is the antitype of Jacob’s ladder, that reaches both and joins them together; the daysman between them, who lays his hand on them both, and makes peace between them; and so a learned Grecian [4] interprets the word for "mediator" eirhno poiov, "a peacemaker"; and this work he performs not merely by way of intreaty, as one man may intreat another to lay aside his resentment against an offender, and not pursue him to his destruction, which lies in his power; or as Moses intreated God with great vehemence and importunity to forgive the Israelites, or blot him out of his book; for however commendable this may be for one man to intercede with another, or with God for an offender, in such a manner; yet it seems too low and mean an office for Christ the Son of God, barely to intreat his Father to lay aside the marks of his displeasure against a sinner, and not so honourable for God to grant it, without satisfaction; wherefore Christ acts the part of a mediator, by proposing to his Father to make satisfaction for the offence committed, and so appease injured justice. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation in a way of satisfaction; reconciliation in this way is Christ’s great work

as mediator; this is what was proposed in covenant, and what he therein agreed to do, and therefore is called the mediator of the covenant.

Reconciliation supposes a former state of friendship, a breach of that friendship, and a renewal of it; or a bringing into open friendship again. Man in a state of innocence was in a state of friendship with God, had many high honours and special favours conferred upon him; being made after the image and likeness of God, had all the creatures put in subjection to him, was placed in a delightful garden, had a right to eat of the fruit of all the trees in it but one; to him the creatures were brought to give them names, and an help meet was provided for him; but man being in this honour abode not long, sin soon separated chief friends, and he was drove out of his paradisaical Eden; and appeared to be, as all his posterity are, not only at a distance from God, and alienation to him, but enmity against him, as the carnal mind of man is; and in this state the elect of God were considered, when Christ undertook in covenant to be the mediator of reconciliation for them; and in this condition he found them, when he came to make actual reconciliation for them; "you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled", (Colossians 1:21) and hereby has brought them into an open state of grace and favour with God; into greater nearness to him, and into a more exalted state of friendship with him than was lost by the fall.

It should be observed, that the elect of God are considered in the covenant of grace as fallen creatures; and that Christ being a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction for them, supposes them such. In the covenant of works there was no mediator; while that covenant remained unbroken, and man continued in a state of integrity, he needed none; he could correspond and converse with God without one; though he might have knowledge of Christ as the Son of God, and second person in the Trinity, which was necessary to his worship of him, yet he knew nothing of him as mediator, nor needed him as such; he could hear the voice of God, and abide in his presence without fear or shame; it was after he had sinned, and not before, that he hid himself among the trees, on hearing the voice of God: nor is there any mediator for angels, none was provided, nor admitted, for the fallen angels, they were not spared; and the good angels needed not any, having never sinned; they are admitted into the divine presence without a mediator to introduce them; they stand before God, and behold his face continually. Some have thought that Christ is the medium of union of angels with God, and of elect men, chosen in Christ, and considered as unfallen, which I will not object to; but a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction, Christ is only to fallen men, and they needed one; a reconciliation was necessary, and without such a mediator the purposes of God concerning elect men, the covenant of grace made on their account, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the salvation of men could not have been accomplished; nor the perfections of God, particularly his justice and holiness, glorified in it.

Sin has been committed, which is offensive to God, provoking to the eyes of his glory, and deserving of his wrath, even of eternal death; the law broken, which reflects dishonour on the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; justice injured and affronted, and which insisted on making a satisfaction, and that nothing less than perfect obedience to the law, and a bearing the penalty of it; fallen man could not make his peace with God, nor reconcile himself to him on such terms; Christ, as mediator of the covenant, undertook to make reconciliation for elect men; and God set him and sent him forth to be, and he is become the propitiation for their sins; and God is pacified towards them for all that they have done, and has taken away all his wrath, and turned

himself from the fierceness of his anger, and removed all the visible marks and effects of his displeasure. Nor is this reconciliation Christ is the mediator of, as thus stated, any contradiction to the everlasting love of God to his elect in Christ; where there is the strongest love among men, when an offence is committed, there is need of reconciliation to be made. David had the strongest affection for his son Absalom as can well be imagined; Absalom committed a very heinous offence, murdered his brother Amnon, David's firstborn, and heir to his crown; he fled from justice, and from his father's wrath and vengeance he might justly fear; Joab became a mediator between them, first more secretly, by means of the woman of Tekoah, and then more openly in his own person, and succeeded so far as to obtain leave that the young man be called from his exile; nevertheless, when returned, David would not admit him into his presence until two years after, when, and not before, a full and open reconciliation was made and declared; and yet all this while the heart of David was towards his son, and continued, even notwithstanding his unnatural rebellion against him. And so the love of God to his people is from everlasting to everlasting, invariably the same: with him there is no shadow of turning; there is no change in God, as not from love to hatred, so not from hatred to love; he is in one mind, and none can turn him, no, not Christ himself; nor was it the work of Christ's mediation, nor the design of it, to turn the heart of God; for that proceeded according to the unalterable and unchangeable will of God; nor did the mediation of Christ procure, nor was it intended to procure the love and favour of God to his elect; so far from it, that itself is the fruit and effect of that love (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:10). It was love that set forth and sent forth Christ to be the propitiation for sin; it was owing to the good will and free favour of God, that a Mediator was admitted for sinful men; and it appeared still greater, in providing one to be a Mediator of reconciliation for them; and the reconciliation the scriptures speak of, as made by the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, is not a reconciliation of God to them, as to his love, but justice; but a reconciliation of them to God; and that not so much of their persons, which are always acceptable and well pleasing to God, as considered in Christ, in whom they were chosen, as for their sins, (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 1:20-21; Hebrews 2:17) and which is no other than a satisfaction for them to divine justice; for the reconciliation of their persons in that way, is not to the love and affections of God, from which they were never separated, but to the justice of God, offended by their sins; and the whole is a reconciliation of the divine perfections to each other in the business of salvation; for though these agree among themselves, yet with respect to that, had different claims to make; the love and grace of God pleaded for mercy, and mercy pleaded for itself, that it might be shown to the objects of love; but justice insisted on it, that satisfaction be made for the offences committed; the difficulty was how to answer each of these pleas; Christ interposed, and offered himself in the covenant, to be a Mediator of reconciliation, or to make satisfaction for sin; and so mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Reconciliation then is the principal branch of Christ's office in the covenant as Mediator. Another follows, namely, His intercession, or advocacy, which proceeds upon reconciliation or satisfaction made; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our sins", (1 John 2:1-2) and it is his being the Propitiation for sin, that is the foundation of his advocacy, or on which is grounded his plea for the remission of it; he is the Angel of God's presence, who always appears there for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them; he is first the Mediator of reconciliation, and then of intercession; as they are reconciled to God by his sufferings and death, they are saved through his interceding life. He is called the Angel of God's presence, not

only because he enjoys it himself; but because he introduces his people into it, and presents their petitions to God, offers up the prayers of all saints, perfumed with the much incense of his mediation; through which they become acceptable to God. Christ is the medium of access to God, to the throne of his grace; there is no drawing nigh of sinful men to God without a Mediator, without him he is a consuming fire; no man can come to the Father but by Christ; he is the only Way, the new and the living Way; and through him, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, there is access with boldness and confidence. And he is the medium of acceptance, both of persons and services, which are only accepted in the Beloved, and become acceptable through his prevalent mediation and intercession; and he is the medium of conveyance of all the blessings of the covenant of grace to his people, which are all communicated in virtue of his advocacy for them; and he is the medium of the saints' communion and fellowship with God now, as he will be the medium of their glory and happiness to all eternity. The next thing to be considered is,

2. Secondly, The fitness of Christ for his work and office, as the Mediator of the covenant; since a mediator was necessary, and he must be one of the divine Persons in the Trinity; the Son of God being the middle Person in it, seems most proper and suitable to preserve the order, name, and place of the Persons in it: it does not seem so decent, that the first Person should be a Mediator to the second; but rather, since, as Dr. Goodwin expresses it, the suit of trespass was commenced, and ran in the name of the Father, of the first Person for the rest; it seems most agreeable that the reconciliation be made to him by one of the other Persons; and since the second Person bears the name of a Son, as the first of a Father, it seems most in character that the Son should mediate with the Father, than the Father with the Son; and since it was proper that the Mediator should become the Son of man, as will be seen hereafter, it seems most agreeable, that he who is the Son of God should become the Son of man; otherwise there would be two Sons in the Trinity, or two Persons so called: and for the first or third Person to become a Mediator between God and man, does not seem so becoming, as he who is the second or middle Person among them. But the principal fitness of Christ for his office, as Mediator, at least for the execution of it, lies in the union of the two natures, human and divine, in his one Person; whereby he is the Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh; and as he partakes of both natures, he has an interest in, and a concern for both; he is fit to be a Mediator between God and man; both to take care of things pertaining to God and his glory, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

2a. It was requisite that he should be man, assume human nature into union with his divine Person, even a true body, and a reasonable soul.

2a1. That he might be related to those he was a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour of; that he might be their brother, their near kinsman, their God, and so have an apparent right to redeem them, as the near kinsman, according to the law, had Leviticus 25:48-49.

2a2. That sin might be satisfied for, and reconciliation be made for it, in the same nature which sinned; and whereas, according to the scheme of mediation and salvation by Christ, the same individuals that sinned were not to suffer; it seems requisite and reasonable that an individual of that nature should, in their room and stead, that so it might come as near to what the law required as could be (Genesis 2:17).

2a3. It was proper that the Mediator should be capable of obeying the law, broken by the sin of man: as a divine Person could not be subject to the law, and yield obedience to it; and had he

assumed the angelic nature, that would not have been capable of obeying all the precepts of the law, which are required of men; and universal perfect obedience was necessary for the justification of a sinner before God; hence Christ was made of a woman, that he might be made under the law, and yield obedience to it; by which obedience men are made righteous in the sight of God (Galatians 4:4; Romans 5:19).

2a4. It was meet the Mediator should be man, that he might be capable of suffering death; as God he could not die, and had he assumed the nature of an angel, that is uncapable of dying; and yet suffering the penalty of the law, death, was necessary to make reconciliation; a sacrifice for sin was to be offered, and therefore it was proper Christ should have somewhat to offer; even a true body, and a reasonable soul, Which he did offer; peace was to be made by blood, and reconciliation by the sufferings of death, and therefore a nature must be assumed capable of shedding blood, and of suffering death; and without which he could not be made sin, and a curse for men, as the law required he should. In a word, it was highly becoming, that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through suffering, that he might be a perfect Saviour, which could not be, without the assumption of human nature (see Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 2:14-15; Hebrews 5:9; Hebrews 8:3).

2a5. It was fit the Mediator should be man, that he might be a merciful, as well as a faithful High Priest, have a fellow feeling with his people, and sympathise with them under all their temptations, afflictions, and distresses, and succour and relieve them, from love and affection to them, as their friend and brother (Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 4:15).

2a6. It was necessary that he should be holy and righteous, free from all sin, original and actual, that he might offer himself without spot to God, take away the sins of men, and be an advocate for them, (Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 9:14; 1 John 3:5; 1 John 2:1) but it was not enough to be truly man, and an innocent person; he must be more than a man, to be a mediator between God and man; it was requisite, therefore, 2b. That he should be God as well as man.

2b1. That he might be able to draw nigh to God, and treat with him about terms of peace, and covenant with him; all which a mere man could not do; and therefore it is with wonder said, and as expressive of the arduousness of the task, of the difficulty of the work, and of the necessity of a divine Person to do it; "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?" (Jeremiah 30:21) to mediate between him and sinful men, to lay his hands on both, and reconcile them together; none but Jehovah’s fellow could or dared to do this.

2b2. That he might give virtue and value to his obedience and sufferings; for if he had been a mere man, his obedience and righteousness would not have been sufficient to justify men, nor his sufferings and death a proper sacrifice and atonement for sin. But being God as well as man, his righteousness is the righteousness of God; and so sufficient to justify all that believe in him, and them from all their sins; and his blood is the blood of the Son of God, and so cleanses from all sin, and is a proper atonement for it.

2b3. Being Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, it naturally and necessarily leads men to put their trust and confidence in him, and rely upon him, for peace, pardon, and salvation; whereas, if he was a mere man, and not God, this would entail a curse upon them; "for cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm", (Jeremiah 17:5) and even to worship and adore him,

and ascribe divine honour and glory to him; which to do would be idolatry, was he not God; for though he that is Mediator is to be worshipped by angels and men, yet not as mediator, but as God; for it is his Deity that is the foundation of worship, and renders him the proper object of it; God will "not give" his "glory to another", (Isaiah 42:8) not even the glory of being a Mediator to any other but a divine Person; for of Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, are the words spoken, as appears from the whole preceding context: it is necessary that the Mediator should be God, that he might be the proper object of trust, worship, honour, and glory divine. Nor is it any objection to his being a Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then the Father and the Spirit would be Mediators too, the divine nature being common to them all; since it is not in the divine nature, essentially considered, but as it subsists in the second Person, the Son of God, that Christ is Mediator, and performs his office; and to exercise this office in it, is no lessening and degrading of his Person, since it is a glory that none but a divine Person is fit to bear: and it may be observed, that among men this office is sometimes assumed and exercised by one superior to either of the parties between whom he mediates; and though the Father may be said to be greater than Christ, considered in his office capacity, yet this does not suppose any subjection and inferiority of his divine Person: nor is it any objection to Christ being Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then he must be a Mediator to himself, or reconcile men to himself; for not to observe, that Christ in his office may be distinguished from himself, as a divine Person; as one may be distinguished from himself as to different circumstances of age, office, &c. there is no impropriety that Christ is a Mediator for himself, or has made reconciliation and satisfaction to himself; for if the Father may be said to reconcile men to himself by his Son, as in (2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Colossians 1:20) why may not the Son be said to reconcile men to himself, as God, by his sufferings and death as man? There is no impropriety, that if a man has offended a society of men, one of that society should take upon him to be a mediator for him, and reconcile him to that society, though he himself is a part of it, and as such, equally offended as they: or, still nearer to the case in hand, supposing a rebellion in a nation, against the king of it, and this king should have a son, who is heir to his throne, and so must be equally offended with the rebels as his father, and yet should take upon him to be a mediator between his father and the rebels, and make peace between them; where would be the impropriety of it, though he himself, with his father, is the party offended? The mediation of Christ thus stated, meets with and militates against two errors; one of those, who say he is only a Mediator as to his human nature; and that of others, who assert him to be only a Mediator as to his divine nature. But most certain it is, that there are various acts and works of Christ, as Mediator, in which both natures manifestly appear, and are concerned; not to make mention of the incarnation itself, or Christ’s assumption of human nature, which manifestly implies both; for it was a divine Person that partook of flesh and blood, or assumed, not an angelic, but an human nature: it was the Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, that was made flesh, and dwelt among men; it was he that was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him, that was found in fashion as a man, and took on him the form of a servant; it was God manifest in the flesh. In the obedience of Christ both natures are to be perceived; not only the human nature, in his being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but the divine nature also; or otherwise, where is the wonder, that "though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered", (Hebrews 5:8) and it was that which gave virtue to his obedience, and made it satisfactory to the justice of God, and made the law more honourable than the perfect and perpetual obedience of angels and men could do. In the act of

laying down his life for men, both natures appear; the human nature, which is passive in it, and is the life laid down; the divine nature, or the divine Person of Christ, who is active in it, and laid down his life of himself, he having such a power over his life as man, and that at his dispose, as no mere creature ever had; and both are to be observed in his taking of it up again; his human nature, in his body being raised from the dead; his divine nature or person, in raising it up of himself, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power: he was put to death in the flesh, in human nature, and quickened in the Spirit, or by his divine nature; the sacrifice of himself, was his own act, as Mediator; what was offered up were his soul and body, his whole human nature; this was offered by his eternal Spirit, or divine nature, which gave virtue to it, and made it a proper atoning sacrifice for sin. To observe no more, the redemption and purchase of his people, is a plain proof of both natures being concerned in his work as Mediator; the purchase price, or the price of redemption, is his precious blood, his blood as man; but what gave virtue to that blood, and made it a sufficient ransom price, is, that it was the blood of him that is God as well as man; and therefore God is said to purchase the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

2c. It was not only requisite and necessary, that the Mediator should be God and man, but that he should be both in one Person, or that the two natures should be united in one Person; or, rather, that the human nature should be taken up, and united to, and subsist in the Person of the Son of God; for the human nature, as it has no personality of itself, it adds none to the Son of God; it is no constituent part of his Person; he was a divine Person, before his assumption of human nature; and what he assumed was not a person, but a nature, and is called a "thing, nature, seed", (Luke 1:35; Hebrews 2:16) had it been a person, there would be two persons in Christ, and so two mediators, contrary to the express words of scripture, (1 Timothy 2:5) and if the human nature was a person, as it must be a finite one, what was done and suffered by it, must be finite also, and of no use but to that person, and could have no sufficient virtue and value in them to justify men, and atone for sin; but these two natures being in personal union, the works and actions of either, though distinct and peculiar to each, yet belong to the whole Person, and are predicated of it; and so those of the human nature have virtue and efficacy in them, from the personal union, to make them effectual to the purposes for which they were designed, without which they would be ineffectual. Hence it may be observed, that Christ is described in one nature, by qualities, works, and actions, which belong to him in the other, and is what divines call a communication of idioms, or properties; thus the Lord of glory is said to be crucified; God is said to purchase the church with his blood; and the Son of man is said to be in heaven, while he was here on earth, (1 Corinthians 2:8; Acts 20:28; John 3:13) the advantage of this personal union is, that the divine nature has an influence upon, and gives virtue and dignity to whatsoever is done or suffered in the human nature; which is of the utmost concern in the mediation of Christ: nor is it any objection that two natures should influence one and the same action, or be concerned in the production or perfection of it; when it is observed, that the soul and body of man, united together, concur in the performance of the same action, whether good or bad. I shall next enquire,

3. Thirdly, How Christ came to be the Mediator of the covenant, even the Mediator of reconciliation in it: it was owing originally to a thought in the heart of God, the offended Party; whose thoughts were "thoughts of peace, and not of evil", towards offending man; this affair began with God the Father; "All things are of God", that is, the Father, as appears by what follows; "Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation"; the

doctrine of it, to publish and declare to the world; the sum and substance of which is, "to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself", (2 Corinthians 5:18-19) that is, consulting with Christ his Son, and with him contriving the scheme and method of reconciling to himself the world of his elect, considered as sinful fallen creatures in Adam: upon the first thought of peace and reconciliation, a council of peace was held between the divine Persons, which issued in a covenant of peace in which it was proposed to Christ, and he agreed to it, to be the Peace maker, upon which he was constituted the Mediator of it; "I was set up from everlasting", (Proverbs 8:23) says Christ; that is, by his divine Father; though not without his own consent: or, "I was anointed", which does not design a collation of any gifts, qualifying him for the office of Mediator; as when he is said to be anointed with the Holy Ghost; only his investiture with that office, so expressed, because the rite of anointing was used in the consecration of kings, priests, and prophets to their office. And God not only set him up, but "set" him "forth", in his eternal purposes and decrees, to be the "propitiation for sin", to make reconciliation and satisfaction for it, (Romans 3:25) and declared him in prophecy to be the Prince of peace, and the Man that should appear in human nature, and make peace and reconciliation between him and men; he sanctified him, or set him apart to this office before the world began; and in the fulness of time, sent him to be the propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice, for the sins of men; and even before his incarnation, being constituted in covenant the Mediator of it, he acted as such, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation: he exercised in each of his offices then; his prophetic office, by making known to Adam the covenant of grace, immediately after his fall; by preaching by his Spirit to the disobedient in the times of Noah, the spirits that were in prison, in the times of the apostle Peter; and by his Spirit, in the prophets testifying beforehand his own sufferings, and the glory that should follow. His Kingly office, in gathering, governing, and protecting his church and people, who acknowledged him as their King, Judge, and Lawgiver: and his Priestly office, through the virtue of his blood reaching backward to the foundation of the world, and therefore said to be the Lamb slain so early, (Revelation 13:8) and instances there are of his intercession under the former dispensation, (Zechariah 1:12-13; Zechariah 3:1-4) the actual existence of Christ’s human nature from eternity, was not necessary to his being a Mediator of the covenant; it was enough that he agreed in covenant, to be man in time; that this was known he would be, and was certain he should be; and accordingly he was, from the instant of the covenant making, reckoned and accounted, and bore the name of the God-man and Mediator, and acted as such. Some parts of his work did not require the actual existence of the human nature; he could draw nigh to God, as Jehovah’s fellow, without it; he could treat with God about terms of peace, and promise to fulfil them, and covenant with God without it: it no more required the actual existence of his human nature, to covenant with his Father, about the reconciliation and redemption of man, than it required that the Father should assume such a nature to covenant with his Son about the same: there were other parts of Christ’s work as Mediator, which required its actual existence; as obedience to the law, and suffering death, the penalty of it; but then, and not before, was it necessary for him to assume it, when the fulness of time was come agreed on, to obey and suffer. It only remains now,

4. Fourthly, To show what a Mediator Christ is, the excellency of him, and the epithets which belong to him as such. And,

4a. He is the one and only Mediator; "There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus"; and there is no other: the papists plead for other mediators, angels and saints departed; and distinguish between a Mediator of redemption, and a mediator of intercession; the former, they own, is peculiar to Christ, the latter common to angels and saints; but there is no Mediator of intercession, but who is a Mediator of redemption and reconciliation; the instances produced are insufficient, and respect either the uncreated angel, Jesus Christ himself, (Zechariah 1:12; Revelation 8:3) or saints, ministers, and members of churches in the present state, and not as departed, (Revelation 5:8) and if is to be understood of departed spirits, it is only an (Revelation 6:9) instance of prayer for themselves, and not for others: the passages in (Exodus 32:13; Job 5:1) with others, are quite impertinent.

4b. Christ is a Mediator of men only, not of angels; good angels need not any, and as for evil angels, none is provided nor admitted, as before observed. Yet not of all men; for the world, said to be reconciled to God by Christ, is not all the individuals in it; but the world Christ gave his flesh, or human nature for the life of, since there is a world for which he is not so much as a Mediator of intercession, and much less a Mediator of reconciliation (see 2 Corinthians 5:19; John 6:51; John 17:9). The persons for whom Christ acted as a Mediator, by means of death, for the redemption of their transgressions, were such as were called, and received the promise of the eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9:15).

4c. Yet he is the Mediator both for Jews and Gentiles; for some of both these are chosen vessels of mercy; and God is a covenant God, not to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles also; and Christ is a Propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, but for the sins of the whole world, or of God’s elect throughout the whole world: and therefore both have access to God through the one Mediator, Christ, (Romans 9:23-24; Romans 3:29-30; 1 John 2:2; Ephesians 2:18).

4d. Christ is Mediator both for Old and New Testament saints; there is but one Mediator for both, but one Way to the Father, which is Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but one Way of life, peace, reconciliation, and salvation; but one Redeemer and Saviour; but one name given under heaven among men, whereby they can be saved; Old and New Testament saints are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus; he is the Foundation of the apostles and prophets.

4e. Christ is a prevalent Mediator, his mediation is always effectual, ever succeeds, and is infallible; as his work was to make peace and reconciliation, and he agreed and engaged to make it; he has made it, the thing is done, and done effectually; and as for his prayers, they are always heard, his intercession ever prevails, and is never in vain; "I knew that thou hearest me always" (John 11:42).

4f. Christ is an everlasting Mediator; he was Mediator from everlasting, and acted as such throughout the whole Old Testament period and still continues; he has an unchangeable priesthood; his blood always speaks peace and pardon, and he ever lives to make intercession; and when his mediatorial kingdom will be completed, and there will be no need of him, either as a Mediator of reconciliation or intercession, at least in the manner he has been, and now is; for sin being wholly removed from the saints, even as to the being of it, they may have access to God, and he may communicate unto them, without the intervention of a Mediator; as is the case of the holy angels; though Christ may be the medium of the glory and happiness of his people to all eternity; and since the happiness of the saints will greatly lie in beholding the glory of Christ as

God-man, and the glory of God will be most illustriously displayed in him, it may be admitted: I shall observe no more, only that this office of Christ, as Mediator, includes his Kingly, Priestly, and Prophetic offices; all which will be considered in their proper place.

ENDNOTES:

[1] R. Joseph Albo, Ikkarim, Orat. 2. c. 28.

[2] Quis Rer. Divin. Haeres, p. 509. Vid. ibid. de Cherubim, p. 112.

[3] Plutarch. de Isid. et Osir.

[4] Suidas in voce mesiths.

02. Of Christ the Surety of the Covenant

Of Christ, The Surety Of The Covenant. The suretyship of Christ is a branch of his mediatorial office; one way in which Christ has acted the part of a Mediator between God and men, is by engaging on their behalf, to do and suffer whatever the law and justice of God required, to make satisfaction for their sins. The Greek word for "surety" egguov, is used but once throughout the whole New Testament, (Hebrews 7:22) and there of Christ; where he is said to be made, or become, "the Surety of a better testament", or covenant. And the word is derived either from egguv, "near", because a surety draws nigh to one on the behalf of another, and lays himself under obligation to him for that other; thus Christ drew nigh to his Father, and became a Surety to him for them; hence those words, "I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?" (Jeremiah 30:21) or rather, it is derived from guion, which signifies the "hand" [1]; because when one becomes a Surety, he either puts something into the hand of another for security, or rather puts his hand into the hand of another, or strikes hands with him; a rite much used in suretyship, and is often put for it, and used as synonymous; see (Proverbs 6:1; Proverbs 17:18; Proverbs 22:26). Snidas [2] derives it from gh, guh, the "earth", because that is the firmest of the elements, and remains immoveable, and may denote the firmness and security of the promise, or bond, which a surety gives to one for another. The Hebrew word for a "surety", in the Old Testament, bre, (Genesis 43:9) and elsewhere, has the signification of "mixing", because, as Stockins [3] observes, in suretyship persons are so mixed among themselves, and joined together, that the one is thereby bound to the other: and, upon the whole, Christ, as a Surety, drew nigh to his Father on the behalf of the elect, struck hands with him, and gave him firm security for them, and put himself in their place and stead, and engaged to perform everything for them that should be required of him; for the better understanding this branch of Christ's office in the covenant, it may be proper to consider, 1. First, In what sense Christ is the Surety of the covenant. And,

1a. First, He is not the Surety for his Father, to his people, engaging that the promises made by him in covenant shall be fulfilled; which is the Socinian sense of Christ's suretyship [4]; for though the promises were made to Christ, and are Yea and Amen in him; and many of them, such as respect him, were fulfilled in him, and by him, as the minister of the circumcision, (Galatians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Romans 15:8). Yet, such is the faithfulness of God that has promised, that there needs no surety for him; his faithfulness is sufficient, which he will not suffer to fail; he is God, that cannot lie, nor deny himself; there is no danger of his breaking his word, and not fulfilling his promise, which may be depended on, and strongly confided in: and if his word was not enough, he has joined his oath to it; so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, the heirs of promise might have strong consolation, in believing the fulfilment of every promise made (Hebrews 6:18). Besides, though Christ is equal with his Father, is Jehovah's fellow, and has all the perfections of Deity in him, yet he is not greater than he; and, with reverence to him be it said, he cannot give a greater security, than the word and oath of God, or that will lay a firmer foundation for confidence in the promises of God; and it is with an ill grace these men advance

such a notion; since they make Christ to be but a mere man; and what dependence can there be upon him, when cursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm? (Jeremiah 17:5) and what greater security is it possible that a mere man should give, than what the promise of God itself gives? or what additional strength can a creature give to that, to induce a stronger belief of it? Nor,

1b. Secondly, Is Christ in such sense a Surety, as civilians call a "fidejussor", or such a surety that is jointly engaged with a debtor, for the payment of a debt; or is so bound for another, as that other remains under obligation, and the obligation of the surety is only an accession to the principal obligation, which is made stronger thereby, and the creditor has the greater security; yet still the principal debtor is left under his debt, that is not removed from him, and he is under obligation to pay it, if able; and it is first to be demanded of him, or should his surety desert his suretyship, and not make satisfaction. But now none of these things are to be supposed in Christ's suretyship.

1b1. He is not a mere accessory to the obligation of his people for payment of their debts; he and they are not engaged in one joint bond for payment; he has taken their whole debt upon himself, as the apostle Paul did in the case of Onesimus; and he has paid it off, and entirely discharged it alone.

1b2. Nor was any such condition made in his suretyship engagements for his people, that they should pay if they were able; for God the Father, to whom Christ became a Surety, knew, and he himself, the Surety, knew full well, when this suretyship was entered into, that they were not able to pay, and never would be; yea, that it was impossible for them, in their circumstances, ever to pay; for having failed in their obedience to God, all after acts of obedience, though ever so perfect, could not make amends, or satisfy for that disobedience, since to those God has a prior right; and their failure in obedience, brings upon them a debt of punishment, which is everlasting, and "ad infinitum"; and, if left on them, would be ever paying, and never paid (see Luke 7:41-42; Matthew 18:24-25; Matthew 5:26; Matthew 25:46).

1b3. Nor is such a supposition to be made, that Christ might desert his suretyship, withdraw himself from it; this indeed has been supposed by some: but though Christ was not obliged to become a Surety, he voluntarily engaged in this work, and cheerfully took it on him; yet when he had undertaken it he could not relinquish it, without being guilty of disobedience to his Father, and of unfaithfulness to his own engagements; for from the instant he became a Surety for his people, he became a Servant to his Father, and he called and reckoned him as such; "Thou art my servant, O Israel; behold my servant whom I uphold", (Isaiah 49:3; Isaiah 42:1) and laid his commands upon him, both to obey his law, and lay down his life for his people, both which he undertook to do, and did perform; or otherwise he could not have had the character of God's righteous Servant, nor would have been faithful to him that appointed him, nor to himself, (Isaiah 53:10; Hebrews 3:2) and consequently could not be without sin, which God forbid should ever be said or supposed of the holy Jesus, who did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth; yet this has been supposed of him by some, and the dreadful consequences of it, which have been blasphemously uttered by some schoolmen and popish writers, not fit to be mentioned.

1b4. Nor is it to be supposed, that Christ might not fulfil his suretyship engagements, or not make satisfaction, as might be expected; since if he did not, it must be either for want of will, or want of power; not of will, since the persons he became a surety for, he bore the strongest affection to;

these were the sons of men, in whom was all his delight from everlasting; and such his love to them, that nothing whatever could separate from it: nor could it be for want of power, since, as a divine Person, he is the mighty God; as Mediator, has all power in heaven and in earth; as man, was made strong by the Lord for this work, and had a power, as such, to lay down his life, and take it up again: and should he have deserted his suretyship, and not have made the promised and expected satisfaction, the purposes of God, respecting the salvation of the elect by Christ, must have been frustrated, and made null and void; the council of peace held concerning it would have been without effect; the covenant of grace abolished; the salvation of God's people not obtained, and the glory of God, of his grace, mercy, truth, and faithfulness lost; yea, Christ himself must have been deprived of his mediatorial glory; all too shocking to be admitted. But,

1c. Thirdly, Christ is in such sense a Surety, as civilians call an expromissor, one that promises out and out, absolutely engages to pay another's debt; takes another's obligation, and transfers it to himself, and by this act dissolves the former obligation, and enters into a new one, which civilians call "novation"; so that the obligation no longer lies on the principal debtor, but he is set free, and the Surety is under the obligation, as if he was the principal debtor, or the guilty person. Now this sort of suretyship being most similar, and coming nearest to Christ's suretyship, is made use of to express and explain it; though they do not in everything tally; for the civil law neither describes nor admits such a Surety among men as Christ is; who so substituted himself in the room and stead of sinners, as to suffer punishment in soul and body for them; but in some things there is an agreement.

1c1. Christ, by his suretyship, has took the whole debt of his people upon himself, and made himself solely responsible for it; he has dissolved thereby their obligation to payment or punishment, having taken it on himself; so that they were by it entirely set free from the very instant he became their Surety; it is a rule that will hold good, as Maccovius [5] observes, that as soon as anyone becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted: which is the case here; for from henceforward, God the Father looked for his debt, and expected satisfaction of Christ, and let the sinners go free, for whom he engaged; he was gracious, and said, "deliver" them "from going down to the pit; I have found a Ransom", (Job 33:24) just as when the apostle Paul became a surety for Onesimus; supposing him accepted as such by Philemon, Onesimus was set free; the apostle taking the whole debt and wrong upon himself, and promising to repay and make satisfaction, and which he wrote and signed with his own hand.

1c2. When Christ became a Surety for his people, their sins were no longer imputed to them, but were imputed to Christ, were placed to his account, and he became responsible for them; it was not, at the time of his sufferings and death, that God laid on him first the iniquities of his people, and they were imputed and reckoned to him, and he accounted them as his own, (2 Corinthians 5:19; Isaiah 53:6; Psalms 40:12; Psalms 69:5) by which it appears, that obligation to payment of debts, or punishment, did not lie upon the principal debtor, or guilty person, but upon Christ, who became their Surety; for,

1c3. The Old Testament saints were really freed from guilt, condemnation, and death, before the actual payment was made by Christ their Surety; some had as full an application of the pardon of their sins, and as clear a view of their interest in Christ's righteousness, as their justifying

righteousness before God, as any of the New Testament saints ever had; the one were saved by the grace of Christ as the other; yea, they were received into heaven, and actually glorified, before the suretyship engagements of Christ were fulfilled (Isaiah 43:25; Isaiah 45:24-25; Acts 15:11; Hebrews 11:13-16). So that it is a plain case, that the obligation to payment and punishment lay not on those for whom Christ became a Surety, but was transferred from them to him; unless this absurdity can be admitted, that such an obligation lay on glorified saints, till the actual payment was made by Christ; or that there was a "limbus patrum", as the papists say, where the saints, before Christ's coming, were detained; but were set free by him when he came.

1c4. It is certain that the Old Testament saints had knowledge of the suretyship engagements of Christ, and prayed and pleaded for the application of the benefits of them to them, (Job 19:25; Psalms 119:122; Isaiah 38:14) and which they enjoyed: and such was the dignity of Christ's person, and his known faithfulness to his engagements, and the eternity of them, which with God has no succession, they were always present with him, and in full view, as if actually performed; before and after made no difference in the sight of God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and eternity itself as but a moment. And now, from this suretyship of Christ arise both the imputation of sin to Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness to his people; this is the ground and foundation of both, and on which the priestly office of Christ stands, and in virtue of which it is exercised (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:20-22). I proceed, 2. Secondly, To consider what Christ as a Surety, engaged to do. And,

2a. First, He engaged to pay the debts of his people, and satisfy for the wrong and injury done by them; this may be illustrated by the instance of the apostle Paul engaging for Onesimus; which is thus expressed, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account; I Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it", (Philemon 1:18-19). Sin is a wrong and injury done to divine justice, and to the holy law of God, broken by it; which Christ undertook to satisfy for; and sins are debts; see (Matthew 6:12) compared with (Luke 11:4) not proper ones, for then they might be committed with impunity, since it is right and commendable to pay debts: but in an improper sense, as debts oblige to payment, so sins to punishment; even to endure the curse of the law, and death eternal, the sanction of it: these debts, or sins, are infinite objectively, as they are contracted and committed against an infinite being, and require punishment of a creature ad infinitum; and therefore not to be paid off, or answered, by a finite creature; but Christ being an infinite Person, as God, was able to pay off those debts, and answer for those sins, and engaged to do it, and has done it.

There is a twofold debt paid by Christ, as the Surety of his people; the one is a debt of obedience to the law of God; this he engaged to do, when he said, "Lo, I come to do thy will"; thy law is within my heart: and accordingly he was made under the law, and yielded perfect obedience to it, by which his people are made righteous; and the other is a debt of punishment, incurred through failure of obedience in them; the curse of the law he has endured, the penalty of it, death; and by paying both these debts, the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled in his people, considered in him their Head and Surety. Now let it be observed, that these debts are not pecuniary ones, though there is an allusion to such, and the language is borrowed from them; but criminal ones, a wrong and injury done, as supposed in the case of Onesimus; and are of such a nature as deserve and require punishment in body and soul, being transgressions of the righteous law of God; and God is to be considered, not merely as a creditor, but as the Judge of the whole earth, who will do

right, and who will by no means clear the guilty, without a satisfaction to his justice; and yet there is a mixture of grace, mercy, and goodness in God, with his justice in this affair, by admitting a Surety to obey, suffer, and die, in the room and stead of his people, which he was not obliged unto; nor does the law give the least hint of an allowance of it; nor do the civil laws of men admit of any such thing, that an innocent person should suffer death in the room of one that is guilty, even though he consents to it, and desires it; because no man has a power over his own life, to dispose of it at pleasure; but God, who can dispense with his own law, if he pleases, has thought fit to explain it, and put a construction on it in favour of his people, where it is not express; and allow of a commutation of persons, that his Son should stand in their legal place and stead, obey, suffer, and die for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. This is owing to his sovereign grace and mercy; nor is at all inconsistent with his justice, since Christ fully consented to all this, who is the Prov.ince of life, and had power over his own life, as man, to lay it down, and take it up again; and since justice is fully satisfied, by the obedience and death of Christ, and the law magnified and made honourable, and more so than it could have been by all the obedience and sufferings of angels and men put together.

2b. Secondly, Another thing which Christ as a Surety engaged to do, was to bring all the elect safe to glory; this may he illustrated by Judah’s suretyship for Benjamin; thus expressed to his father, "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever" (Genesis 43:9). And thus Christ became a Surety to his divine Father, for his beloved Benjamin, the chosen of God, and precious; as he asked them of his Father, and they were given into his hands, to be preserved by him, that none of them might be lost; he agreed that they should be required of his hand, everyone of them, and pass under the hand of him that telleth them, and their whole number appear complete, and none missing; as will be the case, when he shall say, "Lo, I, and the children which God hath given me" (Hebrews 2:13). Christ engaged to "bring" his people to his Father; this was the work proposed to him, and which he agreed to do; "to bring Jacob again to him, and to restore the preserved of Israel", (Isaiah 49:5-6) to recover the lost sheep, to ransom them out of the hands of him that was stronger than they; to redeem them from all iniquity, and from the law, its curse and condemnation, and save them with an everlasting salvation, and bring them safe to his Father in heaven; and because he laid himself under obligation to do all this; hence he says, "them also I must bring", into his fold here, and into heaven and glory hereafter, (John 10:16) and "set" them "before" his Father; as he did at his death, when all the elect were gathered together in one Head, even in him, to present them in the body of his flesh, through death, holy, unblameable, and unreproveable in the sight of God; and as he now does in heaven, where he appears in the presence of God for them, and they are set down in heavenly places in him, as their Head and Surety; and as he will at the last day, when he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, the mediatorial kingdom, the kingdom of priests, complete and perfect, as he received them; and having first presented them to himself, as a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, he will present them faultless before the presence of his Father’s glory, with exceeding joy; and will be so far from bearing any blame, having so fully discharged his suretyship engagements, that he will appear without sin unto salvation; even without sin imputed, without the wrong done by his people put on his account; all being fully answered for according to agreement.

ENDNOTES:

[1] So Hesychius and others.

[2] In voce ennuh.

[3] Clavis Ling. Sanct. p. 810.

[4] Crellius et Schlichtingius in Heb.. vii. 22.

[5] Theolog. Quaest. loc. 31. qu. 6.

02. Of Christ the Testator of the Covenant

Of Christ, The Testator Of The Covenant.

1. First, The covenant of grace bears the name, and has the nature of a testament: it is often called the new and better testament, as administered under the gospel dispensation, (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 7:22; Hebrews 9:15) in distinction from the former: it is called a testament, in allusion to the last will and testament of men. And,

1a. Because it is the will of God himself, and not another; the will of him that is sovereign and absolute, who does according to his will in heaven and in earth, in nature, providence, and grace. The covenant is founded on the will of God, and is the pure effect of it; he was not obliged to make it; he freely and of his own accord came into it; so all the contracting parties in it, as has been before observed. A man's will or testament ought to be voluntary; he is not to be forced nor drawn, nor pressed to make it, contrary to his inclination; or otherwise it is not his own will. The covenant, or testament of God, is of his own making, without any influence from another; all the articles in it are of his free good will and pleasure; as, that he will be the covenant God of his people; that they shall be his sons and daughters; that they shall be his heirs, and joint heirs with Christ; that they shall enjoy all the blessings of grace, redemption, pardon, justification, regeneration, perseverance in grace and glory; for he hath bequeathed, in this will, both grace and glory to his people (Psalms 89:11; Luke 12:32).

1b. As a will consists of various legacies to various persons, so does the covenant of grace; some to Christ, for he, under different considerations, is a legatee in it, and a testator of it: all the elect, his spiritual seed and offspring, are bequeathed unto him, as his portion and inheritance, and with which he is greatly delighted (Deuteronomy 32:9; Psalms 2:8; Psalms 16:6). "As my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom", says he, (Luke 22:29) his mediatorial kingdom, a kingdom of priests, and which he disposed of to him in a testamentary way, as the word there used signifies. There are other legacies, such as before suggested, respecting grace and glory, left in this will for the brethren of Christ, among whom he is the firstborn, and so appointed principal heir, yea, heir of all things, and they joint heirs with him; and what is given to them, is in trust with him for them, particularly the inheritance bequeathed, which they obtain in him, and is reserved with him in heaven for them.

1c. In wills, what a man disposes of, is, or should be, his own; no man has a power to dispose, nor ought to dispose of, what is another's, or not his own; or otherwise, his will is a void will, and such bequests void bequests. All the blessings of goodness, whether of nature, providence, or grace, are all the Lord's own, and he has a sovereign right to dispose of them as he pleases, and to give them to whomsoever he will; and against which no one has any just cause or reason to object; and if he does, it is to no purpose; "Is it not lawful for me", says the Testator of the covenant, "to do what I will with mine own?" Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" (Matthew 20:15).

1d. This will, or testament, of Jehovah, is an ancient one, it was made in eternity; it is called an everlasting covenant, or testament; not only because it always continues, and will never become null and void, but because it is from everlasting; the bequests and donations made in it were made before the world began (2 Timothy 1:9). It is, indeed, sometimes called a new testament, not because newly made, but because newly published and declared, at least in a more clear and express manner; a new and fresh copy of it has been delivered out to the heirs of promise.

1e. It is a will or testament that is unalterable; "Though it be but a man's covenant", or testament, "yet if it be confirmed" by his own handwriting and seal, and especially by his death, "no man disannulleth or addeth thereunto" (Galatians 3:15). The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and sure; this testament, or will, is founded upon the immutability of the divine counsel; so that the heirs of promise, the legatees in it, may have strong consolation, and be fully assured of enjoying their legacies in it; which are the sure mercies of David, of David's Son and Antitype, as all the promises of it are Yea and Amen in him.

1f. Testaments, or wills, are generally sealed as well as signed: the seals of God's will or testament are not the ordinances; circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace; it was a seal to Abraham, and to him only, that he should be the father of believing Gentiles; and that the same righteousness of faith should come upon them, which came upon him, when in uncircumcision: nor is baptism, which is falsely said to come in the room of it, and much less is it a seal of the covenant; nor the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; for though the blood of Christ, one of the symbols in it, is yet not that itself: but the seals are the Holy Spirit of God, and the blood of Christ; and yet the Holy Spirit is not such a seal that makes the covenant, or testament, surer in itself, only assures the Lord's people of their interest in it, by witnessing it to their spirits, by being in them the earnest of the inheritance bequeathed them, and by sealing them up unto the day of redemption; properly speaking, the blood of Christ is the only seal of this testament, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and therefore called the blood of the covenant, and the blood of the new testament, (Zechariah 9:11; Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 13:20).

1g. To all wills there are commonly witnesses, and often three, and in some cases three are required. Now as God sware by himself, because he could sware by no greater; so because no other and proper witnesses could be had, to witness this will made in eternity, God himself, or the three divine Persons, became witnesses to it, the Three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost (1 John 5:7). Unless we choose to conceive of things in this manner; that as the Father, the first Person, gives the lead in all things in nature and in grace, and as he did in the council of peace, so in the covenant of grace, or in this testament, he may be considered as the maker of the will, or testament, and the Son and Spirit as witnesses to it.

1h. This will, or testament, is registered in the sacred writings, from thence the probate of it is to be taken; the public notaries, or amanuenses, that have copied it under a divine direction, are the prophets and apostles; hence the writings of the one are called the Old Testament, and the writings of the other the New Testament, the latter being the more clear, full, and correct copy. The covenant of grace having the nature of a testament, shows that there is no restipulation in it on the part of men; no more than there is a restipulation of legatees in a will; what is bequeathed to them being without their knowledge and consent, and without anything being required of them, to which they give their assent. The covenant of grace is properly a covenant to Christ, in which he

restipulates; but a testament to his people, or a pure covenant of promise. Also it may be observed, that the legacies in this testament are owing to the goodwill of the testator, and not to any merit in the legatees; "For if theft which are of the law be heirs", if they that seek eternal life by the works of the law be heirs of grace and glory, then, says the apostle, "faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect", which declare it to be a free donation: and so again, "If the inheritance be of the law", or to be obtained by the works of it, "it is no more of promise"; these will not consist with, but contradict one another; "but God gave it to Abraham by promise"; as he has done to all the legatees in his covenant or will (see Romans 4:14; Galatians 3:18).

2. Secondly, The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, may be considered as testator of the covenant of grace, as it is a will or testament, and which is plainly suggested in Hebrews 9:15-17 for,

2a. Christ as God has an equal right to dispose of things as his divine Father, seeing all that the Father has are his; as all the perfections of deity, so all persons, and all things in nature, providence, and grace; particularly all the blessings of grace and of glory. He is over all God blessed for ever, and all things are of him and owe their being to him, and are at his dispose; yea, all things are delivered by the Father to him as mediator: and if the Spirit disposes of his gifts and graces, dividing them to every man severally as he will; the Son of God may be reasonably thought to have a power and right to dispose of the blessings of his goodness to whomsoever he pleases.

2b. Nothing is disposed of in the covenant, or testament, without his counsel and consent; for though with respect to creatures, angels and men, it may be said of God, "with whom took he counsel?" yet with his Son, the Wonderful Counsellor, the Angel of the great council, he did; for the council of peace was between them both, the Father and the Son, which respected the salvation of men, and the donation of grace and glory to them.

2c. Nor was anything given in covenant, or disposed of in the will and testament of God, but with respect to the death of Christ; all promised in covenant was on condition of Christ’s making his soul an offering for sin, and of pouring out his soul unto death, (Isaiah 53:10-12) all the blessings of grace bestowed on Old Testament saints, as they were legacies in this testament, so they were given forth in virtue of the blood of the covenant, which had a virtue that reached backward; Christ being the lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and there is no blessing of grace in the covenant, but what is on account of the death of Christ the testator; redemption of transgressions, that were under both the first and second testaments, was by means of death; and without shedding of blood there was no remission under either dispensation; and it is the death of Christ that secures from condemnation, as well as by it reconciliation is made.

2d. Whatever is given in this will, is given to Christ first, to be disposed of by him, so that he is the executor as well as the testator of it; he was set up as mediator from everlasting; was prevented with the blessings of goodness, or had them first given to him; he was possessed of a fulness of grace, and grace was given to the elect in him before the world began; not only the blessings of grace were put into his hands to dispose of, but eternal life, for he has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; whether this be considered as an inheritance which He, the Word of God’s grace, the essential Word, is able to give among them that are sanctified by faith in him; or as a kingdom prepared for them in the purposes of God, and which Christ gives a right

unto, and a meekness for; yea, he himself disposes of it in a testamentary way, "and I appoint unto you a kingdom", dispose of it to you by will and testament (Luke 22:29). Wherefore,

3. Thirdly, The death of Christ is necessary to put this will in force, to give strength unto it, that it may be executed according to the design of the maker of it; "for where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all, while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:16-17). It is not the death of any, only of the testator himself, that gives validity to his will, or renders it executable; and it is only the death of Christ that gives force and strength unto, or ratifies and confirms the covenant of grace; not the death of slain sacrifices, for though by the blood and death of these the first testament was dedicated, ratified, and confirmed in a typical way, as these were types of Christ in his bloodshed and death, (Hebrews 9:19-22) yet the new testament is only, really, truly, and properly ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ itself; and whereas the Father and the Spirit were jointly concerned with Christ in making this will or testament, it was not necessary that they should die, nor could they, since they never assumed a nature capable of dying; only it was necessary that one of the testators should assume a nature capable of death, and in it die to give force to this will; and infinite wisdom judged it most proper and fitting that the Son of God should do it, who took upon him, not the nature of angels, who are incorporeal, immaterial and immortal spirits, and die not; but he became a partaker of flesh and blood, of human nature, that he might die and ratify the testament and will he was concerned in the making of; and this was necessary to give it strength and force: not as if it was alterable until the death of Christ, as the wills of men are until their death, which while they live are liable to be altered again and again; for the first thoughts of God always remain, and that to all generations; his mind is never turned, his counsel is immutable, and so his covenant and testament founded thereon is unalterable; nor that the inheritance bequeathed in this will could not be enjoyed before the death of Christ; this indeed is the case with respect to the wills of men, the legacies are not payable, nor estates bequeathed enjoyed, until the testator dies; but such is not only the certainty of Christ’s death, and which with God was as if it was, before it really was, but such is the virtue and efficacy of it, that it reaches backward to the beginning of the world, as before observed; wherefore the Old Testament saints not only received the promise of eternal inheritance, but enjoyed it before the death of Christ, though in virtue of it, for they are said to "inherit the promises", that is, the things promised, (Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 6:11) but the death of Christ was necessary to confirm the covenant or testament, that the legatees might appear to have a legal right to what was bequeathed to them, law and justice being satisfied thereby; so that no caveat could be put in against them, and no obstruction made to their claim of legacies, and their enjoyment of them; and no danger of this will being ever set aside. There is another concern and part which Christ has in the covenant, and that is the "messenger" of it, (Malachi 3:1) but as that respects the administration of it, it will be considered in its proper place, after the fall of man.

02. Of Christ's Blessing His People as Priest

Of Christ’s Blessing His People as a Priest

Thirdly, I proceed in this chapter to consider another part of Christ’s priestly office; which lies in blessing his people; for this was what belonged to the priests. Aaron and his sons were appointed to bless the people of Israel in the name of the Lord; and had a form of blessing prescribed them; which they were to use, and did use on that occasion (Deuteronomy 21:5; Numbers 6:23-26). Indeed, the blessing of the priests was only prayer-wise; they could not confer a blessing, only prayed for one; yet when they did, the Lord promised to give one (Numbers 6:27), and some think Christ’s blessing his people is only a species or branch of his intercession; though Christ does not only intercede for blessings for his people, but he actually confers them; and whether this is to be considered as a branch of Christ’s intercession; which is made, not in a supplicant, but in an authoritative manner, as has been shown; or whether as a distinct part of Christ’s priestly office; I shall treat of it particularly and separately, and much in the same method as the other parts have been treated of; by showing,

1. That Christ was to bless his people; this was promised and prophesied concerning him, and was prefigured in types of him.

1a. First, It was promised to Abraham, that in his "seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed" (Genesis 22:1-24; Genesis 28:1-22), and which was renewed to Isaac (Genesis 26:4), and also again to Jacob (Genesis 28:14), and which contains the sum of the gospel preached unto Abraham; for by "seed" is meant, not his numerous natural seed, descending from him by ordinary generation, in successive periods of time; but his single, special, and principal seed, the Messiah, who was to spring from him (Galatians 3:8; Galatians 3:16), and by "all nations" are meant some of all nations, the chosen vessels, who consist both of Jews and Gentiles, the redeemed of the Lamb, who are by him redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; and are effectually called, by the Spirit and grace of God, out of the world, and the nations of it, in each of the periods of time, and so are all blessed, both in time and to eternity; and on this account Christ is truly called, "the desire of all nations" (Haggai 2:7), whose coming as an High Priest with good things being promised, might be expected and desired by them; and those may be said not only to be blessed in him as their representative, as they are, both in eternity and in time (Ephesians 1:3-4; Ephesians 2:5-6) and not only "through" him, all the blessings of goodness being put into his hands for them; and so they come to them, through his hands, and through the efficacy of his blood, as redemption, pardon, grace, and eternal life (Ephesians 1:7; Acts 13:38; Titus 3:6; Romans 6:23), but they are blessed by him as it is his own act and deed; and so the apostle interprets and explains the phrase; "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed; unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away everyone of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25-26).

1b. Secondly, Christ’s blessing his people was prefigured in Melchizedek, the type of him, and of whose order he was. This illustrious person met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the

kings, "and blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:19), that is, May Abraham be blessed of God with both temporal and spiritual blessings, which he who is Lord of both worlds is able to bestow upon him: and on this benediction the apostle observes that Melchizedek, who "received tithes from Abraham, blessed him who had the promises"; not only of a Son to be his heir, and of the land of Canaan for his seed, but of the Messiah, and of the heavenly inheritance; from whence he infers the greatness, the excellency, and the superiority of Melchizedek, as a type of Christ (Hebrews 7:6-7). The priests under the law, one part of whose work and office it was to bless the people, and who did bless them, were types and figures of Christ in that action, and foreshowed what he was to do when he came (Leviticus 9:22; Psalms 118:26).

2. Christ has blessed his people, does bless them, and will continue to bless them: he blessed them under the Old Testament; he appeared in an human form to Jacob, and wrestled with him; nor would Jacob let him go except he blessed him; and he had power with him, and prevailed, and got the blessing; as appears by the name of Israel he gave him; and having such an experience of his ability to bless, he addressed him for a blessing on his grandchildren, saying, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads"; meaning Christ the uncreated Angel, the Angel of God’s presence, the Angel of the covenant, who had protected him from all evil throughout his life, and particularly from the evil he feared from his brother Esau; when he appeared to him, and for him, and blessed him, as before observed (Genesis 32:24-29; Genesis 48:16), and as Christ came in the fulness of time, an High Priest of good things; he blesses his people with them, of which his blessing his disciples is a specimen; and which was done by him after he had offered himself a sacrifice, and was risen from the dead, and before his ascension to heaven; "he lift up his hands and blessed them: and it came to pass while he blessed them he was parted from them" (Luke 24:50-51).

2a. First, Observe the qualifications of Christ to bless his people, his fitness, ability, and sufficiency for such a work.

2a1. As he is God, or a divine person, he must be able to bless; God is blessed; this is an epithet of his; blessedness is a perfection of Deity; it is a principal one; yea, all his perfections are comprehended in it, and serve to complete it; and hence he is the fountain of all blessedness to his creatures. Now Christ is "over all, God blessed for ever" (Romans 9:5), all the fulness of the Godhead is in him; all that the Father hath are his, he is the Lord God omnipotent, "and able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20), he is EI-Shaddai, God all sufficient; as such he is the Creator of all things; nothing is made without him, but all by him and for him; and he has all the blessings of nature in his hands to dispose of; the earth is his, and the fulness thereof; and he can give it to whom and when he pleases: as such he is the God of providence; and as such jointly works in providence with his divine Father; and has all providential goodness to bless men with: as such he is the God of all grace, the God of his people, their sun and shield, who gives grace and glory; and his grace is sufficient for them; every good and perfect gift of grace comes from him; and grace and peace are equally prayed and wished for from him as from the Father; as in all the epistles.

2a2. Christ, as Mediator, has a fitness, ability, and sufficiency to bless his people; as such, God has "made him most blessed for evermore", and "prevented him with the blessings of goodness"

(Psalms 21:3; Psalms 21:6), by laying up in him the blessings of the covenant of grace, to communicate to his people; by first giving all the blessings of grace to him, and then to them in him. As God, he has a natural claim and right to all blessedness; he has it to the full, infinitely, in right of nature; it is independent of, and underived from another: but as Mediator, he is made blessed by the will and pleasure of his Father; the blessings of grace and goodness are given unto him; it is his Father's good pleasure, that all the fulness of grace should dwell in him; out of which, his people, in all ages, receive grace for grace; and all their spiritual wants are supplied from thence; nor can they want any good thing; his grace is sufficient for them, and he has enough to dispense unto them. Besides, as Mediator, he has obtained all blessings for them, in a way consistent with all the perfections of God, to bestow them on them. Who can doubt of his abilities to bless his people with deliverance from sin, Satan, the law, its curses and condemnation, and from ruin and destruction; since he has obtained eternal redemption for them? or with a justifying righteousness; since, as he came to bring in everlasting righteousness, he is become the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes? or with spiritual peace, he has promised to give, since he has made peace by the blood of his cross? or with salvation, and all things appertaining to it; since he is become the author of eternal salvation, and is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him?

2b. Secondly, The persons who are blessed by Christ: though "all nations" of the earth are said to be blessed in him, and by him; yet not every individual of all nations; for at the same time that this was promised to Abraham, God declared that he would curse them that cursed him; and so all such that curse his people, and blaspheme his name; yea, there are some whose very blessings are cursed, as well as their persons; and, indeed, all that are of the works of the law, or seek for justification by them, are cursed, "that continue not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10), which no man does; and therefore is cursed by that very law by which he seeks for justification. To which may be added, that all graceless and Christless sinners, instead of being blessed by Christ, will, at the last day, be bid to depart from him, saying, "Depart from me, ye cursed" (Matthew 25:41). But,

2b1. All that are blessed of the Father are blessed by Christ; God, as the God and Father of Christ, blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in him; and those that are blessed in him are blessed by him; the same the Father blesses, the Son does also; to whom he will say at the great day, "Come, ye blessed of my Father" (Ephesians 1:3; Matthew 25:34).

2b2. All that are chosen of God in Christ are blessed by him; for they are blessed with all spiritual blessings according as they are chosen in him; their election of God is the standard, rule, and measure of all after blessings; that stands at the front of them and secures all the rest; "whom he did predestinate, them he also called", &c. (Romans 8:30). The elect of God are the objects of all the blessings of grace which arise from Christ's death, resurrection, session at the right hand of God, and his intercession there; or otherwise there would be no strength nor force in the triumphant challenge of the apostle (Romans 8:33-34).

2b3. All that are given to Christ by the Father are blessed by him; for these he prays for blessings, on these he bestows them; he manifests the name of God unto them, his favour and grace, and the blessings of it; his gospel, and the privileges belonging to it; he confers grace on them, keeps them by his power, and gives unto them eternal life (John 17:2; John 17:6; John 17:8-9; John

17:11-12; John 17:24).

2b4. All the covenant ones are blessed by Christ; all that are in covenant have a right to the blessings of it, and they are blessed with it; God is their covenant God, and happy are they whose God he is; God, even their own God, will bless them. The covenant of grace is ordered in all things and sure; and Christ, the mediator of it, in whose hands they are, gives them the sure mercies of David.

2b5. All the spiritual Israel of God, the whole Israel of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, are blessed by Christ; what is said of literal Israel, "Happy art thou, O Israel, —O people saved by the Lord" (Deuteronomy 33:29), is true of mystic Israel, or the elect of God among all nations; that Israel whom God has chosen, and Christ has redeemed and called by name; these are the seed of Israel that are justified in Christ, and saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation (Psalms 135:4; Isaiah 43:1; Isaiah 45:17; Isaiah 45:25).

2c. Thirdly, The blessings Christ blesses his people with, some of which are as follow.

2c1. With a justifying righteousness; this is a great blessing: David describes "The blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Romans 4:6), and that is the righteousness of Christ; and this Christ has not only wrought out, and brought in, but he brings it near to his people; he puts it upon them, he clothes and covers them with it; so that they are justified from all their sins, and secured from condemnation and death, and are saved from wrath to come; their persons and services are acceptable unto God; and it is well with them at all times, in life, in death, and at the last judgment.

2c2. With the pardon of their sins, which is another great blessing; "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven" (Psalms 32:1), and Christ has not only shed his blood to obtain remission of sins for his people, but through the ministry of his gospel, and by his Spirit and grace he applies it to them (Matthew 9:2), and which fills their hearts with joy and gladness.

2c3. Christ blesses his people with the adoption of children; they are not only predestinated of God unto it by him, and he has redeemed them that they might receive it, but he himself bestows it on them; (John 1:12).

2c4. Those are blessed by Christ with regeneration and conversion by his Spirit and grace through the ministration of his gospel; this is the instance mentioned by the apostle, of Christ’s blessing his people, for whose sake he was raised up, and to whom sent (Acts 3:26). His blessing them lay in this, in turning them from sin and self; and in turning them to himself, to his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for peace, pardon, justification, and eternal salvation.

2c5. The same persons are blessed by Christ with the Spirit, which he has received without measure; and with the graces thereof in an abundant manner, at first conversion, which are richly shed on them, through Christ, their Saviour; and by whom they are blessed with all after supplies of grace, till he brings them to glory.

2c6. The Lord blesses his people with peace (Psalms 29:11), which flows from his peace speaking blood, his perfect righteousness, and atoning sacrifice; with peace which passeth all understanding; and is what the world can neither give nor take away.

2c7. He blesses them with the gospel, the ordinances of it, and the privileges of his house. He favors them with the joyful sound, with the good news and glad tidings of his gospel: he satisfies them with the goodness and fatness of his house; he gives them a place, and a name in it, better than that of sons and daughters; he makes them fellow citizens with the saints, and makes them into the household of God, and causes them to partake of every blessing and privilege of the children of God.

2c8. And lastly, Christ blesses his people with eternal life and happiness; he not only intercedes for them that they may be with him where he is, and behold his glory; and not only is gone beforehand, to prepare mansions of glory for them; but, according to his promise, will come and take them to himself, and introduce them into his kingdom and glory, where they shall be for ever with him.

2d. Fourthly, The nature and excellencies of these blessings.

2d1. They are covenant blessings; which are laid up and secured in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure; and which are very comprehensive, and include both grace and glory.

2d2. They are spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3), such as are of a spiritual nature, relating to the spiritual welfare of men, and suited to spiritual men; and for the good of their souls or spirits; and are what the Spirit of God takes, shows, and applies unto them.

2d3. They are solid and substantial ones; blessings indeed, such as Jabez prayed for; saying, "O that thou wouldst bless me indeed!" (1 Chronicles 4:10). Earthly and temporal blessings, as riches and honours, are things that are not, non-entities, comparatively speaking, have no solidity and substance in them; but the blessings of Christ, both of grace and glory, have substance in them; faith is the "substance" of things hoped for; and heaven is a more "enduring substance"; which wisdom, or Christ, causes his people to inherit (Hebrews 11:1; Hebrews 10:34; Proverbs 8:21; Proverbs 23:5).

2d4. They are irreversible blessings; the blessing with which Isaac blessed Jacob was confirmed by him with a resolution not to alter it: and the blessing Balaam was commanded to bless Israel with, was what he could not reverse, whatever good will he had to it: but the blessings of grace by Christ, are such as God never repents of, revokes, or reverses; these are "the gifts and calling of God" to grace and glory, which "are without repentance" (Romans 11:29).

2d5. These blessings are eternal; whatever is done in this way of Christ’s blessing his people "is for ever" (Ecclesiastes 3:14). Christ’s righteousness is an everlasting righteousness; pardon of sin ever remains; once a child of God, always so; no more a servant, but a son, an heir of God, and a joint heir of Christ; so every blessing of grace, with glory and happiness, in the world to come.

02. Of Christ's State of Humiliation

Of Christ’s State of Humiliation

Christ’s state of humiliation began at his incarnation, and was continued through the whole of his life unto death, which is fully and clearly expressed in a few words in Php 2:7-8 "but made himself of no reputation," &c. and which the apostle illustrates and confirms by placing it in a contrast with his glorious estate previous to it; for by how much the higher he was in that state, the lower and meaner he appears in this; and higher it was not possible for him to be, than as described by the apostle, as "in the form of God," in his nature and essence; and as "equal with God" his Father; having the same perfections, names, works, and worship ascribed to him. Now in his state of humiliation he appeared the reverse of this; he, who was in the form of God, was not only made in the likeness of man, and in fashion as a man, but took on him the form of a servant, of one of the meanest of men; and he, who was equal to his divine Father, made himself of no account among men, and became obedient in all things to his Father, and that even to death itself, the accursed death of the cross.

1. The humiliation of Christ took place at his incarnation, and therefore in the above account of it, the phrases of being "made in the likeness of men," and of "being found in fashion as a man," are used as expressive of it; and which are to be understood of his being really and truly man, as has been observed in the preceding chapter; for though the assumption of the human nature into union with the person of the Son of God was an exaltation of it, and gave it a preeminence to all the other individuals of human nature, and even to angels themselves, as has been shown; (see Psalms 89:19) yet it was an humbling of the person of Christ to take a nature so inferior to his into union with him; for I see not why the phrase of "humbling" may not be used with respect to this matter of the person of the Son of God, since it is used of the divine Being (Psalms 113:6), and if it is an humbling of God, a stoop of Deity, to look upon things in heaven and earth; a condescension in him to dwell on earth, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain (1 Kings 8:27), it must be much more so for the Word and Son of God, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, and to whom the creation of all things is ascribed, to be made flesh and dwell among men (John 1:1-3; John 1:14).

1a. First, The humiliation of Christ appeared both in his conception and birth; though there were some things relating to his conception which were very illustrious and glorious; as a remarkable prophecy concerning it some hundreds of years before it was (Isaiah 7:14), the dispatch of an angel to the virgin to acquaint her with it, when near or at the instant of it, and that it itself was of the mighty power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26; Luke 1:31; Luke 1:35), yet it was amazing humility that he who was the Son of God, lay in the bosom of his Father, should by assumption of human nature into union with his divine person, lie nine months in the womb of a virgin; and he that ascended on high, should first descend into these lower parts of the earth. And though there were many great and glorious things that attended his birth, which made it very illustrious; as an unusual star, which guided the wise men from the east to the place of his nativity, who worshipped him,

and presented gifts unto him; and an angel appeared in a glorious form to the shepherds, who acquainted them with his birth; and a multitude of the heavenly host descended and joined with him, singing "Glory to God in the highest" on account of it; yet, besides many things that followed it, very inglorious; as Herod's search after him to take away his life; the flight of his parents with him into Egypt, where they continued for a while in fear and obscurity; and the massacre of a great number of infants in and about Bethlehem: it may be observed,

1a1. That he was "born of a woman," which very phrase is expressive of meanness (Job 14:1), born of a sinful woman, though he himself without sin; "made of a woman," as the expression is in Galatians 4:4 made of one that was made by him, and to whom he stood in the character of Creator, Lord and Saviour, as she herself owned (Luke 1:46-47).

1a2. Born of a poor woman; for though his mother, the virgin, was of the house of David, of that illustrious family, yet when that family was become very low, like a tree cut down to its roots; for when in such a state was the Messiah to spring from it, as he did, according to the prophecy (Isaiah 11:1), that his mother was a poor woman, appears from the usage she met with at the time of her delivery in the inn, where there was no room for her to be received in, because of her poverty; and therefore was obliged to lay her newly born infant in a manger. Into what a low estate was our Lord brought! As also from her bringing the offering of the poorer sort at her purification. Persons of ability were obliged to offer a lamb on such an occasion, but if poor, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, which she did (Luke 2:7; Luke 2:24), hence the Jews upbraided Christ with the meanness of his parentage, saying, "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary?" plain "Mary;" and "his brethren James and Joses," and "Simon and Judas?" and "his sisters, are they not all with us?" do not we know them, what a low life family they are?

1a3. He was born in a poor country village; for though it was the birth place of David, and called his city, and so famous on that account; yet in Christ's time was mean and obscure, and said to be "little among the thousands of Judah;" and he afterwards lived in a very despicable place, where he was brought up; despicable to a proverb; "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46).

1a4. The nature he was conceived and born in, and which he assumed, though without sin, yet had all the sinless infirmities of human nature: his soul was subject to sorrow, grief, anger, &c. and his body to hunger, thirst, weariness, &c. it was a nature inferior to angels; at least he was for a while, through the sufferings of death, made a little lower than they (Hebrews 2:9), and who at certain times, when in distress, ministered to him and relieved him (Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43), into such a low estate and condition did Christ come in our nature.

1b. Secondly, The humiliation of Christ appeared in all the stages of life into which he came; for he passed through the states of infancy, childhood, and youth, as other men do; he was wrapped in swaddling bands, as newly born infants are; hung upon his mother's breasts as soon as born, and received his nourishment from thence, as infants do; he endured the painful rite of circumcision when eight days old, and was presented in the temple according to usual custom; he continued in the infant state, both with respect to body and mind, the usual time, for ought appears: his case was not like the first Adam's; he was created as one in the prime of life, a grown man, and in the full exercise of his rational powers at once: but so it was not with the second Adam; he was an infant of days, he grew in body as children do; and his reasoning faculties were not opened at

once, but gradually, for it is said, he increased in wisdom as well as "in stature" (Luke 2:40; Luke 2:52), as he grew up in his childhood and youthful state, though we have but little account of it, it appears to be attended with much meanness and obscurity, even to his manhood; we have but one circumstance related of him in this time, which is that of his coming up to Jerusalem with his parents at the passover, when twelve years of age; and though there were some things then appeared in him very remarkable and uncommon, in taking his place among the doctors, hearing and asking them questions; yet he returned with his parents, and lived in subjection to them (Luke 2:42-51), and it seems as if he was brought up to a mechanic business; it was a commonly received tradition of the ancients, that he was brought up to the trade of a carpenter; and there are some things which make it probable; it is a question put by the Jews, "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6:3), nor was it ever denied that he was; they suggest, that he had no liberal education, was not brought up in any of their public schools or academies: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" John 7:15), and it cannot be supposed that he should live an inactive life the greater part of his days; but besides the poverty of his parents, which would not admit of the maintenance of him without business, what greatly prevails upon me to give into this sentiment is, that the second Adam must bear the first Adam’s curse, even that part of it which lay in getting his bread by the sweat of his brow (Genesis 3:19). O what a low estate was our Lord brought into on our account! Add to all this, that his whole life, until he was thirty years of age, was a life of obscurity; for from the time of his coming out of Egypt and being had to Nazareth in his infancy, we hear nothing of him, excepting that single instance of being at Jerusalem when twelve years of age, until he came from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him; and then he was about thirty years of age (Luke 3:23). Now what astonishing condescension and humility is this, and how great was the humiliation of Christ in this state! that the greatest personage that ever was in the world, the Son of God in human nature, and who came to do the greatest work that ever was done in the world, should be in the world thirty years running, and scarce be known at all by the inhabitants of it; at least not known who and what he was (John 1:10), at most but by very few.

1c. Thirdly, The public life of Christ began at his baptism, for by that he was made manifest in Israel; and for that purpose John came baptizing with water; and who had this signal given him, that on whomsoever he should see the Spirit of God descending, the same was he; which when he saw he bore testimony of him that he was the Son of God, and pointed him out as the Lamb of God, that, takes away the sin of the world; and though there were some things attending the baptism of Christ which made it illustrious, as not only John’s testimony of him, but the descent of the Spirit on him as a dove, and a voice from his Father heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (John 1:29-36; Matthew 3:16-17), yet his submission to the ordinance itself was an instance of his humiliation; his coming many miles on foot, from Galilee to Jordan, to John to be baptized of him, is a proof of it; he that had the power of baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire, was baptized in water; he that knew no sin, nor did any, was baptized with the baptism of repentance, as though he had been a sinner; and he that was John’s Lord and Master, was before him, and preferred to him, and whose shoe latchet John was not worthy to unloose; and who could have ordered him to attend him at any place convenient for baptism, which for some reasons he thought fit to submit unto; yet took the pains and fatigue of a journey to go to him for that purpose; and though John modestly declined it at first, having some hint of him who he was, yet being pressed by him, he agreed to administer the ordinance to him, and did; and which was done to fulfil all righteousness, and in obedience to the will of God, and to set an example to

us, that we should tread in his steps; and in all which appear wonderful humility and condescension; (see Matthew 3:13-15).

1d. Fourthly, Immediately after his baptism Christ was harassed with the temptations of Satan, which was another branch of his humiliation and low estate he came into; for "he suffered being tempted;" and he "was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 2:18; Hebrews 4:15), that is, with all sorts of temptations, though not altogether in the same manner, nor had they the same effect on him as on us. Satan tempted him, not by stirring up any corruption, or provoking any lust in him, as he provoked David, stirred up the lust of pride and vanity in him to number the people; for in Christ was no sin, lust, or corruption to stir up; Satan could find nothing of this kind in him to work upon: nor did he tempt him by putting any evil into him, as he put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray his Lord, and into the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira to lie unto the Holy Ghost; nor could he get any advantage over Christ by any of his temptations; he was forced after all his temptations in the wilderness to leave him, and in the garden and on the cross, he was foiled by him; yea he, and his principalities and powers, were spoiled and triumphed over; but inasmuch as by these temptations Christ in his human nature was harassed and distressed, they are a part of his humiliation, and require a particular consideration; and those we have the clearest account of are they which began in the wilderness; for he was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matthew 4:1), that is, he was influenced and directed by the Spirit of God, who had lighted on him at his baptism, under an impulse of his, both inward and outward, to go up from the habitable parts of the wilderness, where John was preaching and baptizing, and where he himself had been baptized, to the mountainous and uninhabitable parts of it, which were quite desolate and uncultivated; where were no provisions, nor any man to converse with, none but wild beasts, to whom he was exposed, and with whom he was (Mark 1:13), another instance of his low estate. The time when he was here tempted was quickly after his baptism; Matthew says "then" he was led to be tempted, that is, when he had been baptized; and Mark says it was "immediately;" and thus as it was with Christ the head, so it often is with his members; that as he was tempted, after his baptism, after the Spirit of God had descended upon him, and filled him with his gifts and graces without measure; and after he had had such a testimony from heaven of his divine Sonship: so his people, after they have had communion with God in ordinances, and have had some sealing testimonies of his love, fall into temptations, and fall by them; as the disciples of Christ after the supper, who, when tempted, all forsook him and fled, and one denied him. Moreover, it was after Christ had fasted forty days, and when he was hungry, that the tempter came to him and attacked him; two of the evangelists say he tempted him forty days; so he might tempt him, more or less, all the forty days, at times; but when they were ended, and Christ was an hungry, then he set upon him with greater violence, as judging it a proper opportunity to try the utmost of his power and skill with him: so Satan suits his temptations to the constitutions, circumstances, and situation men are in.

1d1. The first temptation was by putting an if upon the Sonship of Christ; "If thou be the Son of God;" though there could be no doubt made of this, since a testimony of it from heaven had just been given; and the devils themselves have acknowledged, that Christ is the Son of God (Luke 4:41). And thus the children of God are sometimes tempted to call in question their sonship, because of inward corruptions and outward afflictions: or it may be, Satan argued from hence, "if," or "seeing," thou art the Son of God, as has been testified by a voice from heaven, and thou

thyself affirmest; as a proof of it, "command that these stones be made bread," or "this stone," as Luke expresses it; that is, one of the stones which lay near by, and were in sight: and Satan might hope to succeed in this temptation, since Christ was now hungry, and he might insinuate a concern for his welfare; and the rather as he succeeded with the first Adam, in tempting him to eat of the forbidden fruit; and as he might suggest, he would, by such an act of omnipotence, give proof of his divine Sonship: but though Christ could have done this, as well as God could raise up out of stones children unto Abraham; yet as it was needless to do it in proof of his Sonship, since that had been so well attested already, by a voice from heaven; nor for his sustenance, since he had been sustained by the power and providence of God forty days without food, he might be longer. Besides, he never wrought a miracle for his own support; nor would he do it now, at the instance of the devil, which was what he wanted him to do, in obedience to him, and at his motion; wherefore Christ's answer is; "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deuteronomy 8:3), which signifies, that men may live by that which is not properly bread, as by manna, on which the Israelites lived in the wilderness, to which the passage quoted refers: nor does man live by bread, when he has it, abstracted from the blessing of the mouth of God with it, which gives it nourishment; and besides, without bread, in any sense, a man may be supported by the power and providence of God, as Moses and Elijah were, and as Christ now had been; and therefore, to take such a method as he was tempted to, would have seemed to have been a distrust of that power and providence by which he had been sustained; and thus, by quoting scripture, to repel Satan's temptations, Christ has taught us to make use of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, to withstand the temptations of Satan also.

1d2. The second temptation was, after Satan had prevailed on Christ, or he condescended to go along with him, or he suffered him to take him to the city of Jerusalem, and place him on the pinnacle of the temple, or on the battlements of it, to cast himself down from thence; in order to give proof of his divine Sonship, in a public manner, before the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Priests, Scribes, and common people; by which he might suggest it would gain him great credit and esteem; and as for his preservation in it, he quotes, in imitation of him, a passage of scripture, where it is written, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee," &c. which, however applicable to Christ, as well as to his members, is perverted, since a material clause is omitted, "to keep thee in all thy ways;" whereas Satan was endeavoring to lead him out of the right way, tempting him to the sin of suicide; which he did, either out of envy and malice, and the malignity of his nature; or to prevent, if he had any notion of it, Christ's dying in the room and stead of his people, in a judicial way, for their salvation: however, Christ resisted the temptation, by saying, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 6:16), as Christ was; which was testified by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God, and so Lord and heir of all things. In like manner the children of God are often tempted by Satan to destroy themselves; which shows the similarity between Christ's temptations and theirs.

1d3. The third temptation was, after the devil had taken Christ, by his permission, to an exceeding high mountain, one of those about Jerusalem, or not far from it, and had showed him, by a diabolical and false representation of things to the sight, "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;" alluring him with a promise of these to "fall down and worship him." To promise Christ these was impertinent; since the earth is his, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they

that dwell therein, as the maker of them; and all power in heaven and earth is given him as Mediator; to pretend that these were in his power to dispose of to whomsoever he pleased, as it is in Luke, was intolerable arrogance; when he had not the least thing in the world at his dispose; could not touch any of Job's substance without permission, and a grant from God; nor go into a herd of swine without leave: but to propose to Christ, that he should fall down and worship him, was the height of insolence and impudence! This shows what the original sin of the devil was, affectation of Deity, and to be worshipped as God; hence he has usurped the title of the God of this world; and has prevailed upon the ignorant part of it, in some places, to give him worship: and, indeed, to sacrifice to idols, is to sacrifice to devils: but, not content with this, he sought to be worshipped by the Son of God himself; than which nothing could be more audacious and impious; wherefore Christ rejected his temptation with indignation and abhorrence; saying, "Get thee hence, Satan;" or, as Luke has it, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Deuteronomy 6:13), upon which the devil left him, finding he could do nothing with him; and angels came and ministered to him. After which we hear no more of him, till the time of Christ's death drew nigh, when Christ observed to his disciples, that "the prince of this world cometh," to meet him in the garden, where he was in an agony, and had a combat with him; and his sweat was as drops of blood falling to the ground; and when were the hour and power of darkness, when all the posse of devils were let loose upon him, and cast their fiery darts at him; but he got the victory over them all; yet, notwithstanding that, these various assaults and temptations of Satan, to which he was subject, and by which he was harassed, must be considered as a part of his humiliation, and of that low estate he was brought into.

1e. Fifthly, Christ's humiliation appeared in the reproaches, indignities, and persecutions he endured from men, even contradiction of sinners against himself; the reproaches with which God and his people were reproached, fell on him; and these so thick and fast, and so heavily, that, in prophetic language, reproach is said to have broken his heart (Psalms 69:9; Psalms 69:20). Sometimes his enemies the Jews upbraided him with the meanness of his descent and pedigree, the low estate of his family, as has been observed; with his illiberal education, and the illiterateness of his followers: sometimes they attacked his moral character, affirmed they knew him to be a sinner: charged him with sabbath breaking, with being a glutton and a wine bibber, and an encourager of men in sinful practices; they traduced his miracles, which they could not deny as facts, as if done by the help of the devil; and said he had a devil, and was familiar with one, by whom he did his works; they called him a deceiver of the people, and charged him with preaching false doctrines, and delivering out hard sayings not to be borne with; nay, they endeavoured to fix the imputation of blasphemy on him, because, being a man, he made himself God, and equal to him; they represented him as a seditious person, that went about teaching men not to give tribute to Caesar; as well as having an intention to destroy their law; and as setting men to pull down their temple. In short, they not only rejected him as the Messiah, with the greatest contempt and abhorrence of him; but sought to take away his life in a violent manner; sometimes by having him to the brow of an hill to cast him down headlong; and at other times they took up stones to stone him; nor were they satisfied until they had brought him to the dust of death.

1f. Sixthly, There was a very great degree of meanness and poverty which appeared throughout the whole life of Christ, private and public; to which the apostle has respect, when he says; "Ye

know the grace of our Lord Jesus," &c. (2 Corinthians 8:9), where he puts Christ's riches and poverty in contrast, that by so much the greater his riches were in his former state, by so much the more does his poverty seem to be in his low estate; he was rich in the perfections of his nature, in the possession of heaven and earth, and all therein; and in the revenues of glory arising from the kingdom of nature and providence; and yet he who was Lord of all became poor to make us beggars rich. And this is to be understood of poverty in a literal sense; for Christ was not spiritually poor. Some instances of his meanness and poverty in private life have been observed before; as, that he was born of poor parents, had not a liberal education, and was brought up to a mechanic business. When he came into public life, it does not appear that he had any certain dwelling house to live in; so that "the foxes, and the birds of the air," enjoyed more than he did (Matthew 8:20). To what a low estate was our Lord brought! though he could have supported himself, and his twelve apostles, by working miracles for his and their sustenance; yet he never did, but lived upon the contributions and ministrations of some good women, and others, mentioned in Luke 8:2-3. When the collectors of tribute came to him for the tribute money, he had none to pay them, but ordered Peter to cast his hook into the sea, and take up a fish, and out of that a piece of money, and pay the tribute for him and for himself (Matthew 17:24-27). At his death he had nothing to leave to his mother for her support; but seeing her, and his disciple John, when on the cross, said to her, "Behold thy son;" and to him, "Behold thy mother;" signifying, that he should take care of her; and from that time that disciple took her to his own house (John 19:26-27). Nor had he any tomb of his own, or family vault to be interred in; but was laid in one belonging to another, even Joseph of Arimathea. And this poverty of his was signified by hints, types, and prophecies, that he should be thus poor and needy; and which were hereby fulfilled (Psalms 40:17; Ecclesiastes 9:14; Zechariah 9:9).

1g. Seventhly, Upon the whole, it clearly appears, that Christ indeed "humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation," as in Php 2:7-8 or emptied himself; not of the fulness of grace it pleased the Father should dwell in him; this was with him, and seen, in him, when he became incarnate; and still continues with him; out of which saints receive grace for grace (John 1:14; John 1:16), much less of the perfections of his divine nature, the whole fulness of which dwells in him bodily (Colossians 2:9). Every perfection in Deity was asserted by him in his state of humiliation, as omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, &c. (John 2:24-25; John 3:13; Revelation 1:8). Christ did not lay aside the form of God, in which he was; or lay down his divine nature, which was impossible; nor deny his equality with God, which would be to deny himself; but he consented to have his divine glory covered and veiled, as to the ordinary manifestation of it, and in common; I say as to the ordinary manifestation of it; for it sometimes did break forth in an extraordinary way by miracles (John 2:11), and there, were some, though but few, which saw his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father; the greater part saw no form nor comeliness in him, wherefore he should be desired by them (John 1:14; Isaiah 53:3). He did not give up his equality with God the Father; but he was content that that for a time should be out of sight; and so behave, and be so treated, as if he was not his fellow; he was willing, in the human nature, and in his office capacity, to act in subordination to his Father; to say what he bid him say, and do what he bid him do; even to the laying down of his life; for which he had a commandment from his Father; yea, he owned that in that his present state and circumstances, his Father was greater than he (John 12:49-50; John 10:18; John 14:28). He was content to be had in the utmost disesteem by men, to be emptied of his good name, character, and reputation, to be reckoned a worm, and no man; to be a

Samaritan, and have a devil; and to be called and abused as if he was the worst of men; and to be made sin, and a curse for his people, to repair the loss of honour sustained by the sins of men; so that Christ's humiliation was his own voluntary act and deed.

02. Of Conversion

Of Conversion

Conversion, though it may seem, in some respects, to fall in with regeneration and the effectual calling, yet may be distinguished from them both. Regeneration is the sole act of God; conversion consists both of God’s act upon men, in turning them, and of acts done by men under the influence of converting grace; they turn, being turned. Regeneration is the motion of God towards and upon the heart of a sinner; conversion is the motion of a sinner towards God, as one (Charnock) expresses it. In regeneration men are wholly passive, as they also are in the first moment of conversion; but by it become active: it is therefore sometimes expressed passively; "ye are returned", or converted (1 Peter 2:25), and sometimes actively; "a great number believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21), and "when it", the body of the people of the Jews, "shall turn to the Lord", which has respect to their conversion in the latter day (2 Corinthians 3:16). The effectual calling is the call of men out of darkness to light; and conversion answers to that call, and is the actual "turning" of men from the one to the other; so that, with propriety, conversion may be considered as distinct from regeneration and the effectual calling. Concerning which may be observed, 1. First, what conversion is, and wherein it lies. The conversion to be treated of is not,

1a. An external one, or what lies only in an outward reformation of life and manners, such as that of the Ninevites; for this may be where internal conversion is not, as in the Scribes and Pharisees; and is what persons may depart from, and return to their former course of life again; and where it is right and genuine, it is the fruit and effect of true conversion, but not that itself.

1b. Nor is it a mere doctrinal one, or a conversion from false notions before imbibed to a set of doctrines and truths which are according to the Scriptures; so men of old were converted from Judaism and heathenism to Christianity: but not all that were so converted in a doctrinal sense were true and real converts; some had the form of godliness without the power of it, had a name to live, and be called Christians, but were dead, and so not converted; thus the recovery of professors of religion from errors fallen into, to the acknowledgement of the truth, is called a conversion of them (James 5:19-20).

1c. Nor the restoration of the people of God from backslidings to which they are subject, when they are in a very affecting and importunate manner called upon to return to the Lord (Jeremiah 3:12; Jeremiah 3:14; Jeremiah 3:22; Hosea 14:1-4), so Peter, when he fell through temptation, and denied his Lord, and was recovered from it by a look from Christ, it is called his conversion (Luke 22:32). But,

1d. The conversion under consideration is a true, real, internal work of God upon the souls of men; there is a counterfeit of it, or there is that in some men who are not really converted, which is somewhat similar to that which is always found in those that are truly converted; as, a sense of sin, and an acknowledgment of it; an apprehension of the divine displeasure at it; great distress about it, a sorrow for it, humiliation on account of it, and an abstinence from it; and something that bears

a resemblance to each of these may be found in unconverted persons; though their concern about sin is chiefly for the evil that comes by it, or like to come by it, and not for the evil that is in it; so in converted persons there is sooner or later light into the gospel and the doctrines of it: particularly the doctrine of salvation by Christ, which yield relief and comfort to them under a sense of sin, and encourage faith and hope in God; and there is something like this to be observed in some who are not truly converted, who are said to be "enlightened", that is, in a notional and doctrinal way; and to "taste" the good word of God, though it is only in a superficial manner; and to "receive it with joy", with a flash of natural affection, which lasts for a while; and to believe it with a temporary faith, historically, and become subject to the ordinances; but yet in all this there is no heart work, whereas true genuine conversion lies,

1d1. In the turn of the heart to God, of the thoughts of the heart; which are only evil, and that continually, and about evil things, not about God, and the things of God; "God is not in all their thoughts", nor in any of the thoughts of wicked men; but when converted, their thoughts are about their state and condition by nature, about their souls, and the eternal welfare of them; and about God, and the methods of his grace in the salvation of men: it is a turn of the "desires" of the heart, which before were after vain, carnal, worldly, sinful lusts and pleasures; but now after God and communion with him, after Christ and salvation by him, after the Spirit and the things of the Spirit: it is a turn of the "affections" of the heart, which before were "inordinate", and ran in a wrong channel; before they were fleshly, after the things of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life: but now they are checked, and turned towards God, their hearts being circumcised to love him; and whom they love with their whole hearts and souls, because he first loved them; though before their carnal minds were enmity to him; and towards Christ, whom they now love affectionately, fervently, superlatively, and sincerely; and towards the saints, who are now the excellent in the earth, in whose conversation is all their delight, though before hateful to them; and towards the word, worship, and ordinances of God, which they take pleasure in attending on, though before a weariness to them. Conversion is a turn of the "mind" from carnal things to spiritual ones, and from earthly things to heavenly ones; yea it is a turn of the "will", which before conversion is in a very bad state, is stubborn and inflexible, biased to and bent upon that which is evil, and averse to all that is good; but in conversion God "works in" men "both to will and to do of his good pleasure"; he gives them another will, or however a turn to their will, so that of an unwilling people, they are made a willing people in the day of his power on them; whereas they were unwilling to come to Christ for salvation, and take him alone to be their Saviour; "ye will not come unto me that ye might have life", says Christ (John 5:40), that is, ye have no will to come to me at all for life and salvation; they chose rather to go anywhere than to him for it; but now they are willing to be saved by him, and resolve to have no other Saviour but him; yea though he slay them they will trust in him, and say he shall be our salvation; and though before they went about to establish their own righteousness, and did not and would not submit to the righteousness of Christ; now their stout hearts, which were far from righteousness, are brought down, and they become willing to be found in Christ, and in his righteousness only; and inasmuch as before they would not have Christ to reign over them, and chose not to be subject to his laws and ordinances, now they are ready to acknowledge him as their king and governor, and turn their feet to his testimonies, and esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right.

1d2. Conversion lies in a man’s being turned from darkness to light; the apostle says, he was sent by Christ to the Gentiles, as a minister of the gospel, "to turn them from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18), that is, to be the instrument or means of their conversion, by preaching the gospel to them. In this conversion may seem to coincide with the effectual calling; but it may be observed, that the effectual calling is a call to, but conversion is a turning of, men from darkness to light; God not only calls unto light, but turns them to light in every sense; to God who is light itself, and in whom is no darkness at all; to Christ, who is the light of the world; to the gospel, which is the great light that shines on men who sit in darkness; and to the light of grace, which is a shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.

1d3. Conversion lies in the turning of men "from the power of Satan unto God", as in the above place (Acts 26:18). Satan has great power over men in an unconverted state, his seat is in their hearts, which are the palace in which he rules; he works effectually with great power and energy in the children of disobedience, by stirring up their lusts and corruptions, suggesting evil things to their minds, and tempting them to them; he does all he can to keep them in their native blindness and ignorance, and to increase it, and to prevent them from hearing the gospel, and from its being beneficial to them, lest the light of it should shine into their minds; he captivates them, and leads them captive at his will; and they are willingly led by him, the lusts of their father they will do; but now in conversion they are turned from his power; he is dispossessed of them, and his armor taken from him in which he trusted; the prey is taken out of the hands of the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered; men are translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God’s dear Son; and though they are not freed from his temptations, yet they have grace sufficient given them to bear up under them till it is the pleasure of God to save them from them, who will shortly bruise him under them; and as they are in conversion turned from him, they are turned to God; who before were without him, and alienated from the life of him, and strangers to him; but now they are turned to the knowledge of him, to love to him, to faith in him, and to communion with him.

1d4. Conversion lies in turning men from idols to serve the living God; not merely from idols of silver and gold, of wood and stone, as formerly, but from the idols of a man’s own heart, his lusts and corruptions; with respect to which the language of a converted sinner is, "What have I to do any more with idols?" this is a blessing bestowed in conversion, "Unto you first, God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you", in "turning away everyone of you from his iniquities". In redemption Christ turns away iniquities from his people by bearing them and making satisfaction for them; and in conversion, he by his Spirit and grace turns them from their iniquities; he turns them from the love of them to an hatred of them, even of vain thoughts, as well as of sinful actions; from the service and drudgery of them to the service of righteousness; from the power and dominion of them and subjection to them, and from a course of living in them to a life of holiness; and from the paths of sin to the paths of truth and uprightness.

1d5. Conversion lies in turning men from their own righteousness to the righteousness of Christ; not from doing works of righteousness, for such converted persons are most fit for, and most capable of, and are under the greatest obligations to perform; but from depending upon them for justification before God and acceptance with him; in order to which they must be convinced by the Spirit of God of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them, being imperfect; and of the necessity, perfection, and fulness of Christ’s righteousness, which being turned unto, they receive, embrace, lay hold on, and plead as their justifying righteousness before God; and this

requires more than human teachings: for though ministers are said to "turn many to righteousness", that is, to the righteousness of Christ, yet only instrumentally, and as the means of it, through preaching the gospel, in which there is a revelation of it; for God is the efficient cause of the turn of them to it; for though the gospel is the ministration of it, yet it is the Lord that must bring it near to stouthearted ones far from righteousness, and make them willing to submit unto it, and to be desirous of being found in it; for men naturally do not care to part with their own righteousness; it is their own, and what they have been a long time and with great labour rearing up, and to have it demolished, they cannot bear it; they would fain hold it fast, and lean upon it, though it shall not stand; it is their idol, in which they place their trust and confidence, and to take this away from them is to take away their god; as Micah said, when his idol was stolen from him, "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?" Wherefore the conversion of a self-righteous person is more rare and difficult than the conversion of a profligate sinner; hence our Lord says to the Scribes and Pharisees, that "the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before them"; and that he himself "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matthew 21:31; Matthew 9:13).

1d6. Conversion lies in a man’s turning to the Lord actively, under the influence of divine grace; and by this phrase it is often expressed in scripture, as in Isaiah 10:21; Acts 11:21; 2 Corinthians 3:16, men being thoroughly convinced that there is salvation in no other but in Christ, that it is in vain to expect it elsewhere; after they have made many inquiries and searches to no purpose, turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, and look to him alone for salvation; being apprized of their danger, they turn as they are directed, encouraged and enabled to Christ the stronghold, where they are safe from all danger, and from every enemy; being made sensible of the insufficiency of their own righteousness and of the suitableness of the righteousness of Christ for them, they turn to him as the Lord their righteousness, in whom all the seed of Israel are justified and shall glory; and being fully satisfied with the equity of the laws, rules, and ordinances of Christ, they turn to him as their Lord and Lawgiver, and submit to his commands, renouncing all other lords and their dominion over them; and though in their natural state they are like sheep going astray, in conversion they are returned to Christ, as the great Shepherd and bishop of souls: the parable of seeking and finding, and bringing home the lost sheep, is a fit representation of the conversion of a sinner: Christ’s people are his sheep before conversion, but they are lost sheep, straying in the wilderness; and as sheep never return to the fold, shepherd and pasture of themselves, unless looked up and are returned; so neither do they, till they are sought for and found, and brought home by Christ, the proprietor of them, with joy; and the parables following represent the same thing; as that of the lost piece of silver, for finding which the woman lights a candle and sweeps the house, and searches every corner till she finds it, which gives her joy; this sets forth the high esteem and value the elect are in with Christ, comparable to silver, yea to line gold and precious stones; and the passiveness of men in first conversion, who no more contribute to it than the piece of silver to its being found; and the means and methods made use of in conversion, the light of the gospel ministry, and the stir and bustle on that occasion: so the parable of the prodigal son, and his return to his father, is expressive of the same; his manner of living before his return is a lively picture of the state of unconverted men, living in their lusts, and pursuing the desires of the flesh and of the mind; in his return there are all the symptoms of a true and real conversion; as a sense of his starving, famishing, and perishing state by nature; his coming to his right mind, his sense of sin, confession of it, and repentance for it; his faith and hope of meeting with a favorable reception

by his father, which encouraged him to return, and which he met with; (see Isaiah 55:7).

2. Secondly, The causes of conversion, efficient, moving, and instrumental.

2a. First, The efficient cause, which is not man but God.

2a1. Not man, it is neither by the power nor will of man.

2a1a. Not by the power of man; what is said of the conversion or turning of the Jews from their captivity, is true of the conversion of a sinner, that it is "not by might nor by power", that is not of man, "but by my Spirit, as saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). Men are dead in a moral sense while unconverted, they are dead in trespasses and sins, which are the cause of their death; and their very living in them is no other than a moral death; nor can they quicken themselves, and unless they are quickened they cannot be converted; and being in a moral sense dead they are "strengthless"; they are not only "weak through the flesh", the corruption of nature, but they are "without strength"; without any strength at all to perform that which is good, and much less a work of so great importance as their own conversion; they have not the command of themselves, nor any power over their hearts, the thoughts, desires, and affections of them; they cannot check them and control them at pleasure; they cannot think anything as of themselves, much less think a good thought; they cannot turn the streams of their desires and affections to proper objects; they cannot move their minds, nor bend their wills, even to that which is to their own advantage. Conversion is such an alteration in a man as is not in his power to effect: it is like that of an Ethiopian changing his skin, and a leopard his spots; such things are never heard of, as a blackamoor becoming white, and a leopard becoming clear of his spots; and as unlikely is it that a man should convert himself (Jeremiah 13:23), a tree must first be made good, so as to bring forth good fruit; "Make the tree good", says our Lord; but the tree cannot make itself good; another hand must be employed about it, to engraft it, cultivate and improve it: a thorn bush cannot turn itself into a vine tree, and so bring forth grapes; nor a thistle into a fig tree, to bring forth figs; but as soon may these things be done as a man to convert himself and bring forth the good fruits of righteousness (Matthew 12:33; Matthew 7:16-18). Conversion is the motion of the soul towards God; but as this cannot be in a dead man, and unless he is quickened, so not unless he is drawn by efficacious grace; wherefore God, in conversion, draws men with lovingkindness to himself; and, with the cords of love, to his Son; for "no man", says Christ, "can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him" (John 6:44), and even converted persons themselves are so sensible of this, that they pray, as the church did, "Draw me, we will run after thee" (Song of Solomon 1:4), the thing speaks for itself, and shows that it cannot be done by the power of man; for it is no other than a "creation", which requires creation power to effect it, which a creature has not; for if the restoration, or conversion, of a backslidden saint is a creation, and requires the power of the Creator to do it; of which David, when backslidden, was sensible, and therefore prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God!" then much more is the first conversion of a sinner, and requires like power; it is a resurrection from the dead, and is not to be effected but by the exceeding greatness of God’s power, even such as was put forth in raising Christ from the dead (Ephesians 1:19).

2a1b. Nor is conversion owing to the will of men; the will of man, before conversion, is in a bad state, it chooses its own ways, and delights in its abominations; it is in high pursuit after the desires of the flesh and of the mind; it is resolved to go after its lovers, its lusts, which feed its appetite, and furnish with things agreeable to the carnal mind; the will is become a slave to carnal

lusts and pleasures; though the natural liberty of the will is not lost by sin, it can freely will natural things, as to eat or drink, sit, or stand, or walk, at pleasure; yet its moral liberty is lost, it is shackled with the fetters of sinful lusts, by which it is overcome and brought into bondage; and notwithstanding its boasted liberty, it is an home born slave; and therefore Luther rightly called it "servum arbitrium": man has no will to that which is good till God works it in him, and of unwilling makes him willing in the day of his power: he has no will to come to Christ, to be saved by him; nor to submit to his righteousness; nor to be subject to his laws and ordinances, until such a will is worked in him by efficacious grace. Conversion is denied to be of the will of men; as the whole of salvation is "not of him that willeth"; so this part of it in particular, regeneration, with which conversion, in the first moment of it, agrees; "is not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Romans 9:16; John 1:13). But it may be said, if conversion is not in the power and will of men, to what purpose are such exhortations as these; "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; turn yourselves, and live ye?" and again, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted?" Ezekiel 18:30; Ezekiel 18:32 and Acts 3:19 to which it may be replied, That these passages have no respect to spiritual and internal conversion, but to an external reformation of life and manners. In the first instance the Jews were then in a state of captivity, which was a kind of death, as sometimes sore afflictions are said to be (2 Corinthians 1:10), and into which they were brought through their sins: now the Lord declares, that he took no pleasure in this their uncomfortable state and condition; it was more desirable to him, and therefore he exhorts them to it, to reform from their evil practices; then they would be returned from their captivity, and live comfortably in their own land, as they had formerly done. But what has this to do with the spiritual and internal conversion of a sinner unto

God? with respect to the latter case, the Jews were threatened with the destruction of their city and nation, for their rejection of Jesus the Messiah, and other sins they were guilty of; and now the apostle advises those to whom he directs his discourse, to relinquish their wrong notions of Christ, and repent of their ill usage of him and his followers, and of their other sins, in an external way, that so they might escape the calamities coming upon their nation and people. But supposing these, and such like exhortations, respected internal conversion of the heart to God; such exhortations may be only designed to show men the necessity of such conversion in order to salvation; as our Lord said, "Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven"; and when men are convinced of this, they will soon be sensible of their impotence to convert themselves, and will pray, as Ephraim did "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned", immediately and effectually; for,

2a2. God only is the author and efficient cause of conversion. He that made man’s heart, and formed the spirit of man within him, he only can turn their hearts, and frame and mould their spirits, as he pleases; the heart of a king, and so of every other man, is in the hand of the Lord, and he can turn them as the rivers of water are turned; he, and he only, can give a check unto, and turn the thoughts, desires, and affections of the heart into another channel, and the mind and will to other objects; he can remove the stubbornness of the will, and bend it at his pleasure, and make it pliable and conformable to his own will; he can take away the hardness of the heart, though it is like an adamant stone, he can make it soft, and susceptible of the best impressions; he can break the rocky heart in pieces; yea, take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh; as he can take what he pleases out of it, so he can put into it what he will, as he does in conversion, his laws,

the fear of him, and his Spirit; he can and does draw them, by the powerful influence of his grace upon them, to himself and to his Son; and this he does without forcing their wills; he sweetly allures, by his grace, to come to Christ and his ordinances; he powerfully persuades Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem; he makes his people willing, in the day of his power, to do what they had before no will nor inclination to; and yet they act most freely; the manslayer did not more willingly flee to a city of refuge, to shelter him from the avenger of blood, than a sinner, sensible of his danger, flees to Christ for refuge, and lays hold on the hope set before him. The power of divine grace, put forth in conversion, is irresistible; that is, so irresistible, as that a stop cannot be put to the work, and that become of no effect, through opposition made unto it from within and from without. Conversion is according to the will of God, his will of purpose, which can never be frustrated; "Who hath resisted his will?" his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; it is wrought by his almighty power; the work of faith, which is a principal part of the work of conversion, is begun, carried on, and performed with power; nor can a sinner any more resist, so as to make of none effect, the power of God in conversion, than Lazarus could resist the power of Christ in calling him out of his grave. If it was in the power of the will of men to hinder the work of conversion, so as that it should not take place, when it is the design of God it should; then God might be disappointed of his end, which must not be said; for there is no counsel nor might against him; whatever devices may be in a man’s heart, the counsels of God can never be disappointed; when God has purposed to convert a sinner, who can disannul it? and when his mighty hand of grace is stretched out, to put that purpose into execution, who can turn it back? when he works in any way, and so in this, there is none can let. Besides, if conversion was to stand or fall according to the will of men; or if that had the turning point in man’s conversion, it would rather he ascribed to the will of men than to the will of God; and it would not be true what is said, "It is not of him that willeth": yea, as the will of men then would have the greatest stroke in conversion, in answer to that question, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" it might be said, as it has been said by a proud and haughty free willer Grevinchovius, I have made myself to differ. To all this may be objected the words of Christ; "How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!"(Matthew 23:37) but it should be observed, that this gathering is not to be understood of conversion; but of attendance on the ministry of the word under John the Baptist, Christ himself, and his apostles; to which Christ had affectionately and importunately exhorted them; which, had it been regarded, would have preserved them from the vengeance coming upon Jerusalem: and it should also be observed, that they are not the same persons whom Christ would have gathered, and those of whom he says, "and ye would not"; by whom are meant, the rulers and governors of the people, who would not allow them to attend the gospel ministry, but threatened them with putting them out of the synagogue if they did; (see Matthew 23:13).

2b. Secondly, The moving, or impulsive cause of conversion, is the love, grace, mercy, favour, and goodwill of God; the same as are the moving cause of regeneration and effectual calling, and not the merits of men; for what is there in men before conversion to move God to take such a step in their favour? (see 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 2:2-4).

2c. Thirdly, The instrumental cause, or means of conversion, is usually the ministry of the word; sometimes, indeed, it is wrought without the word, by some remarkable awakening providence or another, and sometimes by reading the scriptures; but, for the most part, it is through the preaching of the word; hence ministers are said to "turn many to righteousness"; and the apostle

Paul says, he was sent by Christ into the Gentile world, to "turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God"; and this is done both by the preaching of the law and of the gospel; "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Psalms 19:7), though perhaps not the law, strictly taken, but the whole doctrine of the word is there meant; however, the preaching of the law is made use of by the Spirit of God to convince of sin; for "by the law is the knowledge of sin"; and by means of it, when it enters into the heart and conscience, under his influence, sin is made to appear exceeding sinful, and the soul is filled with great distress on account of it; for the "law worketh wrath"; though some take this to be rather preparatory to conversion than conversion itself, which may be better ascribed to the gospel; and, indeed, the receiving of the Spirit, and his graces, and particularly faith, are attributed to the preaching of the gospel, and not to the law, as the means thereof; "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law?" that is, by preaching the doctrine of obedience to it; "or by the hearing of faith?" that is, by the doctrine of the gospel, preaching faith in Christ; which is therefore called "the word of faith", and by which it comes; for "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Galatians 3:2; Romans 10:8; Romans 10:17), but then the preaching of the word of the gospel is not sufficient of itself to produce the work of conversion in the heart; men may hear it, and not be converted by it; nor receive any benefit, profit, and advantage through it; if it comes in word only, and not with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; and when it is accompanied with the power of God; or is made the power of God unto salvation, even then it is only an instrument, and not an efficient; for "who is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers, or instruments, by whom ye believed?" (1 Corinthians 3:5).

3. Thirdly, The subjects of conversion; these are not all men, for all, in fact, are not converted; nor does it appear to be the design and purpose of God to convert all men; nor does he give sufficient grace to all men to convert themselves if they will; for he does not so much as give to all men the means of grace, the outward ministry of the word: this was not vouchsafed to the Gentiles for hundreds of years before the coming of Christ; and since, millions have never been favored with it; nor are multitudes at this day; and those who have the scripture to read, to many it is a sealed book, and to all, unless opened by the Spirit of God; and to whom the gospel is preached, it is hid, unless it is given them to know the mysteries of the kingdom, which is not the case of all; the persons converted are the "elect" of God, both among Jews and Gentiles: in the first ages of the gospel, many among the Gentiles were converted, and churches formed of them; and ever since there have been conversions among them, and even to this day, and in the latter day an abundance of them will be converted; and when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, then the Jews, of whom only now and then one are converted, they will be all as a nation born again, converted and saved. They are "redeemed" ones who are converted; and the reason why they are converted is, because they are redeemed; "I will hiss for them", by the ministry of the word, and "gather them", which is another phrase for conversion, "because I have redeemed them" (Zechariah 10:8), they whom God converts are the same persons for whom he has provided forgiveness of sins in the covenant of his grace, and an eternal inheritance in his divine purpose; for the apostle says, he was sent by Christ "to turn men unto God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ" (Acts 26:18). In a word, they are described as "sinners"; "Sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Psalms 51:13), sinners by nature and by practice, and some of them the worst and chief of sinners; and therefore the wonderful grace of God is the more displayed in their conversion, (1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Timothy 1:3; 1 Timothy 1:14-15).

02. Of Creation in General

Of Creation In General.

Having considered the internal and eternal acts of the divine mind, and the transactions of the divine Persons with each other in eternity; I proceed to consider the external acts and works of God, or his goings forth out of himself, in the exercise of his power and goodness in the works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace; which works of God, without himself, in time, are agreeable to the acts of his mind within himself, in eternity. These are no other than his eternal purposes and decrees carried into execution; for "he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Ephesians 1:11). I shall begin with the work of creation, which is what God himself began with; and shall consider the following things concerning it.

1. What creation is. Sometimes it only signifies the natural production of creatures into being, in the ordinary way, by generation and propagation; so the birth of persons, or the bringing them into being, in the common course of nature, is called the creation of them, and God is represented as their Creator (Ezekiel 21:30; Ezekiel 28:14; Ecclesiastes 12:1). Sometimes it designs acts of providence, in bringing about affairs of moment and importance in the world; as when it is said, "I form the light, and create darkness"; which is explained by what follows, "I make peace and create evil": it is to be understood of prosperous and adverse dispensations of providence; which are the Lord’s doings, and are according to his sovereign will and pleasure (Isaiah 55:7). So the renewing of the face of the earth, and the reproduction of herbs, plants, &c. in the returning spring of the year, is called a creation of them (Psalms 104:30). And the renewing of the world, in the end of time, though the substance of it will remain, is called a creating new heavens and a new earth, (Isaiah 65:17). Sometimes it intends the doing something unusual, extraordinary, and wonderful; such as the earth’s opening its mouth, and swallowing up the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness (Numbers 16:30), and the wonderful protection of the church of God (Isaiah 4:5), and particularly the amazing incarnation of the Son of God (Jeremiah 31:22). But, to observe no more, creation may be distinguished into mediate and immediate; mediate creation is the production of beings, by the power of God, out of pre-existent matter, which of itself was not disposed to produce them; so God is said to create great whales and other fishes, which, at his command, the waters brought forth abundantly; and he created man, male and female; and yet man, as to his body, was made of the dust of the earth, and the woman out of the rib of man (Genesis 1:21; Genesis 1:27), and, indeed, all that was created on the five last days of the creation, was made by the all-commanding power and will of God, out of matter which before existed, though indisposed of itself for such a production. Immediate creation, and which is properly creation, is the production of things out of thing, or the bringing of a nonentity into being, as was the work of the first day, the creating the heavens and the earth, the unformed chaos, and the light commanded to arise upon it (Genesis 1:1-3). And these are the original of all things; so that all things ultimately are made out of nothing, which is the voice of divine revelation, and our faith is directed to assent unto and receive; "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrews 11:3), but of things unseen,

and indeed, which had no existence; for God, by his all-commanding word and power, "called things that are not as though they were" (Romans 4:17), that is, called and commanded by his mighty power, nonentities into being; and this is what is meant by a creation of things out of nothing; and so the word arb, used for the making of the heavens and the earth in the beginning, signifies, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe; and indeed it cannot be conceived of otherwise, but that the world was made out of nothing; for,

If nothing existed from eternity but God, or if nothing existed before the world was but himself, by which his eternity is described, and which he claims as peculiar to himself (Psalms 90:2; Isaiah 43:10), and if the world was made by him, as it most certainly was, it must be made by him out of nothing, since besides himself, there was nothing existing, out of which it could be made; to say it was made out of pre-existent matter, is to beg the question; besides, that pre-existent matter must be made by him; for he has "created all things", (Revelation 4:11 and if all things, nothing can be excepted; and certainly not matter; for be that visible or invisible, one of them it must be; and both the one and the other are created of God (Colossians 1:16), and this matter must be made out of nothing, so that it comes to the same thing, that all things are originally made out of nothing. Besides, there are some creatures, and those the most noble, as angels and the souls of men, which are immaterial, and therefore are not made out of matter, and consequently are made out of nothing; and are brought from nonentity into being, by the almighty power of God; and if these, why not others? and if these and others, why not all things, even matter itself? As for that old and trite maxim, so much in the mouths of the ancient philosophers [1], as well as modern reasoners, "Ex nihilo nihil fit", out of nothing, nothing is made; this only holds true of finite nature, finite beings, second causes; by them out of nothing, nothing can be made; but not of infinite nature, of the infinite Being, the first Cause, who is a God of infinite perfection and power; and what is it that omnipotence cannot do? Plato [2] owns that God is the Cause, or Author of those things, which before were not in being, or created all things out of nothing.

2. The object of creation, all things, nothing excepted in the whole compass of finite nature; "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure", or by thy will, "they are and were created" (Revelation 4:11), these all things are comprehended by Moses under the name of the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1), and more fully expressed by the apostles in their address to God, who is described by them as having "made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is" (Acts 4:24), and still more explicitly by the angel, who swore by the living God "who created heaven, and the things that therein are; and the earth, and the things that therein are; and the sea, and the things which are therein" (Revelation 10:6).

2a. First, The heavens and all in them; these are often represented as made and created by God, and are said to be the work of his fingers and of his hands; being curiously as well as powerfully wrought by him (Psalms 8:3, Psalms 19:1, Psalms 102:25). They are spoken of in the plural number, for there are more heavens than one; there are certainly three, for we read of a "third" heaven, which is explained of "paradise" (2 Corinthians 12:2; 2 Corinthians 12:4), this is,

2a1. The heaven of heavens, the superior heaven, and the most excellent, the habitation of God, where his glorious presence is, where he has his palace, keeps his court, and is indeed his throne (Isaiah 65:15; Isaiah 66:1), and where angels dwell, and therefore they are called the angels of heaven, are in the presence of God there, and behold the face of our heavenly Father (Matthew

24:36; Matthew 18:10), and where glorified saints will be in soul and body to all eternity. Now this is a place made and created by God, and as such cannot contain him, though his glory is greatly manifested in it, (1 Kings 8:27), it is where the angels are, who must have an "ubi" somewhere to be in, being finite creatures, and who are said to ascend unto, and descend from thence (John 1:51), and here bodies are, which require space and place, as those of "Enoch" and "Elijah", translated thither, and the human nature of Christ, which has ascended to it, and will be retained in it, until his second coming; and where the bodies of those are, who rose at the time of his resurrection; as well as all the bodies of the saints will be to all eternity: and this is expressly called a "place" by Christ, and is distinguished as the place of the blessed, from that of the damned (John 14:2-3; Luke 16:26), and is sometimes described by an house, a city, a country, kingdom, and an inheritance; and particularly it is called a "city whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10), for he that built all things built this; it is a part of his creation; and all things in it are created by him; he the uncreated Being excepted; even God, Father, Son, and Spirit; but the angels of it are his creatures; "He makes his angels spirits" (Psalms 104:4), of their creation, and the time of it, of their nature, number, excellency, and usefulness, I shall treat in a particular chapter hereafter.

2a2. There is another heaven, lower than the former, and may be called the "second", and bears the name of the starry heaven, because the sun, and moon, and stars are placed in it; "Look towards heaven, and tell the stars", (Genesis 15:5; Isaiah 40:26; Job 22:12), this reaches from the region of the moon to the place of the fixed stars, and to that immense space which our eyes cannot reach. Now this, and all that in it are, were created by God; he made the sun to rule by day, and the moon to rule by night; and he made the stars also (Genesis 1:16).

2a3. There is another heaven lower than both the former, and may be called the aerial heaven; for the air and heaven are sometime synonymous; hence the fowls are sometimes called the fowls of the heaven, and sometimes the fowls of the air, they being the same (Genesis 7:3; Genesis 7:23). Now this wide expanse, or firmament of heaven, is the handy-work of God, and all things in it; not only the fowls that fly in it, but all the meteors gendered there; as rain, hail, snow, thunder, and lightning. "Hath the rain a father?" None but God; and the same may be said of all the rest: (Job 37:6; Job 38:28-29).

2b. Secondly, The earth, and all that is therein. This was first made without form; not without any, but without the beautiful one in which it quickly appeared; and when the waters were drained off from it, and became dry land, it was called earth (Genesis 1:2; Genesis 1:9-10) and as this was made by God, so all things in it; the grass, the herbs, the plants, and trees upon it; the metals and minerals in the bowels of it, gold, silver, brass, and iron; all the beasts of the field, and "the cattle on a thousand hills"; as well as the principal inhabitants of it, men, called eminently the inhabitants of the earth (Daniel 4:35). Of the creation of man I shall treat in a distinct chapter by itself.

2c. Thirdly, The sea, and all that is in that; when God cleaved an hollow in the earth, the waters he drained off of it, he gathered into it; and gave those waters, thus gathered into one place, the name of seas (Genesis 1:10), and which were of his creating; "The sea is his, and he made it", (Psalms 95:5 and all in it: likewise the marine plants and trees, with other things therein; and all the fishes which swim in it, great and small, innumerable (Psalms 104:25-26). Now these, the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that are in them, make up the world which God has created, and which is but one; for though we read of worlds, God has made by his Son, and which are framed

by the word of God (Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 11:3), yet these may have respect only to the distinction of the upper, middle, and lower world; for the numerous worlds some Jewish writers speak of, they are mere fables; and that the planets are so many worlds as our earth is, and that the fixed stars are so many suns to worlds unknown by us, are the conjectures of modern astronomers, and in which there is no certainty; revelation gives no account of them, and we have no concern with them; and were there as many as are imagined, and can be conceived of, this we may be assured of, they were all created by God.

3. The next thing to be inquired into is, When creation began? or God began to create and bring things into being? and this was not in eternity, but in time; an "eternal creature", or a creature in eternity, is the greatest absurdity imaginable; to assert it is an insult on the common sense and understanding of men: it was in the beginning of time, or when time first began, as it did, when a creature was first made, that God made all things; "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth", &c. (Hebrews 1:10), these were the first that were created, and with these time begun; and every creature has a beginning, creation supposes it; for that is no other than bringing a nonentity into being; and therefore since what is created, once was not, it must have a beginning. Some philosophers, and Aristotle at the head of them, have asserted the eternity of the world; but without any reason; and is abundantly refuted by scripture; and therefore cannot be received by those that believe its divine authority; for that not only assures us that it was created in the beginning, and so had a beginning; but gives us an account of what was before it; as, that before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and world were formed, God was, even from everlasting; so that an eternity anteceded the making of the world. Christ also, the Wisdom and Word of God, was before the earth was; even when there were no depths, nor fountains abounding with water; before the mountains and hills were settled, and the highest part of the world made (Psalms 90:2; Proverbs 8:24-30). A choice of men was made in Christ unto eternal life, before the foundation of the world; and grace was given to them in him, as their head and representative, before the world began, (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9). A full proof that the world had a beginning; and that there were things done in eternity, before the world was in being. To say the world, or matter, was coeternal with God, is to make that itself God; for eternity is a perfection peculiar to God; and where one perfection is, all are: what is eternal, is infinite and unbounded; and if the world is eternal, it is infinite; and then there must be two infinites, which is an absurdity not to be received. Besides, if eternal, it must necessarily exist; or exist by necessity of nature; and so be self-existent, and consequently God; yea, must be independent of him, and to which he can have no claim, nor any power and authority over it; whereas, according to divine revelation, and even the reason of things, all things were according to the pleasure of God, or by his will (Revelation 4:11), and therefore must be later than his will, being the effect of it. And as the world had a beginning, and all things in it, it does not appear to be of any great antiquity; it has not, as yet, run out six thousand years, according to the scriptural account, and which may be depended on. Indeed, according to the Greek version, the age of the world is carried fourteen or fifteen hundred years higher; but the Hebrew text is the surest rule to go by: as for the accounts of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Chinese, which make the original of their kingdoms and states many thousands of years higher still; these are only vain boasts, and fabulous relations, which have no foundation in true history. The origin of nations, according to the Scriptures, which appears to be the truest; and the invention of arts and sciences, and of various things necessary to human life; as of agriculture, the bringing

up of cattle; making of various utensils of brass and iron, for the various businesses of life; and the finding out of letters; with many other things, which appear to be within the time the Scripture assigns for the creation; plainly show it could not be earlier, since without these men could not be long: nor does any genuine history give an account of anything more early, nor so early as the Scriptures do; and therefore we may safely conclude, that the origin of the world, as given by that, is true; for if the world had been eternal, or of so early a date as some kingdoms pretend unto, something or other done in those ancient times, would have been, some way or another, transmitted to posterity.

Under this head might be considered, the time and season of the year when the world was created. Some think it was in the vernal equinox, or spring of the year, when plants and trees are blooming, look beautiful, and all nature is gay and pleasant; and at which season in every year, there is a renewing of the face of the earth: and some have observed, in favour of this notion, that the redemption of man was wrought out at this time of the year, which is a restoration of the world; but these seem not sufficient to ascertain it. Others think the world was created in the autumnal equinox, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and in their full perfection; which seems more probable: and certain it is, that some nations of old, as the Egyptians and others, began their year at this time; as did the Israelites, before their coming out of Egypt, when they were ordered by the Lord to make a change; and from thenceforward to reckon the month Abib, or Nisan, in which they came out of Egypt, the first month of the year, and which answers to part of March and part of April; and which they always observed for the regulation of their ecclesiastic affairs, though with respect to civil matters, they still continued to reckon the year from Tisri, which answers to some part of our September; and it may be observed, that the feast of ingathering the fruits of the earth, is said to be "in the end of the year"; and when a new year begun; (see Exodus 12:2; Exodus 23:16). But this is a matter of no great moment, which way soever it is determined; what follows is of more importance.

4. The author of creation is God, and he only; hence he is called the creator of the ends of the earth, of the whole world, to the utmost bounds of it; and claims the making the heavens and the earth to himself alone; and a curse is pronounced on those deities that made not the heavens and the earth; and it is declared, that they should perish from the earth, and from under those heavens (Isaiah 40:28; Isaiah 42:5; Isaiah 44:24; Jeremiah 10:11), and more divine persons than one were concerned in this work, for we read of creators and makers in the plural number (Ecclesiastes 12:1; Job 35:10; Psalms 149:2; Isaiah 54:5), and a plural word for God is made use of at the first mention of the creation (Genesis 1:1), and these divine persons are Father, Son, and Spirit, the one only living and true God; of the Father of Christ there can be no doubt; our Lord addresses his Father as Lord of heaven and earth, the possessor and governor of both, being the creator of them (Matthew 11:25), and the apostles expressly ascribe to him the making of the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that is in them (Acts 4:24; Acts 4:27), and he is said to make the worlds by his Son, and to create all things by Jesus Christ, (Hebrews 1:2; Ephesians 3:9), not by him as an instrument, but as a co-efficient cause; for the particle "by" does not always signify an instrument; (see Romans 11:36), besides, it is expressly said of the Word and Son of God, who is God, that "all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that is made"; and of him, the image of the invisible God and firstborn, or first parent and producer of every creature, that "all things were created by him, and for him"; by him as the first cause, and for him as the chief end

(John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-16), and the Son is addressed by his divine Father after this manner, "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands"; and by him, the eternal Logos, the essential Word of God [3], the worlds are said to be framed (Hebrews 1:8-10; Hebrews 11:3), nor is the Holy Spirit to be excluded from having a concern in the works of creation; since he not only moved upon the face of the waters at the first creation, and brought the unformed earth into a beautiful order, and by him the heavens were garnished, and bespangled with luminaries (Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13), but the formation of men is ascribed to him, "The Spirit of God hath made me, saith Elihu, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4), and since the Spirit of God is the author of regeneration, which is a re-creation, or a new creation, and which requires the same almighty power to effect it, as the old creation did; and since he is the giver of all grace, and of every spiritual gift, which he dispenses to everyone severally as he will; no doubt ought to be made of it, that he had an hand in the creation of all things. And this work of creation was wrought by God, Father, Son, and Spirit, without any other cause, principal or instrumental; not principal, for then that would be equal with God; nor instrumental, since creation is a production of things out of nothing, there was nothing for an instrument to operate upon; and since it was an instantaneous action, done in a moment, there could be no opportunity of using and employing one: besides, this instrument must be either God or a creature; not God, because it is supposed to be distinct from him, and to be made use of by him; and if a creature, it must be used in the creation of itself, which is an absurdity; for then it must be and not be at the same moment: nor could nor can creative power be communicated to a creature; this would be to make finite infinite, and so another God, which cannot be; this would be to make God to act contrary to his nature, to deny himself, which he cannot do; and to destroy all distinction between the creature and the Creator, and to introduce and justify the idolatry of the heathens, who worshipped the creature besides the Creator.

5. The manner and order of the creation; it was done at once by the mighty power of God, by his all-commanding will and word, "He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast" (Psalms 33:9), he gave the word, and every creature started into being in a moment; for though God took six days for the creation of the world and all things in it, to make his works the more observable, and that they might be distinctly considered, and gradually become the object of contemplation and wonder; yet the work of every day, and every particular work in each day, were done in a moment, without any motion and change, without any labour and fatigue, only by a word speaking, by an almighty "fiat", let it be done, and it immediately was done; thus on the "first" day, by the word of the Lord the heavens and the earth were at once made, and light was called into being, "Let there be light, and there was light". On the "second" day the firmament of heaven, the great expanse, was formed in the same manner, to divide the waters above it, gathered up and formed into clouds, from those that were under it upon the surface of the earth; and on the "third" day, in one moment of that day, God ordered the waters under the heavens to be gathered into one place called the sea, and leave the land dry, which he called earth; and in another moment of that day he commanded the earth to bring forth grass, herbs, and trees, and they sprung up at once. On the "fourth" day he made the sun, moon, and stars in an instant, and directed their several uses; on the "fifth" day, in one moment of it, he bid the water bring forth fowls, and in another moment of it created great whales, and the numerous fishes of the sea; and on the "sixth" day, in one moment of it, he ordered the earth to bring forth living creatures, beasts, and cattle, wild and tame; and in another moment on the same day he created man after his image, his soul

immaterial out of nothing, his body out of the dust of the earth; and in another moment on the same day created the woman out of the rib of man, immediately infusing into her a rational soul as into man, since both were made after the image of God; and thus God proceeded in the creation of things in the visible world, from things less perfect to those more perfect, and from inanimate creatures to animate ones, and from irrational creatures to rational ones; and in his great wisdom provided food and habitations for living creatures before he made them; and when he had finished his works he overlooked them and pronounced them all very good. Nor is it any objection to the goodness of them that some creatures are noxious and harmful to men, since they become so through the sin of men; and others are of a poisonous nature, since even these may be good and useful to others; and God has given man capacity and sagacity to distinguish between what may be harmful to him, and what is salutary. There remains nothing more to be observed but, 6. The end of the creation of all things: and,

6a. The ultimate end is the glory of God: "The Lord hath made", in every sense, "all things for himself"; that is, for his glory (Proverbs 16:4), and his glory is displayed in all, the heavens declare it, and the earth is full of it, even the glory of all the divine perfections; "for the invisible things of him", his nature, perfections, and attributes, "from the creation of the world", or by the works of creation, "are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made", which could never be made without them, "even his eternal power and Godhead"; all the perfections of deity, particularly his infinite and almighty power (Romans 1:20), for as the prophet Jeremiah says, "Lord God, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm" (Jeremiah 32:17), moreover the goodness of God is remarkably displayed in the creation; God appears therein to be communicative of his goodness, since he has not only made all things very good, but all conducive to the good of his creatures; the whole earth is full of his goodness; and men are called upon by the Psalmist to give thanks to God because he is good; and the principal things instanced in, in which his goodness appears, are the works of creation; (see Psalms 33:5; Psalms 136:1; Psalms 136:4), &c. to all which may be added, the rich display that is made of the wisdom of God in the several parts of the creation; "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth, by understanding hath he established the heavens, by his knowledge the depths are broken up" (Proverbs 3:19-20). The wisdom of God appears in every creature he has made, in their form, shape, texture, and nature, suitable for what they are designed, and in their subserviency to each other, so that the Psalmist well might say, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!" (Psalms 104:24).

6b. The subordinate end is the good of man, of men in general; the earth is made to be inhabited by man, and all the creatures on it are put in subjection to him, and are for his use and service, as well as all that grows upon it, or are in the bowels of it (Isaiah 45:12; Isaiah 45:18; Psalms 8:6-8), the celestial bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, and all the influences of the heavens, are for his benefit (Genesis 1:14-18; Hosea 2:21-22), particularly the world, and all things were made for the sake of God’s chosen people, who in the several ages of time were to be brought forth and appear on it; and in which, as on a stage and theatre, the great work of their redemption and salvation was to be performed in the most public manner; and they have the best title to the world, even the present world, Christ being theirs, whose is the world and the fulness of it (1 Corinthians 3:22-23; Psalms 24:1), as well as the new heavens and the new earth, as they will be when refined and purified, the second Adam’s world, are for their sakes; and in which none but righteous persons

will dwell, even the whole church of God, when prepared as a bride for her husband, and where the tabernacle of God will be with men. 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1-4, yea the angels of heaven are created for their use and service; they are all "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who are heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1:14), wherefore upon the whole it becomes us to glorify and worship God our creator, to fear him and stand in awe of him, and to put our trust and confidence in him, both for things temporal and spiritual.

ENDNOTES:

[1] So Democritus. Diogenes, Epicurus, vid. Laert. l. 9, 10. “in Vita eorum.----nullam rem e nihilo gigni; nil posse creari, de nihilo----” Lucretius, l. 1. so Persii Satyr. 3. v. 84. “erit aliquid quod aut ex nihilo oriatur, aut in nihilum subito occidat, quis hoc physicus dixit unquam” Cicero de Divinatione, l. 3. c. 37.

[2] Sophista, p. 185.

[3] Pretty remarkable is the account given by Laertius in vita Zeno, of the notion of the Stoic, concerning creation, “with them,” he says, “there are two principles of all things, an agent and a patient; the patient is substance, matter without quality; the agent on it is ton en auth logon ton qeon, God the Word; for he being eternal, effects or creates everything by or through the whole of it."

02. Of Effectual Calling

Of Effectual Calling

Though effectual calling may be distinguished from regeneration, taken more strictly, for the first infusion and impartation of grace in the heart; yet it is closely connected with it, and the consideration of it naturally follows upon it. It is, with great propriety, said to be "effectual" calling, to distinguish it from another calling, which is not effectual; at least, which is not attended with any salutary effect to the persons called with it; of which more hereafter. Concerning effectual calling, the following things may be observed.

1. What it is, and the nature of it. It is not of a civil kind, of which there are various sorts; as a call to an office in state; so Saul and David were chosen and called to take upon them the government of the people of Israel: likewise a call to do some particular service, which God has appointed men to do; so Bezaleel was called and qualified to devise and do some curious work for the tabernacle, and to teach and direct others in it: so the Medes and Persians were sanctified, or set apart by the Lord, and called by him to the destruction of Babylon; and Cyrus was raised up, and called from a far country, to let the captive Jews go free. Indeed, every ordinary occupation, employment, and business of life, men are brought up in, and exercise, is a calling, and a calling of God; hence the apostle says, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called" (1 Corinthians 7:20; 1 Corinthians 7:24). But the calling now to be treated of is of a religious kind; and of which also there are various sorts; as a call to an ecclesiastical office, whether extraordinary or ordinary; so Aaron and his sons were called to officiate in the priesthood; for "no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Hebrews 5:4), so the twelve disciples of Christ were called to apostleship; and Paul, "a servant of Christ", is said to be "called to be an apostle" (Romans 1:1), and ordinary ministers of the word, are set apart and called by the Lord, and by his churches, to the work of the ministry they are put into. There is likewise an universal call of all men, to serve and worship the one true and living God; this call is made by the light of nature, displayed in the works of creation, which demonstrate the Being of God; and by the law of nature, written on the hearts of all men; and by the works of providence, and the bounties of it, which all have a share in, and in which God leaves not himself without a witness; and by all which men are called upon, and directed to seek after God, to worship him, and glorify him as God. And besides this, there is a more special and particular call of men, and not so general, and is either external or internal: the "external" call is by the ministry of the word; by the ministry of the prophets under the Old Testament; and of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and of Christ himself in human nature, and of his apostles under the New; and of all succeeding ministers in all ages. The "internal" call is by the Spirit and grace of God to the hearts and consciences of men; these two sometimes go together, but not always; some are externally called, and not internally called; and of those that are internally called, some are called by and through the ministry of the word, and some without it; though, for the most part, men are called by it; and because it is usually so, and this external call is a matter of moment and importance, it is necessary to be a little more large and explicit upon it. And,

1a. First, This may be considered either as a call to saints, to such who have a work of grace already begun in them; and to such it is a call, not only to the means of grace, but to partake of the blessings of grace; to come as thirsty persons, eagerly desirous of spiritual things, "to the waters", the ordinances, and drink at them; to "buy wine and milk", spiritual blessings, signified hereby, without "money, and without price", these being to be had freely: and these are also called as laboring under a sense of sin, and under a spirit of bondage, to "come" to Christ for "rest", peace, pardon, life, and salvation (Isaiah 55:1; Matthew 11:28), and these in and by the ministry of the word, are called, excited, and encouraged to the exercise of evangelical graces, wrought in them, and bestowed upon them; as repentance, faith, hope, love, and every other; such were the three thousand converts under Peter's sermon, and the jailor, who were under a previous work of the Spirit of God, when they were called and encouraged to repent and believe in Christ, (Acts 2:37-38; Acts 16:29-31), and these are also called, and urged, and pressed, in and by the ministry of the word, to a constant attendance on ordinances, and not to forsake the assembly of the saints, and to a diligent performance of every religious duty, and to be ready to every good work in general: or this external call may be considered, as a call of sinners in a state of nature and unregeneracy; but then it is not a call to them to regenerate and convert themselves, of which there is no instance; and which is the pure work of the Spirit of God: nor to make their peace with God, which they cannot make by anything they can do; and which is only made by the blood of Christ: nor to get an interest in Christ, which is not got, but given: nor to the exercise of evangelical grace, which they have not, and therefore can never exercise: nor to any spiritual vital acts, which they are incapable of, being natural men, and dead in trespasses and sins. Nor is the gospel ministry an offer of Christ, and of his grace and salvation by him, which are not in the power of the ministers of it to give, nor of carnal men to receive; the gospel is not an offer, but a preaching of Christ crucified, a proclamation of the unsearchable riches of his grace, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and life, and salvation by him. Yet there is something in which the ministry of the word, and the call by it, have to do with unregenerate sinners: they may be, and should be called upon, to perform the natural duties of religion; to a natural faith, to give credit to divine revelation, to believe the external report of the gospel, which not to do, is the sin of the deists; to repent of sin committed, which even the light of nature dictates; and God, in his word, commands all men everywhere to repent: to pray to God for forgiveness, as Simon Magus was directed by the apostle: and to pray to God for daily mercies that are needed, is a natural and moral duty; as well as to give him praise, and return thanks for mercies received, which all men that have breath are under obligation to do. They may, and should be called upon to attend the outward means of grace, and to make use of them; to read the Holy Scriptures, which have been the means of the conversion of some; to hear the word, and wait on the ministry of it, which may be blessed unto them, for the effectual calling of them. And it is a part of the ministry of the word to lay before men their fallen, miserable, lost, and undone estate by nature; to open to them the nature of sin, its pollution and guilt, and the sad consequences of it; to inform them of their incapacity to make atonement for it; and of their impotence and inability to do what is spiritually good; and of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them in the sight of God: and they are to be made acquainted, that salvation is alone by Christ, and not other ways; and the fullness, freeness, and suitableness of this salvation, are to be preached before them; and the whole to be left to the Spirit of God, to make application of it as he shall think fit.

1b. Secondly, this external call by the ministry is not universal, nor ever was: under the former dispensation God sent his word unto Jacob and his statutes unto Israel; as for other nations, they knew them not; God overlooked the heathens in their times of ignorance for hundreds of years together, and sent no prophet nor minister unto them, to acquaint them with his mind and will, and lead them into the knowledge of divine things. When the gospel dispensation took place, the apostles of Christ were forbid, by their first commission, to go to the Gentiles, or to any of the cities of the Samaritans; and though, upon Christ's resurrection from the dead, their commission was enlarged, and they were sent to preach to all nations of the world; yet before they could reach to the extent of their commission, multitudes must be dead, to whom the gospel call, or the sound of it, never reached. To say nothing of the new world, or America, supposed not then to be discovered; in succeeding ages, many parts of the world have been without the preaching of the word, and are at this day; and, indeed, it is confined to a very small part of it; and where it is, though many may be externally called by it, yet few are chosen, and internally called by the Spirit and grace of God: and as this call is of many who are not chosen, so of many who are not sanctified, or that are not called with an holy calling; and so of many who are not saved; for it is to some the savour of death unto death.

1c. Thirdly, the external call is frequently rejected, and for the most part, and by the greater numbers of those that hear it; "I have called, and ye have refused: I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people"; and to these it must be useless, as to any salutary effects; many that are called and invited to attend the gospel ministry refuse to come; such were they that were bidden and called to the marriage feast; but they made light of it, and some went to their farms, and others to their merchandise; such were the Scribes and Pharisees, who would neither go into the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer others that were entering to go in but shut it up against them; that is, would neither attend the ministry of Christ and his apostles themselves, nor suffer others, but discouraged them from it, by their reproaches, threats, and persecutions, as our Lord complains (Matthew 23:13; Matthew 23:37). Others that attend the ministry of the word, do it in a careless and negligent manner, not minding what they hear, but like leaking vessels, let it slip, or run out; or stop their ears to the voice of the charmer, charming ever so wisely; many that hear have an aversion to what they hear; the gospel is an hard saying to them, foolishness to some, and a stumblingblock to others; some mock and scoff at it, as the Athenians did; and others, as the Jews, contradict and blaspheme it, putting it away from them, judging themselves unworthy of eternal life; and therefore it is no wonder it becomes of no saving effect to either of these sort of persons: and, indeed, it is always insufficient and ineffectual of itself unto real conversion, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God; when God goes forth with his ministers, working with them, then work is done, but not otherwise; when the hand of the Lord is upon them, or his power attends their ministry, many believe and turn to the Lord; but unless his arm is revealed, the report of the gospel will not be believed, nor the call of it be attended to. Yet,

1d. Fourthly, the external ministry of the word, or the outward call by it, is not in vain; it has its usefulness, and various ends are answered by it. All things are for the elect's sake, and particularly the ministration of the gospel, which to them is the savour of life unto life; as it is the will of God that his chosen people, and others, should promiscuously dwell together, so he sends his gospel to them in general, and by it takes out a people for his name; calls them by his grace effectually, out of the world, and separates them from the men of it, to be a peculiar people to

himself; and the rest are thereby left inexcusable; for if the light of nature leaves men so, much more the light of the gospel; the condemnation of men is aggravated by it; inasmuch, as though they are surrounded with light, they love darkness rather than light. Moreover, by the external ministry of the word, many, though not effectually called, become more civilized and more moral in their conversation; are reformed, as to their outward manners; and through a speculative knowledge of the gospel, escape the grossest pollutions of the world: and others are brought by it to a temporary faith, to believe for awhile, to embrace the gospel notionally, to submit to the ordinances of it, make a profession of religion, by which means they become serviceable to support the interest of it. So that it comports with the wisdom of God that there should be such an outward call of many who are not internally called: nor is he to be charged for it with dissimulation and insincerity; since by it he declares what is his good, perfect, and acceptable will, and what would be grateful and well pleasing to him was it complied with and done. Should it be said, that that is called for and required which man has not power to perform; be it so, which yet may be questioned, it should be observed, that though man by sin has lost his power to comply with the will of God by an obedience to it; God has not lost his power, right, and authority to command. Wherefore, when the ministry of the word is slighted, and the gospel call rejected, it is most righteously resented by the Lord; see Proverbs 1:24-28 and such are justly punished with everlasting destruction by him (1 Peter 4:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). The "internal" call is next to be considered, which is sometimes immediately, and without the ministry of the word; as seems to be the case of the disciples of Christ, of the apostle Paul, and of Zacchaeus, and others: and sometimes mediately by the word; for faith comes by hearing, and bearing by the word; so the three thousand under Peter’s sermon, and those in the family of Cornelius, on whom the Holy Spirit fell while the apostle was preaching; and this is the ordinary way in which God calls men by his grace; and which call is,

1d1. Out of great and gross darkness, into marvelous and surprising light (1 Peter 2:9). God’s elect, while in a state of nature, are in a state of darkness and ignorance; they are in the dark about God, his perfections, purposes, counsels, and methods of grace; about themselves, the state and condition they are in; about sin, the nature of it, and its sad consequences; about the Person of Christ, his offices, and the way of salvation by him; about the Spirit, his work and operations on the souls of men; and about the scriptures, and the doctrines of the gospel contained in them: but in effectual calling the eyes of their understandings are opened and enlightened, and they are made light in the Lord. When the apostle Paul was called by grace, a light surrounded him, as an emblem of that internal light which was sprung in him; and after that there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales, as a token of the removal of his former darkness and ignorance: as God, in the first creation, commanded light to shine out of darkness; so in the new creation, and at effectual calling, he irradiates the minds of his called ones with a divine light, in which they see light; see what sin is, what an evil thing it is, and the exceeding sinfulness of it; see themselves lost and undone by it, and just ready to perish; see their incapacity to save themselves, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; see the glory, fulness, and grace of Christ, the completeness and suitableness of him as a Saviour; and see the truths and promises of the gospel, the great doctrines of it, in another light than they did before; so as to understand them, receive the love of them, believe them with the heart, and distinguish them from those that differ, and rejoice at them, as bringing good news and glad tidings of good things.

1d2. The internal call, is a call of men out of bondage, out of worse than Egyptian bondage, into liberty, even the glorious liberty of the children of God; "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty" (Galatians 5:13), while in a state of nature, they are, as they were by nature, home born slaves, slaves to their sinful lusts and pleasures, and are brought into bondage by them, and held under the power of them, as in a prison; but in the effectual calling, the fetters and shackles of sin are broken off, and the prison doors opened, and they are bid to go forth and show themselves; they become free from the tyranny of sin, and sin has no more dominion over them: in their state before calling, they are under the power and influence of Satan, the strong man armed who keeps possession of them, by whom they are kept in bondage, and led captive by him at his will; but when effectually called, they are taken out of his hands, and are turned from the power of Satan unto God, and are delivered from the power of darkness, and are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, where they are Christ's free men. While they are seeking righteousness and life by the works of the law, they are brought into bondage, for that genders to bondage, and brings on a spirit of bondage upon those that are under it; but in effectual calling they are delivered from it, by the Spirit of God, as a free spirit; and are called to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made them free, and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage; they are called and allowed to make use of a liberty of access to God, through Christ, by one Spirit, and to enjoy all the privileges of the gospel, and the immunities of a gospel church state, being fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

1d3. The internal call, is a call of persons from fellowship with the men of the world, to fellowship with Christ; "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of Christ Jesus our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9), it is like that of the call of Christ to his church (Song of Solomon 4:8). "Come with me from Lebanon", &c. a call to forsake the vanities, pleasures, and profits of the world, and the company of the men of it, and go along with him, and enjoy communion with him: as Abraham was called out of his country, from his kindred, and his father's house; so saints are called to forsake their own people, and their father's house; to relinquish the society of their former companions, and to have no fellowship with ungodly men: not that they are to have no civil correspondence, commerce, and society with the men of the world; for then, as the apostle says, they must needs go out of it; but not to join with them in superstitious worship, in acts of idolatry, in a false religion, and in the observance of the commandments of men; nor in any sinful, profane, and immoral practices; and as much as may be, should shun and avoid all unnecessary company, and conversation with them; for evil communications corrupt good manners; and it is a grief to the people of God, to be obliged to dwell among them, and with them, as it was to Lot, to Isaac and Rebekah, to David, Isaiah, and others: the people of God, in the effectual calling, are called to better company, to communion with God, Father, Son, and Spirit; to fellowship with one another; to converse with saints, the excellent in the earth, in whom is all their delight.

1d4. Such as are effectually called by the Spirit and grace of God, are called to peace; "God hath called us to peace" (1 Corinthians 7:15), to internal peace, to peace of mind and conscience; which men, in a state of nature, are strangers to; for there is no peace to the wicked: but God calls his people to it, and blesses them with it; with a peace which passes all understanding; with peace in the midst of the tribulations of the world; with a peace which the world can neither give nor take away; and which arises from the blood and righteousness of Christ, and is part of that kingdom of God which is within them, into which they are brought at effectual calling. They are likewise called

to peace among themselves, and with all men as much as possible; "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body" (Colossians 3:15).

1d5. They are called out of a state of unholiness and sinfulness, into a state of holiness and righteousness; for being created anew in righteousness and true holiness, and created in Christ Jesus to good works, they are called to the exercise of them; to live holily, soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world; "God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (1 Thessalonians 4:7), and "hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3), to glorious acts of virtue and goodness, becoming the nature of their call, and of him that has called them; "As he which hath called you is holy" &c. (1 Peter 1:15).

1d6. The internal call, is a call of persons "into the grace of Christ" (Galatians 1:6), into the gospel of the grace of Christ, as appears by what follows, to receive it, embrace it, profess it, and stand fast in it; and into the fulness of grace in Christ, to receive out of it, to be strong in it, to exercise faith on it: and to the blessings of grace in his hands, and which are given forth by him; to lay hold upon them, take them to themselves, and claim their interest in them; all being theirs, they being Christ's, his chosen, redeemed, and called ones; and by whom they have access into the state of grace in which they stand.

1d7. It is a call of them to a grate of happiness and bliss in another world; "Who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory" (1 Thessalonians 2:12), to a glory, which is a kingdom; to possess a kingdom of grace now, which cannot be removed; and to inherit the kingdom of glory hereafter, which is au everlasting one; to a glory which is given to Christ; "To the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 2:14; John 17:22; Colossians 3:4), and to eternal glory by Christ Jesus (1 Peter 5:10), and to "lay hold on eternal life" (1 Timothy 6:12), and to an eternal inheritance; and "they which are called, receive the promise of it", and shall certainly enjoy it; having a meetness for it, through the grace of God, and a right unto it, through the righteousness of Christ (1 Peter 1:3-4; Hebrews 9:15), and they are all "called in one hope of their calling" (Ephesians 4:4) to partake of the same inheritance with the saints in light; and to enjoy the same blessed hope laid up for them in heaven; and for which hope of righteousness they wait by faith, through the holy Spirit.

2. The author and causes of effectual calling, efficient, impulsive, instrumental, and final.

2a. The efficient cause is God; "Walk worthy of God, who hath called you; God hath not called us unto uncleanliness, but unto holiness" (1 Thessalonians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 2 Timothy 1:8-9). Sometimes it is ascribed to God personally, to the three divine Persons in the Godhead, to Father, Son, and Spirit; to the Father, when he is said to call by his grace, and reveal his Son; and to call unto the fellowship of his Son; and to call men by Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:15-16; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Peter 5:10), in which places, God that calls, is distinguished from his Son Jesus Christ. Sometimes calling is ascribed to the Son; so Wisdom, the eternal Logos, Word, and Son of God, is represented as calling both externally and internally (Proverbs 1:20 &c.; Proverbs 8:1-4), and saints are said to be the called of Jesus Christ, whom he has a property in, as called ones, being efficiently called by him. And sometimes it is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling"; that is, by the one Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God; and to him are owing that illumination, and that freedom from bondage, and that fellowship with Christ, which make a principal part of what men in the effectual calling are called

into; and it is he that leads to peace and holiness, and into the grace of Christ, and encourages to hope and wait for glory: so that effectual calling is a divine work, and not human.

2b. The impulsive, or moving cause of effectual calling, are not the works of men, but the sovereign will, pleasure, purpose, and grace of God; as in 2 Timothy 1:9.

2b1. The works of men are not the moving or impulsive cause of their being called of God; for those must be either such as are done before calling, or after it: not before calling; for works done then are not properly good works; they are not subjectively good; the doers of them are not good men; and a man must be a good man, before he can perform good works; and though some works done by bad men, may have the show and appearance of good, and be materially, or as to the matter of them, good actions; yet are not such circumstantially: the requisites and circumstances of a good work, being wanting in them; as riot being done according to the will of God, and in obedience to it; nor in faith, and so sin; nor proceeding from a principle of love to God, nor directed to his glory: and such works can never be moving causes of men being called. Nor can good works after calling be such; for they are fruits and effects of the effectual calling; and therefore cannot be ranked among the causes of it. Men, in and by effectual calling, are sanctified, and become meet for their master’s use, and ready to every good work.

2b2. The sovereign will, pleasure, and purpose of God, are what move and determine him to call, by his grace, any of the sons of men: not their wills; for "it is not of him that willeth", but of his own good will and pleasure; they that are called, are "called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28), he has, in his eternal purpose, fixed upon the particular persons whom he will call, and the time when he will call them; for there is a time for every purpose, and so for this, called the time of life and of love; and the place where they shall be called; in this and that place; as at Corinth, Philippi, &c. the means and occasion of their calling, with the several circumstances thereof, are all according to a divine purpose; and show that the whole is owing to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who does all things after the counsel of his own will.

2b3. The free grace of God, in a sovereign, distinguishing way and manner, may truly be said to be the grand, impulsive, moving cause of the effectual calling; to this the apostle ascribed his own; "And called me by his grace": that is, of his pure grace, and according to it. God, as the God of all grace, calls men to grace and glory by Christ; and an abundance of grace is displayed in calling; yea, the first open display of grace, and discovery of love, to a sinner himself, is then made; then is he drawn with loving kindness, as a frail and evidence of everlasting love; and therefore the time of calling, is called a time of love (Jeremiah 31:3; Ezekiel 16:8), and it being of some particular persons, and not of all, shows it to be the effect of distinguishing grace, and of sovereign good will; and, indeed, nothing out of God could move him to such an act as this; and as his grace is his own, he may call by it, and to it, and bestow it on whom he pleases.

2c. The instrumental cause, or rather means of the effectual calling, is the ministry of the word. Sometimes, indeed, it is brought about by some remarkable providence, and without the word; but generally it is by it; "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God". Christ stands in the gospel ministry, at the door of men’s hearts, and knocks and calls; and having the key of the house of David, he opens the heart by his power and grace, and lets himself in; and in this way, and by this means, the Spirit, and his graces, are received; men are called both to grace and glory by the gospel (Galatians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 2:14).

2d. The final causes, or rather the ends of the effectual calling, which are subordinate and ultimate: the subordinate end, is the salvation of God’s elect, that they may possess the blessings of grace, and eternal glory; to both which they are called. And the ultimate end is the glory of the grace of God; for this end God forms his people in regeneration and the effectual calling; namely, to show forth his praise: and this end is answered, in part, in this life, they ascribing all they have, and expect to have, solely to the free grace of God; and it will be consummately answered in the world to come, when all their work will be praise; attributing the whole of their salvation to the sovereign will and pleasure, grace and goodness, of God.

3. The subjects of the effectual calling, or who they are whom God calls by his grace.

3a. They are such whom God has chosen to grace and glory; "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called" (Romans 8:30). Election and calling are of equal extent; the objects are the same, neither more nor fewer; they that were chosen from eternity, are called in time; and they that are called in time, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; the "vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory", are explained and described by such "whom God hath called; not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles" (Romans 9:23-24).

3b. They are such who are in Christ, and secured in him; for they are "called according to grace given them, in Christ Jesus before the world began"; and as grace was given them in him so early, they themselves, in some sense, must then have a being in him; which they have, through being chosen in him, and thereby coming into his hands, they are secured and preserved in him, in consequence of which they are called by grace; thus stands the order of things, as put by the apostle Jude 1:1. "To them that are sanctified by God the Father"; that is, set apart by him in eternal election; and preserved in Christ Jesus, being put into his hands by that act of grace; and called, in virtue of the foregoing acts of grace.

3c. They are such who are redeemed by Christ; calling, follows redemption, and is the certain consequent of it; "I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Isaiah 43:1). Election, redemption, and calling, are of the same persons; those whom God has chosen in Christ, are redeemed by Christ; and who are chosen and redeemed, are, sooner or later, called; and the reason of their being called, is because they are redeemed; "I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them" (Zechariah 10:8).

3d. Those that are called, are, for the most part, either the meanest, or the vilest, among men; the meanest, as to their outward circumstances; "Not many mighty, not many noble are called"; and the meanest, as to their internal capacities; "Not many wise men after the flesh"; the things of the gospel, and of the grace of God, are "hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes" (1 Corinthians 1:26; James 2:5; Matthew 11:25), and oftentimes some of the worst arid vilest of sinners are called by grace; publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God, when scribes and pharisees did not; attended the ministry of the word, and were called by it, when they were not; and Christ came, as he himself says, "not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance", (Matthew 21:31-32; Matthew 9:13; 1 Corinthians 6:11).

4. The properties of effectual calling; which may lead more clearly and fully into the nature of it; though they may be, in general, collected from what has been observed.

4a. It is a fruit of the love of God; because he has loved them with an everlasting love, therefore "with loving kindness he draws" them to himself, and to his Son, in the effectual calling (Jeremiah 31:3), and as it is only of as many as the Lord our God thinks fit to call, it appears to be an act of special and distinguishing grace; it is of special and particular persons, by special grace, and to the special blessings of it.

4b. It is an act of efficacious and irresistible grace. The external call may be, and often is, resisted and rejected; but when God calls internally by his Spirit and grace, it is always effectual, and can never be resisted, so as to be ineffectual; for when God works, none can let or hinder; men, dead in trespasses and sins, rise out of their graves of sin, and live, at his all commanding voice; even as Lazarus came forth out of his grave at the call of Christ; nor could that call be resisted; and even the same power that was exerted in raising Christ himself from the dead, is displayed in the effectual calling of a sinner (Ephesians 1:18-20).

4c. This call is an "holy calling" (2 Timothy 1:9), the author of it is the holy God; holy in his nature, and in all his ways and works, and in this; "As he that has called you is holy" (1 Peter 1:15), and the means by which they are called are holy; whether by reading the scriptures, which has been sometimes the case, they are styled "the holy scriptures"; or whether the first awakenings to a serious concern about divine things, are by the law; that commandment is holy, just, and good; or whether by the pure gospel of Christ; that is a "doctrine according to godliness", and teaches to live an holy life and conversation: and as in the effectual calling, it appears that principles of grace and holiness are wrought in men; so by it they are called to the exercise of holiness and virtue, and of the performance of every good work; they are called into a state of holiness here, and to enjoy an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance hereafter (Romans 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 2 Peter 1:3).

4d. It is an high calling (Php 3:14), he that calls is the high and lofty One, who dwells in the high and holy place; and in and by calling grace, he raises men from the dunghill, and sets them among princes, that they may inherit the throne of glory; however poor they may be with respect to the things of this world, yet by effectual calling they become rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom, and of an inheritance reserved for them in the highest heavens, to which they will be admitted. Wherefore,

4e. This call is styled an "heavenly calling" (Hebrews 3:1), it is a call out of this earthly country, to seek a better country, even an heavenly one; and those that are called, have their citizenship in heaven, and are free denizens of it; and shall enjoy the hope, the hoped for blessedness laid up for them there. For,

4f. This is one of the gifts of God’s special grace, and that "calling" of his, which is without "repentance" (Romans 11:29), it is unchangeable, irreversible, and irrevocable; such shall be preserved safe to the kingdom and glory of God, to which they are called, and shall most certainly enjoy it; for "faithful is he that has called them, who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24), wherefore such are most happy persons; for they may be comfortably assured of their election; for "whom he did predestinate, them he also called": election and calling are put together; the one as the fruit, effect, and evidence, of the other (2 Peter 1:10), and election is to be known by the internal call of the Spirit, through the ministry of the word; (1 Thessalonians 1:4-5), and they may also be comfortably assured of their justification; for "whom he called, them he also justified"; and

such may conclude themselves safe from all charges, from all condemnation, and from wrath to come: and they may most certainly expect eternal glory; for whom God calls and justifies, "them he also glorifies": between calling grace and eternal happiness, there is a sure and an inseparable connection.

02. Of Eternal Adoption and Justification

Of Other Eternal And Immanent Acts In God, Particularly Adoption And Justification.

I shall not here treat of these as doctrines, in the full extent of them; or as blessings of grace actually bestowed upon, and enjoyed by believers, with all the privileges and advantages arising from thence; or as transient acts passing on them, and terminating in their consciences at believing; but as internal and immanent acts, taken up in the mind of God from eternity, and which abide in his will; in which they have their complete "esse", or being, as eternal election has, being of the same kind and nature, and are ranked with it as of the same date, and as branches of it (Ephesians 1:4-6). In the other view of them they will be considered hereafter in course, in a proper place. I shall begin with,

1. Adoption; as predestination to it stands next to election, (Ephesians 1:5) which is no other than his will to adopt the chosen ones, which is his adoption of them; for as the will of God to elect any is his election of them, so his will to adopt the same is his adoption of them; and the complete essence of it lies in his will, and is as such an eternal immanent act of it; in like manner as election is, and may be considered as a branch of it, at least of the same nature with it; and which agrees with the sense of the word "adopto", from whence adoption comes, which is compounded of "ad" to, and "opto" to choose; so that adoption is God’s choice or election of some to be his children; and by this option, or choice, of his they become so. The Greek word for adoption throughout the New Testament is uioyesia, which signifies "putting among the children"; the phrase used by God (Jeremiah 3:19). "How shall I put them among the children?" or a putting one for and in the room of a son, that is a stranger and not a son by birth; a constituting and accounting such an one as a son, according to choice, will, and pleasure: and divine adoption is an act of the sovereign grace and good will of God, (Ephesians 1:5) to which he is not induced by any motive out of himself; not by any excellency in the creature; nor for want of a son; one or other of which is the case in human adoptions; as of Moses, a goodly child, by Pharaoh’s daughter; and of Esther, a beautiful person, and a relation by Mordecai; but divine adoption is of persons exceeding unworthy and undeserving, nothing engaging in them; not only strangers, but children of wrath even as others, and like the wretched infant in (Ezekiel 16:1-63). It is an act of distinguishing grace; it is of men, and not angels; who are servants and not sons, at least not by adoption; and of some men and not of all, though all are alike in their nature state; and it is a most amazing act of unmerited love and free grace (1 John 3:1). Now this is an eternal act of grace:

1a. First, It did not begin in time, but commenced from eternity; it is an act of God’s will, and has its complete essence in it; and the will of God is eternal, no new will, nor any new act of will, arises in God in time; or otherwise he would not be the unchangeable God he is.

1a1. It is an act that does not first take place at believing; indeed the saints are "all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus", openly and manifestatively, (Galatians 3:26) but then it is not faith that makes them children, but what makes them appear to be so; adoption is the act of God, and not of faith; it is God that says, "How shall I put them among the children?" and again, "I will be

their Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters", (Jeremiah 3:19; 2 Corinthians 6:18) it is the work and business of faith to receive the blessing of adoption, which it could not do, unless it had been previously provided in the mind and by the will of God, and in the covenant of his grace; for the reception of which Christ has made way by his redemption, one end of which is "that we might receive the adoption of sons", (Galatians 4:5) that is, by faith; for God has appointed faith to be the general receiver of Christ, and of all the blessings of grace through him, and this among the rest; and to as many as receive Christ, he gives exousian, a power, authority, dignity, and privilege to become the sons of God openly; that is, to claim this as their privilege and dignity; which claim is made by faith; but not the thing itself claimed; "even to them that believe on his name", and who are described as regenerate persons; which is an evidence of their sonship, though not the thing itself; "who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God" (John 1:12-13). But though this describes such who are the sons of God openly, and who believe; yet,

1a2. Adoption does not first commence at regeneration; adoption and regeneration are two distinct blessings, and the one is previous to the other; though they are commonly confounded together by divines. Regeneration is not the foundation of adoption, but adoption the foundation of regeneration; or, the reason why men are adopted, is not because they are regenerated, but they are regenerated because they are adopted. By adoption they are put into the relation of children, and by regeneration they have a nature given them suitable to that relation; and are made partakers of the divine nature, that they may be made known to be heirs apparent to, and to have a meekness for the possession, enjoyment, and use of it, the inheritance in heaven they are adopted to; for,

1a3. The act of adoption is previous to any work of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of his people; "Because ye are sons, sons already, sons by adopting grace; God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts", both to convince, convert, regenerate, and effectually call by his grace, and sanctify, and also to comfort, and to enable to cry Abba Father, witnessing to their spirits, that they are the children of God; and hence he is called, "the Spirit of Adoption"; and it is his influences, teachings, and leadings, which are the evidences of adoption; "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"; not that those influences, operations, and leadings, make them, but make them evident to be such, (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:14-16).

1a4. Divine adoption, or sonship, took place before any work of Christ was wrought in time, for any of the sons of men; it was before his incarnation and birth; forasmuch then, or because "the children are partakers of flesh and blood", the children of God, who are so by adopting grace; therefore "he also", Christ, "himself took part of the same"; for though the nature he assumed was what was in common to all mankind, yet he assumed it with a peculiar view to the children of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham; whose nature he is said to take, and for whose sake he was the child born, and the Son given, (Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:16) and in consequence they must be the children of God before Christ suffered and died; and, indeed, he suffered and died for them under this character, considered as the children of God by adopting grace; for he died not only for the elect of God among the "Jews, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad"; that is, those who were already the children of God by adopting grace, who were scattered throughout the whole Gentile world. This relates to the gathering of all the elect in one, in Christ, in the dispensation of the fulness of times; when Christ

suffered as their Surety, Head, and Representative; and when they were all considered as the children of God, whether in heaven or on earth, and whether among Jews or Gentiles, (Ephesians 1:10; John 11:51-52) and in order to bring these many sons to glory, it became him to be made perfect through sufferings, and that through his redemption of them thereby, they might receive, actually in their own persons, the adoption before provided for them, as before observed; see (Hebrews 2:10; Galatians 4:5).

1b. Secondly, Adoption is an act of God's free grace from all eternity.

1b1. The elect of God are frequently spoken of as a distinct number of men, given to Christ, and as previous to their coming to him by faith, which is the certain fruit and consequence of that gift; see (John 17:2; John 17:6; John 17:9; John 17:24; John 6:37) yea, they were given to Christ before the world was; for if grace was given to them in him before the world began, they themselves must be given to him, and be in him before the world began (2 Timothy 1:9). Now these were given to Christ in the relation of children, and therefore must be children so early; "Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me" (Hebrews 2:13).

1b2. The elect of God were espoused to Christ in eternity; as has been shown in the preceding chapter; which serves to illustrate and prove the relation of sonship to God so early; for as in natural and civil marriage, if a man marries a king's daughter, he becomes his son in law; as David to Saul: or if a woman marries a king's son, she becomes the king's daughter: so the elect of God, his church and people, being espoused to the Son of God, they become the sons and daughters of the Lord God almighty, the King of kings; and hence the church is called the King's daughter, (Psalms 45:13) and these persons being betrothed to Christ, the Son of God, in eternity, as they were the spouse of Christ, they must be, and must be considered as being the sons of God so early.

1b3. The elect of God were taken by him into the covenant of his grace, as children; the sum and substance of which runs thus, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:18). Now this covenant was from everlasting; as the setting up of Christ the Mediator of it so soon; and the promises and blessings, made and provided before the world began, do abundantly testify. Besides, in this covenant, these same persons so early were given to Christ, as his seed and offspring, his children, and he commenced the everlasting Father of them (see Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 53:10).

1b4. Predestination to the adoption of children, is mentioned along with election, as of the same date with it, and as an illustration of it, and as an addition to it, or rather, a branch of it; as men by election are not only chosen to holiness, but to adoption, and the inheritance annexed to it (Ephesians 1:4-5). Adoption is a sentence of grace conceived in the divine mind, and settled by the divine will, and pronounced in divine predestination, which is an eternal act of God; and so says Dr. Ames [1], "Adoption is a gracious sentence of God—which sentence is pronounced in the same variety of degrees as justification; for it was first pronounced in divine predestination, (Ephesians 1:5) afterwards in Christ, (Galatians 4:5) then in believers themselves" (Galatians 4:6). And all these pronunciations, and so all that Christ did in redemption respecting this, or the Spirit of God does in revealing, applying, and witnessing it, yea, all that will be done in eternity to come; for though now the saints "are the sons of God, it doth not yet appear", clearly and fully, "what they shall be", even as sons, or what dignity and glory they shall be raised unto, in consequence of this

relation; I say, all these in time, and to eternity, serve only to open and expand the original act of God’s will, in appointing and constituting them his sons in an eternity past.

2. Justification is an act of God’s grace, flowing from his sovereign good will and pleasure; the elect of God are said to be "justified by his grace"; and as if that expression was not strong enough to set forth the freeness of it, the word "freely" is added elsewhere; "Being justified freely by his grace" (Titus 3:7; Romans 3:24). Justification is by many divines distinguished into active and passive. Active justification is the act of God; it is God that justifies. Passive justification is the act of God, terminating on the conscience of a believer, commonly called a transient act, passing upon an external object. It is not of this I shall now treat, but of the former; which is an act internal and eternal, taken up in the divine mind from eternity, and is an immanent, abiding one in it; it is, as Dr. Ames [2] expresses it, "a sentence conceived in the divine mind, by the decree of justifying."

Now, as before observed, as God’s will to elect, is the election of his people, so his will to justify them, is the justification of them; as it is an immanent act in God, it is an act of his grace towards them, is wholly without them, entirely resides in the divine mind, and lies in his estimating, accounting, and constituting them righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; and, as such, did not first commence in time, but from eternity.

2a. First, It does not begin to take place in time, or at believing, but is antecedent to any act of faith.

2a1. Faith is not the cause, but an effect of justification; it is not the cause of it in any sense; it is not the moving cause, that is the free grace of God; "Being justified freely by his grace", (Romans 3:24) nor the efficient cause of it; "It is God that justifies", (Romans 8:33) nor the meritorious cause, as some express it; or the matter of it, that is the obedience and blood of Christ, (Romans 5:9; Romans 5:19) or the righteousness of Christ, consisting of his active and passive obedience; nor even the instrumental cause; for, as Mr. Baxter [3] himself argues, "If faith is the instrument of our justification, it is the instrument either of God or man; not of man, for justification is God’s act; he is the sole Justifier, (Romans 3:26) man doth not justify himself: nor of God, for it is not God that believes": nor is it a "causa sine qua non", as the case of elect infants shows; it is not in any class of causes whatever; but it is the effect of justification: all men have not faith, and the reason why some do not believe is, because they are none of Christ’s sheep; they were not chosen in him, nor justified through him; but justly left in their sins, and so to condemnation; the reason why others believe is, because they are ordained to eternal life, have a justifying righteousness provided for them, and are justified by it, and shall never enter into condemnation: the reason why any are justified, is not because they have faith; but the reason why they have faith, is because they are justified; was there no such blessing of grace as justification of life in Christ, for the sons of men, there would be no such thing as faith in Christ bestowed on them; precious faith is obtained through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 1:1) nor, indeed, would there be any room for it, nor any use of it, if a justifying righteousness was not previously provided. Agreeable to this are the reasonings and assertions of Twisse [4], Maccovius [5], and others. Now if faith is not the cause, but the effect of justification; then as every cause is before its effect, and every effect follows its cause, justification must be before faith, and faith must follow justification.

2a2. Faith is the evidence and manifestation of justification, and therefore justification must be before it; "Faith is the evidence of things not seen", (Hebrews 11:1) but it is not the evidence of that which as yet is not; what it is an evidence of, must be, and it must exist before it. The "righteousness of God", of the God-man and mediator Jesus Christ, "is revealed from faith to faith", in the everlasting gospel, (Romans 1:17) and therefore must be before it is revealed, and before faith, to which it is revealed: faith is that grace whereby a soul, having seen its guilt, and its want of righteousness, beholds, in the light of the divine Spirit, a complete righteousness in Christ, renounces its own, lays hold off that, puts it on as a garment, rejoices in it, and glories of it; the Spirit of God witnessing to his spirit, that he is a justified person; and so he is evidently and declaratively "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

2a3. Faith adds nothing to the "esse" only to the "bene esse" of justification; it is no part of, nor any ingredient in it; it is a complete act in the eternal mind of God, without the being or consideration of faith, or any foresight of it; a man is as much justified before as after it, in the account of God; and after he does believe, his justification does not depend on his acts of faith; for though "we believe not, yet he abides faithful"; that is, God is faithful to his covenant engagements with his Son, as their Surety, by whose suretyship righteousness they are justified; but by faith men have a comfortable sense, perception and apprehension of their justification, and enjoy that peace of soul which results from it; it is by that only, under the testimony of the divine Spirit, that they know their interest in it, and can claim it, and so have the comfort of it. But,

2a4. Justification is the object, and faith the act that is conversant with it. Now every object is prior to the act that is concerned with it; unless when an act gives being to the object, which is not the case here; for faith, as has been seen, is not the cause, nor matter of justification; what the eye is to the body, that is faith to the soul: the eye, by virtue of its visive faculty, beholds sensible objects, but does not produce them; they are before they are seen, and did they not previously exist, the eye could not behold them; the sun is before it is seen; and so in innumerable other instances: faith is to the soul, as the hand is to the body, receives things for its use; but then these things must be before they are received; faith receives the blessing of justification from the Lord, even that righteousness by which it is justified, from the God of its salvation; but then this blessing must exist before faith can receive it (Psalms 24:5). Christ’s righteousness, by which men are justified, is compared to a robe or garment, which faith puts on; but then as a garment must be wrought and completely made, before it is put on, so must the justifying righteousness of Christ be, before it can be put on by faith.

2a5. All the elect of God were justified in Christ, their Head and Representative, when he rose from the dead, and therefore they believe: Christ engaged as a Surety for all his people from eternity, had their sins imputed to him, and for which he made himself responsible; in the fulness of time he made satisfaction for them by his sufferings and death, and at his resurrection was acquitted and discharged: now as he suffered and died, not as a private, but as a public person, so he rose again, and was justified as such, even as the representative of his people; hence when he rose, they rose with him; and when he was justified, they were justified in him; for he was "delivered for their offences, and was raised again for their justification", (Romans 4:25; 1 Timothy 3:16) and this is the sense and judgment of many sound and learned divines; as, besides our Sandfords [6] and Dr. Goodwins [7], the learned Amesius [8], Hoornbeck [9], Witsius [10], and

others. But,

2b. Secondly, Justification is not only before faith, but it is from eternity, being an immanent act in the divine mind, and so an internal and eternal one; as may be concluded,

2b1. From eternal election: the objects of justification are God's elect; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies"; that is, the elect. Now if God's elect, as such, can have nothing laid to their charge; but are by God acquitted, discharged, and justified; and if they bore this character of elect from eternity, or were chosen in Christ before the world began; then they must be acquitted, discharged and justified so early, so as nothing could be laid to their charge: besides, by electing grace men were put into Christ, and were considered as in him before the foundation of the world; and if they were considered as in him, they must be considered as righteous or unrighteous; not surely as unrighteous, unjustified, and in a state of condemnation; for "there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ", (Romans 8:1) and therefore must be considered as righteous, and so justified: "Justified then we were, says Dr. Goodwin [11] when first elected, though not in our own persons, yet in our Head, as he had our persons then given him, and we came to have a being and an interest in him."

2b2. Justification may well be considered as a branch of election; it is no other, as one expresses it, than setting apart the elect alone to be partakers of Christ's righteousness; and a setting apart Christ's righteousness for the elect only; it is mentioned along with election, as of the same date with it; "Wherein", that is, in the grace of God, particularly the electing grace of God, spoken of before, "he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6). What is this acceptance in Christ, but justification in him? and this is expressed as a past act, in the same language as other eternal things be in the context, he "hath" blessed us, and he "hath" chosen us, and "having" predestinated us, so he hath made us accepted; and, indeed, as Christ as always the beloved of God, and well pleasing to him; so all given to him, and in him, were beloved of God, well pleasing to him, and accepted with him, or justified in him from eternity.

2b3. Justification is one of those spiritual blessings wherewith the elect are blessed in Christ according to election-grace, before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:3-4). That justification is a spiritual blessing none will deny; and if the elect were blessed with all spiritual blessings, then with this; and if thus blessed according to election, or when elected, then before the foundation of the world: and this grace of justification must be no small part of that "grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was" (2 Timothy 1:9). We may say, says Dr. Goodwin [12], of all spiritual blessings in Christ, what is said of Christ, that his goings forth are from everlasting—in Christ we were blessed with all spiritual blessings, (Ephesians 1:3) as we are blessed with all other, so with this also, that we were justified then in Christ!

2b4. Christ became a Surety for his people from everlasting; engaged to pay their debts, bear their sins, and make satisfaction for them; and was accepted of as such by God his Father, who thenceforward looked at him for payment and satisfaction, and looked at them as discharged, and so they were in his eternal mind; and it is a rule that will hold good, as Maccovius [13] observes, "that as soon as one becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted;" which is the case here and it is but a piece of common prudence, when a man has a bad debt, and has good security for it, to look not to the principal debtor, who will never be able to pay him, but to his good bondsman and surety, who is able; and so Dr. Goodwin [14] observes,

that God, in the everlasting transaction with Christ, "told him, as it were, that he would look for his debt and satisfaction of him, and that he did let the sinners go free; and so they are in this respect, justified from all eternity."

2b5. The everlasting transaction, the same excellent writer thinks, is imported in 2 Corinthians 5:19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them". And the very learned Witsius [15] is of opinion, "that this act of God may be called, the general justification of the elect."

And, indeed, since it was the determination of God, and the scheme and method he proposed to take in Christ for the reconciliation of the elect, not to impute their sins to them, but to his Son, their Surety; then seeing they are not imputed to them, but to him; and if reckoned and accounted to him, then not to them; and if charged to him, then they must be discharged from them, and so justified; and a non-imputation of sin to the elect, is no other than a justification of them; and thus the apostle strongly concludes the imputation of Christ's righteousness; which is the "formalis ratio", or the form of justification, from the non-imputation of sin, and the remission of it (Romans 4:6-8).

2b6. It was the will of God from everlasting, not to punish sin in the persons of his elect, but to punish it in the person of Christ; and that it was his will not to punish it in his people, but in his Son, is manifest from his setting him forth in his purposes and decrees, to be the propitiation for sin; and from his sending him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh; and from his being made sin and a curse, that his people might be made the righteousness of God in him. Now, as has been often observed, no new will can arise in God; God wills nothing in time, but what he willed from eternity; and if it was the eternal will of God not to punish sin in his people, but in his Son, then they were eternally discharged, acquitted from sin, and secured from everlasting wrath and destruction; and if they were eternally discharged from sin, and freed from punishment, they were eternally justified: Dr. Twisse [16] makes the very quiddity and essence of justification and remission of sin, which he takes to be the same, to lie in the will of God not to punish; and asserts, that this will not to punish, as it is an immanent act, was from eternity.

2b7. It deserves regard and attention, that the saints under the Old Testament, were justified by the same righteousness of Christ, as those under the New, and that before the sacrifice was offered up, the satisfaction given, and the everlasting righteousness brought in; for Christ's blood was shed for the remission of sins that were past, and his death was for the redemption of transgressions under the first Testament (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:15). Now if God could, and actually did, justify some, three or four thousand years before the righteousness of Christ was actually wrought out, taking his Son's word and bond as their Surety, and in a view of his future righteousness; why could he not, and why may it not be thought he did, justify all his elect from eternity, upon the word and bond of their Surety, and on the basis of his future righteousness, which he had engaged to work out, and which he full well knew he would most certainly work out? and if there is no difficulty in conceiving of the one, there can be none in conceiving of the other.

There are many objections made to this truth; some are so trifling as to deserve no notice; a few of the more principal ones I shall briefly answer to, and chiefly those made, for the most part, by the learned Turretine [17].

2b7a. It is objected, that men cannot be justified before they exist; they must be, before they can be justified; since "non entis nulla sunt accidentia", &c. of a nonentity nothing can be said, nor anything ascribed to it. To which I answer, whatever is in this objection, lies as strongly against eternal election, as against eternal justification; for it may as well be said, how can a man be elected before he exists? he must be before he can be chosen, or be the object of choice. I own, with Maccovius [18], that this is true of non-entities, that have neither an "esse actu", nor an "esse cognitum", that have neither an actual being, nor is it certain, nor known that they shall have any future being: but though God's elect have not an actual being from eternity, yet it is certain, by the prescience and predetermination of God, that they shall have one; for "known unto God are all his works from the beginning", or from eternity (Acts 15:18). And besides this, they have an "esse representativum", a representative being in Christ; which is more than other creatures have, whose future existences are certain; even such a being as makes them capable of being chosen in Christ, and blessed in him before the foundation of the world, and of having grace given them in him before the world was; and why not then of being justified in him? (Ephesians 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:9). Moreover, as the same writer [19] observes, "Justification is a moral act, which does not require the existence of the subject together with it; but it is enough that it shall exist some time or other."

2b7b. It is further objected, that if God's elect are justified from eternity, then they were not only justified before they themselves existed, but before any sin was committed by them; and it seems absurd that men should be justified from sins before they were committed, or any charge of them brought against them. To which may be replied, that it is no more absurd to say, that God's elect were justified from their sins before they were committed, than it is to say, that they were imputed to Christ, and he died for them, and made satisfaction for them before committed; which is most certainly true of all those that live, since the coming and death of Christ: such that believe the doctrines of the imputation of sin to Christ, and of his satisfaction for it, ought never to make this objection; and if they do, they, ought to be fully content with the answer. As for the charge of sin against God's elect, that is not first made when brought to the conscience of an awakened sinner; justice brought the charge against all the elect, in the eternal transactions between the Father and the Son; or how came Christ to be bail and Surety for them? or how otherwise could there be a transfer of the charge from them to Christ? and where is the grace of a non-imputation of sin to them, and of an imputation of it to Christ, if it was not imputable to them, and chargeable on them?

2b7c. It is urged, that strictly and accurately speaking, it cannot be said that justification is eternal, because the decree of justification is one thing, and justification itself another; even as God's will of sanctifying is one thing, and sanctification itself another; wherefore, though the decree of justification is eternal, and precedes faith, that itself is in time, and follows it. To which it may be answered, that as God's decree and will to elect men to everlasting life and salvation, is his election of them; and his will not to impute sin to them, is the non-imputation of it; and his will to impute the righteousness of Christ unto them, is the imputation of it to them; so his decree, or will to justify them, is the justification of them, as that is an immanent act in God; which has its complete essence in his will, as election has; is entirely within himself, and not transient on an external subject, producing any real, physical, inherent change in it, as sanctification is and does; and therefore the case is not alike: it is one thing for God to will to act an act of grace concerning men, another thing to will to work a work of grace in them; in the former case, the will of God is his

act of justification; in the latter it is not his act of sanctification; wherefore, though the will of God to justify, is justification itself, that being a complete act in his eternal mind, without men; yet his will to sanctify, is not sanctification, because that is a work wrought in men, and not only requires the actual existence of them but an exertion of powerful and efficacious grace upon them: was justification, as the papists say, by an infusion of inherent righteousness in men, there would be some strength in the objection; but this is not the case, and therefore there is none in it.

2b7d. It is observed, that the apostle, reckoning up in order, the benefits which flow from the love of God to the elect, in his famous chain of salvation, sets calling before justification, as something antecedent to it, (Romans 8:30) from whence it is concluded, that calling is in order of time, before justification. To which I reply, that the order of things in scripture is frequently inverted. The Jews have a saying [20], that there is nothing prior and posterior in the law; that is, that the order of things is not strictly observed; to put that first which is first, and that last which is last; but the order is changed, and therefore nothing strictly can be concluded from thence; even the order of persons in the Trinity is not always kept to, sometimes the Son is placed before the Father, and the Holy Spirit before them both; which, though it may be improved into an argument for their equality, yet not to destroy the order among them; and so with respect to calling, it may be observed, that it is sometimes placed before election, (2 Peter 1:10) but none but an Arminian would argue from thence, that it is really before it in order of time, or that men are not elected until they are called: on the other hand, salvation is placed before calling (2 Timothy 1:9). "Who hath saved us, and called us", &c. from whence we might, with as great propriety, argue, that salvation, and so justification, precedes calling; as to argue, from the other text in Romans, that calling precedes justification, in order of time. Indeed, nothing is to be concluded with certainty, one way or another, from such modes and forms of expression. Justification, as a transient act, and declarative, follows calling; but as an immanent act in God, it goes before it, of which we are only speaking, as ought always to be remembered.

2b7e. It is affirmed, that those various passages of scripture, where we are said to be justified through faith, and by fairly, have no other tendency than to show that faith is something prerequisite to justification, which cannot be said if justification was from eternity. To which the answer is, that those scriptures which speak of justification, through and by faith, do not militate against, nor disprove justification before faith; for though justification by and before faith differ, yet they are not opposite and contradictory. They differ, the one being an immanent act in God; all which sort of acts are eternal, and so before faith; the other being a transient declarative act, terminating on the conscience of the believer; and so is by and through faith, and follows it. But then these do not contradict each other, the one being a declaration and manifestation of the other. What scriptures may be thought to speak of faith, as a prerequisite to justification, cannot be understood as speaking of it as a prerequisite to the being of justification; for faith has no causal influence upon it, it adds nothing to its being, it is no ingredient in it, it is not the cause nor matter of it; at most, they can only be understood as speaking of faith as a prerequisite to the knowledge and comfort of it, and to a claim of interest in it; and this is readily allowed, that no man is evidentially and declaratively justified until he believes; that is, he cannot have the knowledge of it, nor any comfort from it; nor can he claim his interest in it, without faith; and this being observed, obviates another objection, that if justification is before faith, then faith is needless and useless. It is not so; it is not of use to justify men, which it is never said to do; but it is of use to receive the

blessing of justification, and to enjoy the comfort of it.

2b7f. It is asserted, that justification cannot be from eternity, but only in time, when a man actually believes and repents; otherwise it would follow, that he who is justified, and consequently has passed from death to life, and is become a child of God, and an heir of eternal life, abides still in death, and is a child of wrath, because he who is not yet converted, and lies in sin, abides in death, (1 John 3:14) and is of the devil, (1 John 3:8) and in a state of damnation, (Galatians 5:21) but this latter especially cannot be admitted of, with respect to God’s elect, even while unconverted. And now, to remove this seeming difficulty, let it be observed, that the elect of God may be considered under two different "heads", Adam and Christ, and as related to two covenants at one and the same time; as they are the descendants of Adam, they are related to him as a covenant head, and as such, sinned in him, and judgment came upon them all to condemnation and death, and so they are, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. But as considered in Christ, they are loved with an everlasting love, chosen in him before the world was, and always viewed and accounted righteous in him, and so secured from everlasting wrath and damnation; hence it is no contradiction to say, that the elect of God, as in Adam, and according to the covenant of works, are under the sentence of condemnation; and that as in Christ, and according to the covenant of grace, and the secret transactions thereof, they are justified, and saved from condemnation. This is no more a contradiction, than that they were loved with an everlasting love, and yet are children of wrath, at one and the same time, as they most certainly are; nor than that Jesus Christ was the object of his Father’s love and wrath at the same time, he sustaining two different capacities, and standing in two different relations, when he suffered in the room and stead of his people; as the Son of God he was always the object of his love; as the Surety of his people, bearing their sins, and suffering for them, he was the object of his wrath, (Psalms 89:38).

2b7g. It is urged what the apostle says (1 Corinthians 6:11). "Now ye are justified"; as if they were not justified before; but the word now is not in the text; and was it, and admit that to be the sense of it, it does not follow that they were not justified before: for so they might be "in foro dei", in the court of God, and in his account from eternity, and in Christ their Head and Surety, and especially when he rose from the dead, before now; yet not till now be justified in "foro conscientiae", in their own consciences, and by the Spirit of God; which is the justification the apostle is there speaking of. In a word, the sentence of justification pronounced on Christ, the representative of his people, when he rose from the dead, and that which is pronounced by the Spirit of God in the consciences of believers, and that which will be pronounced before men and angels at the general judgment, are only so many repetitions, or renewed declarations, of that grand original sentence of it, conceived in the mind of God from all eternity; which is the eternal justification pleaded for; and is no other than what many eminent divines of the highest character for learning and judgment, have asserted, as before observed; and it is to such as these Dr. Owen [21] refers, when he replied to Mr. Baxter, who charged him with holding eternal justification; "I neither am, nor ever was of that judgement; though as it may be explained, I know better, wiser, and more learned men than myself, (and he might have added, than Mr. Baxter,)that have been, and are."

ENDNOTES:

[1] Medulla Theologiae, l. 1. c. 28. s. 2, 3.

[2] Ibid. c. 27. s. 9.

[3] Aphorism, 56.

[4] Vindiciae Gratiae, l. 1. par. 2. s. 25. p. 197.

[5] prwton qeudov, Arminian, c. 10.

[6] De Descensu Christi. l. 3. s. 30. p. 59.

[7] Work, vol. 4. part 1. p. 105, 106.

[8] Medulla ut supra.

[9] Summa Controvers. l. 10. p. 705.

[10] Animadv. Irenic c. 10. s. 2. see the words of these authors at length, and of others before referred to, in my treatise on Justification.

[11] Ut supra.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Theolog. Quaest. loc. 31. qu. 6.

[14] Ut supra.

[15] Ut supra.

[16] Ut supra, p. 104.

[17] Institut. Theolog. tom. 2. loc. 16. qu. 9. s. 3.

[18] Loc. Commun. c. 69. p. 609.

[19] Theolog. Ouaest. loc. 31.

[20] T. Bab. Pesachim: fol. 6. 2.

[21] Doctrine of Justification vindicated from the animadversions of R. B. p. 9.

02. Of Justification

Of Justification

Pardon of sin, and justification from it, are very closely connected; the one follows upon the other; according to the position of them in some passages of scripture, pardon is first, and justification next; (as in Acts 13:38-39; Acts 26:18), though they are not, the one, in reality, prior to the other; they are both together in the divine mind, and in the application of them to the conscience of a sinner; indeed, according to the order of causes, justification by the righteousness of Christ, imputed, may be considered as before pardon; since God forgives sin for Christ's sake; that is, for the sake of his righteousness imputed. Now that for the sake of which a thing is, must be before that for which it is, as the cause is before the effect. Some take them to be the same, and that justification lies solely in the remission of sins; and others more rightly make the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and forgiveness of sins, the two parts of justification, distinct ones; while others think they are not two integral parts, really distinct, but only one act, respecting two terms, "a quo et ad quem"; just as by one and the same act darkness is expelled from the air, and light is introduced; so by one and the same act of justification, the sinner is absolved from guilt, and pronounced righteous; hence they suppose such express the whole of justification, who say, it consists in the remission of sins, and those that say it consists in the imputation of righteousness; because when God forgives men their sins, he pronounces them righteous, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them; and when he pronounces them righteous, by that he forgives them their sins; remission of sin supposes the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and the imputation of Christ's righteousness infers the remission of sin. But though these are not to be separated, yet they are to be distinguished; and I should choose to consider them, not as distinct parts of the same thing, but as distinct blessings of grace; for though pardon and justification agree in some things, in others they differ. In some things they agree.

1. In their efficient cause, God: as God only can and does forgive sin, it is his prerogative, it is peculiar to him; so it is God that justifies the sinner, and he only; "there is one God, who justifies the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith"; that is, that justifies both Jews and Gentiles, who believe in Christ (Mark 2:7; Romans 3:30).

2. In their moving cause, the free grace of God: pardon of sin is owing to the riches of God's grace, and the multitude of his tender mercy; and justification is ascribed to the grace of God, and is said to be freely by his grace (Ephesians 1:7; Psalms 51:1; Titus 3:7; Romans 3:24).

3. In their procuring cause, the blood of Christ: the blood of Christ was shed to procure the remission of sins, and it is by it; and so likewise justification is by the same blood (Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:9).

4. In the objects of it: the same persons that are pardoned are justified, and the same that are justified are pardoned; to whom God imputes the righteousness of Christ, to their justification, to them he gives the remission of sin; and to whom he does not impute sin, but forgives it, he imputes

righteousness without works (Romans 4:6-8).

5. In their commencement and completion: pardon and justification commence together, and both are finished at once, "simul" and "semel"; and are not carried on in a gradual and progressive way, as sanctification is (Colossians 2:13; Acts 13:39).

6. In the manner of actual enjoying them, which is in a way of receiving, and that by faith; it is by faith men receive the forgiveness of sins; and by it they receive abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness to justification of life; and, this is what the Scriptures call justification by faith (Acts 26:18; Romans 5:1; Romans 5:17-18). But though they agree in these things, in others they differ.

1. Pardon is of men that are sinners, and who remain such, and may be called so, though pardoned sinners; but justification is a pronouncing persons righteous, as if they had never sinned; it is one thing for a man to be arraigned at the bar as a criminal, and be tried, cast, and condemned, and after that be pardoned; and another thing for a man to be tried by law, and to be found and declared righteous by it, as though he had not transgressed it.

2. Pardon takes away sin from the sinner, but does not give him a righteousness, as justification does; pardon takes away the filthy garments; but it is justification that clothes with change of raiment, with the robe of Christ’s righteousness; these are two distinct things (Zechariah 3:4).

3. Pardon frees from punishment, and an obligation to it, as it takes away guilt; "the Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (2 Samuel 12:13), but does not entitle to everlasting life, happiness, and glory: that justification does, and therefore is called "justification of life"; and in consequence of which men are made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life (Romans 5:18; Titus 3:7). When a king pardons a criminal, he does not by that act entitle him to an estate, much less to his crown and kingdom; but if he will, when he has pardoned him, take him to court, and make him his son and heir, it must be by another distinct act of royal favour.

4. More is required for justification than for pardon; the blood of Christ was, sufficient to procure pardon, and did procure it: but to the justification of a sinner, the holiness of the human nature of Christ, the perfect obedience of his life, and his bloodshed, and sufferings of death, are and must be imputed.

5. The righteousness of Christ, by which men are justified, is the fulfilling of the law; Christ came to fulfil it in the room of his people; and he is the fulfilling end of it to them, for righteousness; which is inherent in him, the author of it: not so pardon; that does not fulfill the law, gives no righteousness; nor does it reside in Christ, as righteousness does (Romans 10:4; Isaiah 45:24).

6. Pardon lies in the non-imputation of sin; justification in the imputation of righteousness: righteousness is imputed, but pardon is not (Romans 4:6-7).

7. Justification passed on Christ, as the head and representative of his people; but not pardon: Christ having had the sins of his people imputed to him, and having made satisfaction to the justice of God for them, he was acquitted, discharged, and justified; but not pardoned: we may truly say, Christ was justified, and that God justified him, because the Scriptures say so; but not that he was pardoned; such an expression would sound harsh, and be very unwarrantable; see (Isaiah 50:8-9; 1 Timothy 3:16).

8. An innocent person, falsely charged, may be acquitted and justified, when he cannot be said to be pardoned; yea, such who need no pardon, as Adam did not in his state of innocence, and the elect angels in heaven; yet may be said to he justified, that is declared to be just and righteous: so men, in the present state, could they perfectly fulfil the law, as they cannot, would be justified by it; for "the doers of the law are justified; he that does these things shall live by them" (Romans 2:13; Romans 10:5). Moreover, if justification and pardon are to be considered as cause and effect, as before observed, they must be distinct, and are not to be confounded. The doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ is a doctrine of great importance; the apostle speaks of it as if the essence of the gospel lay in it; and calls the opposite to it, justification by the works of the law, another gospel; (see Galatians 1:6-7; Galatians 3:8), it is a fundamental article of the gospel; some have called it, the "basis" of Christianity; it was the great doctrine of the reformation; what our first reformers made their chief study; and by it cut the sinews of "popery", the antichristian doctrines of penance and purgatory, of pardons and indulgences, of the merit of good works, works of supererogation, &c. Luther used to call it, "articulus stantis vel cedentis ecclesiae" the article of the church, by which it stands or falls; as this is, the church is; if this obtains, the church is in a well settled and prosperous state; but if this loses ground, and is rejected, it is in a ruinous one: if this is a rule to judge by, it may be easily discerned, in what case the church, and interest of religion, now are. This doctrine is the ground and foundation of all solid joy, peace, and comfort, in this life, and hope of eternal glory hereafter.

I have, in a former part of this work, see "Justification" 853, treated of justification, as an immanent and eternal act in God; and so it may be said to be from eternity, and before faith; and in what sense it is so, with a removal of objections, has been shown in the place referred to; and therefore shall only now discourse concerning justification, as it terminates in the conscience of a believer; and which the scriptures style justification by faith. I shall, 1. Consider the act of justification, and in what sense the word is to be taken. And,

1a. It is not to be understood of instructing men in the scheme and method of justification, whether in a legal or evangelical way (Acts 15:1; 1 Timothy 1:7; Daniel 12:3).

1b. Nor is it to be understood of making men righteous, by infusing righteousness into them; for this is to confound justification and sanctification together, which are two distinct things (1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 6:11), this is sanctification: the righteousness by which men are justified, is imputed to them; but the righteousness of sanctification is inherent in them; that by which men are justified, are the obedience and blood of Christ; but infused holiness is neither of these. The word "justify" is never used in a physical sense, for producing any real internal change in men; but in a forensic sense, and stands opposed, not to a state of impurity and unholiness, but to a state of condemnation; it is a law term, and used of judicial affairs, transacted in a court of judicature; (see Deuteronomy 25:1; Proverbs 17:15; Isaiah 5:22; Matthew 12:37), where justification stands opposed to condemnation; and this is the sense of the word whenever it is used in the doctrine under consideration; so in Job 9:2-3; Job 25:4 so by David (Psalms 143:2), and in all Paul’s epistles, where the doctrine of justification is treated of, respect is had to courts of judicature, and to a judicial process in them; men are represented as sinners, charged with sin, and pronounced guilty before God, and subject to condemnation and death; when, according to this evangelic doctrine, they are justified by the obedience and blood of Christ, cleared of all charges, acquitted and absolved, and freed from condemnation and death, and condemned to

eternal life; (see Romans 3:9; Romans 3:19; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:16; Romans 5:18-19; Romans 8:1; Romans 8:33-34; Galatians 2:16-17; Titus 3:7).

1c. Justification is to be understood in this doctrine, not of justification before men, before whom men may appear righteous (Matthew 23:28), but in the sight of God, in whose sight they cannot be justified by the works of the law (Romans 3:20). Nor of the justification of a man's cause; or of his vindication from the calumnies of men (1 Samuel 12:5-6; Psalms 7:8; Job 13:18). Nor of the justification of a man's faith by his works; thereby proving the genuineness and sincerity of it: so the faith of Abraham, and of Rahab, was justified by their works; or their faith in the promises made unto them, was proved to be genuine and sincere; the one by offering up his Son; and the other by hiding the spies (James 2:21-25). But of the justification of the persons of men before God; and this is either legal or evangelical: legal, on condition of a person's fulfilling the whole law, or yielding perfect obedience to it; which, in man's present state and circumstances, is impossible (Romans 2:13; Romans 10:5; Romans 8:3-4). Evangelical; which is an act of God's grace, accounting and pronouncing a person righteous, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and received by faith; so "by the obedience of one many are made righteous"; and, Christ is of God, "made righteousness to them"; and they are "made the righteousness of God in him"; are reckoned perfectly righteous through him, and so stand justified and accepted in the sight of God (Romans 5:19; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21), and this is the justification we are treating of; concerning which further observe,

2. The causes of it. The "moving cause" is the grace of God; it was the sovereign grace, favour, and goodwill of God, which put him upon forming the scheme and method of justification; which moved him to appoint and send his Son, to work out, and bring in a righteousness for the justification of his people; and then to accept of it as their justifying righteousness, and to impute it freely to them, without works: the procuring, meritorious, or material cause of justification, is the righteousness of Christ imputed, which will be treated of more largely, when we come to consider the matter of justification; or what that is, for the sake of which, any of the sons of men are justified before God. At present I shall only attend to the efficient cause of justification, who is God; "It is God that justifies" (Romans 8:33; Romans 3:26; Romans 3:30; Galatians 3:8), which is marvelous; since,

2a. He is the Judge of all the earth, who will do right, and will by no means clear the guilty. Judges among men, by his orders and instructions, and as they would forfeit his displeasure, were not to justify the wicked; and yet he, who is Judge himself in the earth, "justifies the ungodly": but then it should be observed, that he does not justify them without a righteousness, but upon the foot of Christ's righteousness; so that though he justifies the ungodly, yet not as ungodly, but as righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; hence it is, that it is one of the privileges of such persons, that they can "come to God, the Judge of all", without fear and dread, appearing before him perfectly righteous in Christ the Mediator (Hebrews 12:23-24).

2b. Whose law is the rule by which he judges, and that law broken by men, and yet he justifies them. The law is holy, just, and good, and requires perfect, sinless obedience of men, but is broken by them in ten thousand instances; and he that offends in one point, is guilty of all, and the law pronounces him guilty, and curses and condemns him; and yet God, who judges according to this law, justifies them (Romans 2:12), but then it should be observed, that Christ has fulfilled the

law, in the room and stead of these persons; so that "the righteousness of the law" is said to be "fulfilled in them"; and it is considered as if it was fulfilled by them; and on this account they are legally acquitted, discharged, and justified, according to this law; its demands being fully satisfied by Christ.

2c. Sin, the breach of the law of God, is committed against him, and is hateful to him, and yet he justifies from it; every sin, being a transgression of the law, is against God, the Lawgiver, and cannot but be resented by him, and be an abomination to him; he hates it, and the workers of it; well then might Bildad say, "How then can man be justified with God?" (Job 25:4), and yet he is.

2d. It is that God that justifies, who will not admit of an imperfect righteousness, in the room of a perfect one: man's righteousness is imperfect, and cannot be reckoned as a perfect one by him, whose judgment is according to truth; nor will it stand in judgment, nor answer for the sinner at the bar of God, and justify in his sight; and yet God justifies; but then it is through the perfect righteousness of Christ, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes" (Romans 10:4).

2e. That God, who is the Lawgiver, and is able to save and to destroy, who has power to destroy both body and soul in hell, and would be just in so doing, and into whose hands it is a fearful thing to fall, yet he justifies. Now this act of justification, as ascribed to God, belongs to all the three Persons in the Godhead; they are all concerned in it, Father, Son, and Spirit.

2e1. First, God the Father; who, in many places where he is spoken of as a justifier, is distinguished from Christ; as where it is said, "It is God that justifieth—who shall condemn? It is Christ that died!" Again, God is said to "be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Romans 8:34; Romans 3:25-26), the same that justifies the head, justifies the members; now it is the Father that justified Christ, the head of his elect, of whom Christ says, He is near that justifieth me (Isaiah 50:8).

2e1a. God the Father contrived the scheme and method of justification; it would have been a puzzling question to angels and men, had not he resolved it; "How should man", sinful man, "be just with God?" But God, in his infinite wisdom, "found a ransom", a Ransomer, a Redeemer of his people, to bring in everlasting righteousness for them, and thereby acquit and discharge them, and "deliver them from going down to the pit" of ruin and destruction; "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself"; was, with him, forming the scheme of their peace and reconciliation, of their redemption, justification, and salvation; "not imputing their trespasses", but the righteousness of his Son unto them (Job 33:24; 2 Corinthians 5:19).

2e1b. He sent his Son, in the fulness of time, to execute this scheme; he sent him in human nature, "made under the law", subject to it, in the room and stead of his people, and to yield a perfect obedience to it; and he sent him "in the likeness of sinful flesh", with their sins imputed to him; and by making him a sacrifice for sin, through his sufferings and death, he bore the penalty of the law, that so the whole "righteousness of the law", or all it could demand, both with respect to precept and penalty, "might be fulfilled in" them; they being represented by him (Galatians 4:4; Romans 8:3-4).

2e1c. A perfect righteousness being wrought out by Christ, agreeable to the requirements of law and justice, by which the law is magnified and made honorable, and justice satisfied; God the

Father approves of it, is well pleased with it, and accepts of it as the justifying righteousness of them that believe in Christ.

2e1d. He imputes this righteousness to believers as their own: this is the Father's act of grace (Romans 4:6). "Of Him", that is, of God the Father, "are ye in Christ Jesus", chosen in him, and united to him; "who, of God" (the Father) "is made unto us righteousness"; which is done by his act of imputation (Romans 4:6; 1 Corinthians 1:30).

2e2. Secondly, God the Son, the second Person, is concerned in the justification of men; "By his knowledge", says Jehovah the Father, "shall my righteous Servant justify many" (Isaiah 53:11).

2e2a. Christ, as a divine Person, as he has power to forgive sin, so to absolve and justify from it; of which we have some instances, even when he was here on earth, in human nature, as to the man sick of the palsy he said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee!" and to the woman taken in adultery, "Neither do I condemn thee!" which was a full acquittal and discharge; and to his apostles he said, "Ye are clean", every whit clean, free from sin, and fully absolved from it, "Through the word I have spoken to you"; the sentence of justification by his blood and righteousness he had pronounced upon them (Matthew 9:2; John 8:11; John 15:3; John 13:10).

2e2b. As Mediator, Christ is the author of that righteousness by which sinners are justified; as he was to bring in an everlasting righteousness, he has brought in one; hence he is called, The Lord our Righteousness, the Son of righteousness, and the end of the law for righteousness; and men are made righteous by his obedience, and justified by his blood (Jeremiah 23:6; Malachi 4:2; Romans 10:4; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:19).

2e2c. As the head and representative of his people, they are justified in him; as Adam's natural posterity, sinning in him, were condemned in him, judgment came upon them all unto condemnation: so all Christ's spiritual seed and offspring are justified in him; for "in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory"; as he was "delivered" into the hands of justice and death "for their offences", to make satisfaction for them, so he was "raised again for their justification"; and when he was raised, he was justified, acquitted, and discharged himself from all the sins of his people, imputed to him, having satisfied for them; and then they were justified in him (Isaiah 45:25; Romans 4:25; 1 Timothy 3:16).

2e2d. As Christ has wrought out a righteousness for is people, so he actually puts it upon them, clothes them with it: says the church, "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness": he is that Angel of the Lord before whom Joshua was brought, and accused Satan; and to whom he himself said, "I will clothe with change of raiment" (Isaiah 61:10; Zechariah 3:4).

2e2e. As it is to faith the righteousness of Christ is revealed, and by faith it is received, hence believers are said to be justified by faith; so this faith, as well as righteousness, is of Christ; as he is the object of it, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me"; so he is the "author" and "finisher" of it (John 14:1; Hebrews 12:2).

2e3. Thirdly, The Holy Spirit of God, the third Person, has also a concern in the justification of sinners.

2e3a. He convinces men of righteousness, of their want of righteousness; of the weakness, imperfection, and insufficiency of their own righteousness, that they have none that can be called a

righteousness; and that unless they have a better righteousness than that, they will never enter into the kingdom of heaven (John 16:8).

2e3b. He brings near the righteousness of Christ; not only externally, in the ministry of the word; but internally, by the illumination of his grace; this is one of the things of Christ he takes and shows to souls enlightened by him; he shows them the fulness, glory, and suitableness of the righteousness of Christ, how perfect it is, how adequate to all the demands of law and justice, and how suitable to them; to cover their naked souls, to secure them from condemnation and death, to justify them before God, and render them acceptable in his sight, and entitle them to eternal life.

2e3c. He works faith in convinced and enlightened persons, to look at the righteousness of Christ, and take a view of its glories and excellencies; to approve of it, desire it, and to lay hold on it, and receive it as their justifying righteousness. Such a faith is of the operation of God, of the Spirit of God; it is what he works in the saints, and enables them to exercise it; hence he is called, "the Spirit of faith" (Colossians 2:13; 2 Corinthians 4:13).

2e3d. He bears witness to their spirits, that they are interested in the righteousness of Christ, and are justified by it; and he pronounces the sentence of justification in their consciences, or declares them justified, in the name of Christ, and on account of his righteousness; and which is the meaning of their being justified "in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

3. The objects of justification; and they are the elect;. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth!" that is, the elect (Romans 8:33), for who else can be meant?

3a. Elect men, and not elect angels; for though there are elect angels, and these are holy, just, and righteous; and so may be declared to be what they are, just and righteous, and in that sense justified; yet, since they never laboured under the suspicion of a crime, nor were ever chargeable with any, they cannot, in a strict sense, be said to be justified. But elect men, who are sinners in Adam, as chosen in Christ their Head, are reckoned righteous; for justification is a branch of election, in which the elect are reckoned as righteous, through the righteousness of Christ: and these being the objects of justification, show the eternity of that act, since election was from the beginning, and before the foundation, of the world; and the specialty of it, since the elect are a special and peculiar people; and the security of it, for it is certain, being closely connected with predestination, whom God predestinates, he calls and justifies; and its being a security from wrath and condemnation; for whom he justifies he glorifies, (Romans 8:30).

3b. Redeemed ones are the objects of justification; all that are chosen are redeemed; and all that are redeemed are justified; justification proceeds upon redemption; "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24), by which they are redeemed from all their iniquities, and from all the curses of the law due unto them, and so are acquitted and discharged.

3c. Pardoned ones; for all that are chosen and redeemed are pardoned, and those are justified: the chosen are pardoned; for the Lord says, "I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jeremiah 50:20), that is, whom he has reserved for himself by the act of election: and the redeemed are pardoned; for forgiveness of sin is a branch of redemption; "In whom we have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sin" (Ephesians 1:7), and whose sins are forgiven, they are justified, (Romans

4:6-7).

3d. Hence it appears, that the objects of justification are not all men; for all men are not chosen; they are only a remnant, according to the election of grace: nor are all men redeemed; for those that are redeemed, are redeemed from among men, and out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: nor are all pardoned; for there are some whose sins go beforehand to judgment, and are never forgiven: nor do all men believe; faith is peculiar to God’s elect: nor are all men saved from wrath, as they would be, if justified by the blood of Christ; some will go into everlasting punishment, when the righteous shall go into everlasting life: and so all are not justified; though there is an all that are justified, even all the seed and offspring of Christ, the seed of Israel on whom the gift of righteousness comes to justification of life (Isaiah 45:25; Romans 5:18).

3e. Yet they are many (Isaiah 53:11; Romans 5:19), for whom Christ gave his life a ransom; and whose blood was shed for the remission of their sins; those are said to be many (Matthew 20:28; Matthew 26:28).

3f. The objects of justification are described as sinners, and ungodly: "sinners" (Galatians 2:17), "ungodly" (Romans 4:5). So they are, in their unregenerate state: but when converted, they are described as believers in Christ; for the righteousness of Christ is "unto all, and upon all them that believe"; it is applied unto them, and put upon them; and they have a comfortable sense and perception of their justification by it; they "believe in Jesus Christ, that they might be justified by the faith of Christ"; by Christ, the object of faith, and through believing in him, have a comfortable view of their justification before God, and acceptance with him; hence it is said, that "by him all that believe are justified", openly and manifestatively, and have the testimony and comfort of it within themselves; and these may be said to be "justified by faith"; by Christ, and his righteousness received by faith, (Romans 5:1; Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16 Acts 13:39) and such are not nominal believers, who only have a notional, historical faith, or who only profess to believe, as Simon Magus did; but who, "with the heart, believe unto righteousness"; who truly and heartily believe in the righteousness of Christ for their justification before God; and such shall never come into condemnation, (Romans 10:10 John 5:24).

4. The charges, or sins, such are justified from. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth", (Romans 8:33) from all charges, all that may be truly brought against them, all criminal charges they are chargeable with.

4a. They are chargeable with original sin, the sin of the first man; they were, seminally, in his loins, when he eat the forbidden fruit; as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, when be paid tithes to Melchizedek: they were federally in him, as their covenant head and representative, and sinning in him, they became chargeable therewith; and judgment so far proceeded against them, as to bring them under the sentence of condemnation and death; but God justifies and acquits them from that offence, through the gift of his Son’s righteousness, which comes unto them to justification of life; and he frees them from the charge of that disobedience by which they were made sinners, through the imputation of Christ’s obedience to them, (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:18-19).

4b. They are chargeable with impurity of nature, and a want of original righteousness; which Adam, by sinning, lost, and all his posterity are without it; they are conceived in sin, and bring an impure nature into the world with them; which is the case of all, even of God’s elect. The law

requires purity and holiness of nature, and charges with the want of it; but God justifies from this charge, through the imputation of the holiness of Christ; human nature to them, which is a branch of their justification; and is thought, by some divines, to be "the law of the Spirit, of life" in him, which "frees from the law of sin and death"; and who is made, to his people, "sanctification" and righteousness; and was typified by the high priest, having an inscription on his forehead, "Holiness to the Lord" (Romans 8:21; Cor. 1:30; Exodus 28:36).

4c. They are chargeable with actual sins, before conversion, and those many, and some very heinous; and yet God justifies from them all; as Saul was chargeable with blasphemy, persecution, and doing injury to others; but obtained pardoning mercy, and a justifying righteousness: the Corinthians were guilty of some of the blackest crimes, and most enormous sins, yet were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God: the apostles, and others, before conversion, were disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures; and yet were justified, by the grace of God, and made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life (1 Timothy 1:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Titus 3:3; Titus 3:7).

4d. They are chargeable with a multitude of sins, after conversion; with many revoltings, and sometimes with great backslidings; their failings and infirmities, errors and mistakes, are innumerable; yet all are forgiven, and they are cleansed and justified from them (James 3:2; Psalms 19:12; Hosea 14:4).

4e. They are justified from all their sins, of whatsoever kind, that they can be charged with; for they that believe in Christ, "are justified from all things", from all sins, from all criminal charges; God forgives all their trespasses, for Christ’s sake, and his blood cleanses from all sin (Acts 13:39; Colossians 2:13; 1 John 1:7).

4f. They are justified by the righteousness of Christ, "from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses"; for there were some sins which the law made no provision of sacrifice for, as adultery and murder; such therefore that despised Moses’ law, by breaking it in such instances, "died without mercy"; but God justifies from all such sins, as well as others, through the righteousness of Christ (Acts 13:39; Hebrews 10:28; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 9:26).

4g. God justifies his elect from all charges brought against them, from what quarter soever, and whether true or false; do they bring charges against themselves, as they often do? conscience, which is as a thousand witnesses, accuses and condemns them; but though their hearts and consciences condemn them, God is greater than their hearts, and knows all things; what provisions he has made for them in covenant, what a righteousness his Son has wrought out for their justification; and though as on one hand, if a good man knows nothing by himself, yet he is not hereby justified; so on the other, though he knows much by himself and against himself, yet God clears him from all. Do saints bring chargers one against another, sore crimes rightly, and sometimes wrongly, whether privately or publicly: and do not forgive one another, as they should do, since God, for Christ’s sake, forgives them? yet God forgives all, and clears from all charges, true or false. Does the world bring charges against them, as they frequently do, even speak all manner of evil of them falsely, for Christ’s sake, as Tertullius the orator, against the apostle Paul? yet every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them God will condemn; for their "righteousness is of me, saith the Lord"; plainly suggesting, that he would justify and acquit them from all (Isaiah 54:17). Does Satan go about the earth to pick up charges against the people of

God, and then accuse them to him, as he did Job, whence he is called, "the accuser of the brethren?" Jehovah repels his charges, and rebukes him for them; an instance of this we have in the vision of Zechariah (Zechariah 3:1-4). In a word, whatever charges the law of God brings against the elect, which is broken by them, and for which it accuses, pronounces guilty, curses and condemns, and whatever charges the justice of God can produce against them, the mouth of the one, and of the other, is stopped by the righteousness of Christ; by which the one is honored and magnified; and the other is satisfied and well pleased; and so a full justification from all charges takes place, and God is Just while he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.

5. The matter and form of justification, the righteousness of Christ imputed: the matter of justification, or that for the sake of which a sinner is justified, is the righteousness of Christ; the form and manner in which it is made over to such an one, and becomes his, is by imputation.

5a. First, The matter of justification, the righteousness of Christ; and everything else must be removed from it, and denied of it. As,

5a1. First, a man’s own righteousness, or his obedience to the law; this is expressly denied to be that by which a sinner can be justified; "By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight", in the sight of God; that is, by works done in obedience to the law; and which is meant, not of the ceremonial, but the moral law; that law by which is the knowledge of sin, and which pronounces a man guilty of it before God, and stops his mouth, as the context shows; and is opposed to grace, which the ceremonial law is not, being of grace, given to relieve, under a sense of sin, by pointing to the Saviour, and his propitiatory sacrifice; and hence this conclusion is drawn, "Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith"; by Christ and his righteousness, the object of faith; "without the works of the law"; being joined to Christ, and his righteousness, or considered as any part of a justifying righteousness, (Romans 3:20; Romans 3:28). And to the same purpose are the words of the apostle, in Galatians 2:16. The reasons why a man’s own righteousness cannot be the matter of his justification before God, are,

5a1a. Because it is imperfect, and the law will not admit of an imperfect righteousness for justification; it requires perfect, sinless obedience; and not anything short of that will it allow to be a righteousness; "It shall be our righteousness", says Moses, "if we observe to do all these commandments, before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us" (Deuteronomy 6:25), so that if there is any failure, either in the matter or manner of obedience, it is no righteousness; and such obedience and righteousness, men, since the fall, were never capable of; the people of Israel, in general, followed after the law of righteousness; but did not attain to it, seeking it not by faith in Christ, in whom it is only found; but, as it were, by the works of the law, in which there is a deficiency, and so no righteousness:

5a1a. And those among them who made the largest pretensions to righteousness, fell short of it, as the Scribes and Pharisees; insomuch, that if a man’s righteousness does not exceed theirs, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven; nay, even the works of the truly just and good, are not perfect; "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20), hence good men, sensible of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, decline and deprecate entering into judgment with God upon that foot, acknowledging the impurity and imperfection of their obedience; on account of which, they know they could not be just with God (Job 9:2-3; Job 9:20; Job 9:32; Psalms 143:2; Isaiah 64:6).

5a1b. If justification was by the works of men, it could not be by grace; for grace and works are opposed, and cannot consist together in the business of justification; for if it is of grace, then not of works; but justification is by grace, and therefore not by works; "Being justified freely by his grace" (Romans 3:24), not only by grace, but freely by it; or by grace that is altogether free; and, indeed, as Austin says, it would not be grace if it was not so, or was any ways clogged with the works of men.

5a1c. If justification was by man's obedience, it would not be by a righteousness without works, and that imputed, as it is; if it is by a man's own righteousness, then not by a righteousness without works, for that consists entirely of works; and if a man's own, then not imputed; whereas, the blessedness of justification, lies in the imputation of a righteousness without works, (Romans 4:6).

5a1d. If justification could be by men's obedience to the law, then there would have been no need of the righteousness of Christ, nor of his coming into the world to work out one; it would have been an unnecessary thing for God to send his Son, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, by him, if we could have fulfilled it ourselves; and not only his life, and the obedience of it, would have been useless, but his death also; for, as the apostle argues, "If righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Galatians 2:21).

5a1e. If justification was by the works of men, boasting would be encouraged; whereas, God's design in the whole scheme of salvation, and so in this branch of it, is to prevent it, lest any man should boast; "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith"; that is, not by the doctrine of justification, by the works of men, that would establish boasting; but by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, which leaves no room for it, (Romans 3:27).

5a2. Secondly, Nor is man's obedience to the gospel, as to a new and milder law, the matter of his justification before God. It was a notion, that some years ago obtained, that a relaxation of the law, and the severity of it, has been obtained by Christ; and a new law, a remedial law, a law of milder terms, has been introduced by him, which is the gospel; the terms of which are, faith, repentance, and new obedience; and though these are imperfect, yet being sincere, they are accepted of by God, in the room of a perfect righteousness. But every article of this scheme is wrong; for,

5a2a. The law is not relaxed, nor any of its severity abated; there is no alteration made in it; neither with respect to its precepts, nor its penalty; it requires the same holy, just, and good things, it ever did; Christ came not to destroy it, but to fulfil it: nor is the sanction of it removed; though it is not made for, or does not lie against, a righteous man; yet it is made for, and lies against, the sinner and transgressor; and as it has the same commanding, so the same condemning power, to them that are under it; it accuses, pronounces guilty, condemns, and curses, even such who continue not in all things to observe it.

5a2b. Nor is the gospel a new law; there is nothing in it that looks like a law; it has no commands in it, but all promises; it is a pure declaration of grace and salvation by Christ; therefore called, the gospel of the grace of God, and the gospel of our salvation.

5a2c. Nor are faith, repentance, and new obedience, the terms of it, and required by it, as conditions of men's acceptance with God; faith and repentance, as doctrines, are gospel doctrines, and parts of the gospel ministry; and as graces, are not terms and conditions required in

it, to be performed by men of themselves; they are blessings of grace, declared in it, and are gifts of grace bestowed on men; faith is the gift of God, and repentance is a grant from him; and both they, and new and spiritual obedience, are provided for in the covenant of grace (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

5a2d. If these were terms and conditions, required of men, in the gospel, to be performed by them, in order to their acceptance with God, the gospel would not be a remedial law; nor these milder terms than those of the old law; for it was easier for Adam, in a state of innocence, to have kept the whole law, than it is for man, in his fallen state, to repent and believe in Christ, and perform new and spiritual obedience of himself; till God takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh, and gives grace, as well as time and space, to repent, men never will nor can repent of their sins: and faith is not of a man's self; no man can come to Christ, that is, believe in him, unless it be given to him, and the Father draws him; and without Christ, his Spirit and grace, a man cannot do any good thing.

5a2e. Nor is it true, that God will accept of an imperfect righteousness in the room of a perfect one: nor can any thing more highly reflect upon the justice and truth of God, who is the Judge of all the earth, and will do right, and whose judgment is according to truth, and can never account that a righteousness which is not one.

5a3. Thirdly, nor is a profession of religion, even of the best religion, the Christian religion, the matter of justification before God; men may have a form of godliness without the power of it; they may submit to the ordinances of Christ, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and attend every duty of religion, and yet be far from righteousness: and even if a profession of religion was taken up upon right principles, on a good foundation, and held and maintained in an honorable manner, and even though a man may be ever so sincere in it, it is not the matter of his justification. For,

5a4. Fourthly, sincerity itself, in any religion, even in the best religion, is not a justifying righteousness. There may be sincerity in a bad religion, as well as in a good one; a man may be sincerely wrong, as well as sincerely right; may be a sincere Pagan, a sincere Papist, and a sincere Mohammedan, as well as a sincere Christian; yea, a man may be a sincere blasphemer of Christ, and a sincere persecutor of his followers, as the apostle Paul was, before conversion, and as the persecutors of Christ's disciples (Acts 26:9; John 16:2), and taking sincerity in the best sense, as a grace of the Spirit of God, which accompanies all other graces, and denominates faith unfeigned, hope without hypocrisy, and love without dissimulation; it belongs to sanctification, and not justification; and is not the whole, nor any part of justifying righteousness.

5a5. Fifthly, nor faith, the "to credere", or act of believing; this is, by some, said to be imputed for righteousness; but is not so; for,

5a5a. Faith, as a man's act, is his own; and is called "his" faith, "thy" faith, and "my" faith (Habakkuk 2:5; Matthew 9:22; Matthew 15:28; James 2:18), whereas, the righteousness by which a man is justified, is not his own, but another's, and therefore not faith.

5a5b. Faith is imperfect; it is so in the greatest believers; the disciples of Christ saw need to pray, Lord, "increase our faith!" whereas, a righteousness to justify must be perfect; nothing else can be accounted a righteousness.

5a5c. Faith is not everlasting; as to its use; is only for the present life; it will be changed into vision: but the righteousness by which sinners are justified before God, and which was brought in by Christ for that purpose, is "everlasting righteousness" (Daniel 9:24).

5a5d. Faith and righteousness are manifestly distinguished; "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith"; and therefore faith cannot be that righteousness. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness"; and therefore righteousness must be a distinct thing from faith; which "righteousness is unto all, and upon all them that believe"; and therefore must be different from that faith with which they believe, (Romans 1:17; Romans 10:10; Romans 3:22).

5a5e. Something else, and not faith, is said to be that by which men are made righteous, and justified; as "the obedience of one", Jesus Christ, by which "many are made righteous"; and the blood of Christ; "being justified by his blood" (Romans 5:9; Romans 5:19). Now faith is neither the one nor the other; and though men are said to be "justified by faith", yet not as an act of men; for then they would be justified by works, contrary to express scripture; nor by it as a grace of the Spirit in men; for this would confound justification and sanctification together; but by the object of it, Christ, and his righteousness, apprehended, received, and embraced by faith. And though believers are said to be justified by faith, yet faith is never said to justify them.

5a5f. The passages produced to establish this notion, that faith is a man’s righteousness, are insufficient; "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness" (Romans 4:3). And again (Romans 4:5), "His faith is counted for righteousness". And in (Romans 4:9), "We say, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness". Now this can not be understood of the act of Abraham’s faith; but of the object of it, or that which he believed in, the righteousness of Christ, which God imputes, without works (Romans 4:6), and that this must be the sense is clear, from this one single consideration, that the same "it" which was imputed to Abraham for righteousness, is imputed to all those who believe in God, who raised up Christ from the dead (Romans 4:22-24). Now supposing Abraham’s faith was imputed to him for a justifying righteousness; it cannot reasonably be thought that it should be imputed also for righteousness to all that believe in all succeeding ages.

5a6. Sixthly, Nor is the whole of sanctification the matter of justification; these two are distinct things, and not to be confounded; the one is a work of grace within men, the other an act of God’s grace towards and upon men; the one is imperfect, the other perfect; the one is carried on gradually, the other done at once. But the sole matter of justification, or that for the sake of which a sinner is justified before God, is the righteousness of Christ; and which is,

5a6a. Not his essential righteousness, as God; the righteousness by which men are justified is the righteousness of God, which was wrought out by Christ, who is God as well as man; but it is not that righteousness which is essential to him as God; he that is their righteousness is Jehovah, but the righteousness by which he is Jehovah, or which belongs to him as such, is not their righteousness, as Osiander dreamed; for this would be to deify them.

5a6b. Nor his righteousness, integrity, and fidelity, which he exercised in the discharge of his mediatorial office; that was personal and respected himself, and not relative to others; he was faithful to him that appointed him to that office, and he did his work in so upright a manner, that he obtained the character of God’s "righteous servant" (Isaiah 11:5; Isaiah 53:11), but though it is a

righteousness he wrought out as mediator, which is imputed for justification, yet it is not his mediatorial righteousness, or the righteousness of his office, or that by which he showed the discharge of it.

5a6c. Nor does it consist of all the actions and works he did here on earth, nor of what he is doing in heaven; it wholly consists of those he wrought in his state of humiliation here on earth, yet not all of these; not his extraordinary and miraculous works, these were proofs of his Deity, and of his Messiahship; they were done and recorded to engage men to believe in him, and in his righteousness; but were no ingredients, as one observes [1], in that righteousness on which they were to believe. Nor is his work in heaven, appearing for his people there, interceding for them, and preparing mansions of glory for them, any part of the righteousness wrought out for them, and imputed to them. But,

5a6a. What he did and suffered in their nature on earth, and in their room and stead, and as their substitute and representative, commonly called his active and passive obedience; to which may be added the purity and holiness of his nature, and which altogether made up the dikaiwma tou nomou, "the righteousness of the law", which was "fulfilled" by him, as their head and representative (Romans 8:4), for whatever the law required is necessary to a sinner’s justification before God; and that requires of sinners more than it did of man in innocence. Man was created with a pure and holy nature, conformable to the pure and holy law of God; and it was incumbent on him to continue so, and to yield in it perfect and sinless obedience; and in failure thereof he was threatened with death; and now having sinned, whereby his nature is vitiated and corrupted, and his obedience become faulty and imperfect, suffering the penalty of the law is required; and all this is requisite to the justification of a sinner, purity of nature, perfection of obedience, and sufferings of death; all which meet in Christ, the representative of his people, in whom they are justified.

5a6a1. Holiness of nature: some consider this only as a qualification for his office, and the due performance of it in human nature; whereby he was capable of yielding sinless obedience to the law, and was qualified as an high priest to offer himself a spotless sacrifice, and to be a proper advocate for sinners, being Jesus Christ the righteous; but this not only fitted him for his work, but made him suitable to us, "Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless"; the law required an holy nature in conformity to it; it is wanting in us, it is found in Christ, "who is of God made to us sanctification"; see more of this under the "fourth head".

5a6a2. The obedience of Christ’s life, commonly called his active obedience, which was sinless and perfect; his whole life was in perfect conformity to the law, and was a continued series of holiness and obedience; the holiness of his nature appeared in all his actions, throughout his whole state of humiliation, from his birth to his death; in all which he was the representative of his people; what he did, he did in their room and stead, and therefore was reckoned as if done by them, and is imputed to them as their righteousness: there are some divines [2] who exclude the active obedience of Christ from being any part of the righteousness by which men are justified; they allow it is a condition requisite in him as mediator, qualifying him for his office; but deny that it is the matter of justification, or that it is imputed and reckoned for righteousness to men. They suppose that Christ was obliged to this obedience for himself as a creature, and that it is unnecessary to his people, because his sufferings and death are sufficient for their justification. But,

5a6a2a. Though the human nature of Christ being a creature, and so considered, was subject to a law and obliged to obedience; yet it was not obliged to a course of obedience in such a low, mean, and suffering state, being entitled to glory and happiness from the moment of its union to the Son of God; this was voluntary: besides, the human nature being taken into personal union with the Son of God, the person of Christ, who was not subject to the law, but was above it, and Lord of it; it was an act of his will to submit to it, and a wonderful instance of his condescension it was; moreover, as Christ being made of a woman, and was made under the law, he was made both for the sake of his people; he became man for their sake, "to us or for us a child is born" (Isaiah 9:6), and for their sake he became subject to the law, that he might yield obedience to it in their room and stead, and that he might redeem them from the curse of it; and this was the kind and gracious design of his divine Father in sending him in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might both obey and suffer for them, that so the whole righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them (Galatians 4:4; Romans 8:3-4).

5a6a2b. Without the active obedience of Christ the law would not be satisfied, the language of which is "Do and live"; and unless its precepts are obeyed, as well as its penalty endured, it cannot be satisfied; and unless it is satisfied, there can be no justification by it; Christ, as a surety, in the room and stead of his people, must both obey the precepts of the law and bear its penalty; his submitting to the one, without conforming to the other, is not sufficient; one debt is not paid by another; his paying off the debt of punishment did not exempt from obedience, as the paying off the debt of obedience did not exempt from punishment: Christ did not satisfy the whole law by either of them separately, but by both conjunctly [joined together]; by his sufferings and death he satisfied the threatenings, the sanction of the law, but not the precepts of it thereby; and by his active obedience he satisfied the preceptive part of the law, but not the penal part; but by both he satisfied the whole of the law and made it honorable.

5a6a2c. It is by a righteousness that men are justified, and that is the righteousness of Christ; now righteousness, strictly speaking lies in doing, in actual obedience to the commands of the law, "This shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do", &c. (Deuteronomy 6:25). Christ's righteousness lay in doing, not in suffering; "all righteousness, as one says [3], is either an habit or an act; but sufferings are neither, and therefore not righteousness; no man is righteous because he is punished; if so, the devils and damned in hell would be righteous in proportion to their punishment; the more severe their punishment, and the more grievous their torments, the greater their righteousness must be; if there is any righteousness in punishment, it must be in the punisher, and not in the punished."

If therefore men are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, it must be by his active obedience, and not merely by his sufferings and death; because these, though they free from death, yet, strictly speaking, do not make men righteous.

5a6a2d. It is expressly said, that "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19), which cannot be meant of the sufferings and death of Christ; because, properly speaking, they are not his obedience, but the effect of it; besides, the antithesis in the text determines the sense of the words; for if by one man's actual disobedience, which was the case, many were made sinners, so by the rule of opposition, by one man's actual obedience, which is Christ's, many are made righteous, or justified.

5a6a2e. The reward of life is not promised to suffering, but to doing; the law says, "Do this and live"; it promises life, not to him that suffers the penalty, but to him that obeys the precept; "there never was a law, as an excellent divine observes [4], even among men, either promising or declaring a reward due to the criminal, because he had undergone the punishment of his crimes."

Christ's sufferings and death being satisfactory to the comminatory [a formal denunciation] or threatening part of the law, are reckoned to us for justification, that so we may be freed and discharged from the curse of it, and from hell and wrath to come; but as they do not constitute us righteous, they do not entitle us to eternal life; but the active obedience or righteousness of Christ being imputed to us, is "unto justification of life", or is what gives the title to eternal life.

5a6a3. Nevertheless the sufferings and death of Christ, or what is commonly called his passive obedience, are requisite to our justification before God. Passive obedience is a phrase that may be objected to as not accurate, being a seeming contradiction in terms; suffering and obedience convey different ideas, and belong to different classes; suffering belongs to the predicament or class of passion, obedience to that of action; yet as Christ's sufferings flow from his obedience, and were the effect of his submission to his Father's will, with respect to which he said, "Not my will but thine be done"; and as he was obedient throughout his life, in all the actions and in all the sufferings of it, even to the moment of his death; and was also obedient in death, laying down his life at the command received from his Father; "For though a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered"; and was even active in his sufferings; he laid down his life of himself, he poured out his soul unto death, and gave himself an offering, and a sacrifice for sin; considering these things, the phrase, passive obedience, may be admitted of; especially as it is well known what is meant by it, the voluntary sufferings and death of Christ, which are most certainly ingredients in the justification of a sinner.

It may be asked, if Christ was the representative of his people in his active obedience, which constitutes them just or righteous, and is their justification of life, or what entitles to eternal life, what need was there of his sufferings and death? to which it may be answered, that it was necessary that Christ, as the surety and representative of his people, should satisfy the law in everything it could require of them, both as creatures, and as sinful creatures. As creatures, the law could require of them purity of nature, and perfect obedience to it, which were in their first parents, but were lost by them, and are wanting in them; as sinful creatures, it could require of them to endure the penalty of it. Christ now as the surety of his people, represented them as creatures, in the purity of his nature and in the perfection of his life, or in his active obedience; and presented that to the law for them which it could require of them as creatures: and as it is certain he represented them in his sufferings and death, hence he is said to die for them, that is, in their room and stead, and they to be crucified and buried with him; in these he represented them as sinful creatures, and bore the penalty or curse of the law; and in both obediences he satisfied the whole of it; and as by the one they are freed from death the sanction of the law, so by the other they are entitled to life, and by both Christ is the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness unto them. For that the sufferings and death of Christ, as well as his active obedience, are requisite to the complete justification of a sinner, appears,

5a6a3a. That without these the law would not be satisfied, and all its demands answered; and unless it is satisfied; there can be no justification by it; and it cannot be satisfied unless its penalty

is endured; for,

5a6a3b. The law, in case of disobedience to it, threatened with death, and death is the just wages and due demerit of sin; and therefore this must be endured, either by the sinner or a surety for him, or else he cannot be discharged by the law.

5a6a3c. The justification of a sinner is expressly ascribed to the blood of Christ, which is put for the whole of his sufferings and death, (Romans 5:9).

5a6a3d. Justification proceeds upon redemption, "being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus", (Romans 3:24) now redemption is by the blood of Christ, and through his sufferings and death (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 3:18-19; Revelation 5:9).

5a6a3e. It is upon the foot of Christ's satisfaction that justification takes place, and satisfaction is made by Christ's doing and suffering all the law requires; and so as by his obedience, likewise by his blood and death, to which it is more frequently ascribed, peace is made by his blood, reconciliation by his death, atonement and expiation by his sacrifice, which is of a sweet smelling savor to God (Colossians 1:20; Romans 5:10; Hebrews 9:26; Ephesians 5:2).

5a6a3f. The complete justification of a sinner, does not seem to be finished by Christ until his resurrection, after his obedience and sufferings of death; for he "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). In short, the righteousness by which we are justified, as Dr. Ames says [5], is not to be sought for in different operations of Christ, but arises from his whole obedience, both active and passive; which is both satisfactory and meritorious, and frees from condemnation and death, and adjudges and entitles to eternal life; even as one and the same disobedience of Adam, stripped us of original righteousness, and rendered us obnoxious to condemnation. So much for the matter of justification.

5b. Secondly, The form of it, is imputation; or the manner in which the righteousness of Christ is made over to a sinner, and it becomes his, is by imputing it to him; "Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Romans 4:6). The words used both in Hebrew and Greek, ■■■ and logizomai, ellogew, &c. signify, to reckon, repute, estimate, attribute, and place something to the account of another [6]: as when the apostle said to Philemon, concerning Onesimus, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account", touto emoi ellogei, let it be reckoned, or imputed to me. So when God is said to impute the righteousness of Christ to any, the sense is, that he reckons it as theirs, being wrought out for them, and accounts them righteous by it, as though they had performed it in their own persons: and that it is by the righteousness of Christ, imputed to his people, that they are justified, is clear, when it is observed,

5b1. That those whom God justifies, are, in themselves, ungodly; for God "justifieth the ungodly" (Romans 4:5), if ungodly, then without a righteousness; and if without a righteousness, then, if they are justified, it must be by a righteousness imputed to them, or placed to their account; which can be no other than the righteousness of Christ.

5b2. They that are justified, are justified either by an inherent, or by an imputed righteousness: not by an inherent one, for that is imperfect, and so not justifying; and if not by an inherent righteousness, then it must be by one imputed to them, for there remains no other.

5b3. The righteousness by which any are justified, is the righteousness of another, and not their own, even the righteousness of Christ; "Not having on mine own righteousness", says the apostle (Php 3:9). Now the righteousness of another, cannot be made a man’s, or he is justified by it, any other way than by an imputation of it to him.

5b4. The same way that Adam’s sin, became the sin of his posterity, or they were made sinners by it, the same way Christ’s righteousness becomes his people’s, or they are made righteous by it. Now the former is by imputation; and so the latter; "As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners"; that is, by the imputation of it to them; "so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous"; that is, by placing it to their account, (Romans 5:19).

5b5. The same way that the sins of Christ’s people became his, his righteousness becomes theirs. Now their sins became Christ’s by imputation only; the Father hid them on him, or made them to meet upon him, imputed them to him, placed them to his account; and he took them upon him, and looked upon himself as answerable to justice for them; and so, in the same way, his righteousness is made over to, and put upon his people; "For he who knew no sin, was made sin for us", by imputation, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"; accounted righteous in him, through his righteousness imputed (2 Corinthians 5:21). Now there are several things which are said of this imputed righteousness of Christ, which serve greatly to recommend it, and set forth the excellency of it; as,

5b5a. That it is called "the righteousness of God" (Romans 1:17; Romans 3:22), being wrought by Christ, who is God as well as man; approved and accepted of by God, and freely imputed by him to believers, as their justifying righteousness.

5b5b. It is called, "the righteousness of One" (Romans 5:18), of one of the Persons in the Trinity, the Son of God; of him, who, though he has two natures united in him, is but one Person, and who is the one common Head to all his seed; and though his obedience, or righteousness, serves for many, it is "the obedience of One" (Romans 5:19), and therefore they are justified, not partly by their own obedience, and partly by Christ’s, but by his only.

5b5c. It is called, "the righteousness of the law" (Romans 8:4), being wrought by Christ in conformity to the law; so that this righteousness is a legal righteousness, as performed by Christ, being every way commensurate to the demands of it; though evangelical, as made over to his people, and revealed in the gospel; for it is manifested without the law, though witnessed to by law and prophets.

5b5d. It is called, "the righteousness of faith" (Romans 4:13), not that faith is righteousness, or imputed for it, or is the matter of a justifying righteousness, or any part of it; but because the righteousness of Christ is revealed to faith, and that lays hold on it, receives it, rejoices in it, and boasts of it.

5b5e. It is called, "the gift of righteousness", and "the free gift", and "the gift by grace" (Romans 5:15-17), because freely wrought out by Christ, and freely imputed by God the Father; and faith is freely given to receive and embrace it.

5b5f. It is called, "a robe of righteousness", a garment down to the feet, which covers the whole mystical body of Christ (Isaiah 61:10; Revelation 1:13), it is signified by gold of Ophir, of wrought

gold, and raiment of needle work; setting forth the preciousness of it (Psalms 45:9; Psalms 45:13-14). It is said to be change of raiment, and the wedding garment (Zechariah 3:4; Matthew 22:12), yea, the "best robe" (Luke 15:22), a better robe than Adam had in Eden, or the angels in heaven; theirs, at best, being but the righteousness of a creature, and that loseable, as the event showed; but Christ's righteousness is the righteousness of God, and an everlasting one; it may rendered, the "first robe"[7], being first in designation, and in the provision of the covenant of grace; though Adam's robe of righteousness was first in wear and use.

6. The effects of justification by the righteousness of Christ may be next considered, which are as follow.

6a. An entire freedom from all penal evils, in this life and in that which is to come. Justified ones are not freed from all evils; they have their evil things now, as Lazarus had, but they are not brought upon them by way of punishment; afflictions are evils in themselves, being not joyous but grievous; but then they are not penal ones; they are fatherly chastisements, they are fruits and evidences of the love of God to them, and not of his vindictive wrath, (Revelation 3:19; 1 Corinthians 11:32), death was threatened as a punishment for sin, and is the just demerit of it, and as such is inflicted on unrighteous ones, but is no penal evil to justified ones; it is their privilege and not their punishment (1 Corinthians 3:22; Revelation 14:13), and therefore their death is desirable, even by wicked men, as it was by Balaam: nor will any penal evil befall the justified ones after death; for "being now justified" by his (Christ's) blood, they "shall be saved from wrath through him"; from wrath to come, the vengeance of eternal fire: should any penal evil be inflicted on them here or hereafter, it would highly reflect upon the justice of God, in punishing twice for the same offences, once in their surety, and again in themselves; since the chastisement, or punishment of their sins has been laid on Christ, and he has endured it; and therefore it would be a lessening of the value of Christ's satisfaction, as if it was not made to full content, should punishment be inflicted in any degree upon those for whom it is made; and it would be contrary to the gospel declaration, that they that believe in Christ are justified, and shall not enter into condemnation.

6b. Peace with God is another fruit and effect of justification; being "justified by faith, we have peace with God" (Romans 5:1), peace with God is made by the blood of Christ, and reconciliation by his death; and besides that, there is a peace of conscience which is had in a way of believing, and through a comfortable sense and perception of an interest in the righteousness of Christ, the effect of which is peace and quietness (Isaiah 32:17).

6c. Access to God through Christ; for having a comfortable view by faith of interest in the righteousness of Christ unto justification, it follows, "by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand" (Romans 5:2), access to God as the God of grace, to him as on a throne of grace, to all the blessings of grace which come from God through Christ; and through the blood and righteousness of Christ justified ones have great freedom, boldness and confidence, to go to God, and present their supplication to him for what they want; not for their righteousness sake, but in their requests making mention of the righteousness of Christ, and only pleading the worth and virtue of that.

6d. Acceptance with God through Christ follows upon justification by his righteousness; there can be no acceptance with God upon the foot of a man's own righteousness, which cannot render him

acceptable to God; but through the righteousness of Christ there is an acceptance both of persons and services; first of persons and then of services; as God had respect to Abel, and so to his offering, and accepted it; so he has respect to the persons of his justified ones, as considered in Christ; he has respect to him, and is well pleased with him, and with all that are in him; they are accepted of God in the beloved, being clothed with the robe of his righteousness, and the garments of his salvation; and their services being done in the strength of Christ, and through faith in him, and to the glory of God by him, and their spiritual sacrifices being offered up by him their great high-priest, they become acceptable to God through him.

6e. The well being of God's people here and hereafter depends upon their justification, and is a consequent of it; "Say ye to the righteous", one that is justified by the righteousness of Christ, "that it shall be well with him" (Isaiah 3:10), it is well with the justified ones in life; be it with them as it may, all is well with them and for the best; all things work together for their good, adversity and prosperity; what they have of worldly things, though but little (Psalms 37:16; Proverbs 15:16-17), are blessings to them: it is well with such an one at death, he has hope in it, and rejoices in hope of the glory of God; peace is the end of the perfect and upright man, who is perfectly righteous through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; and it is well with him at judgment, he has a righteousness that will answer for him in that time to come; and he shall have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; and it will be well with him to all eternity; he that is righteous will then be righteous still, and ever continue so, and shall go into everlasting life.

6f. Glorying, or boasting, is another effect of justification; not in a man's self, in his own righteousness; not of his duties, services, and performance; nor of blessings of goodness enjoyed through his own merit; nor of heaven and happiness, as his own acquisition; all such boasting is excluded, by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; but such as are justified in Christ glory of him, in whom they are justified; and glory in this, that he is "of God, made to them righteousness" (Isaiah 45:25; 1 Corinthians 1:30).

6g. Justified ones have an undoubted title to eternal life; hence justification by Christ's righteousness is called, "justification of life", because it entitles to it; and such are "made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life"; are heirs of the inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and reserved in the heavens, and shall be possessed of it, (Romans 5:18; Titus 3:7). For,

6h. Certainty of salvation may be concluded from justification; such as are justified, shall most assuredly be "saved from wrath"; there is an inseparable connection between justification and glorification; "Whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Romans 5:9; Romans 8:30).

7. The properties of justification.

7a. It is an act of God's grace, of pure grace, without any consideration of merit, worthiness, and works of men; grace is the moving cause of it, as has been already observed; it was according to the purpose and grace of God, that he resolved upon the justification of any of the sons of men; "The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith" (Galatians 3:8), the scripture foresaw, or predicted, the justification of them; because God, of his sovereign grace and good will, determined on it; grace set wisdom at work to find out a proper way and method of making men just with God, which could never have been found out by men or angels; and having

found a way to impute their sins, not to themselves but to Christ, and to impute his righteousness to them; he was "gracious, and said, Deliver them from going down to the pit". Grace put him on calling Christ to be their surety, to bring in an everlasting righteousness for them; and it was grace in Christ to accept the call, and say, "Lo, I come to do thy will!" one part of which was, to work out a righteousness for his people; and it was grace in God to send his Son to obey, suffer, and die for them, in their nature, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them; and it was grace in him to accept of that righteousness as if done by them, and to impute it to them freely without works, and to give them faith to lay hold upon it for themselves; and it appears the more to be an act of grace, in that they are "ungodly" whom God justifies, sinners, even some, the chief of sinners, (Romans 4:5; 1 Corinthians 6:11).

7b. It is an act of justice, as well as of grace: God is righteous in all his ways and works, and so in this; the law being perfectly fulfilled by Christ, the surety, both with respect to precept and penalty; justice is fully satisfied, and so God is "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus", (Romans 3:26).

7c. It is universal, as to persons, sins, and punishment: as to persons, all the seed of Israel are justified; that is, all the elect of God and seed of Christ; as there was an "all" on whom judgment came to condemnation, through the offence of the first Adam, even all his natural posterity; so there is an all on whom the free gift by the righteousness of Christ comes, to the justification of life; even all the children of God, and offspring of Christ, the second Adam, whose righteousness is "unto all", and "upon all" them that believe (Isaiah 45:25; Romans 5:18; Romans 3:22). And with respect to sins, they that are justified, are justified from all sins whatever; Christ has redeemed his people from all their iniquities; all are forgiven for his sake; his blood cleanses from all, and his righteousness clears and acquits them of all: and as to punishment, they are entirely secure from it, even to the least degree; they are saved from wrath; they are secure from all condemnation; they are delivered from the curse of the law; nor shall they be hurt by the second death, the wages of sin; it shall not have any power at all over them: the whole righteousness of Christ is imputed to them; a whole Christ is made to them righteousness; and in such a manner, that they are made the righteousness of God in him; and they are complete in him, are perfectly comely through his comeliness put upon them, a perfection of beauty, all fair, and without spot.

7d. It is an individual act, done at once, and admits of no degrees; the sins of God’s elect were altogether and at once laid on Christ, and satisfaction for them was made by him at once; he removed the iniquity of his people in one day, and by one sacrifice put away sin for ever; all sins were pardoned at once, upon this sacrifice offered, and satisfaction made; and the righteousness of Christ was accepted of, and imputed to his people at once. The sense of justification, indeed, admits of degrees; "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith"; from one degree of faith to another; from a lesser, and lower degree of it, to an higher; it is gradually that faith rises to a full assurance of interest in it, so that a man knows with certainty, that he is and shall be justified; the manifestations of it are various and different, at different times; but the act itself, as in God, is always the same, perfect and complete. Indeed, there are fresh declarations and repetitions of the sentence of it was first conceived in the divine mind from all eternity; it was virtually pronounced on the elect in Christ, their representative, at his resurrection from the dead; and it is afresh pronounced in the conscience of a believer, by the Spirit, and he bearing testimony to it; and it will be again notified at the general judgment, before angels and men; but justification, as an act of

God, is but one, and done at once, and admits of no degrees; and is not carried on in a gradual, progressive way, as sanctification is.

7e. It is equal to all, or all are alike justified, that are justified; the price of redemption, on which justification proceeds, is the same, the precious blood of Christ; even as the ransom price, and atonement money paid for the children of Israel, was the same, an half shekel for the rich and for the poor: and it is the same righteousness of Christ that is imputed to one as to another; it is a garment down to the feet, and covers the whole mystical body, the lowest and meanest members of it, as well as the more principal; it is unto all, and upon all them that believe; there is no difference, they have all the same righteousness, and the same precious faith, though not to the same degree; yet the weakest believer is as much justified, as the strongest believer; and so the greatest, as well as the smallest sinner, though one may be justified from more sins than another, having committed more: yet one is not more justified than the other; though one man may have more faith, and more sanctifying grace than another, yet no man has more righteousness, or a more justifying righteousness than another.

7f. It is irreversible, and an unalterable act; it is according to the immutable purpose and grace of God, which can never be frustrated; it is part of that grace given, and one of those spiritual blessings wherewith the elect were blessed in Christ before the world began; it is one of those things which God does, and are for ever. Neither the righteousness by which they are justified, nor the faith by which they receive the justifying righteousness from the Lord, ever fail. The righteousness is an everlasting righteousness; and faith fails not; Christ is the author and finisher of it. Though a righteous man falls, he never falls from his righteousness: a man that is only seemingly and outwardly righteous, may turn away from his own righteousness, and go into a course of sin, and die; but one that is truly righteous, through the righteousness of Christ, can never turn and fall from that, nor shall ever enter into condemnation; but shall be eternally saved and glorified.

7g. Though by the act of justification, persons are freed from sin, and from obligation to punishment for it, sin is not thereby taken out of them. They are, indeed, so freed from it, that God sees no iniquity in them, to condemn them for it; he sees all the sins of his people in the article of providence, and chastises for them; but in the article of justification he sees none in them; they are acquitted, discharged, and justified from all; yet sin dwells in them, as it did in the apostle Paul, who, undoubtedly, was a justified person; yea, "There is not a just man upon earth"; one that is truly righteous, in an evangelic sense, "that doth good and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

7h. Through justification by the righteousness of Christ, neither the law is made void and of none effect, nor is the performance of good works discouraged. The Law is not made void; "Do we make void the law through faith?" that is, through the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; "God forbid! yea, we establish the law"; by presenting to it a righteousness every way commensurate to its demands, by which it is magnified and made honorable: nor does this doctrine discourage duty, but animates to it; and is to be constantly preached for this end, "That they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works" (Titus 3:7-8).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Dr. Goodwin, his Works, vol. 3. par. 3. p. 336.

[2] Wendelin, Piscator, Pareus, Lubbertus, Forbes, and others.

[3] Molinaeus apud Maccov. Loc. Commun. c. 69. p. 613.

[4] Dr. Goodwin, ut supra, p. 338.

[5] Medulla Theolog. l. 1. c. 20. s. 13. & c. 27. s. 27.

[6] bvx “putavit, imputavit, reputavit, aestimavit”, Buxtorf. logizomai “aestimo, reputo, item imputo, et alicujus veluti rationibus infero, tribuo”, Scapula.

[7] thn golhn thn prwthn, “stolam primam”, V. L. Arias Montanus.

02. Of Man in a State of Innocency

Of the Honour and Happiness of Man In a State of Innocency.

Having considered the first and principal events of providence respecting angels, I shall proceed to consider such as respect man, as soon as created, and when in his first estate, and the honour and happiness of that estate; not what regard his internal honour and excellency, being created in the image and likeness of God, which lay in his wisdom and knowledge; in his holiness and righteousness; in the right use of his rational powers, his understanding, will, and affections; in communion with God, and in his frequent appearances to him, which have been treated of; but what regard his external honour and happiness; as,

1. First, His being placed in the garden of Eden; for an habitation to dwell in; for the support of his animal life; and for his exercise in the culture and dressing of it,

1a. First, For his habitation; "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden"; and there he put the man whom "he had formed" (Genesis 2:8). Indeed, the whole earth was made to be inhabited by man, as it has been ever since the creation of it; "the heaven", even "the heavens are the Lords"; he has reserved that part of his creation for himself, for the habitation of his holiness; and for his attendants, the holy angels; "But the earth hath he given to the children of men", for them to dwell in; (see Isaiah 45:18; Psalms 115:16). And though Adam was heir and lord of the whole world, yet there was one particular spot more excellent than all the rest, assigned him for his residence; even as a king of a large country has his royal seat, palace, and court, in some particular part of it: and it appears that this garden of Eden was not the whole world, as some have thought, which, for its delightfulness and fertility, might be called a garden; but though it was exceeding delightful and fruitful, in comparison of what it is now; yet it is certain, that the garden of Eden was a distinct spot from the rest of the world; this is clear from the man being said to be put into it when created, which shows that he was formed without it, and when made, was removed into it; as also from his being driven out of it when he had sinned. To which may be added, that we read of a land that was at the East of it; (see Genesis 2:8; Genesis 3:24; Genesis 4:16). It is called the garden of God, because of his planting; and of Eden, because of the pleasantness and delightfulness of it, as the word signifies; hence any spot that was uncommonly fruitful and delightful, is compared unto it (Genesis 13:10). Where this garden was, cannot be said with any certainty; whether in Armenia, Assyria, or in Judea; most probably it was in Mesopotamia, since we read of an Eden along with some places in that country (Isaiah 37:12). However, it is not to be known at this day; and there are many things that contribute to the obscurity of it; as its being left without any to cultivate it, upon Adam’s being ejected from it, and so, in course of time, must become ruinous and desolate; and from the curse taking place upon it, as no doubt it did, and upon it chiefly and in the first place, as being man’s peculiar habitation; "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth": besides, fire might spring up out of the earth, and destroy the trees and ornaments of it; or they might be washed away afterwards by the waters of the flood; and what through the change it might then undergo, as the whole earth did; and through the alteration of the course of

the rivers of it, it is no wonder it should not be known at this day where it was. However, it was so delightful a spot, at its first plantation, that the church of Christ is compared unto it, and is called, in allusion to it, "a garden enclosed"—and her plants, "an orchard", or "paradise of pomegranates" (Song of Solomon 4:12-13). Moreover, it was an emblem of the heavenly state, which is therefore called paradise (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:3-4; Revelation 2:7).

1b. Secondly, Adam was put into the garden of Eden for the support of his animal life; where grew trees, not only pleasant to the sight, but good for food; and Adam was allowed to eat of them all excepting one (Genesis 2:9; Genesis 2:16-17), there are two trees particularly taken notice of; "the tree of life, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil": the former is so called, because with the other trees of the garden, it was a means of maintaining Adam's animal life, and perhaps the chief means of it; and so of the continuance of his life, so long as he stood in his integrity; for notwithstanding his body was gifted with immortality, this it had not from the constitution of it, but from the gift of God; and was to be continued in the use of means, and by eating of the fruit of this tree in particular; though what it was, and its fruit, are not now to be known by us: not that it had such a virtue in it as to prevent diseases; to which Adam's body was not, as yet, subject; nor such as to give and preserve immortality, and continue it, as Adam vainly thought it would, after he had sinned; which seems to be supposed in Genesis 3:22 spoken according to his sense of things; but this tree was planted and pointed at, and called by this name, because it was a token that Adam had his natural life from God, the God of his life; and that it depended upon him, and that he might expect the continuance of it so long as he kept his state of integrity: it was also an emblem of Christ, who is therefore called the tree of life (Proverbs 3:18; Revelation 2:7; Revelation 22:2). But not then to Adam, unless of him as his Creator, from whom, as such, he had his life and being; but not of him as Mediator, who, as such, is the author and giver of life, spiritual and eternal; but of him, as such, Adam had no knowledge; and so could not be a symbol of spiritual and eternal life to him, its that his then present state, though it might be after his fall. There was another tree, called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil": what that tree was, cannot be said; it is generally thought to be the apple tree; founded upon a passage in (Song of Solomon 8:5). Others have thought of the fig tree, because that Adam and Eve immediately plucked the leaves of that tree, to cover their naked bodies with; but after they had suffered so much by eating the fruit of it, it can hardly be supposed, if this was the tree, that they would have so much as touched its leaves, and much less have wrapped their bodies with them; and there is no sufficient foundation for either of them; nor for any other suggested; as the vine tree, stalks of wheat, &c. and though this tree might be as good for food as any other of the trees, yet it was forbid to be used for that purpose, as a trial of man's obedience. It had its name, not from any virtue that it had of ripening the rational powers of man, and of increasing and improving his knowledge, as say the Jews and Socinians, who take Adam to be but a great baby, an infant in knowledge;[1] whereas his knowledge of God, and of things natural and moral, was very great: and besides, had he wanted knowledge, this tree could not be the means of accelerating and increasing it, since he was forbid to eat of it; nor was it so called from the lie of the serpent; "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil". But this tree had its name before that lie was told, or any temptation was offered to Eve (Genesis 2:9; Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3:5). But it was so called, either because God hereby tried and made known, whether Adam would obey his will or not; or eventually, since hereby Adam knew by sad experience, what the good was he had lost, and might have enjoyed; and what a bitter and evil thing sin was, and what evil it had

brought on him and his posterity; otherwise Adam full well knew before, in the theory, the difference between good and evil; but by his fall, or eating of the fruit of this tree, he knew these things practically; to his great grief and distress.

1c. Thirdly, Adam was put into the garden of "Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Genesis 2:15), for the culture of it; not to worship and serve God in it, as some give the sense of the word: indeed as Adam had a right knowledge of God, and knew it was his duty to worship, serve, and glorify God, he took every opportunity of doing it in the garden; and the various trees and plants, and beauties of it, must needs lead him into adoring views of the great Creator; and he might often take his walks in the garden to contemplate the perfections of God displayed in it; even as Isaac went into the field to meditate on divine things. But the sense of the passage is, that he was put into the garden to cultivate it and keep it in good order, and keep out of it everything that might be injurious to it; and this was a proper exercise for man in his state of innocence; for it was never the will of God that men should in any state live an idle and lazy life; nor indeed any of his creatures, the most exalted; the angels are "ministering spirits", employed in the service of God, and in ministrations to their fellow creatures. Yet the work of man in the garden was without toil and fatigue, he did not eat his bread with the sweat of his brow, as after the fall; but his service in it was attended with the utmost delight and pleasure; nor was it at all dishonorable to him, nor inconsistent with the high, honorable, and happy estate in which he was.

1d. Fourthly, What added to the delight and fruitfulness of the garden of Eden, was a river that went out of it to water it; which was parted into four heads or branches, the names of which were Pison, Gibon, and Hiddekel or Tigris, and Euphrates; which may be symbols of the gospel and its doctrines, which, like a fountain or river, went forth out of Zion the church, and makes it cheerful and fruitful; and of the ordinances of it, those still waters of the sanctuary; or of the Spirit and his grace, which are rivers of living waters which flow from them that believe; or rather of the everlasting love of God, that pure river of water of life, a river of Eden, or of pleasure; the four heads and branches of which are election, redemption, effectual calling, and eternal life (Romans 8:30).

2. Secondly, Another remarkable event in providence, relating to the honour of man in his estate of innocence, is the bringing of all the creatures to him to give names unto them, and whatsoever names he gave them they were called by (Genesis 2:19), which was a proof and instance of his great wisdom and knowledge, part of the image of God he was created in; for to give names to creatures suitable to their nature, required a large share of knowledge of them; insomuch that Plato[2] said, that it seemed to him that that nature was more than human that gave names to things; and besides, by the creatures being brought unto him for such a purpose, whether by the ministry of angels, or by an instinct in them, it was putting him into the possession of them, as being their lord and proprietor; whose dominion over them was declared when created, and now confirmed by this act.

3. Thirdly, Another providential event, and which shows the care of God over Adam, and his concern for him, is providing an help meet for him, and a partner with him in civil and religious things, man being a sociable creature; and whereas no suitable one could be found among the creatures, he cast man into a deep sleep, and took out a rib from him, and of that made a woman, brought her to him and joined them together in marriage, by whom he could propagate his species

and live a social life; which shows that marriage is honorable, being instituted in paradise, and not at all inconsistent with the pure state of man in innocence; and it was also typical of the marriage of Christ, the second Adam, and his church; and of their mutual union and communion; (see Ephesians 5:31-32).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vid. Joseph. Antiq. 1. i. c. 1. s. 4. Socinum de Stat. Prom. Hom. c. 4. Et Smalcium apud Peltii Harmon. Remonstr. et. Socin. art. 6. p. 39.

[2] In Cratylo, p. 268-270.

02. Of Propitiation, Atonement, and Reconciliation

Of Propitiation, Atonement, and Reconciliation, as Ascribed to Christ

Having observed, that though the word "satisfaction" is not syllabically used in scripture, when the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction is spoken of; yet that there are words and terms equivalent to it, and synonymous with it; as "propitiation, atonement", and "reconciliation": it may be proper to explain these terms, and give the sense of them; which may serve the more to clear and confirm the doctrine of satisfaction; and to begin,

1. First, with "Propitiation": the first time we meet with this word, and as applied to Christ, is in Romans 3:25. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation"; either to be the author of propitiation; for whose sake, and on account of what he was to do and suffer, God would be propitious to men—his justice be appeased—and he be at peace with them; laying aside all marks of displeasure, anger, and resentment against them: for this was Christ's work as Mediator; he drew nigh to God, and treated with him about terms of peace, and entered into measures of peace with him; interposed between justice and them, became a Mediator between God and man, to bring them together; hence he has the names of Shiloh, the Prince of peace, the Man the Peace, and Jesus our peace, who has made both one: or else to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; such hilastic, propitiatory, and expiatory sacrifices there were under the law; typical of the expiatory and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; and as God in them smelled a sweet savor of rest, as types of Christ; so his sacrifice was an offering of a sweet smelling savor to him; he was well pleased with it, it gave him content and satisfaction, because his justice was appeased by it, and the demands of his law were answered, yea, it was magnified and made honorable; the word used in the above text ilasthrion, is the same which the Greek version of Exodus 25:21 and which the apostle, in Hebrews 9:5 use of the mercy seat; which, with the cherubim upon it, and the ark, with the law therein under it, to which it was a lid or cover, formed a seat for the divine Majesty; and which was an emblem of his mercy and justice shining in the atonement made by Christ, which this exhibited to view; and gave encouragement to draw nigh to this mercy seat, or throne of grace, in hope of finding grace and mercy, and enjoying communion with God: a glimpse of this the poor publican had, when he said, "God be merciful", ilasqhti, "propitious, to me a sinner!" or be merciful to me, through the propitiation of the Messiah. Now Christ was "set forth" to be the propitiation in the purposes and decrees of God, proeqeto, God "foreordained" him, as he was foreordained to be the Lamb slain, as the ransom price and propitiatory sacrifice; whose sufferings and death, which were the sacrifice, were according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (1 Peter 1:19; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:28), and he was set forth in the promises and prophecies spoken of by all the holy prophets that were from the beginning of the world; as the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpents head, destroy him and his works, among which this is a principal one, making an end of sin, by a complete atonement for it; and he was set forth as such in the types and shadows of the law, the trespass offerings, and sin offerings, which are said to bear the sins of the congregation, and to make atonement for them; which were typical of Christ, who was made an offering for sin, bore the sins of many, and made atonement for them (Leviticus 10:17), and he has

been set forth, in the fulness of time, in the exhibition of him, in human nature, in which he was manifested to take away sin; and he has put it away, and even abolished it, by the propitiatory sacrifice of himself; and he is still set forth in the gospel, as the sin bearing and sin atoning Saviour who has satisfied law and justice, and made peace by the blood of his cross; and therefore it is called the word of reconciliation, the gospel of peace, and the word preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

There are two other places where Christ is spoken of as ilasmoV, the "propitiation"; and these are in the first epistle of the apostle John; in one of them (1 John 4:10), it is said, "God sent his Son to be the propitiation of our sins"; that is, sent him in human nature, to offer up soul and body as a sacrifice, and thereby make expiation of sin, and full atonement for it; and in the other it is said (1 John 2:9). "And he is the propitiation for our sins", the sins both of Jews and Gentiles; for which he is become a propitiatory sacrifice; upon which God is "merciful", ilewV, "propitious" to his people, notwithstanding all their "unrighteousness, sins, and transgressions", or is "pacified towards them for all that they have done" (Hebrews 8:12; Ezekiel 16:63).

2. Secondly, the word atonement, though often used in the Old Testament, of typical sacrifices, making expiation of sin; as in Leviticus 1:4; Leviticus 4:20; Leviticus 4:26; Leviticus 4:31; Leviticus 4:35; Leviticus 5:6; Leviticus 5:10; Leviticus 5:13; Leviticus 5:16; Leviticus 5:18; Leviticus 16:6; Leviticus 16:10-11; Leviticus 16:16-18; Leviticus 16:27; Leviticus 16:30; Leviticus 16:32-34; Leviticus 17:11 where the word rpk is used, which signifies to "cover"; and Christ, by his sacrifice, the antitype of these, is a covering to his people, from the curses of the law they have broken—from the wrath of God they have deserved—and from avenging justice their sins exposed them to. Yet it is but once used in the New Testament (Romans 5:11). "By whom we have received the atonement" made for them by Christ their surety, head, and representative; that is, the benefit of it, the application of it by the Spirit of God, who takes the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and applies to his people, and shows them their interest therein; the effect of which is joy, peace, and comfort. The word used properly signifies "reconciliation"; and so it is elsewhere translated; and the Hebrew word ■■■ is sometimes rendered to “reconcile” (Leviticus 6:30), atonement and reconciliation for sin, design the same thing, and both satisfaction for it. Which leads to observe,

3. Thirdly, that the word "reconciliation" is frequently used with respect to this doctrine. Reconciliation began with God himself; "All things are of God", originally, in nature, providence, and grace; particularly this, "Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:18). It began in the thoughts of his heart, which were thoughts of peace; it was brought into council and settled in covenant, called the council and covenant of peace. It was carried into execution by Christ, who is frequently represented as the author of it, by his death, and the blood of his cross (Romans 5:10; Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20-22), and it was made unto God, against whom sin is committed, whose law is broken, and his justice offended; and who is the Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy (Romans 5:10; Ephesians 2:16), and it is a reconciliation for sin, to make atonement for it (Daniel 9:24; Hebrews 2:17), and of sinners and enemies in their minds to God (Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21), which may be further illustrated,

3a. First, by observing the character of the persons reconciled; which will show the cause, reason, and necessity of a reconciliation to be made; they are "enemies"; and in one of the texts referred

to, they are said to be "enemies in their minds by wicked works": which is expressive,

3a1. Of the internal enmity there is in their minds and hearts; the carnal mind, as every man's mind is naturally carnal, is not only an enemy, but "enmity" itself, "against God" (Romans 8:7), to the Being of God—wishing there was no God—to the nature and perfections of God, denying some of them, misrepresenting others, and framing him in their minds, as altogether such an one as themselves—to the purposes and decrees of God, which they cannot bear, and to which they insolently reply; and to the providences of God, they charge with inequality and unrighteousness: and they are inwardly and secretly enemies to Christ, to his person and offices; particularly his kingly office, being unwilling that he should reign over them; and to his gospel, and the special doctrines of it; and to his ordinances, they care not to be subject unto: and so they are to the Spirit, to his Person, whom they know not, nor can receive; to his operations, which they deride and ridicule; the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to them: and they are enemies to the people of God, there is an old and implacable enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; the saints are hated by the world, because chosen and called out of the world; God's elect themselves, while in a state of nature, are hateful, and hating one another; Paul, a chosen vessel of salvation, was, while unregenerate, exceeding mad against the saints. But,

3a2. There is an external enmity, which appears by wicked works and sinful actions openly committed: which are acts of hostility against God, are contrary to his nature and will are abominable in his sight provoke the eyes of his glory, excite his wrath, and cause it to be revealed from heaven, and for which it comes on the children of disobedience; and all are deserving of it: sins are breaches of the law of God, render men liable to the curses of it, and to death itself, the sanction of it; they not only all with enmity to God, and show it to him, but set men at a distance from him; so that they have no communion with him, are far off, are without him, and separate from him. But,

3a3. Men are not only enemies internally, and externally to God, but there is an enmity on the part of God to them; there is a law enmity, or an enmity declared in the law against them; they are declared by the law of God as enemies; traitors, and rebels to him; and as such God's elect were considered, when Christ died to make reconciliation for them; for it is said, "while they were sinners Christ died for them, and when they were enemies they were reconciled to God, the death of his Son" (Romans 5:8; Romans 5:10). Now the far greater part of those for whom Christ died, were not then in an actual sinful state, nor in actual rebellion and enmity against God; for then they were not in actual being; but they were considered as in their apostate head, as sinners in him, and so as rebels and traitors; as such they were deemed by the law, and proceeded against, proclaimed guilty, judgment came upon them to condemnation; they were, in the eye of the law, and in the sight of justice, viewed as enemies, and declared such: and this law enmity is what was slain by Christ, and removed at his death; and not that enmity that was in their minds; that was not removed by and at the death of Christ; that is removed at conversion, when the arrows of the word become sharp in these enemies, which bring them to fall under, and be subject to Christ; when they are made willing in the day of his power, to be saved by him, to submit to his righteousness, and to have him to reign over them: this is the work of the Spirit of Christ: there is a two fold reconciliation, one of which is the work of Christ, and was made at his death: the other the work of his Spirit, at conversion; when, by his grace, men are reconciled to the way of salvation by Christ; and both may be seen in one text (Romans 5:10). If there had been no other enmity than what is in

the hearts of men against God, there would have been no need of the sufferings and death of Christ to make reconciliation; but there was a law enmity on the part of God, and his justice, which required the death of Christ to take it away. Not that there was any enmity in the heart of God to his elect; that would be inconsistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love, which appeared strongly towards them at the time Christ died for them, reconciled them, and became the propitiation for their sins (Romans 5:8; Romans 5:10; Titus 3:3-4; 1 John 4:10). But they were, according to the law, and in the view of justice, deemed and declared as the enemies of God. So when the subjects of a king rise up in rebellion against him, there may be no enmity in his heart to them; yet they are, according to law, proclaimed rebels, and enemies to him, and may be treated as such, and proceeded against in due form of law; and yet, after all, be pardoned by him. There was, in some sense, a reciprocal enmity between God and men, which made a reconciliation necessary; and which was brought about by the bloodshed, sufferings, and death of Christ, when he slew the enmity of the law, and blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that were against sinners, so making peace (Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:14). Which will further appear,

3b. Secondly, By observing what reconciliation signifies and imports: there is something similar and analogous in a case when it is made between man and man, though not altogether the same; and some caution must be taken, lest we go into mistakes: reconciliation between man and man, supposes a former state of friendship subsisting between them, a breach of that friendship, and a renewing and restoration of it: and there is something like it in reconciliation between God and man; man, in his primeval state, was in strict friendship with God, not only Adam personally being made after the image, and in the likeness of God, having dominion over all the creatures, made for his use, and which were brought to him, to be named by him; and having an habitation in a most delightful garden, where he was allowed to eat of all kind of fruit in it, but one; and where he enjoyed communion with God: in all this honour he was; and not he only, but all his posterity, considered in him, as their head and representative, were in a state of friendship with God; hence the covenant made with him, in which he was their federal head, is rightly called by divines, "foedus amicitiae", a covenant of friendship: but man abode not long in this state; sin, that whisperer and agitator, soon separated chief friends; alienated man from the life of God, caused him to apostatize from him, and to become a traitor to him; filled him with enmity to him, and set him at a distance from him; and in this state of alienation and enmity, all his posterity naturally are; with respect to the elect of God among them, Christ has interposed, appeased justice, satisfied the law, and made reconciliation for them, and brought them into an open state of friendship with God; so that they are considered, in consequence of this, as Abraham was, the friends of God, and are treated as such (James 2:23; Song of Solomon 5:1; John 15:15), have the blessings of divine favour bestowed upon them, and rich communications of grace made unto them. But here we must proceed warily, and observe some things to prevent mistakes and misrepresentations; for perhaps there is not one thing in the whole scheme of evangelical truths more difficult rightly to fix than this. It should be considered, that properly speaking there are no passions nor perturbations of mind in God, who is a spirit, simple and uncompounded, and not capable of such things; when therefore displeasure, anger, provocation, resentment, &c. are ascribed to him, it must be understood after the manner of men; that he says something in his word, and does something in his providence, and the outward dispensations of it, which is somewhat similar to what men say and do, when the above is the case with them; otherwise we are not to conceive that God is in a passion, and is ruffled, and his mind disturbed, as they are. Nor are we to imagine there is any

change in God, as in men, who are sometimes friends, then enemies, and then friends again; he changes not, there is no variableness nor shadow of turning in him; he may change his voice to his people, and speak comfortably to them in his gospel, who before spoke terribly to them in his law; he may change his outward conduct and behavior towards them, and carry it friendly to them, when before as at a distance: but he never changes his mind, counsel and affections to them; his love is everlasting and invariable; he ever rested in it, and nothing can separate from it; his love is never changed to enmity, and from enmity to love again; his special secret favour, as it is never lost, needed no recovery; nor did Christ, by making satisfaction and reconciliation for sin, procure the love and favour of God to his people; for Christ's being sent to be the propitiation, his sufferings and death, sacrifice and satisfaction, were the fruit and effect of the love of God, and not the cause of it (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:10). The reconciliation made by Christ was not to the love of God, which was never lost, but to the justice of God, offended by sin; the flaming sword, which turned every way and threatened vengeance, was plunged into the heart of Christ, the surety of his people, which was done to declare the righteousness and satisfy the justice of God; and to open a way for mercy to display itself, and turn its hand upon the little ones; and thus justice and mercy happily met together, and were reconciled to one another in their different pleas and demands (Zechariah 13:7; Romans 3:25-26; Psalms 85:10). The reconciliation made by Christ is for sin, to make satisfaction for it (Daniel 9:24; Hebrews 2:17), and on that account it is a reconciliation of sinners to God, he being thereby pacified towards them for all that they have done; being well pleased with what Christ has done and suffered for them; he is well pleased with him, and with all that are considered in him, who are accepted in him the beloved, and are admitted into an open state of favour; which is meant by their having access through Christ into the grace wherein they stand (Matthew 3:17; Ephesians 1:6; Romans 5:2), for though the love of God to his elect is invariable and unchangeable in itself, yet the manifestation of it is different; and it may be distinguished into secret and open love; there are obstructions by sin thrown in the way of love, which must be removed, in order to enjoy open favour and the blessings of it, and which are removed by Christ; thus Christ was made under the law, to redeem his people, that they might receive the adoption of children; and was made a curse for them, that the blessings of grace love had provided in covenant for them, might come upon them; and he was made sin, and a sin offering for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; and be brought into a state of open fellowship and communion with him, who before were kept at a distance. Thus David, though he most affectionately loved his son Absalom, and longed for him, when for an offence he fled; and though through the mediation of Joab he was allowed to return to Jerusalem, yet the king would not suffer him to see his face for the space of full two years; when by the mediation of the same person he was admitted into the king's presence, taken into open favour, and kissed by him (2 Samuel 13:39; 2 Samuel 14:1; 2 Samuel 14:21; 2 Samuel 14:24; 2 Samuel 14:33).

3c. Thirdly, the means by which this reconciliation is made, are the bloodshed and death of Christ; he only is the reconciler and peace maker; a sinner cannot make peace with God or reconciliation, that is, satisfaction for his sins; not by his works of righteousness, which are impure and imperfect; nor by repentance, which the law does not admit of, nor is it any satisfaction to it; nor by faith, for that does not make, only receives the atonement made by Christ; there is nothing a sinner can do, will make peace and reconciliation for him; and what will, he cannot do; which is no less than fulfilling the whole law, and answering all the demands of law and justice (Romans 8:3-4), death

being the sanction of the law, and the wages of sin, there is no reconciliation to be made but by death; not by the death of slain beasts, which could not take away sin; nor by the death of the sinner himself: the Jews having lost the true notion of the atonement by the Messiah, fancy that a man's death atones for his sins; but it is a false notion, there is no other way of peace, reconciliation, and atonement being made, but by the death of the Son of God; who being God as well as man, could and did give virtue and efficacy to his blood, sufferings, and death in human nature united to his person, as to make them adequate to the said purposes.

02. Of Redemption by Christ

Of Redemption by Christ

Having, in the preceding book, gone through the twofold state of Christ, his humiliation and exaltation; and considered each of the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, sustained and exercised by him therein; I shall now proceed to consider the blessings of grace, which come by him, through the exercise of them; and especially his priestly office; for he is "come an High Priest of good things to come" (Hebrews 9:11), which were future, under the former dispensation, were promised, prophesied of, and prefigured in it; but not accomplished; for "the law" had only a shadow of these good things to come, (Hebrews 10:1), but now they are come, and are actually obtained, through Christ's coming in the flesh; and through what he has done and suffered in it; as redemption, satisfaction, and reconciliation for sin, remission of sin, justification, adoption, &c. and as redemption stands in the first place; and is a principal and most important blessing and doctrine of grace, I shall begin with that. And,

1. First, I shall settle the meaning of the word; and show what it supposes, includes, and is designed by it. Our English word Redemption, is from the Latin tongue, and signifies, buying again; and several words in the Greek language, of the New Testament, are used in the affair of our Redemption, which signify the obtaining of something by paying a proper price for it; sometimes the simple verb agorazw, to "buy", is used: so the redeemed are said to be "bought unto God" by the blood of Christ; and to be "bought" from the earth; and to be "bought" from among men; and to be "bought" with a price; that is, with the price of Christ's blood, (Revelation 5:9; Revelation 14:3-4; 1 Corinthians 6:20), hence the church of God is said to be purchased with it, (Acts 20:28). Sometimes the compound word exagorazw, is used; which signifies, to buy again, or out of the hands of another; as the redeemed are bought out of the hands of justice; as in (Galatians 3:13; Galatians 4:5). In other places lutrow, is used, or others derived from it; which signifies, the deliverance of a slave, or captive, from his thraldom, by paying a ransom price for him: so the saints are said to be redeemed, not with silver or gold, the usual price paid for a ransom; but with a far greater one, the blood and life of Christ, which he came into this world to give, as a ransom price for many; and even himself, which is antilutron, an answerable, adequate, and full price for them (1 Peter 1:18; Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6). There are various typical redemptions, and that are of a civil nature, which may serve to illustrate our spiritual and eternal redemption by Christ. As,

1a. The deliverances of the people of Israel out of their captivities, Egyptian and Babylonian; the latter I shall not much insist upon; since, though the Jews were exiles in Babylon, they did not appear to be in much slavery and thraldom; but built houses, planted gardens, and had many privileges; insomuch that some of them, when they might have had their liberty, chose rather to continue where they were; and though their deliverance is sometimes called a redemption, yet sparingly, and in an improper sense (Jeremiah 15:21), for they were redeemed without money; and Cyrus, their deliverer, neither gave nor took a price for them; and is never called a redeemer;

(see Isaiah 14:13; Isaiah 52:3). But the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt, was a very special and remarkable type of redemption by Christ, out of a worse state of bondage than that of Egypt. The Israelites were made to serve with rigor, and their lives were made bitter with hard bondage, in brick and mortar, and service in the field; and they cried to God, by reason of their bondage, it was so intolerable; and it was aggravated by the taskmasters set over them; who, by the order of Pharaoh, obliged them to provide themselves with straw, and yet bring in the full tale of brick as before: which fitly expresses the state and condition that men are in; who, through sin, are weak and unable to fulfill the law; yet is it as regardless of want of strength, as the Egyptian taskmasters were of want of straw: it requires sinless and perfect obedience to it; and curses and condemns such as continue not in all things to do it. The deliverance of the people of Israel, is called a redemption; God promised to rid them out of their bondage, and to "redeem" them with a stretched out arm; and when they were delivered, he is said to have led forth the people he had "redeemed": and the bringing them out of the house of bondage, or redeeming them out of the house of bondmen, is used as an argument to engage them to regard the commandments of God (Exodus 6:6; Exodus 15:13; Exodus 20:9; Deuteronomy 7:8). And which redemption by Christ, from sin, the law, and death, lay the redeemed under a still greater obligation to do; Moses, who was the instrument God raised up, and whom he called and sent to redeem Israel, is said to be a "deliverer", or as it should be rendered, a "redeemer" (Acts 7:35), in which he was a type of Christ, whom God raised up, called, and sent to be a Redeemer of his spiritual Israel: and there was, in some sense, a price paid for the redemption of literal Israel; since they are expressly said to be a purchased people, bought by the Lord (Exodus 15:16; Deuteronomy 32:6), and their deliverance was owing to blood, the blood of the passover lamb, sprinkled on their door posts; typical of the blood of Christ, the price of our redemption. Besides, as it has been observed by some, the redemption of the people of Israel, being the Lord’s people, was by virtue of their future redemption by Christ; whose sufferings and death were for the "redemption of transgressions", or of transgressors, who were "under the first testament"; and that the temporal deliverance of none but the Lord’s people, is called a redemption, not that of his and their enemies.

1b. The ransom of the people of Israel, when numbered, was typical of the ransom by Christ; which was made by paying half a shekel, called the atonement money for their souls, and which was paid alike for a rich man, as a poor man; whereby they were preserved from any plague among them (Exodus 30:12-16). None but Israelites were ransomed; and none are ransomed by Christ, but the spiritual Israel of God, whom he has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and who shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; even the whole Israel of God, Jews and Gentiles: they were a numbered people for whom the ransom was paid; and so are they that are redeemed and ransomed by Christ; whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life; who have passed under the hands of him that telleth them, and have been told into the hands of Christ; and are particularly and distinctly known by him, even by name; the sheep for whom he has laid down his life; and are a special and peculiar people. The half shekel was paid alike for rich and poor, for one neither more nor less. Christ’s people, though some may be redeemed from more and greater sins than others; yet they are all redeemed from all their sins, and with the same price, the price of his blood; and which is, as the half shekel was, an atonement for their souls; by which peace and reconciliation, and full satisfaction are made for sin, so that no plague shall come nigh them; they are delivered from going down to the pit of destruction; and are saved from the second death; (see Job 33:24).

1c. The buying again of an Israelite, waxen poor, and sold to another, by any near akin to him; is a lively representation of the purchase and redemption of the Lord's poor people (Leviticus 25:47-49) who, in a state of nature, are poor, and wretched, and miserable; even so as to be like beggars on the dunghill; when such was the grace of Christ, who, though rich, for their sakes became poor, that they, through his poverty might be made rich; and to such a degree, as to be raised from the dunghill and sit among princes, and inherit the throne of glory. Though some may not sell themselves to work wickedness, as Ahab did, yet all are sold under sin; for if this was the case of the apostle Paul, though regenerate, much more must it be the case of an unregenerate man; who, through sin, is brought into subjection to it, a servant of it, and a slave to it; as the poor Israelite, sold to a stranger, was a bondman to him: and such an one cannot redeem himself, being without strength, unable to fulfil the law, and to make atonement for sin; nor can any of his friends, though ever so rich, redeem him, or give to God a ransom for him; such may redeem a poor relation, or friend from a prison, by paying his pecuniary debts for him; but cannot redeem his soul from hell and destruction; may give a ransom price to man for one in slavery and bondage; but cannot give to God a ransom to deliver from wrath to come: only Christ, the near Kinsman of his people, can do this, and has done it; he that is their "Gaol", their near "Kinsman", partaker of the same flesh and blood with them, is their Redeemer, who has given himself a ransom for them.

1d. The delivery of a debtor from prison, by paying his debts for him, is an emblem of deliverance and redemption by Christ: a man that is in debt, is liable to be arrested, and cast into prison, as is often the case; where he must lie till the debt his discharged, by himself or another: sins are debts; and a sinner owes more than ten thousand talents, and has nothing to pay; he cannot answer to the justice of God for one debt of a thousand; nor can he, by paying a debt of obedience he owes to God, pay off one debt of sin, or obligation to punishment; and so is liable to a prison, and is in one; is concluded under sin, under the guilt of it, which exposes him to punishment; and he is held with the cords and fetters of it; which he cannot loose himself from; and he is shut up under the law, in which he is held, until delivered and released by Christ; who, as he has engaged to pay the debts of his people, has paid them, cleared the whole score, and blotted out the hand writing that was against them; in consequence of which is proclaimed, in the gospel, liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; and in the effectual calling Christ says "to the prisoners", "Go forth", opening the prison doors for them; and to them that sit in darkness, in the gloomy cells of the prison, "show yourselves"; all which is done in virtue of the redemption price paid by Christ for his people.

1e. The ransoming of persons out of slavery, by paying a ransom price for them, serves to give an idea of the redemption of the Lord's people by Christ. They are in a state of slavery, out of which they cannot deliver themselves; Christ is the ransomer of them out of the hands of such that are stronger than they; his life and blood are the ransom price he has paid for them; and they are called, the ransomed of the Lord; their deliverance from present bondage, and future ruin and destruction, is in consequence of a ransom found and given; "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom" (Job 33:24; Zechariah 9:11). In which there is an allusion to a custom in the eastern countries, to put their slaves in an evening into a pit, where they are close shut up till the morning, and then taken out, to be put to their slavish employments; but not delivered, unless a sufficient ransom is given for them; and such is the blood of the covenant. Now all these views of redemption plainly point out to us the following things with respect to the redemption of the Lord's

people.

1e1. That they are previous to their redemption, and which that supposes, in a state of captivity and bondage; they are sinners in Adam, and by actual transgressions; and so come into the hands of vindictive justice, offended by sin; and which will not clear the guilty without satisfaction given to it; which is made by paying a price: redemption by Christ is nothing more nor less than buying his people out of the hands of justice, in which they are held for sin; and that is with the price of his blood; which is therefore paid into the hands of justice for them: hence they are said to be redeemed, or bought unto God by his blood (Revelation 5:9). Being sinners, and offenders of the justice of God, that holds under sin; under the guilt of it, which binds over to punishment, unless delivered from it; it holds them under the sentence of the law, transgressed by them; which not only accuses of and charges with sin, but pronounces guilty, and condemns and curses: it holds them in subjection to death, even eternal death; which is the wages and just demerit of sin: the law threatened with it in case of sin; sin being committed, the sentence of death passed upon all men; all having sinned, judgment, or the judicial sentence, came upon all men to condemnation in a legal way; and sin reigned unto death in a tyrannical manner; or, in other words, man became not only deserving of wrath, but obnoxious to it; the wrath of God was revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men; and indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, come upon every soul of man, as upon the children of disobedience, unless delivered from it, through the redemption that is by Christ. In such an enthralled state are men to sin, to the justice of God, to death, and wrath to come.

1e2. That redemption by Christ is a deliverance from all this. It is a redemption from sin; from all iniquities whatever, original and actual (Psalms 130:8; Titus 2:14), from avenging justice, on account of sin; from the guilt of sin; for there is no condemnation by it to them that are interested in redemption by Christ; "Who shall condemn? it is Christ that died!" and by dying, has redeemed his people from sin, and secured them from condemnation (Romans 8:1; Romans 8:33) and in virtue of this they are delivered from the dominion of sin; for though this is done in the effectual calling, by the power of divine grace, it is in virtue of redemption by Christ, by whom sin is crucified, and the body of it destroyed; so that it shall not reign in them, or have dominion over them: one branch of redemption lies in being delivered from a vain conversation; and, ere long, the redeemed shall be delivered from the very being of sin; when their redemption, as to the application of it, will be complete; as it will be in the resurrection; when the soul will not only be among the spirits of just men made perfect; but the body will be clear of sin, mortality, and death; which is called redemption that draws near, the redemption of the body waited for, and the day of redemption (Luke 21:28; Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14; Ephesians 4:30). Redemption is a deliverance from the law, from the bondage of it, and from the curse and condemnation by it; so that there shall be no more curse; and from eternal death and wrath to come: life is forfeited into the hands of justice by sin; which life is redeemed from destruction by Christ, giving his life a ransom for it; he, by redeeming his people, has delivered them from wrath to come; being justified through the redemption that is in Christ, by his blood, they are, and shall be saved, from everlasting wrath, ruin, and destruction.

1e3. That redemption by Christ is such a deliverance, as that it is setting persons quite free and at entire liberty; such who are dead to sin by Christ are freed from it, from the damning power of it, and from its dominion and tyranny; and though, not as yet, from the being of it; yet, ere long, they

will be; when, with the rest of the members of the church, they will be presented glorious, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: and such are free from the law; though not from obedience to it, yet from the bondage of it; they are delivered from it, and are no longer held in it, as in a prison; but are directed and exhorted to stand fast in the liberty from it, with which Christ has made them free; and this will have its full completion on all accounts, when the saints shall be delivered from every degree of bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

02. Of Regeneration

Of Regeneration

Regeneration follows adoption, being the evidence of it; regeneration describes the persons who have received the power to become the sons of God (John 1:12-13), and though these are distinct things, yet they are closely connected together; where the one is, the other is also, as to enjoyment and experience; and they bear a similarity to each other. Regeneration may be considered either more largely, and then it includes with it effectual calling, conversion, and sanctification: or more strictly, and then it designs the first principle of grace infused into the soul; which makes it a fit object of the effectual calling, a proper subject of conversion, and is the source and spring of that holiness which is gradually carried on in sanctification, and perfected in heaven. Concerning regeneration, the following things may be enquired into:

I. What regeneration is, or what is meant by it, the nature of it; which is so mysterious, unknown, and unaccountable to a natural man, as it was to Nicodemus, though a master in Israel; now it may be the better understood by observing the phrases and terms by which it is expressed.

1. It is expressed by being "born again", which regeneration properly signifies; (see John 3:3; John 3:7; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 Peter 1:23 and this supposes a prior birth, a first birth, to which regeneration is the second; and which may receive some light by observing the contrast between the two births, they being the reverse of each other: the first birth is of sinful parents, and in their image; the second birth is of God, and in his image; the first birth is of corruptible, the second birth of incorruptible seed; the first birth is in sin, the second birth is in holiness and righteousness; by the first birth men are polluted and unclean, by the second birth they become holy and commence to be saints; the first birth is of the flesh and is carnal, the second birth is of the Spirit and is spiritual, and makes men spiritual men; by the first birth men are foolish and unwise, being born like a wild ass’s colt; by the second birth they become knowing and wise unto salvation: by the first birth they are slaves to sin and the lusts of the flesh, are home born slaves; by the second birth they become Christ’s free men: from their first birth they are transgressors, and go on in a course of sin, till stopped by grace; in the second birth they cease to commit sin, to go on in a course of sinning, but live a life of holiness, yea he that is born of God cannot sin; by the first birth men are children of wrath, and under tokens of divine displeasure; at the second birth they appear to be the objects of the love of God; regeneration being the fruit and effect of it, and gives evidence of it; a time of life is a time of open love.

2. It is called a being "born from above", for so the phrase in John 3:3; John 3:7 may be rendered; the apostle James says in general, that "every good and every perfect gift is from above"; and regeneration being such a gift, must be from above; and indeed he particularly instances in it, for it follows, "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth" (James 1:17-18). The author of this birth is from above; those that are born again are born of God their Father who is in heaven; the grace given in regeneration is from above, (John 3:27) truth in the inward part, and wisdom in the hidden part, or the grace of God in the heart produced in regeneration, is that "wisdom that is from above",

(James 3:17) such that are born again, as they are of high and noble birth, they are partakers of the heavenly and high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and shall most certainly possess it (1 Peter 1:3-4; Hebrews 3:1; Php 3:14).

3. It is commonly called the new birth, and with great propriety; since the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, are joined together as meaning the same thing; and what is produced in regeneration is called the new creature, and the new man; and those who are born again are said to be new born babes (Titus 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24; 1 Peter 2:2), it is a new man, in distinction from the old man, or the principle of corrupt nature, which is as old as a man is; but the principle of grace infused in regeneration is quite new; it is something "de novo", anew implanted in the heart, which never was before in human nature, no not in Adam in his state of innocence; it is not a working upon the old principles of nature, nor a working them up to an higher pitch: it is not an improvement of them, nor a repairing of the broken, ruined image of God in man. But it is altogether a new work; it is called a creature, being a work of almighty power; and a new creature, and a new man, consisting of various parts, and these all new: there are in it a "new heart", and a "new spirit", a new understanding, to know and understand things, never known nor understood before: a new heart, to know God; not as the God of nature and providence; but as the God of Grace, God in Christ, God in a Mediator; the love of God in him, the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it made with him; Christ, and the fullness of grace in him, pardon of sin through his blood, justification by his righteousness, atonement by his sacrifice, and acceptance with God through him, and complete salvation by him; things which Adam knew nothing of in Paradise: in this new heart are new desires after these objects, to know more of them, new affections, which are placed upon them, new delights in them, and new joys, which arise from them (Ezekiel 36:26; 1 John 5:20; 1 Corinthians 2:9). In this new man, are "new eyes" to see with; to some God does not give eyes to see divine and spiritual things; but to regenerated ones he does; they have a seeing eye, made by the Lord (Deuteronomy 29:4; Proverbs 20:12), by which they see their lost state and condition by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, their own ability to make atonement by anything that can be done by them; the insufficiency of their own righteousness; their impotence to every good work, and want of strength to help themselves out of the state and condition in which they are, and the need they are in of the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and of salvation by him. They have the eye of faith, by which they behold the glories of Christ’s Person, the fullness of his grace, the excellency of his righteousness, the virtue of his blood and sacrifice, and the suitableness and completeness of his salvation: and regeneration, in this view of it, is no other than spiritual light in the understanding. Moreover, in the new man are new ears to hear with; all have not ears to hear; some have, and they have them from the Lord, and blessed are they! (Revelation 2:11; Deuteronomy 29:4; Proverbs 20:12; Matthew 13:16-17), they hear the word in a manner they never heard before; they hear it as to understand it, and receive the love of it; so as to distinguish the voice of Christ in it, from the voice of a stranger; so as to feel it work effectually in them, and become the power of God unto salvation to them; they know the joyful sound, and rejoice to hear it. The new man has also "new hands", to handle and to work with; the hand of faith, to receive Christ as the Saviour and Redeemer, to lay hold on him for life and salvation, to embrace him, hold him fast, and not let him go; to handle him, the Word of life, and receive from him grace for grace: and they have hands to work with, and do work from better principles, and to better purposes than before. And they have "new feet" to walk with, to flee to Christ, the City of refuge; to walk by faith in him; and to walk on in him, as they have

received him; to run with cheerfulness the ways of his commandments; to follow hard after him, and to follow on to know him; and even to run, and not be weary, and to walk, and not faint.

4. Regeneration is expressed by being quickened. As there is a quickening time in natural generation; so there is in regeneration; "You hath he quickened" (Ephesians 2:1). Previous to regeneration, men are dead while they live; though corporally alive, are morally dead, dead in a moral sense, as to spiritual things, in all the powers and faculties of their souls; they have no more knowledge of them, affection for them, will to them, or power to perform them, than a dead man has with respect to things natural; but in regeneration, a principle of spiritual life is infused; that is a time of life when the Lord speaks life into them, and produces it in them. Christ is the resurrection and life unto them, or raises them from a death of sin to a life of grace; and the spirit of life, from Christ, enters into them. Regeneration is a passing from death to life; it is a principle of spiritual life implanted in the heart; in consequence of which, a man breathes, in a spiritual sense; where there is breath, there is life. God breathed into Adam the breath of life, and he became a living soul, or a living person, and breathed again: so the Spirit of God breathes on dry bones, and they live, and breathe again. Prayer is the spiritual breath of a regenerate man; "Behold, he prayeth!" is observed of Saul when regenerated; who, just before, had been breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ. A regenerate man breathes in prayer to God, and pants after him; after more knowledge of him in Christ, after communion with him, after the discoveries of his love; particularly after pardoning grace and mercy: and sometimes these breathings and desires are only expressed by sighs and groans, yet these are a sign of life; if a man groans, it is plain he is alive. There are, in a regenerated man, which shows that he is made alive, cravings after spiritual food: as soon as an infant is born, it shows motions for its mother’s milk, after the breast: so newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. They have their spiritual senses exercised about spiritual objects; they have what answer to the senses in animal life, their seeing and hearing, as before observed, and also their feeling; they feel the burden of sin on their consciences; the workings of the Spirit of God in their hearts; as well as handle Christ, the Word of life; which makes it a plain case that they are alive; a dead man feels nothing. They have a spiritual taste, a gust for spiritual things; the word of Christ is sweeter to their taste than honey, or the honeycomb; they sit under his shadow with pleasure, and his fruit, the blessings of his grace, are sweet unto their taste; they taste that the Lord is gracious, and invite others to taste and see also how good he is; they savour the things which be of God, and not of men; Christ, and his grace, are savoury to them; his robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, smell delightfully as myrrh, &c. (Song of Solomon 1:3; Psalms 45:8) and these spiritual senses, and the exercise of them in them, show them to be alive, or born again; such persons live a life of faith; they live by faith; not upon it, but on Christ, the object of it; and they grow up into him their Head, from whom they receive nourishment; and so increase with the increase of God; which is an evidence of life. In a word, they live a new and another life than they did before; not to themselves, nor to the lusts of men; but to God, and to Christ who died for them, and rose again; they walk in newness of life.

5. Regeneration is signified by "Christ being formed in the heart" (Galatians 4:19), his image is stamped in regeneration; not the image of the first Adam, but of the second Adam; for the new man is after the image of him who has anew created it, which is the image of Christ; to be conformed to which God’s elect are predestinated, and which takes place in regeneration

(Romans 8:29; Colossians 3:10). The graces of Christ, as faith, and hope, and love, are wrought in the hearts of regenerate persons, and soon appear there; yea, Christ himself lives in them; "Not I", says the apostle, "but Christ lives in me"; he dwells by faith there; Christ, and the believer, mutually dwell in each other.

6. Regeneration is said to be "a partaking of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), not of the nature of God essentially considered: a creature cannot partake of the divine essence, or have that communicated to it; this would be to deify men: the divine perfections, many of them, are utterly incommunicable, as eternity, immensity, &c. nor of the divine nature, or of it in such sense as Christ is a partaker of it, by the personal, or hypostatical union of the two natures in him; so that the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him. But in regeneration there is that wrought in the soul, which bears a resemblance to the divine nature, in spirituality, holiness, goodness, kindness, &c. and therefore is so called.

7. There are also several terms, or words, by which the grace of regeneration is expressed; as by grace itself; not as that signifies the love and favour of God towards his people, or the blessings of grace bestowed upon them; but internal grace, the work of grace in the heart; and which consists of the various graces of the Spirit implanted there; as faith, hope, and love: such as are begotten again, are begotten to a lively hope, and have it, and believe in the Son of God; and love him that begot, and him that is begotten (1 Peter 1:3; 1 John 5:1). It is called "spirit" (John 3:6) from its author, the Spirit of God; and from its seat, the spirit of man; and from its nature, which is spiritual, and denominates men spiritual men. It is also signified by "seed" (1 John 3:9). "Whosoever is born of God—his seed remaineth in him"; which is the principle of grace infused in regeneration; and as seed contains in it virtually, all that after proceeds from it, the blade, stalk, ear, and full corn in the ear; so the first principle of grace implanted in the heart, seminally contains all the grace which afterwards appears, and all the fruits, effects, acts, and exercises of it.

II. The springs and causes of regeneration; efficient, moving, meritorious, and instrumental.

First, The efficient cause of it; who is not man, but God.

1. First, Not man; he cannot regenerate himself; his case, and the nature of the thing itself, show it; and it is indeed denied of him. The case in which men before regeneration are, plainly shows that it is not, and cannot be of themselves; they are quite ignorant of the thing itself. Regeneration is one, and a principal one, of the things of the Spirit of God, and which a natural man cannot discern and understand; let him have what share he may of natural knowledge; as Nicodemus, a master in Israel, and yet said, how can these things be? and a man cannot be the author of that of which he has no knowledge: nor do men, previous to regeneration, see any need of it; as those who think themselves whole, see no need of a physician, nor make use of any; and who reckon themselves rich, and stand in need of nothing; as not of righteousness, so not of repentance; and if not of repentance, then not of regeneration. And whatsoever notion they may have of it, from what others say concerning it; they have no inclination, nor desire, nor will to it, till God works in them both to will and to do; the bias of their minds is another way; yea, their carnal minds are enmity to it; they mock at it, and count it all dream and enthusiasm. And had they any disposition of mind to it, which they have not, they have no power to effect it; they can do nothing, not the least thing of a spiritual kind; and much less perform such a work as this: this is not by might or power of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts; to all which may be added, and which makes it impracticable, is, that

men are dead in trespasses and sins; and can no more quicken themselves than a dead man can; as soon might Lazarus have raised himself from the dead, and the dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision, have quickened themselves and lived.

2. The nature of the work clearly shows that it is not in the power of men to do it; it is represented as a creation; it is called a new creature, the workmanship of God created in Christ, the new man after God, created in righteousness. Now creation is a work of almighty Power; a creature cannot create the least thing, not a fly, as soon might he create a world; and as soon may a man create a world out of nothing, as create a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within him. It is spoken of as a "resurrection" from the dead; and as soon might dead bodies quicken themselves, as men, dead in sin, raise themselves up to a spiritual life; this requires a power equal to that which raised Christ from the dead; and is done by the same. Its very name, "regeneration", shows the nature of it; and clearly suggests, that it is out of the power of man to effect it: as men contribute nothing to their first birth, so neither to the second; as no man generates himself, so neither can he regenerate himself; as an infant is passive in its natural generation, and has no concern in it; so passive is a man in his spiritual generation, and is no more assisting in it. It is an "implantation" of that grace in the hearts of men which was not there before; faith is one part of it, said to be "not of ourselves", but the gift of God; and hope is another, without which men are, while in a state of unregeneracy; and love is of such a nature, that if a man would give all he has for it, it would utterly be contemned; it is a maxim that will hold, "nil dat quod non habet", nothing can give that which it has not: a man destitute of grace, cannot give grace, neither to himself nor to another. This work lies in taking away "the heart of stone", and giving an "heart of flesh"; even "a new heart" and "a new spirit": and none can do this but he who sits upon the throne, and says, "Behold, I make all things new". To say no more, it is a "transforming" of men by the renewing of their minds, making them other men than they were before, as Saul was, and more so; the change of an Ethiopian’s skin, and of the leopard’s spots, is not greater, nor so great, as the change of a man’s heart and nature; and which, indeed, is not a change of the old man, or corruption of nature, which remains the same; but the production of the new man, or of a new principle, which was not before.

3. Regeneration is expressly denied to be of men; it is said to be "not of blood", the blood of circumcision, "which availeth not anything; but a new creature" is of avail, when that is not; nor of the blood of ancestors, of the best of men, the most holy and most eminent for grace; the blood of such may run in the veins of men, and yet they be destitute of regenerating grace; as was the case of the Jews, of multitudes of them, who boasted of being of Abraham’s seed, and of his blood: none need value themselves upon their blood on any account, and much less on a religious one; since all nations of the earth are made of one man’s blood, and that is tainted with sin, and conveys corruption; sin is propagated that way, but not grace: nor are men born "of the will of the flesh", which is carnal and corrupt; impotent to that which is good, and enmity to it: regeneration is not of him that willeth; God, of his own will, begets men again, and not of theirs: nor are they born of "the will of men", of the greatest and best of men, who are regenerated persons themselves; these, of their will, cannot convey regenerating grace to others; if they could, a good master would regenerate every servant in his family; a good parent would regenerate every child of his; and a minister of the gospel would regenerate all that sit under his ministry; they can only pray and use the means; God only can do the work. Wherefore,

II. Secondly, the efficient cause of regeneration is God only; hence we so often read, "which were born of God", and "whosoever and whatsoever is born of God" (John 1:13; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:1; 1 John 5:4), and this is true of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, who have each a concern in regeneration.

1. God the Father, who is the Father of Christ; he as such begets men again according to his abundant mercy (1 Peter 1:3), and as the Father of lights, of his own sovereign will and pleasure, regenerates with the word of truth; and as light was one of the first things in the old creation, so in the new creation, or regeneration, light is the first thing sprung in the heart by the Father and fountain of light (James 1:17-18), and as the Father of men by adoption he regenerates; it is of him they are born again, who is their covenant God and Father in Christ; he has chose them unto holiness, of which regeneration is the root, seed, and principle; he has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, which is done in regeneration; and it is by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he sheds abundantly through Christ the Saviour, that he saves his elect ones.

2. God the Son has also a concern in regeneration, and so great a concern, that they who am born again are said to be "born of him", that is, Christ; for no other is spoken of in the context (1 John 2:29), he is the "resurrection and the life"; the author of the spiritual resurrection to a spiritual life, which is no other than regeneration; he quickens whom he will, as the Father does; and it is through his powerful voice in the gospel, that the dead in sin hear and live; it is his Spirit which is sent down into the hearts of his people, as to bear witness to their adoption, so to regenerate them; his grace is given to them, yea he himself is formed in them; his image is stamped upon them; and it is by virtue of his resurrection that "they are begotten" to a lively hope of the heavenly inheritance (John 11:25; John 5:21; John 5:25; Galatians 4:6; Galatians 4:19; 1 Peter 1:3-4).

3. The Holy Spirit of God is the author of regeneration, and to him it is ascribed by our Lord; "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:5), by "water", is not meant the ordinance of water baptism, that is never expressed by water only, without some other word with it in the text or context which determines the sense; nor is regeneration by it; Simon Magus was baptized, but not regenerated: regeneration ought to precede baptism; faith and repentance, which are graces given in regeneration, are required previous to baptism; nor is water baptism absolutely necessary to salvation; whereas without regeneration no man can neither see nor enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the grace of the Spirit is meant by water, so called from its cleansing and purifying use, as it has to do with the blood of Jesus, hence called the washing of regeneration; of this grace the Spirit is the author, whence it bears his name, is called "Spirit"; it is the renewing of the Holy Ghost, or the new creature is his workmanship; quickening grace is from him; it is the Spirit that quickens and gives life, and frees from the law of sin and death (Titus 3:5; John 3:6; John 6:63).

Secondly, The impulsive, or moving cause, is the free grace, love and mercy of God; "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened us" (Ephesians 2:4-5). Regeneration, as it is a time of life when men are quickened, it is a time of love, of open love; it springs from love, which moves mercy to exert itself in this way; it is "according to his abundant mercy God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope" (1 Peter 1:3), and this was sovereign grace and mercy, not excited by any motives or conditions in men, or by any preparatory works in them;

what were there in the three thousand, some of whom had been concerned in the death of Christ, converted under Peter's sermon? what were in the jailor, who had just before used the apostles in a cruel manner? what were there in Saul, the blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious person, between these characters and his obtaining mercy? no, it is not according to the will and works, of men that they are regenerated, but God, "of his own will begat he us" (James 1:18), his own sovereign will and pleasure; and this grace and mercy is abundant; it is richly and plentifully displayed; it is "exceeding abundant", it flows and overflows; there is a pleonasm, a redundancy of it (1 Timothy 1:14), and to this, as a moving cause, regeneration is owing.

Thirdly, the resurrection of Christ from the dead is the virtual or procuring cause of it; there is a power or virtue in Christ's resurrection, which has an influence on many things; as on our justification, for which he rose again, so on our regeneration; for men are said to be "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3), and which also may be considered as the exemplary cause of it; for as there is a planting together "in the likeness of his death, so in the likeness of his resurrection from the dead"; as Christ's resurrection was a declaration of his being the Son of God, so regeneration is an evidence of interest in the adoption of children; and as the resurrection of Christ was by the mighty power of God, so is the regeneration and quickening of a dead sinner; and as Christ's resurrection was his first step to his glorification, so is regeneration to seeing and entering into the kingdom of God.

Fourthly, The instrumental cause of regeneration, if it may be so called, are the word of God, and the ministers of it; hence regenerate persons are said to be "born again by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23), and again, "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth" (James 1:18), unless by the Word in these passages should be meant the Eternal Logos, or essential Word of God, Christ Jesus, since logoV is used in both places; though ministers of the gospel are not only represented as ministers and instruments by whom others believe, but as spiritual fathers; "though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ", says the apostle to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 4:15), "yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel"; so he speaks of his son Onesimus, whom he had "begotten in his bonds" (Philemon 1:10) yet this instrumentality of the word in regeneration seems not so agreeable to the principle of grace implanted in the soul in regeneration, and to be understood with respect to that; since that is done by immediate infusion, and is represented as a creation; and now as God made no use of any instrument in the first and old creation, so neither does it seem so agreeable that he should use any in the new creation: wherefore this is rather to be understood of the exertion of the principle of grace, and the drawing it forth into act and exercise; which is excited and encouraged by the ministry of the word, by which it appears that a man is born again; so the three thousand first converts, and the jailor, were first regenerated, or had the principle of grace wrought in their souls by the Spirit of God, and then were directed and encouraged by the ministry of the apostles to repent and believe in Christ: whereby it became manifest that they were born again. Though after all it seems plain, that the ministry of the word is the vehicle in which the Spirit of God conveys himself and his grace into the hearts of men; which is done when the word comes not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; and works effectually, and is the power of God unto salvation; then faith comes by hearing, and ministers are instruments by whom, at least, men are encouraged to believe: "received ye the Spirit", says the apostle, "by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith": (Galatians 3:2), that is, by the preaching of the law, or by the preaching of

the gospel? by the latter, no doubt.

III. The subjects of regeneration are next to be inquired into, or who they are God is pleased to bestow this grace upon. These are men, and not angels; good angels have no need of regeneration; they are holy angels, and continue in that state of holiness in which they were created, and are confirmed therein; they have no need of it to make them meet for heaven, they are there already; they are the angels of heaven, and always behold the face of our heavenly Father there: as for the evil angels, none of them ever had, nor never will have any share in regenerating grace; they believe indeed, but they have not the faith of regenerate ones, or that faith which worketh by love; they believe there is a God, but they do not, nor can they love him; they believe he is, and tremble at his wrath; they have no hope as regenerate ones have, but live in black despair, and ever will. They are men God regenerates, and not brutes, nor stocks nor stones; these are not subjects capable of regeneration; God could raise up children out of these, but it is not his way and work; they are rational creatures he thus operates upon, and he treats them as such in the ministry of his word; though he is represented as dealing otherwise by the adversaries of the grace of God: but though they are men, and men only, whom God regenerates, yet not all men; all men have not faith, and hope, and love; they are a kind of first fruits of his creatures, whom of his own will he begets with the word of truth; they are such who are called out and separated from the rest of the world; they are such who are the peculiar objects of his love; for regeneration is the fruit and effect of love, and the evidence of it; they are such whom God has predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, in which image they are created in regeneration; those whom the apostle speaks of as "begotten again unto a lively hope, are first described as elect according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Peter 1:2-3), and they are such who are redeemed by Christ, for they that are chosen in him, have redemption through his blood; and those are quickened by his Spirit and grace, when dead in trespasses and sins, for such is their state and condition before they are born again; they are such who are the sons of God by adopting grace, who because they are sons the Spirit of God is sent into them, as to witness their adoption, so to regenerate them, which gives evidence of it; and thus they become openly the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Let it be further observed, that though the chief and principal seat of regeneration is the spirit or soul of man, yet it extends its influence to the body and the member’s thereof; whereby they are restrained from the lusts of the flesh, as to yield a ready, constant, and universal obedience to them; or so as to "yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin"; but, on the contrary, are so under the power of the reigning principle of grace, implanted in them in regeneration, that they, "through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, and live" (Romans 6:12-13; Romans 8:13).

IV. The effects of regeneration, or the ends to be answered, and which are answered by it, and which show the importance and necessity of it.

1. A principal effect of it; or, if you will, a concomitant of it, is a participation of every grace of the Spirit. Regenerate ones have not only the promise of life made to them, but they have the grace of life given them; they live a new life, and walk in newness of life: they partake of the grace of spiritual light; before, their understandings were darkened; but now they are enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of divine things; they were before, darkness itself; but now are made light in the Lord. In regeneration is laid the beginning of sanctification, which is carried on till completed, without which no man shall see the Lord; for the new man is

created in righteousness and true holiness; the principle of holiness is then formed, from whence holy actions spring. The grace of repentance then appears; the stony, hard, obdurate, and impenitent heart being taken away, and an heart of flesh, susceptible of divine impressions, being given; on which follow, a sense of sin, sorrow for it after a godly sort, and repentance unto life and unto salvation, which is not to be repented of: faith in Christ, which is not of a man’s self, but the gift of God, and the operation of the Spirit of God, is now given and brought into exercise; which being an effect, is an evidence of regeneration; for "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ", and especially that believes in Christ, as his Saviour and Redeemer, "is born of God" (1 John 5:1), and such have hope of eternal life by Christ; while unregenerate men are without hope, without a true, solid, and well grounded hope; but in regeneration, they are begotten to a "lively hope", and have it; a good hope, through grace, founded upon the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, which is of use to them both in life and death. Regenerated persons have their "hearts circumcised", which is but another phrase for regenerating grace, "to love the Lord their God with all their heart and soul" (Deuteronomy 30:6), and though before, their carnal minds were enmity to God, and all that is good; now they love him, and all that belong to him, his word, worship, ordinances, and people; and by this it is known, that they "have passed from death to life", which is no other than regeneration, "because they love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). In short, regenerate persons are partakers of all the fruits of the Spirit; of all other graces, besides those mentioned; as humility, patience, self-denial, and resignation to the will of God. And they are blessed with such measures of grace and spiritual strength, as to be able to resist sin and Satan, and to overcome the world, and every spiritual enemy; "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world", the god of it, the men in it, and the lusts thereof; "Whosoever is born of God, sinneth not", does not live in sin, nor is he overcome by it; "but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself" from Satan, and his temptations, from being overcome with them; "and that wicked one toucheth him not": being clothed with the whole armour of God, which he has skill to wield; he keeps him off, and at bay, so that he cannot come in with him; he holds up the shield of faith to him, whereby he quenches all his fiery darts (1 John 5:4; 1 John 5:18).

2. Knowledge, and actual enjoyment of the several blessings of grace, follow upon regeneration. The covenant of grace is "ordered in all things", and is full of all spiritual blessings; and a grant of all the blessings of grace was made to Christ, and to the elect in him, before the world began, and they were secretly blessed with them in him as early; but then till the Spirit of God is sent down into their hearts in regeneration, to make known unto them the things which God has freely given them, they are strangers to them, and have no knowledge of them, cannot claim their interest in them, nor are they actually possessed of them. They are loved of God with an everlasting love; but then the first open display of it to them is in regeneration, when God draws them with lovingkindness to himself, as a fruit and effect, and so an evidence of his ancient love to them. They are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; but this is not known by them till the gospel comes, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; working powerfully in them, regenerating, quickening, and sanctifying them; when that holiness to which they are chosen, is implanted, and that image of Christ, to which they are predestinated, is stamped: there is an union with Christ, which election in him gives; and there is a legal union between him and the elect, as between a surety and debtor, in virtue of suretyship engagements for them; and there is a mystical union, as between head and members; and a conjugal one, as between man and wife: but before regeneration there is no vital union, or such an union as between vine and branches, by which

they actually receive life, and grace, and nourishment, and bear, and bring forth fruit. They are the sons of God by predestination; and in covenant, the adoption of children belongs, unto them; but this does not appear till regeneration takes place, when they receive in person the power and privilege of it, and are manifestly the sons of God by faith in Christ. Justification was a sentence conceived in the mind of God from eternity; was pronounced on Christ, and his people in him, when he rose from the dead; but is not known to those interested in it, till the Spirit of God reveals the righteousness of Christ from faith to faith, and pronounces upon it the sentence of justification in the conscience of the believer; until he is born again, he has no knowledge of this blessing, no comfortable perception of it; nor can he claim his interest in it, nor have that peace and joy which flow from it. And now it is that an awakened sinner has the application of pardoning grace and mercy; for though pardon of sin is provided in covenant, and the blood of Christ is shed for it, and he is exalted to give it; yet it is not actually given, applied, and enjoyed, until repentance is given also; for they are both in Christ's gift together; and when also it is that God blesses his people with peace, with peace of conscience, flowing from the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ.

3. Another effect of regeneration is, a fitness and capacity for the performance of good works. In regeneration men are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works"; and by their new creation, become fit for, and capable of, performing them; the new man is formed in them "unto righteousness and true holiness", to the acts and exercises of righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 2:10; Ephesians 4:24), such who are born again, are "sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Timothy 2:21), whereas, an unregenerate man is "to every good work reprobate"; he has neither will nor power to perform that which is good, till God "works in him both to will and to do". The principal ingredients in good works are wanting in them, wherefore they cannot be acceptable to God: and, indeed, "without faith", as these are without it, "it is impossible to please God"; nor can they that are "in the flesh", who are carnal and unregenerate, "please God"; that is, do those things which are pleasing to him (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 8:8), without the Spirit of God, and the grace and strength of Christ, nothing of this kind can he performed; wherefore God has promised to put his "Spirit" in his people, which he does in regeneration, to "cause them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them": so though they can do nothing of themselves, yet, through the Spirit, grace, and strength of Christ, they can do all things (Ezekiel 36:27; Php 4:13) to which they must be referred; even a very heathen could say, Whatever good thing thou dost, ascribe it to God [1].

4. Regeneration gives a meetness for the kingdom of God; without this, no man can see, nor enter into it (John 3:3; John 3:5), whether by "the kingdom of God" is meant, a gospel church state, and a participation of the privileges and ordinances of it, or the ultimate state of glory and happiness: the former may be meant, into which publicans and harlots went before the Pharisees; and which they would neither enter into themselves, nor suffer others to go in who were entering; and a removal of which from them, Christ threatens them with (Matthew 23:13; Matthew 21:31; Matthew 21:43). Unregenerate men may indeed, in a sense, see and enter into this kingdom of God; they may attend the word, and embrace the truths of it, make a profession of faith, submit to gospel ordinances, and become members of a gospel church; this they may do in fact, but not of right; they are such as do not come in at the right door, Christ, and true faith in him; but climb up another way, and are thieves and robbers; hypocrites in Zion, tares in Christ's field, and foolish virgins among the wise; to whom the kingdom of God is compared. Unregenerate men have not the

proper qualifications for the church of God, and the ordinances of it; these particularly, are faith and repentance; these are required to a person's admission to baptism (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 3:8; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:37), and so to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat" (1 Corinthians 11:28), whether he has true repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and if such a man, devoid of these, which attend or flow from regeneration, gets admitted to these ordinances, and into a church state, of what avail is it to him here or hereafter? what does it signify now to have the form of godliness, without the power? a name to live, and yet be dead? or hereafter; for "what is the hope of the hypocrite" of what use is it to him? "though he hath gained" the name of a professor, of a religious man, and a place in the house of God, "when God takes away his soul", these will be of no service to him? Though may be the ultimate state of glory may be meant by the kingdom of God, in the above passages; as in (1 Corinthians 6:9; Luke 12:32; Matthew 25:34). An unregenerate man has no apparent right unto it; nor meetness for it. The proper right unto it lies in adoption; "If children, then heirs". But this right, so founded, does not appear till a man is born again, which is the evidence of adoption; nor can he be meet and fit for it, without this grace of God regenerating, quickening, and sanctifying; for without holiness man shall see the Lord; and nothing shall enter into the heavenly state that defiles or makes an abomination; but when men are born again, they are, heirs apparent to the heavenly inheritance; they are rich faith, and heirs of a kingdom; and are meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light.

V. The properties of regeneration; and which may serve to throw more light on the nature of it.

1. Regeneration is a passive work, or rather, men are passive in it; as they must needs be, in the first infusion and implantation of grace, and the quickening of them; even as passive as the first matter created was, out of which all things were made; and as a dead man, when raised from the dead is; or as the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision were, while the Spirit of God breathed upon them, and then they became active; and as infants are in the natural generation of them; for men no more contribute to their spiritual birth, than infants do to their natural birth; all this appears from regeneration being a creation, a resurrection from the dead, and a being begotten and born again.

2. It is an irresistible act of God's grace; no more resistance can be made unto it, than there could be in the first matter to its creation; or in a dead man to his resurrection; or in an infant to its generation. Regeneration is of the will of God, which cannot be resisted; the Spirit, in regeneration, is like "the wind", which "bloweth where it listeth", and none can hinder it "so is everyone that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8), it is done by the power of God, which is uncontrollable; whatever aversion, contrariety, and opposition there may be in the corrupt nature of men unto it, that is soon and easily overcome by the power of divine grace; when the stony heart is taken away, and an heart of flesh is given. When God works, nothing can let; an unwilling people are made willing in the day of his power; high thoughts, reasonings, and imaginations of the carnal mind, are cast down by him.

3. It is an act that is instantaneously done, at once; it is not like sanctification it gives rise to; which is but a begun work, and is carried on gradually; faith grows, hope and love abound more and more, and spiritual light and knowledge increase by degrees, till they come to the perfect day: but regeneration is at once; as an infant in nature is generated at once, and is also born at once, and not by degrees; so it is in spiritual generation; one man cannot be said to he more regenerated

than another, though he may be more sanctified; and the same man cannot be said to be more regenerated at one time than at another.

4. As it is done at once, so it is perfect; some persons speak of a regenerate and an unregenerate part in men; and that they are partly regenerate and partly unregenerate. I must confess I do not understand this; since regeneration is a new creature, and perfect in its kind. There are, indeed, two principles in a man that is born again; a principle of corrupt nature, and a principle of grace; the one is called the old man, and the other the new: the whole old man is unregenerate, no part in him is regenerated; he remains untouched, and is just the same he was, only deprived of his power and dominion; and the new man is wholly regenerate, no unregenerate part in him: there is no sin in him, nor done by him, he cannot commit sin; "the king’s daughter is all glorious within": a man child, as soon as born, having all its limbs, is a perfect man, as to parts, though these are not at their full growth and size, as they will be, if it lives: so the new man is a perfect man at once, as to parts, though as yet not arrived to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

5. The grace of regeneration can never be lost; once regenerated, and always so; one that is born in a spiritual sense, can never be unborn again; for he cannot die a spiritual death; he is born of incorruptible and immortal seed; he is born of water and of the Spirit, or of the grace of the Spirit, which is as a well of living water in him, springing up unto everlasting life: and all such who are begotten again unto a lively hope of a glorious inheritance, are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation (1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 Peter 1:23). To which may be added,

6. An adjunct which always accompanies regeneration, a spiritual warfare between the old and the new man, the principle of sin, and the principle of grace; the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; the law in the members warring against the law of the mind; which are, as it were, a company of two armies engaged in war with each other, which always issues in a victory on the side of the new creature; for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and sin and Satan, and every enemy, and is more than a conqueror over all, through Christ.

ENDNOTES:

[1] ti an agaqon pratths eis qeous anapemte, Bias apud Laert. 1. 1. in vita ejus.

02. Of Sanctification

Of Sanctification The foundation of "sanctification" is laid in "regeneration"; as it is a holy principle, it is first formed in that; the new creature, or new man, is created in righteousness and true holiness; and it appears in "effectual calling", which is an "holy calling"; and is to be seen in conversion, which is a turning of men "from their iniquities": and that holiness which is begun in regeneration, and is manifest in effectual calling and conversion, is carried on in sanctification, which is a gradual and progressive work, and issues and is finished in glorification; so that it may, with propriety, be distinguished from regeneration, effectual calling, and conversion, and be separately treated of.

There is a sanctification which is more peculiarly ascribed to God the Father; and which is no other than his eternal election of men to it: under the law, persons and things separated and devoted to holy uses, are said to be "sanctified"; hence those who are set apart by God for his use and service, and are chosen by him to holiness here and hereafter, are said "to be sanctified by God the Father" (Jude 1:1). There is a sanctification also that is more peculiar to Christ the Son of God; not only as he is the representative of his people, and is "holiness to the Lord" for them; which the high priest had upon his forehead, who was a type of him, and the representative of Israel; and as he has the whole stock of grace and holiness in his hands, which is communicated to the saints as is necessary; and as the holiness of his human nature, is, with his active and passive obedience, imputed to their justification, and so makes a part of that; hence he is said to be made to them "sanctification" (1 Corinthians 1:30), but as the expiation of their sins is made by his blood and sacrifice; this is called a sanctification of them; "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12). But there is another sanctification, which is more peculiar to the Holy Spirit of God, and is called "the sanctification of the Spirit" (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 2:2) and this is the sanctification to be treated of. Concerning which may be inquired,

1. First, what it is, and the nature of it. It is something that is "holy", both in its principle and in its actings; and is superior to anything that can come from man, or be performed by him of himself. It does not lie in a conformity to the light of nature, and the dictates of it; nor is it what may go by the name of moral virtue, which was exercised by some of the heathen philosophers to a very great degree, and yet they had not a grain of holiness in them; but were full of the lusts of envy, ambition, pride, revenge, &c. nor does it lie in a bare, external conformity to the law of God; or in an "outward reformation" of life and manners; this appeared in the Pharisees, to a great degree, who were pure in their own eyes, and thought themselves holier than others, and disdained them, and yet their hearts were full of all manner of impurity. Nor is what is called "restraining grace", sanctification; persons may be restrained by the injunctions of parents and masters, by the laws of magistrates, and by the ministry of the word, from the grosser sins of life; and be preserved, by the providence of God, from the pollutions of the world, and yet not be sanctified. Nor are "gifts", ordinary or extraordinary, sanctifying grace; Judas Iscariot, no doubt, had both, the ordinary gifts of a preacher, and the extraordinary gifts of an apostle, and yet not a holy man. Gifts are not

grace; a man may have all gifts, and all knowledge, and speak with the tongue of men and angels, and not have grace; there may be a silver tongue where there is an unsanctified heart! Nor is sanctification a restoration of the lost image of Adam, or a reparation and an amendment of that image marred by the sin of man; or a new vamping up the old principles of nature: but it is something entirely new; a new creature, a new man, a new heart, and a new spirit; and the conformity of a man to another image, even to the image of the second Adam, the Son of God.

Some make sanctification to lie in the deposition, or putting off, of the old man, and in the putting on of the new man. This has a foundation in the word of God (Ephesians 4:22; Ephesians 4:24) and belongs to sanctification, and may be admitted, if understood of the actings of it, as these are, which suppose a previous principle from which they arise. By the "old man", is meant corrupt nature; which is as old as a man is in whom it is, and which he brings into the world with him; and by the putting of it off, is not meant the removal of it from him; for it continues with him, even with a sanctified person, as long as he is in the world; nor any change in the nature of it, which always remains the same; much less a destruction of it, which will not be till this earthly house is dissolved: but a dispossession of it, of its power, a displacing it from its throne, so as not to yield obedience to the lusts of it; nor walk according to the dictates of it; nor have the conversation according to it. By the new man, is meant the new principle of grace and holiness, wrought in the soul in regeneration: and by the putting on of that, the exercise of the several graces of which it consists; see Colossians 3:12-13.

Others distinguish sanctification, into "vivification" and "mortification": and both these are to be observed in sanctification. Sanctification, as a principle, is a holy, living principle, infused; by which a man that was dead in trespasses and sins, is quickened; and from whence flow living acts; such as living by faith on Christ; walking in newness of life; living soberly, righteously, and godly: all which belong to sanctification. And there is such a thing as mortification; not in a literal and natural sense, of the body, by fasting, scourging, &c. Nor is it the abolition of the body of sin, by the sacrifice of Christ; nor the destruction of the principle and being of sin in regenerate and sanctified persons; for though they do not live in sin, yet sin lives in them, and is sometimes very active and powerful: but the weakening of the power of sin, and a mortification of the deeds of the body, and of the members on earth; so that a course of sin is not lived in, but men are dead unto it; and to which the Spirit of God, and his grace, are necessary (Colossians 3:5; Romans 8:13). But leaving these things, I shall more particularly consider sanctification as an holy principle, and the holy actings of it.

1a. First, as an holy principle. The first rise of which is in regeneration; there it is first formed, as before observed. And this is no other than the good work of grace begun in the hearts of regenerate ones. It is a "work", not of men; for as regeneration is not of the will of men; nor conversion by might or power of men: so neither is sanctification; none can say, "I have made my heart clean", or have sanctified myself: it is the work of God; "We are his workmanship", and a curious piece of workmanship sanctification is; too curious for a creature to perform; it is done "in the name" of the Lord Jesus, and "by the Spirit of our God". It is a "good" work; the efficient cause is good, God himself; the moving cause good, his love, grace, kindness, and good will; the matter good, some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel; the instrumental cause or means, the good word of God: and it is good in its effects; it makes a man a good man, and fits him for the performance of good works, and is the source of them. It is commonly called "a work of grace",

and with great propriety; since it flows from the free, sovereign, and abundant grace of God in Christ; and is an implantation of all grace in the heart. And in scripture it is called "the work of faith", because faith is a principal part of it; and in the exercise of which sanctification much lies; hence saints are said to be "sanctified by faith, which is in Christ" (Acts 26:18). It is an internal work; it is a work "begun in" the soul, which the Spirit of God works in the hearts of his people, by putting the fear of God, and every other grace, there; hence it goes by various names, which show it to be something within a man, and not anything external; see Romans 2:28-29. It is called "the inward man, and the hidden man of the heart", which has its place there, and is not obvious to everyone (Romans 7:22; 1 Peter 3:4), and not only from the author of it, the Spirit of God; and from the nature of it, being spiritual, and conversant with spiritual things; but from the seat and subject of it, the spirit or soul of man; it is called "spirit", being wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God (John 3:6). It has also the name of "seed", which sometimes signifies the word; which being cast into the heart, and taking place there, becomes the "engrafted word"; and sometimes grace itself, which is like seed sown in the earth, which lies hid in it awhile, and then springs and grows up, a man knows not how; and this is that "seed" which remains in the heart of believers, and is never lost (1 John 3:9). Sometimes it is compared to a "root", which lies under ground, is not seen, and is the cause of fruit being brought forth upwards; and may be what Job calls, "the root of the matter" in him; and which the stony ground hearers being without, withered, and came to nothing (Job 19:28; Matthew 13:21). It is called, "truth in the inward parts"; which is expressive of the integrity and uprightness of the heart, of a true and right spirit created there, and of the truth and reality of grace and holiness, or true holiness, in which the new man is created (Psalms 50:6; Psalms 50:10; Ephesians 4:24). Once more, it is signified by "oil in the vessel" of the heart, had with the "lamp" of an external profession (Matthew 25:4), by "oil" is meant grace, so called for its illuminating nature, grace is spiritual light in the understanding; and for its supple, softening nature, it takes off the hardness of the heart, and the stubbornness of the will; and because it will not mix with other liquids, as grace will not mix with sin; and which is had, held, and retained in the heart, as in a vessel; and from which the lamp of profession is distinct, which is more visible. I proceed, 1b. Secondly, To consider sanctification in its holy actings.

1b1. With respect to God; which appear in the disposition of the mind, the motions of the heart Godwards, and in the behavior and conduct of a saint before him, and with regard unto him; and which become manifest,

1b1a. In a holy reverence of him, on account of his nature, perfections, works, and blessings of goodness. In an unsanctified man, there is no fear of God before his eyes; but where a principle of grace and holiness is wrought, the fear of God soon appears; it is the beginning of wisdom; and is one of the first things that appear in a regenerate man; he cannot do what he before did, and others do; "so did not I, because of the fear of God", said Nehemiah (Nehemiah 5:15), such an one will serve the Lord with reverence and godly fear.

1b1b. Sanctification shows itself in love to God, and delight in him. An unsanctified man cannot love God, who is pure and holy; nor take any delight in him, in his word, his ways, and worship; "The carnal mind is enmity to God", and desires him to depart from him, and chooses not the knowledge of his ways; nay, one that has taken on him the mask of religion, and is not sincere, can have no true affection for God, nor pleasure in the things of God. Job says of the hypocrite, "Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?" No, he will not (Job 27:10).

But in regeneration and sanctification, the Lord circumcises the heart, or regenerates and sanctifies it, "to love the Lord with all the heart and with all the soul!" that is, sincerely and cordially.

1b1c. It appears in submission to the will of God in all things, even in the most adverse dispensations of providence; as the instances of Aaron, Eli, David, and others show; who murmured not, nor complained, but were still and quiet, and resigned to the divine will, under some severe rebukes of providence. Much of sanctification lies in the conformity of our wills to the will of God. That holy man Bishop Usher said of it, "Sanctification is nothing less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation of his will to the will of God, and to live in the offering up of his soul continually in the flames of love, as a whole burnt offering to Christ."

1b1d. It is to be seen in religious exercises, and in acts of devotion to God, and in the exercise of grace in them as in an affectionate attendance on the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; and in fervent prayer, which is the breath of a sanctified soul towards God. Holiness only appears in these things, or is real, when grace is in exercise in them; for otherwise, there may be an outward performance of them, and yet no true holiness.

1b1e. The holy actings of sanctification may be discerned in the earnest pantings and eager desires of the soul after communion with God, both in private and public; when a soul cannot be content with ordinances without enjoying God in them; when it pants after him, as the heart pants after the water brooks; and when without him, seeks everywhere for him, till it finds him, and then exults in its fellowship with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ.

1b1f. A soul that is sanctified by the Spirit of God, seeks the glory of God in all it does, whether in things civil or religious: one that is unsanctified, and only makes a show of religion, and of good works, he does all to be seen of men, and seeks his own glory therein; whatever show of devotion and holiness may be made by such persons, there is not a grain of holiness in them. Whereas he that seeks the glory of God in all, "the same is true", hearty and sincere, a real saint, "and no unrighteousness is in him", no insincerity and dissimulation (John 7:18).

1b2. Sanctification discovers itself in its holy actings, with respect to Christ.

1b2a. In applying to him for cleansing; as in a view of its guilt, it applies to blood for pardon; and to his righteousness for justification: so under a sight and sense of its pollution, and of the spreading leprosy of sin all over it; it goes to him as the leper did, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean!" and such deal with his blood for the purification of their souls, as well as for the remission of their sins; and have their hearts purified by faith in it.

1b2b. In subjection to him, as King of saints; they not only receive him as their Prophet, to teach and instruct them, and embrace his doctrines; and as their Priest, by whose sacrifice their sins are expiated; but as their King, to whose laws and ordinances they cheerfully submit; esteeming his precepts, concerning all things, to be right, none of his commandments grievous; but, from a principle of love to him, keep and observe them.

1b2c. In setting him always before them, as an example to copy after; being desirous of walking even as he walked; both in the exercise of the graces of faith, love, patience, humility, &c. and in the discharge of duty.

1b2d. In a desire of a greater degree of conformity to the image of Christ, which is what they are predestinated unto; which first appears in regeneration, and is increased by every believing view of Christ and his glory, and will be completed in the future state; hence sanctified souls desire to be with Christ, that they might be perfectly like him, as well as see him as he is.

1b3. Sanctification is discovered in its actings, with respect to the Holy Spirit.

1b3a. In minding, savoring, and relishing, the things of the Spirit of God. "They that are after the flesh", carnal, unregenerate, unsanctified ones, "mind the things of the flesh", carnal and sensual lusts and pleasures; "but they that are after the Spirit", who are regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God, "mind the things of the Spirit", which he reveals. recommends, and directs to; these they savor, relish, highly value, and esteem (Romans 8:5).

1b3b. In walking after the dictates, directions, leadings, and teachings of the Spirit; so sanctified persons are described as such "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1).

1b3c. In a desire and carefulness not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom they have their present grace and experience, joy and comfort, and by whom they are sealed to the day of redemption, by any disagreeable behavior to him, to one another, and in the world (Ephesians 4:30).

1b3d. In a desire "to live and walk in the Spirit"; to live in a spiritual manner, under his influence, to exercise every grace, and abound therein, through his power; to perform every duty by his assistance; and to wait, through him, for the hope of righteousness by faith (Galatians 5:5; Galatians 5:25; Romans 12:11; Romans 15:13).

1b4. The holy actings of sanctification are apparent, with respect to sin.

1b4a. In approving, loving, and delighting in the law of God, which forbids it, and condemns for it. An unsanctified man cannot brook the law of God on this account; he is not subjected to it; nor can he be, without efficacious grace exerted on him; he despises it, and casts it behind his back: whereas, a man sanctified by the Spirit of God, approves of the law of God, as holy, just, and good, and loves it exceedingly; "How love I thy law!" says David; and he delights in it, after the inward man, and serves it with his mind and Spirit (Psalms 119:97; Romans 7:12; Romans 7:22; Romans 7:25).

1b4b. In a dislike of sin, and a displicency at it; it is displeasing to him, as it is contrary to the holy nature of God, a breach of his righteous law, and is in its own nature exceeding sinful, as well as disagreeable in its effects and consequences.

1b4c. In a loathing sin, and in an abhorrence of it. An unsanctified man chooses his own ways, and delights in his abominations; he takes pleasure in committing sin himself, and in those that do it; sin is a sweet morsel, which he rolls in his mouth, and keeps under his tongue; but one that has the principle and grace of holiness, loaths his sin, and himself for it; and, with Job, abhors himself, and repents in dust and ashes.

1b4d. In an hatred of sin; unholy persons, hate the good and love the evil; but an holy man, loves righteousness and hates iniquity: such that love the Lord, cannot but hate evil; it being so extremely opposite to him: he hates, not only sinful actions, and even what he himself does,

though he would not do them, but vain thoughts also (Romans 7:15; Psalms 119:113).

1b4e. In an opposition to sin: a sanctified man, not only does not make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it; does not regard it in his heart, so as to encourage, nourish, and cherish it; but he acts the part of an antagonist to it, "striving against sin; the spirit lusteth against the flesh"; grace opposes sin, upon the first motion of it, and temptation to it; he has that principle within him that argues thus, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

1b4f. In an abstinence from it, even from every appearance of it, a passing by the ways of it, and avoiding every avenue that leads to it, as being what wars against the soul, and is dangerous and hurtful to it. The grace of God implanted in the heart, as well as displayed in the word, "teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts" (Titus 2:11-12).

1b4g. Sanctification appears in lamenting sin, in deploring the corruption of nature, bewailing indwelling sin, as well as all sinful actions, of thought, word, and deed; sanctified persons are like doves of the valley, everyone mourning for his own iniquities, and for those of others, and the sad effects of them.

1b4h. In earnest desires to be wholly freed from sin; uneasy that vain thoughts should so long lodge within them, weary of a body of sin and death, they groan under the burden of it, and cry, O wretched men that we are! who shall deliver us from it? they long to be with Christ, and to be in heaven; for this reason greatly, among others, that they may be entirely free from sin, and be perfectly holy.

Now can such actings in the mind, and in life, spring from nature? must they not arise from a principle of holiness in the heart? can there be such reverence of God, love to him, resignation to his will, affectionate and fervent devotion to him, desires of communion with him, and a concern in all things for his glory, without a supernatural principle of grace and holiness in the soul? Is it possible, that an unsanctified man should ever apply to Christ for cleansing, be subject to him as King, be desirous of walking as he walked, and of being wrought up to a conformity to him? or be concerned to mind the things of the Spirit, and to walk after the Spirit, and to live in him, and be careful not to grieve him? can there be such actings in the mind concerning sin, as to love the law, which forbids it; to dislike sin, abhor it, and hate it; engage in an opposition to it, abstain from it, lament it, and earnestly desire to be rid of it; can these be the produce of nature? or be without being internally sanctified by the Spirit of God?

2. Secondly, the subjects of sanctification are next to be inquired into; who they are that are sanctified, and what of them.

2a. First, who are sanctified? not all men; all men are unholy, and need sanctification; but all are not made holy; some are filthy, and remain filthy still.

2a1. They are the elect of God; and all of them, whom God chose in eternity, he sanctifies in time; those who are a chosen generation, become an holy people; whom God chose, he chose to holiness, as an end which is always answered, and he chose them through sanctification, as a means in order to a further end, salvation; conformity to the image of the Son of God, in which sanctification lies, is what the chosen are predestinated unto; and, in consequence of their predestination, are made partakers of it. Faith, which is a part of sanctification, flows from electing

grace, and is insured by it; as many as are ordained to eternal life believe, and are everlastingly glorified, which is their perfect sanctification.

2a2. They are the redeemed ones; the subjects of election, redemption, and sanctification, are the same persons. In order, they are first chosen, then redeemed, and then sanctified; those who are chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the Son, are sanctified by the Spirit. One end of Christ's redemption of them, was to sanctify and purify them, a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works; and that they being dead to sin, and that to them, through his sacrifice for sin, they might live unto righteousness; hence of the same persons it is said, "They shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord!" (Isaiah 62:12).

2b. Secondly, what of those persons is sanctified? The whole of them; "The God of peace sanctify you wholly"; that is, as next explained, in soul, body, and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

2b1. The soul, or spirit, is the principal seat, or subject of sanctification, in all the powers and faculties of it; "Be renewed in the spirit of your minds" (Ephesians 4:23). It is the heart into which the fear of God is put, and which is circumcised to love the Lord, and which is purified by faith: it is the understanding that is enlightened, to discern holy and spiritual things; and so to mind them, approve of them, and gaze at them, with wonder and delight: the will is bowed to the will of God, and made willing in the day of his power, to serve him, as well as to be saved by him; and which is resigned to all the dispensations of divine providence: the affections are made spiritual, holy, and heavenly; from whence springs a cheerful obedience to the commands of God and Christ: and the mind and conscience, which were defiled with sin, are purged from dead works to serve the living God.

2b2. The body also is influenced by sanctifying grace. As, though the heart is the principal seat of sin, out of which all manner of wickedness flows, and spreads itself, not only over the powers and faculties of the soul, but also over the members of the body; so that there is no part nor place clean: thus, though the soul is the principal seat of sanctification, yet it diffuses its influence, as over all the powers of the soul, so over all the members of the body; its sensual appetite and carnal lusts are checked and restrained by sanctifying grace; so that sin reigns not in our mortal bodies, as to obey the lusts thereof, and to yield our members, as instruments of unrighteousness, unto sin (Romans 6:12-13).

2c. Thirdly, the causes of sanctification, by whom it is effected, from whence it springs, and by what means it is carried on, and at last finished.

2c1. The efficient cause is God, Father, Son, and Spirit. Sometimes it is ascribed to the Father, the God of all grace, who will make us perfect, perfectly holy; the very God of peace, with whom we have peace, through Christ, will sanctify us wholly; the Father, on whom we call, the Father of Christ, and of us, says, "Be ye holy, as I am holy", and who only can make us so (1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 Peter 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:23). And Christ is not only our sanctification, but our sanctifier; "He that sanctifieth" is Christ, "and they who are sanctified" are his chosen and redeemed ones; and these "are all of one" (Hebrews 2:11), of one and of the same nature; he partakes of their nature, and they are made partakers of his; all that holiness which they have, they have from him; from that fulness of it which is in him. Though this work of sanctification is more commonly ascribed to the Holy Spirit, who is therefore called, "the Spirit of holiness"; not only from his own

nature, but from his being the author of holiness in the hearts of God’s people, and which is therefore called, "the sanctification of the Spirit"; it is he that begins, and carries on, and finishes this work; every grace is from him, faith, hope, and love, and every other; and which are supported and maintained, and drawn forth into exercise, and brought to perfection by him.

2c2. The moving cause, is the grace and good will of God; the same grace which moved God to choose any to holiness, moves him to work it in them: the same grace which moved him to send his Son into the world to redeem men, moves him to send his Spirit into their hearts to sanctify them: the same great love, and abundant mercy, that moves him to regenerate and quicken them, moves him to sanctify them: as of his own good will he begets them again, it is of his own good will that he sanctifies them; "This is the will of God", not only his will of precept, and his approving will; but the purpose and counsel of his will, what flows from his sovereign will; "Even your sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3). The state and condition of the people of God, before their sanctification, clearly shows that it must arise, not from any merit or motive in them; but from the free favour and good will of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

2c3. The instrumental cause, or means, is the word of God; both the written word, the scriptures, which are holy scriptures; the author holy, the matter holy, and, when attended with a divine power and influence, are the means of making men holy, and of fitting and furnishing them for every good work; and also the word preached, when accompanied with the same power; "Faith comes by hearing", and is increased thereby; the doctrines of the gospel are according to godliness; and with a divine blessing, influence both the heart and life to godliness and holiness; the ordinances are made and continued, for the perfecting of the saints, for the carrying on, and perfecting the work of holiness in them; and various providences of God, even afflictive ones, are designed of God, and are means, in his hand, of making his people more and more "partakers of his holiness" (Hebrews 12:10), of this use afflictions were to holy David (Psalms 119:67; Psalms 119:71).

2d. Fourthly, the adjuncts or properties of sanctification.

2d1. First, it is imperfect in the present state, though it will most certainly be made perfect; where the work is begun it will be performed: sanctification in Christ is perfect, but sanctification in the saints themselves is imperfect; it is perfect with respect to parts, but not with respect to degrees. Sanctification, as a principle, which is the new creature, or new man, has all his parts; though these are not grown up to the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ, as they will do; where there is one grace, there is every grace, though none perfect; there is a comparative perfection in the saints, when compared with what they themselves once were, and others are; and when compared even with other saints, for one saint may have a greater degree of grace and holiness than another; "let us therefore, as many as be perfect"; and yet the greatest of those was not absolutely perfect, even the apostle himself, who so said (Php 3:12; Php 3:17), all the saints may be said to be perfect, as perfection denotes sincerity and truth; so their faith, though imperfect, is unfeigned; their hope is without hypocrisy, and their love without dissimulation; but otherwise sanctification in the best of men is imperfect; this appears,

2d1a. From the continual wants of the saints; they are always "poor and needy", as David says of himself; which could not be true of him as to things temporal, but as to things spiritual: the best of saints continually stand in need of more grace to oppose sin, resist temptations, perform duty, and persevere in faith and holiness; the grace of God is sufficient for them, but then that must be daily

communicated to them; God has promised to supply, and he does supply all their need, as it returns upon them; but then it cannot be said that they are "perfect and entire, wanting nothing"; since they are continually in want of more grace.

2d1b. This appears from their disclaiming perfection in themselves, and their desires after it. Job, David, the apostle Paul, and others, have in express words declared they were not perfect, nor thought themselves so, but far from it; and yet expressed strong desires after it, which showed they had it not; the apostle Paul has fully set forth both in those words of his, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect" &c.(Php 3:12-14).

2d1c. That sanctification is imperfect, is abundantly manifest from indwelling sin in the saints, and the sad effects of it; the apostle Paul speaks of "sin dwelling in him" (Romans 7:18-19), and the apostle John says, "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1 John 1:8), and the experience of the saints in all ages testifies the same: this is clear from their ingenuous confessions of sin, such as made by Jacob, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and others; from their groans and complaints under the weight of sin, as an heavy burden, too heavy to bear; from the continual war in them between flesh and spirit, the law in their members and the law in their minds; from their prayers for the manifestation of the pardon of their sins, and for cleansing from them, and to be kept from the commission of them; from the many slips and falls which the best are subject to in one way or another; and from backwardness to duty, remissness in it, and that coldness and lukewarmness which too often attend it.

2d1d. This is also evident from the several parts of sanctification, and the several graces of which it consists, being imperfect. Faith is imperfect; there are deficiencies in faith to be made up; the best of saints have had them, and their failings in the exercise of that grace have been manifest, as in Abraham, Peter, and others; and they have been sensible of their imperfection in it, as the apostles of Christ were when they said, "Lord increase our faith", or "add" to it (Luke 17:5), hope sometimes is so low as that it seems to be "perished from the Lord", and only the mouth is put in the dust with an "if so be there may be hope" (Lamentations 3:18; Lamentations 3:29). Love, however warm and fervent at first, remits and abates; its ardour is left, though that is not lost; the love of many waxes cold. Spiritual, experimental, sanctified knowledge is but in part, and will remain so until that which is perfect is come.

2d2. Secondly, though sanctification is imperfect, it is progressive, it is going on gradually till it comes to perfection; this is clear from the characters of the saints, who are first as little children, infants newly born; are in a state of childhood, and by degrees come to be young men, strong and robust, and overcome the evil one, and at length are fathers in Christ (1 John 2:13-14), and from the similies by which the work of grace is illustrated; as that in general by seed sown in the earth, which springs up first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear; and faith in particular by a grain of mustard seed, which when first sown is small, the least of all seeds, but when it grows up, it becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out great branches (Mark 4:28; Mark 4:31-32), so spiritual light and knowledge at first is very dim and obscure, like the sight that the man had whose eyes Christ opened; first he saw men like trees walking, and after that all things clearly; so the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Mark 8:23; Proverbs 4:18), there is such a thing as growing in grace, in the grace of faith, and abounding in hope and love, and increasing in the knowledge of divine things which

there would be no room for, if sanctification was perfect. Yet,

2d3. Thirdly, though it is imperfect, it will certainly be perfected; grace in the soul is a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life; it is always running to, and will issue in eternal life: it is certain, from election and redemption, the ends whereof would not be answered, if this was not completed; and from its being the work of the Holy Spirit, who having begun it, will finish it; he is a rock, and his work is perfect; having undertook it, he will not leave it till it is done; and when he works, none can let; he will perfect that which concerneth his saints, and will fulfil the good pleasure of his will in them, and the work of faith, with power.

2d4. Fourthly, sanctification is absolutely "necessary" to salvation. It is necessary for many things; it is necessary to the saints, as an evidence of their election and redemption; this is the closing work of grace, and is the evidence of all that goes before. It is necessary to church fellowship, to the communion of saints in a social manner. Members of churches are described as holy brethren, saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus, and none are meet to be admitted among them but such who are so; for "what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" &c. (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). Sanctification is necessary as a meetness for heaven; for the inheritance of the saints in light; without regeneration, in which sanctification is begun, no man shall see, nor enter, into the kingdom of God. It is absolutely necessary for the beatific vision of God in a future state; "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord"; but being possessed of that, shall see him, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with him for ever (Hebrews 12:14; Matthew 5:8; Psalms 17:15). To say no more, it is necessary for the work of heaven, which is singing songs of praise, songs of electing, redeeming, regenerating, calling, and persevering grace; how can unholy persons join with the saints in such work and service as this? yea, it would be irksome and disagreeable to themselves, could they be admitted to it, and were capable of it; neither of which can be allowed.

02. Of the Active Obedience of Christ

Of the Active Obedience of Christ in His State of Humiliation The humiliation of Christ may be seen in his obedience to God, through the whole course of his life, even unto death; in order to which,

1. First, He took upon him the form of a servant (Php 2:7), and really became one; even the Servant of God: and this is an instance of his amazing humility and condescension; that he, who was the Son of God, of the same nature with God, and equal to him, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, should voluntarily become the Servant of him; which the apostle observes with astonishment; "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered!" (Hebrews 5:8). He was chosen of God, in his eternal purposes, to be his Servant; and therefore is called, his Servant elect (Isaiah 42:1). He called him to the work and office of a servant; and said unto him, in the everlasting council and covenant of grace and peace, "Thou art my Servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified" (Isaiah 49:3). And Christ, the Son of God, accepted of this office; agreed to be the Servant of God, to come into the world, and do his will and work (Psalms 40:7-8). And accordingly, he was prophesied of as the Servant of the Lord, that should come (Zechariah 3:8; Isaiah 42:1). In the fulness of time he was sent, and came not to be ministered unto, as a monarch, but to minister as a servant; and he quickly appeared to be under a law, and was subject to the law of circumcision; and being had in his infancy to Egypt, the house of servants; to his ancestors, according to the flesh, was an emblem of that servile state he was come into: and very early did he declare, that he must be about his Father's business: as a servant, he had work to do, and much work, and that very laborious; which lay, not only in working miracles, which were works his Father gave him to finish, as demonstrations of his Deity, and prods of his Messiahship; nor only in going about from place to place, healing all manner of diseases, and so doing good to the bodies of men; nor only in preaching the gospel, for which he was qualified and sent, and thereby did good to the souls of men; but chiefly in fulfilling the law of God, both in the preceptive and penal part of it, in the room and stead of his people; and thereby wrought out the great work of all he came to do, the redemption and salvation of men; for this was the work assigned him by God his Father, as his servant; "to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel"; that is, to redeem and save the chosen people: this was the work his Father gave him to do; this was the work which was before him when be came; and this is the work which he has finished; for he has obtained eternal redemption; and is become the author of eternal salvation. Now throughout the whole of his work, as a servant, he appeared very diligent and constant; very early he discovered an inclination to be about it; very eager was he at it; when in it, it was his meat and drink; and he was continually, constantly employed in it (John 4:34; John 9:4). Nor did he leave working till he had completed the whole. In all which he was faithful to him that appointed him; and very justly did he obtain the character of God's "righteous Servant" (Isaiah 11:5; Isaiah 53:11).

2. Secondly, When Christ became incarnate, and took upon him the form of a servant, and really was one; he, as such, was subject to the law of God: hence these two things are joined together, as having a close connection with each other; "Made of a woman; made under the law" (Galatians

4:4).

2a. First, Christ was made under the judicial, or civil law of the Jews; he was by birth a Jew, and is called one (Zechariah 8:23). It is manifest that he sprung from the tribe of Judah; which tribe, in process of time, gave the name of Jews to the whole people of Israel; and because our Lord was of that tribe, he is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5). He was born at Bethlehem, in the tribe of Judah, and was of the seed of David, who was of that tribe; and is therefore said to be the root and offspring of David (Revelation 22:16). Wherefore, since he, the salvation of God, and Saviour of men, as to his human nature, was of the Jews; it was fit and proper he should be subject to their civil government, and to the laws of it, as he was: for though he was charged with sedition, yet falsely, for he was subject to their government, though it was then in the hands of the Romans; and not only paid tribute himself, but directed others to do the same, saying, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's (Matthew 17:24-27; Matthew 22:17-21). And to this law he submitted,

2a1. That it might appear he was of the nation of the Jews, as it was prophesied of, and promised he should; as, that he should be of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the Jewish fathers, according to the flesh; all which he was (Genesis 22:18; Genesis 49:10; Matthew 1:1; Romans 9:5).

2a2. That it might be manifest that he came before the Jewish polity was at an end; as it was foretold he should (Genesis 49:10). And Christ being under and subject to the civil law, showed that the sceptre and lawgiver had not departed, but civil government yet continued; though now, for many hundreds of years it has wholly departed, and is not, in any form or shape, among that people; which has fulfilled the prophecy in Hosea 3:4. "The children of Israel shall be many days without a king"; and therefore the Messiah must be come long ago, before they were without one, as he did; for Herod was king when he was born.

2a3. Christ became subject to the civil law, to teach his followers subjection to civil magistrates; and this is the doctrine of his apostles, frequently inculcated by them, to be subject to the higher powers, to obey magistrates, and submit to every ordinance of men (Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13).

2b. Secondly, Christ was made under the ceremonial law, and became subject to that; he was circumcised when eight days old, according to that law; and was presented in the temple at the time of his mother's purification, as the law required: at twelve years of age he came with his parents to Jerusalem, to keep the passover; and when he had entered on his public office, it was his custom constantly to attend synagogue worship; and it was one of the last actions of his life, to keep the passover with his disciples. Now he became subject to this law,

2b1. Because it looked to him, and centered in him; it was a shadow of good things to come by him: the feasts of tabernacles, passover, and Pentecost; the sabbaths of the seventh day of the week, and of the seventh year, and of the seven times seventh year, were shadows, of which he is the substance: all the ablutions, washings, and purifications enjoined by it, were typical of cleansing by his blood: and all the sacrifices of it, daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly, all pointed to his sacrifice.

2b2. He was made under this law, in order to fulfil it; for it became him to fulfil all righteousness, ceremonial as well as moral righteousness; and all things in it were to have an end, and had an end, even a fulfilling end in him.

2b3. He was made under it, that by fulfilling it he might abolish it, and put an end to it; for when it was fulfilled, it was no longer useful; and there was a necessity of the disannulling of it, because of its weakness and unprofitableness; and accordingly, this law of commandments was abolished; this handwriting of ordinances was blotted out; this middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down; and the rituals of it pronounced weak and beggarly elements; and believers in Christ were directed to take care they were not entangled with this yoke of bondage; nor should they judge and condemn one another for any neglect of it; Christ has answered to the whole, by being made under it.

2c. Thirdly, Christ was made under the moral law; under this he was as a man; being "made of a woman", in course he was made under the law; for every man, as a creature of God, is subject to him, its Creator and Lawgiver; and to his law: to fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man; and is the duty of every man; and was the duty of Christ, as man. But besides this, Christ was made under it, as the surety and substitute of his people; as he became their surety, he engaged to fulfil the law in their room and stead; this is a very principal part of that will of God, which he declared his readiness to come and do; saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God! thy law is within my heart" (Psalms 40:7-8).

2c1. He was made under it, in order to fulfil the precepts of it; which to do is righteousness (Deuteronomy 6:25), and is that righteousness which he undertook to work out in perfect agreement with the commands of the law; and which he perfectly obeyed; for he always did the things which pleased the Father, and all that was pleasing to him; even every command of his righteous law; nor did he fail in anyone instance; he never committed one sin; and so did not transgress the law in anyone particular; but was holy and harmless throughout the whole of his life and conversation.

2c2. He submitted to the penal part of the law; the law pronounces a curse on all those that do not perfectly observe its precepts; Christ being the Surety of his people, was made a curse for them; or endured the curse of the law in their stead, that he might redeem them from it (Galatians 3:10; Galatians 3:13). The penal sanction of the law was death; it threatened with it, in case of sin or disobedience to it; the wages of sin is death; Christ therefore, as the substitute of his people became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, for them.

2c3. All this he became and did, to fulfil the law in their room; and that the righteousness of it might be fulfilled in them, and so deliver them from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of it; that being, through Christ, dead to them, and they to that, that they might live unto God in a spiritual and evangelic manner.

3. Thirdly, Christ taking upon him the form of a servant, in human nature, and being made under the law, he was obedient to it, throughout the whole course of his life, to the time of his death; which is meant by that phrase, "Became obedient unto death"; that is, until death, as well as in it, and by submission to it. And,

3a. There is the obedience of Christ to men; he was obedient to his earthly parents; he not only lived in a state of subjection to them in his childhood and youth, but continued his filial affection for them, and regard to them, particularly to his mother, when a grown man: his words to her in John 2:4 do not express irreverence towards her; nor did she so understand them, showing no resentment at them; but the contrary: nor do those in Matthew 12:48-49 signify any disrespect to her, nor want of affection to her; but his great affection for his spiritual relations: and that he retained his filial duty and regard to her to the last, appears by his bequeathing her to the care of one of his disciples (John 19:27). Christ also yielded obedience to civil magistrates, as before observed, by paying the tribute money; hence in prophecy he is called, the Servant of rulers (Isaiah 49:7). But,

3b. There is the obedience of Christ to God; for his Servant he was; and it was his law he was made under; and to which he yielded obedience; and is that obedience by which his people are made righteous; though there are many things in which Christ was obedient to God, which do not come into the account of his obedience for the justification of men. As,

3b1. The miraculous actions which were performed by him: these were necessary to be done, for they were predicted of him, and were expected from him; hence the Jews said, "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" (John 7:31; Isaiah 35:5-6). And these were done to prove his proper Deity, that he was truly God; that he was in the Father, and the Father in him; that is, that he was of the same nature with him, and equal to him; for the truth of which he appeals to those works of his (John 10:38; John 14:11). These were also proofs of his being the true Messiah; and were given by him as evidences of it to the two disciples John sent to him, to know whether he was the Messiah expected or not (Matthew 11:3-5). Now these were done in obedience to his Father; he gave him those works to finish, and because they were done by his direction, and in his name, and by his authority, they are called the works of his Father (John 5:36; John 10:25; John 10:37). And yet these are no part of that obedience by which men are made righteous; these were done to answer the above ends; and they are recorded, that we might believe in the Son of God, and in his righteousness; but, as Dr. Goodwin observes [Works, vol. 3. part 3. p. 336.], they are not ingredients in that righteousness in which we believe. Nor,

3b2. His obedience in the ministration of the gospel: he had from God his mission and commission to preach the gospel; he was qualified for it as man, through the unction of the Holy Spirit; he was sent of God to preach to this and the other city; to these and the other people: he became the minister of the circumcision, or a minister to the circumcised Jews; both for the truth and faithfulness of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers; and in obedience to the will of God, who gave him a commandment what he should say, and what he should speak; and accordingly he said and spoke what was delivered to him; not his own doctrine, but his Father’s, in which he sought, not his own, but his glory; and so showed himself to be true, and no unrighteousness in him (Romans 15:8; John 8:28; John 12:49-50; John 7:16-18). But now it was not his faithful execution of this his prophetic office, nor of the whole of his office as Mediator, which is the obedience or righteousness by which a sinner is justified; for though it is the righteousness of the Mediator; yet not the fidelity and righteousness he exercised in the execution of his office, is that by which men are justified. Nor,

3b3. His obedience to the ceremonial law, which he was under, as has been shown; and to which he yielded obedience; of which many instances have been given; but this is no part of our justifying righteousness; for the greater number of those that are made righteous by Christ's obedience, were never under this law; and so under no obligation to yield obedience to it; nor their surety for them. But,

3b4. It is Christ's obedience to the moral law, which he was under, and to which he was obedient throughout his life, unto death; and is what all men are subject, and ought to be obedient to; and for lack of which obedience, Christ has yielded a perfect one, in the room and stead of his people; concerning which may be observed, his qualifications and capacity for it, his actual performance of it, and the excellency of his obedience, whereby it appears to have answered the end and design of it.

3b4a. First, The qualifications and capacity of Christ to yield perfect obedience to the law.

3b4a1. His assumption of human nature, which was necessary to his obedience: as God he could not obey; he therefore took upon him a nature in which he could be subject to God, and yield obedience to him; and which was fit and proper to be done in that nature in which disobedience had been committed.

3b4a2. He was made under the law, for this purpose; which has been particularly explained and enlarged on.

3b4a3. He had a pure and holy nature, quite conformable to the pure, holy, and righteous law of God; clear of all irregular affections, desires, motions, or lusts; is called, "the holy Thing", said to be "without spot or blemish", harmless and undefiled; entirely free from both original and actual transgression, and so fit for pure and perfect obedience to be performed in it.

3b4a4. Was possessed of a power of free will to that which is holy, just, and good, agreeable to the law of God. In the state of innocence the will of man was free to that which is good only: in man fallen, his will is only free to that which is evil: in a man regenerate, there being two principles in him, there is a will to that which is good, and a will to that which is evil; so that he cannot do oftentimes what he would: but the human will of Christ was entirely free to that which is good; and as he had a will and power to do, so he always did the things which pleased his Father.

3b4a5. He had a natural love to righteousness, and an hatred of sin (Psalms 45:7), and from this principle flowed an entire conformity to the law, throughout the whole of his life, and all the actions of it.

3b4b. Secondly, His actual performance of it; for as he came to fulfil it, he has fulfilled it; and is become the end of it, for righteousness, to everyone that believes. The moral law consists of two tables; and is reduced, by Christ, to two points, love to God, and love to our neighbour; and both have been exactly observed and obeyed by Christ.

3b4b1. The first table of the law; which includes,

3b4b1a. Love to God; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart", &c. (Matthew 22:37-38) and which was never obeyed and fulfilled to such perfection and purity as by Christ; and which he has fully shown by his regard to the whole will of his Father, to all his commands, even to the

laying down of his life for men; and therefore voluntarily went forth to meet the prince of this world in the garden, and deliver up himself into the hands of his emissaries, in order to suffer and die, according to his Father's will; hence he said, "That the world may know that I love the Father---Arise, let us go hence" (John 14:31).

3b4b1b. Faith and trust in God; for to believe God, and to believe in him, is to have him before us, as the law requires: Christ very early exercised faith and hope on him as his God; even when he was upon his mother's breasts; and when in the midst of his enemies, and in suffering circumstances, he expressed the strongest degree of confidence in him; "The Lord God will help me, therefore I shall not be ashamed" (Psalms 22:9-10; Isaiah 50:7-9).

3b4b1c. The whole worship of God; not only internal, which lies in the exercise of faith, hope, love, &c. just observed; but external, as prayer and praise; both which Christ was often in the exercise of (Luke 6:12; Luke 10:21), and who not only directed to the worship and service of God, and of him only; but set an example by his constant attendance on public worship on sabbath days; and he showed his regard to it, by inveighing against all innovations in it, the doctrines, traditions, and commandments of men, as vain and superstitious; and by resenting every degree of profanation, even of the place of public worship (Matthew 4:10; Matthew 13:54; Matthew 15:3; Matthew 15:6; Matthew 15:9; Matthew 21:12-13).

3b4b1d. Honour and reverence of the name of God; and though Christ himself was dishonored by men, he was careful to honour his God and Father, and not take his name in vain; "I honour my Father", says he, "and ye dishonor me". With what reverence does he address him in his prayer; saying, "Holy Father, and righteous Father?" (see John 8:49; John 17:11; John 17:25).

3b4b1e. Sanctification of the sabbath; for though Christ was charged with breaking it, by doing acts of mercy on it; which he vindicated, and so cleared himself from the aspersion of his enemies; yet he was constant in the observation of it for religious service; it was his constant custom to go to the synagogue on sabbath days, and there either hear or read the scriptures, and expound them (Luke 4:16; Luke 4:31).

3b4b2. The second table of the law; which includes,

3b4b2a. Honoring of parents, and obedience to them; the first commandment with promise, and the first in this table; and which, how it was observed by Christ, both in youth and manhood, has been remarked already; (see Luke 2:51), and in which he was a pattern to others of filial obedience.

3b4b2b. Love to our neighbour as one's self, and which is the second commandment, and like to the first (Matthew 22:39). And this was never fulfilled by any as by Christ; who has shown the greatest love, pity, and compassion, both to the bodies and souls of men: greater love hath no man, than what he has expressed to men, by suffering and dying for them, and working out their salvation (John 15:13).

3b4b2c. Doing all good to men the law requires: and no injury to the persons and properties of men, which that forbids; and which Christ punctually observed: he went about continually from place to place, doing good to the bodies of men, by healing all manner of diseases; and to the souls of men, by preaching wholesome doctrine to them: nor did he ever, in one single instance,

do any injury to the person of any man, by striking, smiting, or killing; nor to the property any one; he did "no violence", committed no act of rapine or robbery, or took away any man's substance by fraud or force (Acts 10:38; Isaiah 53:9).

3b4b2d. As all malice, impurity, and evil concupiscence, are forbidden in this table of the law; none of these appeared in Christ; no, not the least shadow of them; no malice prepense, nor hatred of any man's person; no unchaste desires, looks, words, and actions; no evil covetousness, or lust after what is another's; nor after any worldly riches and grandeur: so that the law, in both its tables, was precisely obeyed by him.

3b4c. Thirdly, The obedience which Christ yielded to the law, has these peculiar excellencies in it.

3b4c1. It was voluntary; he freely offered himself to become man, to be made under the law, and yield obedience to it; or, in other words, to do the will of God; saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!" and when he was come, it was meat and drink; or, he took as much delight and pleasure in doing the will and work of God, and went about it as willingly and as cheerfully, as a man does in eating and drinking (Hebrews 10:7; John 4:34).

3b4c2. It is perfect and complete; there is no command but what Christ inviolably kept; no one, in anyone instance, was broken by him; "He did no sin": whatever was commanded, he did; and whatever was forbidden, he avoided: hence those that are justified by his obedience and righteousness, are all fair, without spot, perfectly comely through his comeliness put upon them.

3b4c3. It excels the obedience of men and angels; not only the obedience and righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, who pretended to a strict observance of the law, but of the most truly righteous persons; for "there is not a just man upon earth, that does good and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20). But Christ did all that was good, without sin: the obedience and holiness of angels is chargeable with folly, in comparison of the purity and holiness of God: but the obedience and righteousness of Christ is without any blemish, weakness, or imperfection.

3b4c4. It was wrought out in the room and stead of his people; he obeyed the law, and satisfied it in all its demands, that the righteousness of it might be fulfilled in them, or for them, in him, as their head and representative; hence he, being the end of the law for righteousness unto them, it is unto them, and comes upon them.

3b4c5. It is the measure and matter of the justification of them that believe in him; "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19), that is, by the imputation of this obedience, or righteousness, unto them; (see 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

3b4c6. It is an obedience well pleasing in the sight of God; because voluntary, perfect, superior excellency, performed in the room and stead of his people, and by which they are justified. God is well pleased with his Son, and with his people, considered in him; and with his righteousness and obedience imputed to them; because by it the law is magnified and made honorable; Christ always did the things which pleased his Father; his obedience, in all the parts of it, is acceptable to him; and so are his people on account of it, in whose room and stead it was performed; this is what is commonly called the active obedience of Christ, which he performed in life, agreeable to the precepts of the law.

02. Of the Administration of the Covenant of Grace

Of the Manifestation and Administration of the Covenant of Grace

Having treated of the sin and fall of our first parents, and of the breach of the covenant of works by them, and of the sad effects thereof to themselves, and of the woeful consequences of the same to their posterity; of the imputation of their sin, and of the derivation of a corrupt nature unto them; and of actual sins and transgressions flowing from thence, and of the punishment due unto them: I am now come to the dawn of grace to fallen man, to the breakings forth and application of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it to the spiritual seed of Christ among the posterity of Adam.

I have considered the covenant of grace in a former part of this work, as it was a compact in eternity, between the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; in which each person agreed to take his part in the economy of man’s salvation: and now I shall consider the administration of that covenant in the various periods of time, from the beginning of the world to the end of it. The covenant of grace is but one and the same in all ages, of which Christ is the substance; being given for "a covenant of the people", of all the people of God, both Jews and Gentiles, who is "the same" in the "yesterday" of the Old Testament, and in the "today" of the New Testament, and "for ever"; he is "the way, the truth, and the life", the only true way to eternal life; and there never was any other way made known to men since the fall of Adam; no other name under heaven has been given, or will be given, by which men can be saved. The patriarchs before the flood and after, before the law of Moses and under it, before the coming of Christ, and all the saints since, are saved in one and the same way, even "by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and that is the grace of the covenant, exhibited at different times, and in divers manners. For though the covenant is but one, there are different administrations of it; particularly two, one before the coming of Christ, and the other after it; which lay the foundation for the distinction of the "first" and "second", the "old" and the "new" covenant, observed by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 8:7-8; Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 9:1; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24), for by the first and old covenant, is not meant the covenant of works made with Adam, which had been broke and abrogated long ago; since the apostle is speaking of a covenant waxen old, and ready to vanish away in his time: nor was the covenant of works the first and most ancient covenant; the covenant of grace, as an eternal compact, was before that; but by it is meant the first and most ancient administration of the covenant of grace which reached from the fall of Adam, when the covenant of works was broke, unto the coming of Christ, when it was superseded and vacated by another administration of the same covenant, called therefore the "second" and "new" covenant. The one we commonly call the Old Testament dispensation, and the other the New Testament dispensation; for which there seems to be some foundation in 2 Corinthians 3:6; 2 Corinthians 3:14 and Hebrews 9:15 these two covenants, or rather the two administrations of the same covenant, are allegorically represented by two women, Hagar and Sarah, the bondwoman and the free (Galatians 4:22-26), which fitly describe the nature and difference of them. And before I proceed any farther, I shall just point out the agreement and disagreement of those two

administrations of the covenant of grace.

1. First, The agreement there is between them.

1a. They agree in the efficient cause, God: the covenant of grace, in its original constitution in eternity, is of God, and therefore it is called his covenant, being made by him; "I have made a covenant--my covenant I will not break", #Psalms 89:3; Psalms 89:34 and whenever any exhibition or manifestation of this covenant was made to any of the patriarchs, as to Abraham, David, &c. it is ascribed to God, "I will make my covenant—he hath made with me an everlasting covenant" (Genesis 17:22; Sam. 23:5) so the new covenant, or new administration of it, runs in this form, "I will make a new covenant" &c. (Hebrews 8:8).

1b. In the moving cause, the sovereign mercy, and free grace of God, which moved God to make the covenant of grace at first (Psalms 89:2-3). And every exhibition of it under the former dispensation, is a rich display of it, and therefore it is called, the "mercy promised to the fathers" in his "holy covenant" (Luke 1:72), and which has so largely appeared in the coming of Christ, which is ascribed to "the tender mercy of our God", that "grace" and "truth", in the great abundance of them, are said to come by him; by which names the covenant of grace, under the gospel dispensation, is called, in distinction from that under the Mosaic one (Luke 1:78; John 1:17).

1c. In the Mediator, who is Christ; there is but one Mediator of the covenant of grace, let it be considered under what dispensation it will; even Christ, who under the former dispensation was revealed as the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent’s head, and make atonement by his sufferings and death, signified by the expiatory sacrifices, under the law; the Shiloh, the peaceable One, and the Peace Maker, the living Redeemer of Job, and of all believers under the Old Testament. Moses, indeed, was a Mediator, but he was only a typical one. There is but "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus"; there never was any other, and he is the "Mediator of the new covenant" (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 12:24).

1d. In the subjects of these covenants, or administrations of the covenants of grace, the elect of God, to whom the blessings of it are applied. It was with the chosen people of God in Christ, the covenant of grace was originally made; and according to the election of grace are the spiritual blessings of it dispensed to the children of men (Psalms 89:3; Ephesians 1:3-4), so they were under the former dispensation, from the beginning of the world, to the seed of the woman, in distinction from the seed of the serpent; to the remnant according to the election of grace among the Jews, the children of the promise that were counted for the seed; and election, or elect men, obtain the blessings of the covenant in all ages, and under the present dispensation, more abundantly, and in greater numbers.

1e. In the blessings of it; they are the same under both administrations. Salvation and redemption by Christ is the great blessing held forth and enjoyed under the one as under the other (2 Samuel 23:5; Hebrews 9:15). Justification by the righteousness of Christ, which the Old Testament church had knowledge of, and faith in, as well as the new (Isaiah 45:24-25; Romans 3:21-23). Forgiveness of sin through faith in Christ, all the prophets bore witness to; and the saints of old, as now, had as comfortable an application of it (Psalms 32:1; Psalms 32:5; Isaiah 43:25; Micah 7:18; Acts 10:43). Regeneration, spiritual circumcision, and sanctification, were what men were made partakers of under the first, as under the second administration of the covenant (Deuteronomy

30:6; Php 3:3). Eternal life was made known in the writings of the Old Testament, as well as in those of the New; and was believed, looked for, and expected by the saints of the former, as of the latter dispensation (John 5:39; Hebrews 11:10; Hebrews 11:16; Job 19:26-27). In a word, they and we eat the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:3-4).

2. Secondly, In some things there is a disagreement between these two administrations of the covenant of Grace.

2a. Under the first administration saints looked forward to Christ that was to come, and to the good things that were to come by him, and so were waiting, expecting, and longing for the enjoyment of them; but under the second and new administration, believers look backwards to Christ as being come, before whose eyes he is evidently set forth in the word and ordinances, as crucified and slain; and they look to the blessings of the covenant through him as brought in; to peace, pardon, atonement, righteousness, redemption, and salvation, as wrought out and finished.

2b. There is a greater clearness and evidence of things under the one than under the other; the law was only a shadow of good things to come; did not so much as exhibit the image of them, at least but very faintly. The obscurity of the former dispensation, was, signified by the veil over the face of Moses, when he spoke to the children of Israel; so that they could not see to the end of what was to be abolished; whereas, believers under the present dispensation, with open face, with faces unveiled, behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord clearly and plainly (Hebrews 10:1; 2 Corinthians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 3:18), then, comparatively, it was night, now broad day; the day has broke, and the shadows are fled and gone.

2c. There is more of a spirit of liberty, and less of bondage, under the one, than under the other; saints under the one differed little from servants, being in bondage under the elements of the world; but under the other are Christ's freemen, and receive not the spirit of bondage again, to fear; but the spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father; which is a free spirit, and brings liberty with it; and for this reason the two different administrations of the covenant, are signified, the one by Hagar, the bondwoman, because it engendered to bondage, and those under it were in such a state; and the other by Sarah, the free woman, an emblem of Jerusalem, which is free, and the mother of us all (Galatians 4:1-3; Galatians 4:24-26; Romans 8:15).

2d. There is a larger and more plentiful effusion of the Spirit, and of his gifts and graces, under the one than under the other; greater measures of grace, and of spiritual light and knowledge were promised, as what would be communicated under the new and second administration of the covenant; and accordingly grace, in all its fulness and "truth", in all its clearness and evidence, are "come by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17; see Jeremiah 31:31-34).

2e. The latter administration of the covenant extends to more persons than the former. The Gentiles were strangers to the covenants of promise, had no knowledge nor application of the promises and blessings of the covenant of grace, except now and then, and here and there one; but now the blessing of Abraham is come upon the Gentiles, and they are fellow heirs of the same grace and privileges, and partakers of the promises in Christ by the gospel (Ephesians 2:12; Ephesians 3:6; Galatians 3:14).

2f. The present administration of the covenant of grace, will continue to the end of the world; it will never give way to, nor be succeeded by another; it is that which remains, in distinction from that which is done away, and so exceeds in glory: the ceremonial law, under which the former covenant was administered, was "until the time of reformation", until Christ came and his forerunner; "The law and the prophets were until John", the harbinger of Christ, the fulfilling end of them; (see 2 Corinthians 3:11; Hebrews 9:10; Luke 16:16).

2g. The ordinances of them are different. The first covenant had ordinances of divine service; but those, comparatively, were carnal and worldly, at best but typical and shadowy, and faint representations of divine and spiritual things; and were to continue but for a while, and then to be shaken and removed, and other ordinances take place, which shall not be shaken, but remain to the second coming of Christ; and in which he is more clearly and evidently set forth, and the blessings of his grace (Hebrews 9:1; Hebrews 9:10; Hebrews 12:27).

2h. Though the promises and blessings of grace under both administrations are the same, yet differently exhibited; under the former dispensation, not only more darkly and obscurely, but by earthly things, as by the land of Canaan, and the outward mercies of it; but under the latter, as more clearly and plainly, so more spiritually and nakedly, as they are in themselves spiritual, heavenly, and divine; and delivered out more free, and unclogged of all conditions, and so called "better promises", and the administration of the covenant, in which they are, a "better testament"; God having "provided" for New Testament saints some "better thing", at least held forth in a better manner; that Old Testament saints might not be "made perfect" without them (Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 7:22; Hebrews 11:40).

02. Of the Anger and Wrath of God

Of The Anger And Wrath Of God.

Besides the love and kindness of God, his grace, favour, and good will, his mercy, pity, and compassion; and his longsuffering and forbearance; which flow from the goodness of his nature; there are other things to be considered, which may come under the notion of affections; as anger, wrath, hatred, &c. The anger and wrath of God are often used promiscuously in Scripture, to signify the same thing, and yet they sometimes seem to be distinct; and according to our notion of them, as in men, they may be distinguished: anger is a lower and lesser degree of wrath, and wrath is the height of anger; and accordingly I shall distinctly consider them, as in God.

1. The Anger of God. And shall, first, show that it belongs to God; and in what sense, and on what account. And, secondly, with whom he is angry; or on whom his anger is exercised.

1a. First, That Anger belongs to God, or may be predicated of him. This is denied by some philosophers of the Cynic and Stoic sects, because it is a passion; they allow grace, good will, and beneficence in God to men, but not anger; this they suppose to be a weakness, and even a sort of madness[1], and what is unbecoming a wise and good man, and much more unbecoming Deity. The Epicureans deny that either is in God; neither favour and good will, nor anger and wrath[2]; for they imagine he has no concern in the affairs of men, and neither regards their good actions, nor their bad ones; and so is neither pleased nor displeased with them; and is neither kind and favourable to them; nor is angry with them, nor resents what is done by them. But the scriptures everywhere ascribe anger to God; and often speak of it, as being kindled against particular persons, and against whole bodies of men; and give many particular instances of it: to produce the whole proof of this, would be to transcribe a great part of the Bible. But then anger is to be considered not as a passion, or affection in God, as it is in men; and especially as it may be defined from the etymology of the Latin word for it "ira", as given by a learned grammarian[3], deriving it from "ire", "to go"; as if a man, when in anger, goes out of himself; and when he lays it down, returns to himself again; this cannot, in any sense, be ascribed to God: rather it may be, as if it was "ura", and so is "ab urendo", from burning; or rather from the Hebrew word hrx which signifies to burn; and the anger of God is compared to fire in Scripture, and is often said to be kindled; but then we are not to imagine, when God is said to be angry, that there is any commotion or perturbation in God’s mind; that he is ruffled and discomposed, or that there is any pain or uneasiness in him, as in human minds; so it may be in finite created spirits, but not in an infinite and uncreated one, as God is: and much less is this to be considered as a criminal passion in him, as it too often is in men; for God is a pure and holy being; without iniquity: besides, there may be anger in men without sin; we are exhorted to be angry and sin not, (Ephesians 4:26) and it is certain there was anger in the human nature of Christ, in whom there was no sin, nor was he conscious of any, (Mark 3:5) and so there may be in the divine mind, without an imputation of weakness or sin. Anger in God is no other than a disgust with sin, and with sinners, on account of it; it is often said in Scripture, that such and such a thing displeased him, or was evil, and not right

in his sight (Numbers 11:1; 2 Samuel 11:27; Psalms 60:1; Isaiah 59:15). All sin is displeasing to God; he cannot take any pleasure in it, nor look upon it with delight; it is so contrary to his nature, and repugnant to his will, he cannot but have an aversion to it, and an abhorrence of it; and there are some sins more especially which provoke him to anger; as the sins against the first table of the law, particularly idolatry; which, of all sins, is the most provoking to him: since it strikes at his very being, and robs him of his glory; see (Deuteronomy 32:16; Deuteronomy 32:21; Judges 2:12-13; Judges 1:1-36 King 16:33). Likewise distrust of the power and providence of God, murmuring at it, and complaining of it; which was often the case of the Israelites; and by which they provoked the Lord to anger; so perjury, false swearing, the taking of the name of God in vain, and blasphemy of it; profanation of the Lord's day, and neglect of his word, worship, and ordinances: and not these only, but sins against the second table of the law, are highly displeasing to God, and resented by him; as disobedience to parents, murder, adultery, theft, false witness, covetousness, and every evil thing (see Isaiah 5:24-25). Now "who knoweth the power of God's anger?" (Psalms 90:11) nothing can resist it, nor stand before it; not rocks and mountains, which are overturned and cast down by it; nor the mightiest monarchs, nor the proudest mortals, nor the stoutest and adamantine hearts; none can stand before God when once he is angry, (Job 9:5; Job 9:13; Psalms 76:7; Nahum 1:6).

1b. Secondly, The objects of the anger of God, or on whom it is exercised. "God is angry with the wicked every day", (Psalms 7:11) because they are daily sinning against him; their whole lives are one continued series and course of wickedness; all they do is sin; their very actions in civil life, the ploughing of the wicked, is sin; and all their religious services are but "splendida peccata", "shining sins", and so are displeasing to God, and resented by him; their sacrifices, brought with a wicked mind, without a right principle, and a right end, are an abomination to him, (Proverbs 21:4; Proverbs 21:27) being in the flesh, in an unregenerate state, they cannot please God, nor do the things which are pleasing in his sight; being destitute of the grace of God, and particularly of faith; "without which it is impossible to please him." These, though God is angry with them continually, yet they do not always appear under the visible and public tokens of his resentment; the "rod of God" is not on them; nor are they in trouble, as other men, and have more than heart can wish; oftentimes their families, flocks, and herds, increase; and they spend their days in health, wealth, and pleasure, (Job 21:7-13; Psalms 73:3-12) and seem as if they were the favourites of heaven, and think themselves to be such. But though God is slow to anger, as he is often described, moves slowly to express his anger; yet he will most certainly do it in the issue of things; and though men may promise themselves impunity in sin, and fancy they shall have peace when they walk after the imagination of their evil hearts, and add sin to sin; yet at length God will not spare them; but his anger and jealousy shall smoke against them, and all the curses written in the law shall come upon them, (Deuteronomy 29:19-20).

Moreover, God is angry with his own special people, holy and good men; we read of his anger being kindled against Aaron and Miriam, for speaking against Moses; and against Moses and Aaron, for not sanctifying him before the children of Israel; insomuch that neither of them were admitted to enter the land of Canaan; and against David, Solomon, and others, for sins committed by them. And this is not at all inconsistent with the love of God unto them: anger is not opposite to love; there may be anger in the nearest and dearest relatives; and where there is the most affectionate regard to each other: the anger of Jacob was kindled against his beloved Rachel; a

father may be angry with his son, and chastise him for a fault, and yet dearly love him; and a son may be angry with a father, as Jonathan was with Saul, yet bear a true filial affection for him. God loves his people with an everlasting and unchangeable love, and never alters and varies in it; and yet may be angry, that is, displeased with them, and show his resentment at sin committed by them, by his chastisement of them, and still continue his love to them; for even that is done in love. Besides, the anger of God towards them, is often only in their sense and apprehension of it; when God goes forth towards them, in some dispensations of his, which are not agreeable to them, they conclude he is angry with them; and when these dispensations are varied, then they suppose his anger is turned away from them, (Isaiah 12:1) so when he hides his face from them, and unbelief prevails, they interpret it, putting them away in anger, and shutting up his tender mercies in anger, (Psalms 27:9; Psalms 77:9) when he seems to turn a deaf ear to their prayers, and does not give an immediate answer to them; this they call being angry against the prayer of his people, (Psalms 80:4) and when he afflicts them, in one way or another, then they apprehend he comes forth in anger against them; and "they have no soundness in their flesh, because of his anger; nor rest in their bones, because of their sins", (Psalms 38:3) but when he takes off his afflicting hand, grants his gracious presence, and manifests his pardoning love and grace, then they conclude he has turned himself from the fierceness of his anger (Psalms 85:2-3). Now this apparent anger, or appearance of anger, "endures but for a moment", (Psalms 30:5) a very short space of time indeed; though God hides his face from his people, and chides them for their sins: yet he does not keep anger for ever: this is the criterion by which he is distinguished from other gods, in that he retains not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy, (Psalms 103:9; Micah 7:18) and in this the anger of God towards his people, differs from his anger to wicked men, since the one is but for a moment, and the other is continual.

2. The Wrath of God is the heat of his great anger, (Deuteronomy 29:24) it is his anger not only kindled and incensed, but blown up into a flame; it is the "indignation" of his anger, the "fury" and "fierceness" of it, (Isaiah 30:30; Isaiah 42:25; Hosea 11:9) and it seems to be no other than his punitive justice, and includes his will to punish sinners according to the demerit of their sins in strict justice; his threatenings to do it, and the actual execution of it; which is the vengeance that belongs to him, and he will recompense; even his vindictive wrath, or vengeful judgment; "What if God willing to show his wrath", &c.? (Romans 9:22). Now the wrath of God may be considered,

2a. As temporary, or what is executed in the present life; of which there have been many instances and examples, and there will be more; and a brief review of them will give a more enlarged idea of the wrath of God. Not to take notice of the apostate angels, whom God has cast down to hell; where, though they may not be in full torment, yet are dreadful instances of the wrath of God against sin; since not one of them have been spared, or have shared in pardoning grace and mercy. I shall only observe what examples of it have been, or will be, among men. The first instance of it is in the condemnation of Adam, and all his posterity, for the first sin, and for only one single sin of his. How great must that sin be! what sinfulness must there be in it! how greatly must the divine Being be incensed by it! in that, for it, he has caused death, that is, his wrath to pass in judgment on him, and all his offspring; so that, in consequence of it, all the children of Adam are the children of God’s wrath. The next is the drowning of the old world, when full of violence and corruption; so that God repented he had made man in it, and it grieved him to the heart; and in his wrath he determined to destroy man and beast in it; and which he did, by bringing a flood on the

world of the ungodly. Then follows another, though not so general; but limited and restrained to a part of the world; the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and others of the plain; whose inhabitants being notorious sinners, provoked the eyes of God's glory to such a degree, that he rained fire and brimstone from heaven upon them; and set them as an example and emblem of mens' suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. The plagues inflicted on the Egyptians, for not letting Israel go, when demanded of them, is another instance of the wrath of God; for by inflicting these on them, he not only made a way to his anger, to show it forth, as the Psalmist says; but, as he also observes, "he cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble", (Psalms 78:49-50). The children of Israel themselves often provoked the Lord to wrath; and brought it down upon them, for their sins; as at Horeb, when they made the calf; at Taberah, Massah, and Kibrothhattaavah, where they murmured against the Lord, (Deuteronomy 9:8; Deuteronomy 9:19; Deuteronomy 9:22) as they did likewise at the report of the spies, concerning the land of Canaan; when "God swore in his wrath, they should not enter into his rest." And again, upon the affair of Korah, and his accomplices, when wrath went forth from the Lord, and the plague began, (Numbers 14:23; Numbers 16:46). Witness, also, each of their captivities; particularly their captivity in Babylon, through their mocking at, and misuse of the prophets of the Lord; so that wrath arose against them; and there was no remedy; and their last captivity, and destruction, by the Romans; when wrath came upon them to the uttermost; and under which wrath, and in which captivity they are to this day. Whenever the four sore judgments of God, the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, have been exercised in the world, as they often have been; they are always in wrath; and these with earthquakes, and such like uncommon events, are presignifications, and foretokens of greater wrath yet to come; and in a little while, the seven vials full of the wrath of God, will be poured forth on antichrist, and on the antichristian states; and the judgment of God will come on Babylon in one day. And when the end of all things is come, the earth, and all in it will be burnt with fire, and the heavens melt away with fervent heat; the day of the Lord will burn like an oven, and the wicked, like stubble, will be burnt up by it, and will have neither root nor branch left: all which will be expressive of the great wrath of God. But there is no greater instance of it, or what more fully demonstrates it, than what our Lord Jesus Christ suffered and endured as the Surety of his people, in their room and stead; when, their sins being imputed to him, were found on him, and he was stricken for them; the sword of justice was sheathed in him; the vindictive wrath of God was poured forth upon him, to the uttermost of the demerit of sin; God spared him not: how inconceivably great must his wrath be against sin, when God spared not in the least his own dearly beloved Son, but suffered him to be put to the most exquisite pain, both in body and soul, for the sins of his people!

2b. There is the wrath of God that is yet to come: the Scriptures speak of future wrath; wrath that will take place in the life which is to come; which in part, commences at the death of wicked men; and will be complete at their resurrection from the dead (Matthew 3:7; 1 Thessalonians 1:10). This is expressed by fire, than which nothing is more intolerable; even devouring fire and everlasting burnings, not to be endured; this is no other than the curse of the law that is broken; which not only reaches to this life, but to that which is to come; it is the same with the second death; which lies in a separation from God, and, in a sense of his hot displeasure; it is called hell and hell fire; the word for which, in the New Testament, is taken from Gehinnom, or the valley of Hinnom; where the Jews burnt their children in sacrifice to Molech; and which place, from the beating of drums in it, that the shrieks of the children might not be heard by their parents, was called Tophet; of which the

prophet says, as an emblem of hell fire, or the fire of divine wrath; "Tophet is ordained of old--the pile thereof is fire, and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it", (Isaiah 30:33) which is an awful representation of the wrath of God. And by whatsoever term this state of wrath is expressed, it is always spoken of as what will continue for ever: it is called everlasting fire, everlasting punishment, everlasting destruction, "the smoke of torment, that ascends for ever and ever"; and for the commencement of which, in its full extent, there is a day fixed, called, "the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God"; until which time God reserves wrath for his adversaries; it is laid up in store with him, among his treasures, and will be ever laying out, and pouring forth. As to the objects of this wrath, seeing it is revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men; it lies against all that are unrighteous and ungodly; and as all have sinned, and are under sin, all are "children of wrath", (Ephesians 2:3; Romans 1:18; Romans 3:9; Romans 3:23) but there are some particularly described, on whom this wrath comes, and they are called "children of disobedience", (Ephesians 5:5-6; Colossians 3:5-6) such who are disobedient to the light of nature, rebel against it, and hold truth in unrighteousness, which that discovers; and so as they sin without law, they perish without law, (Romans 1:18-19; Romans 1:21; Romans 1:28; Romans 2:12) and who also are disobedient to the law of God, break it, and are convicted by it, as transgressors, whom it pronounces guilty, and is the ministration of condemnation and death unto them; and who are disobedient to the gospel of Christ, obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, and are slaves to their sinful lusts and pleasures; on these come indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; even on every soul of man that does evil, (2 Thessalonians 1:8; Romans 2:8-9) they are also represented as unbelievers: "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him": he that does not believe that Christ is the Son of God, that he is the Messiah and Saviour of men, the sentence of wrath, which the law has passed on him, as a transgressor of that, remains; and since he denies divine revelation, rejects the gospel scheme, and disbelieves Christ as a Saviour, and salvation by him, there is no help for him; wrath is on him, and that without remedy, it must abide: now it is not any sort of unbelief for which this wrath is, and abides; not for that which is through the want of the means of faith, such as in heathens; for "how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?" (Romans 10:14; Romans 10:17) nor which is through the want of the special grace of faith, which is the gift of God, and peculiar to his elect, and which he only can give, and yet denies it; and which, without his grace vouchsafed, they can never have: but it is the disbelief of the report of the gospel, by such who have the opportunity of reading and hearing it, and yet either attend not to the evidence of it; or, notwithstanding that, reject it; they receive not the record God has given of his Son, and so make him a liar, than which nothing is more provoking to wrath (1 John 5:10). This was the case of the Jews of old, (John 3:19) and is of the deists of the present age. In short, the wrath of God comes upon men either for their sins against the light of nature, or against the law of God, or against the gospel of Christ.

There are some on whom no wrath comes here, nor hereafter; who are the vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory: concerning whom Jehovah says, "fury is not in me"; and to whom he is all love, "love" itself, (Isaiah 27:4; 1 John 4:16) being sinners indeed, and transgressors of the law of God, they are children of wrath as others, (Ephesians 2:3) which phrase not only means that they are serving of wrath, but that, as they are sinners, they are found guilty of it; and not only found guilty, but are condemned unto it; they are really under the sentence of wrath, condemnation, and death; they are obnoxious to the curse of the law, which is no other than the wrath of God; they are liable

to it, and in danger of it; and being so near it, how is it that they escape it, and are secured from it? They are secured from it by the decree of God, who has appointed them not to wrath, but to obtain salvation, (1 Thessalonians 5:9) which decree is unfrustrable by the oath of God, who has swore that he will not be wrath with them, (Isaiah 54:9) which is immutable: by the suretyship engagements of Christ for them, to bear it in their room; and till that was done, God forbore to execute the sentence; called the forbearance of God, (Romans 3:25) by Christ's actually bearing the chastisement of their peace; by being made a curse for them, and enduring the wrath of God in their room; whereby he delivered them from wrath to come, (Psalms 89:38; 1 Thessalonians 5:10) and by his righteousness imputed to them, through which, being justified, they are saved from wrath, (Romans 5:9) though even these persons may have, at times, some apprehensions of the wrath of God; as, particularly, under first awakenings, and convictions of sin; when the law works a sense of wrath in them, and leaves in them a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation; when they flee to Christ, from wrath to come, and say, "Lord, save us, or we perish"; and afterwards, when under the hiding of God's face, or his afflicting hand is upon them, they imagine that the wrath of God lies hard upon them, and his fierce wrath goes over them, (Psalms 88:7; Psalms 88:16; Lamentations 3:1) but in reality, there is no wrath comes upon them now; their afflictions and chastisements are all in love; and there will be no curse hereafter; but they shall always see the face of God, and be "in his presence, where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore" (Revelation 3:19; Revelation 22:3-4).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vide Senecam de Ira, l. 1. c. 1. Sallustium de Diis, c. 14. & Demophili Sentent. p. 8. Ed. Gale.

[2] Vide Lactantium de ira Dei. c. 4. & 5.

[3] Donatus apud Zanchium de Natura Dei, l. 4. c. 6. p. 407.

02. Of the Ascension of Christ

Of the Ascension of Christ to Heaven The ascension of Christ to heaven was, at his death, burial, and resurrection, according to the scriptures; he himself gave hints of it to his disciples, even before his death, as well as after his resurrection; "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (John 6:62; John 16:28; John 20:17). It was pre-signified both by scripture prophecies, and by scripture types.

1. First by scripture prophecies; of which there are many; some more obscurely, others more clearly point unto it. As,

1a. First, A passage in Psalms 47:5 "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." The whole Psalm is applied, by some Jewish writers, to the times of the Messiah, and this verse particularly, who is the great King over all the earth (Psalms 47:2; Psalms 47:7), and more manifestly appeared so at his ascension, when he was made and declared Lord and Christ; and who subdued the Gentile world (Psalms 47:3), through the ministration of his gospel; by which, after his ascension, he went into it, conquering and to conquer; and caused his ministers to triumph in it. And though it was in his human nature that he went up from earth to heaven; yet it was in that, as in union with his divine Person; so that it may be truly said, that God went up to heaven; in like sense as God is said to purchase the church with his blood; even God in our nature; God manifest in the flesh; Immanuel, God with us: and though the circumstance of his ascension, being attended with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet, is not mentioned in the New Testament, in the account of it; yet there is no doubt to be made of it, since the angels present at it, told the disciples on the spot, that this same Jesus should so come, in like manner as they saw him go into heaven: now it is certain, that Christ will descend from heaven with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God: and also, since he was attended in his ascension with the angels of God, and with some men who rose after his resurrection; there is scarce any question to be made of it, that he ascended amidst their shouts and acclamations; and the rather, since he went up as a triumphant conqueror, over all his and our enemies, leading captivity captive.

1b. Secondly, The words of the Psalmist, in Psalms 110:1. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand;" though they do not express, yet they plainly imply, the ascension of Christ to heaven; for unless he ascended to heaven, how could he sit down at the right hand of God there? and hence the apostle Peter thus argues and reasons upon them; "For David is not ascended into the heavens;" not in his body, and therefore the words are not spoken of him, but of one that is ascended; "But he himself saith," not of himself, but another, even of his Lord the Messiah; "The Lord said unto my Lord," &c. (Acts 2:34-35).

1c. Thirdly, The vision Daniel had of the Son of man, in Daniel 7:13-14 is thought by some to have respect to the ascension of Christ to heaven; he is undoubtedly meant by "one like unto the Son of man;" that is, really and truly man; as he is said to be "in the likeness of men," and to be "found in fashion as a man;" the same "came in the clouds of heaven;" so a cloud received Christ, and

conveyed him to heaven, at his ascension; and he was "brought near to the Ancient of days," to God, who is from everlasting to everlasting; and was received with a welcome by him; and there were given him "dominion, glory, and a kingdom;" as Christ, at his ascension, was made, or made manifest, openly declared Lord and Christ, Head and King of his church. Though this vision will have a farther accomplishment at the second coming of Christ, when his glorious kingdom will commence in the personal reign; who will deliver up the kingdom until that reign is ended. Once more,

1d. Fourthly, The prophecy in Micah 2:13 may be understood as referring to this matter; "The breaker up is come up before them;" which, in the latter part of the verse, is thus explained; "And their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them;" so that a divine Person is meant, who is head and king of the church, and plainly points to Christ, who may be called Phorez, "the breaker;" as Pharez had his name from the same word, because he broke forth before his brother; as Christ, at his birth, broke forth into the world in an uncommon way, being born of a virgin; and at his death, broke through the troops of hell, and spoiled principalities and powers; broke down the middle wall of partition, that stood between Jews and Gentiles; and at his resurrection, broke the cords of death, as Samson did his withs, with which he could be no more nor longer held by them, than he with them; and at his ascension he broke up, and broke his way through the region of the air, and through legions of devils; at the head of those that were raised with him when he rose, angels and men shouting as he passed along. But,

1e. Fifthly, What most clearly foretold the ascension of Christ to heaven, is in Psalms 68:18 which is, by the apostle Paul, quoted and applied to the ascension of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-10) and all the parts of it agree with him: he is spoken of in the context, in the words both before and after. He is the Lord that was among the angels in Sinai, who spoke to Moses there; and from whom he received the oracles of God, to give to Israel: and he is the God of salvation, the author of it to his people. And of him it may be truly said, that he "ascended on high," far above all heavens, the visible heavens, the airy and starry heavens, and into the third heaven, the more glorious seat of the divine Majesty: he has led "captivity captive;" either such as had been prisoners in the grave, but freed by him, and who went with him to heaven; or the enemies of his people, who have led them captive, as Satan and his principalities; the allusion is to leading captives in triumph for victories obtained. Christ "received," upon his ascension, "gifts for men;" and, as the apostle expresses it, "gave" them to men; he received them in order to give them; and he gave them, in consequence of receiving them: and even he received them for, and gave them to, "rebellious" men, as all by nature are "foolish and disobedient;" and even those be to whom he gives gifts fitting for public usefulness; and such an one was the apostle Paul, as the account of him and his own confessions show, who received a large measure of those gifts of grace; the end of bestowing which gifts was, "That the Lord God might dwell among men," gathered out of the world, through the ministry of the word, into gospel churches, which are built up for an habitation for God, through the Spirit.

2. Secondly, The ascension of Christ was pre-signified by scripture types; personal ones, as those of Enoch and Elijah. The one in the times of the patriarchs, before the flood, and before the law; the other in the times of the prophets, after the flood, and after the law was given. Enoch, a man that walked with God, and had communion with him, "was not;" he was not on earth, after he had been some time on it; "God took him" from thence up to heaven, soul and body (Genesis 5:24).

Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, in a chariot, and horses of fire; was carried up by angels, who appeared in such a form; when he and Elisha had been conversing together (2 Kings 2:11). So Christ was carried up to heaven, received by a cloud, attended by angels, while he was blessing his disciples: more especially, the high priest was a type of Christ in this respect, when he entered into the holiest of all once a year, with blood and incense; which were figures of Christ's entering into heaven with his blood, and to make intercession for men (Hebrews 9:23-24). The ark in which the two tables were, was a type of Christ, who is the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; and the bringing up of the ark from the place where it was to mount Zion, which some think was the occasion of penning the twenty fourth Psalm, in which are these words, "Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in;" and of the forty seventh Psalm, where are the above words, "God is gone up with a shout," &c. the bringing up of which ark to Zion, may be considered as an emblem of Christ's ascension to heaven, sometimes signified by mount Zion. Now as it was foretold by prophecies and types, that Christ should ascend to heaven, so it is matter of fact, that he has ascended thither; concerning which may be observed,

2a. First, The evidence of it; as the angels of God, who were witnesses of it; for as Christ went up to heaven in the sight of his apostles, "two men stood by them in white apparel," who were angels, that appeared in an human form, and thus arrayed, to denote their innocence and purity; and other angels attended him in his ascent, when it was that he was seen "of angels," who were eyewitnesses of his ascension; (see Acts 1:10; 1 Timothy 3:16). The eleven apostles were together, and others with them, when this great event was; and while he was pronouncing a blessing on them, he was parted from them, and carried up to heaven; they beheld him, and looked stedfastly towards heaven, as he went up, until a cloud received him out of their sight (Luke 24:33; Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-10). Yea, after this, when he had ascended to heaven, and had entered into it, and was set down on the right hand of God, he was seen by Stephen the proto-martyr, and by the apostle Paul: while Stephen was suffering, looking stedfastly to heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and at the same time declared it to the Jews, that he saw the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God (Acts 7:55-56). Christ "appeared" to the apostle Paul at his conversion, when he was caught up into the third heaven, and heard and saw things not to be uttered; and afterwards, when in a trance in the temple, he says, "I saw him" (Acts 26:16; Acts 22:18 see also 1 Corinthians 15:8). Moreover, the extraordinary effusion of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, is a proof of Christ's ascension to heaven (Acts 2:33), for before this time, the Spirit was not given in an extraordinary manner; "Because Jesus was not yet glorified;" but when he was glorified, and having ascended to heaven, and being at the right hand of God, then the Spirit was given; and the gift of him was a proof of his ascension and glorification (John 7:39).

2b. Secondly, The time of Christ's ascension, which was forty days from his resurrection; which time he continued on earth that his disciples might have full proof, and be at a certainty of the truth of his resurrection; "to whom he showed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days;" not that he was with them all that forty days, but at several times in that interval: on the first day he appeared to many, and on that day week again to his disciples; at another time at the sea of Tiberias; and again on a mountain in Galilee. Now by these various interviews the apostles had opportunities of making strict and close observation, of looking wisely at him, of handling him, of conversing with him, of eating and drinking with him, of reasoning upon

things in their own minds, and of having their doubts resolved, if they entertained any; and had upon the whole infallible proofs of the truth of his resurrection: in this space of time also he renewed their commission and enlarged it, and sent them into the whole world to preach and baptize, and further to instruct those that were taught and baptized by them; now it was he opened the understandings of his apostles, that they might more clearly understand the scriptures concerning himself, which he explained unto them, that so they might be the more fitted for their ministerial work; he also spoke to them "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," the gospel church state; of the nature of a gospel church, of the officers of it, of ordinances in it, and discipline to be observed therein; wherefore all that they afterwards delivered out and practiced, were according to the directions and prescriptions given by him: and as all this required time, such a length of time was taken as that of forty days; yet longer it was not proper he should continue with them in this state, lest his apostles should think he was about to set up a temporal kingdom on earth, which their minds were running upon, and inquiring after and expecting (Acts 1:5-6), and besides, it was proper that they should be endued with the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner, to qualify them for the important work Christ gave them a commission to do; and which they could not receive until Christ was ascended and glorified.

2c. Thirdly, The place from whence, and the place whither Christ ascended, may next be considered.

2c1. The earth on which he was when he became incarnate, the world into which he came to save men, out of which he went when he had done his work (John 16:28), the particular spot of ground from whence he ascended was mount Olivet, as appears from Acts 1:12 a place he frequented much in the latter part of his life; and it was in a garden at the bottom of the mount where his sufferings began, where his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and where he put up that prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and where he was in such an agony, that his sweat was as drops of blood falling to the ground; and from this very spot he ascended to his God and Father, to enjoy his presence, and all the pleasures of it, and partake of the glory promised him (Luke 21:37; Luke 22:39; Luke 22:44). One of the evangelists tells us, that he led his disciples as far as Bethany, and there blessed them, and was parted from them; which must not be understood of the town of Bethany, but of a part of mount Olivet near to Bethany, and which bore that name, and which signifies the house of affliction, from whence Christ went to heaven; and as it was necessary he should suffer the things he did, and enter into his glory, so his people must through many tribulations enter the kingdom (Luke 24:50-51; Luke 21:26; Acts 14:22).

2c2. The place whither he ascended, heaven, even the third heaven; hence Christ is often said to be carried up into heaven, taken up into heaven, towards which the disciples were gazing as he went up; passed into heaven, and was received into heaven, where he remains; and which is to be understood, not merely of a glorious state, into which he passed, exchanging a mean, uncomfortable, and suffering one, for a glorious, happy, and comfortable one; which is meant by the two witnesses ascending to heaven, even a more glorious state of the church (Revelation 11:12), but a place in which he is circumscribed in his human nature, where he is, and not elsewhere, nor everywhere; which has received him, and where he is, and will be retained until the times of the restitution of all things; from whence he is expected, and from whence he will descend at the last day; he is gone to his Father there, and has taken his place at his right hand; who,

though everywhere, being omnipresent, yet heaven is more especially the place where he displays his glory; and who is called "Our Father," and Christ's Father, who is "in heaven;" and of going to him at his ascension he often spoke (John 16:10; John 16:16-17; John 16:28; John 20:17).

2d. Fourthly, The manner of Christ's ascension, or in what sense he might be said to ascend; not "figuratively," as God is sometimes said to go down and to go up (Genesis 11:6; Genesis 17:22) which must be understood consistent with the omnipresence of God; not of any motion from place to place, but of some exertion of his power, or display of himself; nor in appearance only, as it might seem to beholders, but in reality and truth; nor was it a "disappearance" of him merely, as in Luke 24:31 for he was seen going up, and was gazed at till a cloud received him out of sight; nor was it in a "visionary" way, as the apostle Paul was caught up into the third heaven, not knowing whether in the body or out of the body; nor in a "spiritual" manner, in mind and affections, in which sense saints ascend to heaven, when in spiritual frames of soul; but "really, visibly," and "locally": this ascension of Christ was a real motion of his human nature, which was visible to the apostles, and was by change of place, even from earth to heaven; and was sudden, swift, and glorious, in a triumphant manner: and he went up as he will come again, in a cloud, in a bright cloud, a symbol of his divine majesty, either literally taken; or if understood of the appearance of angels in the form of a bright cloud, as by Dr. Hammond, it is expressive of the same; nor does it at all affect the reality, locality, and visibility of Christ's ascension, so to understand it: nor can Luke, as an historian, be chargeable with an impropriety in his relation of it in such sense, any more than in the same account by representing angels as appearing in an human form, and in white apparel; nor than that the author of the book of Kings is, in relating the ascent of Elijah to heaven in a chariot and horses of fire, generally understood of angels in such a form (2 Kings 2:11), as the horses and chariots of fire also are in 2 Kings 6:17 which yet were really and visibly seen; and the rather it may be thought that the angels are intended in the account of Christ's ascension, since as the Lord makes the clouds his chariots (Psalms 104:3) so certain it is, the angels are the twenty thousand chariots of God among whom Christ was, and enclosed, as in a bright cloud when he ascended on high (Psalms 68:17-18), all which serve to set forth the grandeur and majesty in which Christ ascended.

2e. Fifthly, The cause or causes of Christ's ascension; it was a work of almighty power to cause a body to move upwards with such swiftness, and to such a distance; it is ascribed to the right hand of God, that is, of God the Father; to the power of God, by which he is said to be lifted up and exalted (Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31), and therefore it is sometimes passively expressed, that he was "carried up, taken up," and "received up" into heaven; and sometimes actively, as done by himself, by his own power; so it is said, "he went up," he lifted up his own body through the union of it to his divine person, and carried it up to heaven; so "God went up with a shout;" (see Acts 1:10), and often he speaks of it as his own act, "What if the son of man ascend," &c. "I ascend to my God," &c. the "efficient" cause of it is God; and being a work "ad extra," Father, Son, and Spirit were concerned in it. The "procuring" or "meritorious" cause of it was the "blood" of Christ; by which he made full satisfaction to divine justice, and obtained eternal redemption for his people: and therefore having done the work he engaged to do, it was but fit and just that he should be, not only raised from the dead, but ascend to heaven, and be received there; hence it is said, "by his own blood," through the virtue of it, and in consequence of what he had done by it, "he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). The "instrumental"

or ministering causes, were the "cloud" and the attending angels.

2f. Sixthly, The effects of Christ’s Ascension, or the ends to be answered, and which have been answered, are,

2f1. To fulfil the prophecies and types concerning it, and particularly that of the high priest’s entering into the holiest of all once a year, to officiate for the people; and so Christ has entered into heaven itself, figured by the most holy place, there to make, and where he ever lives to make, intercession for the saints.

2f2. To take upon him more openly the exercise of his kingly office; to this purpose is the parable of the nobleman (Luke 19:12) by the "nobleman" is meant Christ himself; (see Jeremiah 33:21), by the "far country" he went into, heaven, even the third heaven, which is far above the visible ones; his end in going there, was "to receive a kingdom for himself," to take possession of it, and exercise kingly power; to be made and declared Lord and Christ, as he was upon his ascension (Acts 2:36), which kingdom will be delivered up at the close of his personal reign, and not before.

2f3. To receive gifts for men, both extraordinary and ordinary; and this end has been answered, he has received them, and he has given them; extraordinary gifts he received for, and bestowed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; and ordinary ones, which he has given since, and still continues to give, to fit men for the work of the ministry, and for the good of his churches and interest in all succeeding ages (Ephesians 4:8-13).

2f4. To open the way into heaven for his people, and to prepare a place for them there; he has by his blood entered into heaven himself, and made the way into the holiest of all manifest; and given boldness and liberty to his people through it to enter thither also, even by a new and living way, consecrated through the vail of his flesh (Hebrews 9:8; Hebrews 9:12; Hebrews 10:19-20), he is the forerunner for them entered, and is gone beforehand to prepare by his presence and intercession mansions of glory for them in his Father’s house (Hebrews 6:20; John 14:2-3).

2f5. To assure the saints of their ascension also; for it is to his God and their God, to his Father and their Father, that he is ascended; and therefore they shall ascend also, and be where he is, and be glorified together with him; and all this is to draw up their minds to heaven, to seek things above, where Jesus is; and to set their affections, not on things on earth, but on things in heaven; and to have their conversation there; and to expect and believe that they shall be with Christ for evermore.

02. Of the Being of God

Of the Being of God

Having undertaken to write a System of Theology, or a Body of Doctrinal Divinity; and Theology being nothing else than a speaking of God, or a discoursing concerning him; his nature, names, perfections, and persons; his purposes, providences, ways, works, and word: I shall begin with the Being of God, and the proof and evidence of it; which is the foundation of all religion; for if there is no God, religion is a vain thing; and it matters not neither what we believe, nor what we do; since there is no superior Being to whom we are accountable for either faith or practice. Some, because the being of God is a first principle, which is not to be disputed; and because that there is one is a self-evident proposition, not to be disproved; have thought it should not be admitted as a matter of debate: but since such is the malice of Satan, as to suggest the contrary to the minds of men; and such the badness of some wicked men as to listen to it, and imbibe it; and such the weakness of some good men as to be harassed and distressed with doubts about it at times; it cannot be improper to endeavour to fortify our minds with reasons and arguments against such suggestions and insinuations. And my

1. First argument to prove the Being of a God, shall be taken from the general consent of men of all nations, in all ages of the world; among whom the belief of it has universally obtained; which it is not reasonable to suppose would have obtained, if it was not true. This has been observed by many heathen writers themselves. Aristotle says, "all men have a persuasion of Deity, or that there is a God." Cicero observes, "There is no nation so wild and savage, whose minds are not imbued with the opinion of the gods; many entertain wrong notions of them; but all suppose and own the divine power and nature." And in another place he says, "There is no animal besides man that has any knowledge of God; and of men there is no nation so untractable and fierce, although it may be ignorant what a God it should have, yet is not ignorant that one should be had." And again, "It is the sense of all mankind, that it is "innate" in all, and is, as it were, engraven on the mind, that there is a God; but what a one he is, in that they vary; but that he is, none denies." And to the same sense are the words of Seneca, "There never was a nation so dissolute and abandoned, so lawless and immoral, as to believe there is no God." So Aelianus relates, "None of the barbarous nations ever fell into atheism, or doubted of the gods whether they were or not, or whether they took care of human affairs or not; not the Indians, nor the Gauls, nor the Egyptians." And Plutarch has these remarkable words, "If you go over the earth, says he, you may find cities without walls, letters, kings, houses, wealth, and money, devoid of theatres and schools; but a city without temples and gods, and where is no use of prayers, oaths, and oracles, nor sacrifices to obtain good or avert evil, no man ever saw." These things were observed and said, when the true knowledge of God was in a great measure lost, and idolatry prevailed; and yet even then, this was the general sense of mankind. In the first ages of the world, men universally believed in the true God, and worshipped him, as Adam and his sons, and their posterity, until the flood; nor does there appear any trace of idolatry before it, nor for some time after. The sins which caused that, and with which the world was filled, seem to be lewdness and uncleanness, rapine and violence.

Some think the tower of Babel was built for an idolatrous use; and it may be that about that time idolatry was set up; as it is thought to have prevailed in the days of Serug: and it is very probable that when the greater part of the posterity of Noah's sons were dispersed throughout the earth, and settled in the distant parts of it; that as they were remote from those among whom the true worship of God was preserved; they, by degrees, lost sight of the true God, and forsook his worship; and this being the case, they began to worship the sun in his stead, and which led on to the worship of the moon, and the host of heaven; which seem to be the first objects of idolatry. This was as early as the times Job, who plainly refers to it, (Job 31:26-27). And, indeed, when men had cast off the true object of worship, what more natural to substitute in his room than the sun, moon, and stars, which were above them, visible by them, and so glorious in themselves, and so beneficial to the earth and men on it? Hence the people of Israel were exhorted to take care that their eyes were not ensnared at the sight of them, to fall down and worship them; and which in later times they did (Deuteronomy 4:19; Deuteronomy 2:1-37 King 21:3). It appears also that men took very early to the deifying of their heroes after death, their kings, and great personages, either for their wisdom and knowledge, or for their courage and valour, and martial exploits, and other things; such were the Bel, or Belus, of the Babylonians; the Baalpeor of the Moabites. ;and the Molech of the Phoenicians, and other Baalim lords, or kings, mentioned in the Scriptures: and such were Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Hercules; and the rest of the rabble of the heathen deities; and indeed their Lares, and Penates, or household gods, were no other than the images of their deceased parents, or more remote ancestors, whose memory they revered; and in process of time their deities became very numerous; they had gods many and lords many: even with the Jews, when fallen into idolatry, their gods were according to the number of their cities (Jeremiah 2:28). And as for the Gentiles, they worshipped almost everything; not only the sun, moon, and stars; but the earth, fire, and water; and various sorts of animals, as oxen, goats, and swine, cats and dogs, the fishes of the rivers, the river horse, and the crocodile, those amphibious creatures; the fowls of the air, as the hawk, stork, and ibis; and even insects, the fly; yea, creeping things, as serpents, the beetle, &c.; as also vegetables, onions, and garlic; which occasioned the satirical poet to say, "O sanctas gentes quibus haec nascuntur in hortis, numina!" O holy nations, whose gods are born in their gardens! Nay, some have worshipped the devil himself, as both in the East and West Indies; and that for this reason, that he might not harm them. Now though all this betrays the dreadful depravity of human nature; the wretched ignorance of mankind; and the sad stupidity men were sunk into; yet at the same time such shocking idolatry, in all the branches of it, is a full proof of the truth and force of my argument, that all men, in all ages and countries, have been possessed of the notion of a God; since, rather than to have no God, they have chosen false ones; so deeply rooted is a sense of Deity in the minds of all men.

I am sensible that to this it is objected, that there have been, at different times, and in different countries, some particular persons who have been reckoned atheists, deniers of the Being of a God. But some of these men were only deriders of the gods of their country; they mocked at them as unworthy of the name, as weak and insufficient to help them; as they reasonably might; just as Elijah mocked at Baal and his worshippers. Now the common people, because they so behaved towards their gods, looked upon them as atheists, as such who did not believe there was any God. Others were so accounted, because they excluded the gods from any concern with human affairs; they thought they were other ways employed, and that such things were below their notice, and not becoming their grandeur and dignity to regard; and had much the same sentiments as some of

the Jews had (Ezekiel 9:9; Zephaniah 1:12). But these men were not deniers of the existence of God, only of his providence as to the affairs of the world: and others have been rather practical than speculative atheists, as the fool in Psalms 14:1, who not only live as if there was no God; but wish in their hearts there was none, rather than believe there is none; that so they might take their fill of sin, without being accountable to a superior Being. The number of real speculative atheists have been very few, if any; some have boldly asserted their disbelief of a God; but it is a question whether their hearts and mouths have agreed; at least they have not been able to maintain their unbelief long without some doubts and fears. And at most this only shows how much the reason of man may be debased, and how low it may sink when left to itself: these few instances are only particular exceptions to a general rule; which is not destroyed thereby, being contrary to the common sense of mankind; even as it is no sufficient objection to the definition of man, as a rational creature, that there is now and then an idiot born of his race, so not to the general belief of Deity, that there is now and then an atheist in the world.

It is further objected, that there have been whole nations in Africa and America, who have no notion of Deity. But this is what has not been sufficiently proved; it depends upon the testimonies of travellers, and what one affirms, another denies; so that nothing can with certainty be concluded from them. "I should rather question, says Herbert, Lord Cherbury, whether the light of the sun has shone on the remotest regions, than that the knowledge of the Supreme Being is hidden from them; since the sun is only conspicuous in its own sphere; but the Supreme Being is seen in everything." Diodorus Siculus says, a few of the Ethiopians were of opinion there was no God; though before he had represented them as the first and most religious of all nations, as attested by all antiquity. The Hottentots about the Cape of Good Hope have been instanced in, as without any knowledge of Deity: and certainly they are a most beastly and brutish people that can be named, and the most degenerate of the human species, and have survived the common instincts of humanity; yet, according to Mr. Kolben’s account of them, published some years ago, they appear to have some sense of a Supreme Being, and of inferior deities. They express a superstitious joy at new and full moons; and it is said they pray to a Being that dwells above; and offer sacrifice of the best things they have, with eyes lifted up to heaven. And later discoveries of other nations, show the contrary to what has been asserted of them; which assertions have arose either from want of intimate knowledge of them, and familiar acquaintance with them, or from their dissolute, wicked, and irreligious lives; when, by conversing with them, it appears that they have a notion of the sun, or sky, or something or another being a sort of deity. Thus it has been observed of the Greenlanders, that "they had neither a religion nor idolatrous worship; nor so much as any ceremonies to be perceived tending to it: hence the first missionaries entertained a supposition, that there was not the least trace to be found among them of any conception of a divine Being, especially as they had no word to express him by. But when they came to understand their language better, they found quite the reverse to be true, from the notions they had, though very vague and various, concerning the soul, and concerning spirits; and also from their anxious solicitude about the state after death. And not only so, but they could plainly gather from a free dialogue they had with some perfectly wild Greenlanders, that their ancestors must have believed a supreme Being, and did render him some service; which their posterity neglected by little and little, the further they were removed from more wise and civilised nations; till at last they lost every just conception of the Deity; yet, after all, it is manifest, that a faint idea of a divine Being lies concealed in the minds even of this people, because they directly assent, without any objection, to

the doctrine of a God, and his attributes." And as to what is concluded from the irreligious lives of the inhabitants of some nations, we need not be sent to Africa and America for such atheists as these; we have enough of them in our own nation; and I was just ready to say, we are a nation of atheists in this sense: and, indeed, all men in an unregenerate state, be they Jews or Gentiles, or live where they may, they are ayeoi, "atheists"; as the apostle calls them, (Ephesians 2:12) they are "without God in the world, being alienated from the life of God", (Ephesians 4:18) otherwise there is such a general sense of Deity in mankind; and such a natural inclination to religion, of some sort or another, though ever so bad, that some have thought that man should rather be defined as a religious than a rational animal. I take no notice of the holy angels, who worship God continually; nor of the devils, who believe there is one God and tremble; my argument being only concerned with men.

2. The second argument shall be taken from the law and light of nature; or from the general instinct in men, or impress of Deity on the mind of every man; that is, as soon as he begins to have the exercise of his rational powers, he thinks and speaks of God, and assents to the Being of a God. This follows upon the former, and is to be proved by it; for as Cicero says, "The consent of all nations in anything, is to be reckoned the law of nature." And since all nations agree in the belief of a Deity, that must be a part of the law of nature, inscribed on the heart of every man. Seneca makes use of this to prove there is a God; he says: "because an opinion or sense of Deity, is "implanted" in the minds of all men." And so likewise Cicero, as observed before; and who calls them the notions of Deity implanted and innate. And whoever believes the Mosaic account of the creation of man, cannot doubt of this being his case, when first created; since he is said to be made in the image, and after the likeness of God; for the image of God surely could not be impressed upon him, without having the knowledge of him implanted in him; and though man by sinning has greatly come short of this image and glory of God, yet this light of nature is not wholly obscured, nor the law of nature entirely obliterated in him; there are some remains of it. There are some indeed among us, who deny there are any innate ideas in the minds of men, and particularly concerning God: but to such writers and reasoners I pay but little regard; when the inspired apostle assures us, that even the Gentiles, destitute of the law of Moses, have "the work of the law written in their hearts", (Romans 2:15) which, as it regards duty to God, as well as man, necessarily supposes the knowledge of him; as well as of the difference between good and evil, as founded upon his nature and will: and though this light of nature is not sufficient to lead men, in their present state, to a true spiritual and saving knowledge of God; yet it furnishes them with such a sense of him, as puts them upon seeking him; "if haply they may feel and grope after him, and find him", (Acts 17:27). These notices of a divine Being do not flow from the previous instructions of parents and others; but from a natural instinct; at most, they are only drawn forth by instruction and teaching; Velleius, the Epicurean, says , "that there is a Deity nature itself has impressed the notion of on the minds of all men; for what nation, or sort of men, "he adds, "that has not a certain anticipation of it without being taught it, "or before taught it, as Julian expresses it: nor do these notices take their rise from state policy; or are the effects of that originally: if this was the case, if it was the contrivance of politicians to keep men in awe, and under subjection, it must be the contrivance of one man, or more united together. If of one, say, who is the man? in what age he lived, and where? and what is his name, or his son’s name? If of more, say, when and where they existed? and who they were that met together? and where they formed this scheme? And let it be accounted for; if it can, that such a number of sage and wise men, who have been in the world;

that no man should be able to get into the secret, and detect the fallacy and discover it, and free men from the imposition. Besides, these notices appeared before any scheme of politics was formed; or kings or civil magistrates were in being. Plato has refuted this notion; and represents it as a very pestilent one, both in private and in public. Nor are these notices by tradition from one to another; since traditions are peculiar to certain people: the Jews had theirs, and so had the Gentiles; and particular nations among them had separate ones from each other; but these are common to all mankind: nor do they spring from a slavish fear and dread of punishment; for though it has been said, that fear makes gods, or produces a notion of Deity; the contrary is true, that Deity produces fear, as will be seen in a following argument.

Under this head may be observed the innate desires of men after happiness, which are so boundless as not to be satisfied. Let a man have ever so great a compass of knowledge and understanding; or possess ever so large a portion of wealth and riches; or be indulged with the gratification of his senses to the highest degree; or enjoy all the pleasure the whole creation can afford him; yet after all, according to the wise man, the conclusion of the whole is, "all is vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecclesiastes 2:17). Now these desires are not in vain implanted, there must be an object answerable unto them; a perfect Being, which is no other than God; who is the first cause and last end of all things, of whom the Psalmist says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth my soul desires besides thee" (Psalms 73:25).

3. The third argument, proving the Being of God, shall be taken from the works of creation; concerning which the apostle says, "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" (Romans 1:20). Plutarch, in answer to a question, Whence have men the knowledge of God? replies, "They first receive the knowledge of him from the beauty of things that appear; for nothing beautiful is made in vain, nor by chance, but wrought with some art: that the world is beautiful, is manifest from the figure, the colour, and magnitude of it; and from the variety of stars about the world." And these so clearly display the Being and power of God, as to leave the heathen without excuse, as the apostle observes; and as this, and other instances, show. Most admirable was the reasoning of a wild Greenlander, which he declared to a missionary to be the reasoning of his mind before his conversion; he said to him, "It is true we were ignorant heathens, and knew nothing of God, or a Saviour; and, indeed, who should tell us of him till you come? but thou must not imagine that no Greenlander thinks about these things. I myself have often thought: a "kajak" (a boat) with all its tackle and implements, does not grow into existence of itself; but must be made by the labour and ingenuity of man; and one that does not understand it would directly spoil it. Now the meanest bird has far more skill displayed in its structure, than the best "kajak"; and no man can make a bird: but there is still a far greater art shown in the formation of a man, than of any other creature. Who was it that made him? I thought myself that he proceeded from his parents, and they from their parents; but some must have been the first parents; whence did they come? common report informs me, they grew out of the earth: but if so, why does it not still happen that men grow out of the earth? and from whence did this same earth itself, the sea, the sun, the moon, and stars, arise into existence? Certainly there must be some Being who made all these things; a Being that always was, and can never cease to be. He must be inexpressibly more mighty, knowing, and wise, than the wisest man. He must be very good too, because that everything that he has made is good, useful, and necessary for us. Ah, did I but know him, how would I love him

and honour him! But who has seen him? who has ever conversed with him? None of us poor men. Yet there may be men too that know something of him. O that I could but speak with such! therefore," he said, "as soon as ever I heard you speak of this great Being, I believed it directly, with all my heart; because I had so long desired to hear it." A glaring proof this, that a supreme Being, the first cause of all things, is to be concluded from the works of creation. The notion of the eternity of the world has been imbibed by some heathens, but sufficiently confuted by others. And even Aristotle, to whom it is ascribed, asserts, that "it was an ancient doctrine, and what all men received from their ancestors; that all things are of God, and consist by him." And those that believe the divine revelation, cannot admit of any other doctrine; but must explode the notion of the eternity of the world, and of its being of itself; since that assures us, that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth": also that all things were made, "not of things which do appear", but out of nothing, (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3) for, be it, that the heavens and the earth were made out of a chaos, or out of pre-existent matter; it may be reasonably asked, out of what was that pre-existent matter made? the answer must be, out of nothing; since it was by creation, which is the production of something out of nothing: and which can never be performed by the creature; for out of nothing, nothing can be made by that. If therefore all things are originally produced out of nothing, it must be by one that is almighty, whom we rightly call God. No creature can produce itself; this involves such contradictions as can never be admitted; for then a creature must be before it was; as that which makes must be before that which is made: it must act and operate before it exists; and be and not be at one and the same time; which are such glaring contradictions, as sufficiently confute the creature’s making itself; and therefore its being must be owing to another cause; even to God, the Creator; for between a creature and God, there is no medium: and if it could be thought or said, that the most excellent creatures, men, made themselves; besides the above contradictions, which would be implied, it might be asked, why did not they make themselves wiser and better; since it is certain, they have knowledge of beings superior to them? and how is it that they know so little of themselves, either of their bodies or their souls, if both were made by them? and why are they not able to preserve themselves from a dissolution to which they are all subject? It may be further observed; that effects, which depend upon causes in subordination to one another, cannot be traced up "ad infinitum"; but must be reduced to some first cause, where the inquiry must rest; and that first cause is God. Now here is an ample field to survey; which furnishes out a variety of objects, and all proofs of Deity. There is nothing in the whole creation the mind can contemplate, the eye look upon, or the hand lay hold on, but what proclaims the Being of God. When we look up to the heavens above us; the surrounding atmosphere; the air in which we breathe, which compresses our earth, and keeps it together; the stellar space, and spreading sky, bespangled with stars of light, and adorned with the two great luminaries, the sun and moon, especially the former, that inexhaustible fountain of light and heat; and under whose benign influences, so many things are brought forth on earth; whose circuit is from one end of the heaven to the other; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof: when we consider its form, magnitude, and virtue; its proper distance from us, being not so near us as to scorch us; nor so remote as to be of no use to us; the motion given it at first, in which it has proceeded without stopping, but once as is supposed, in the days of Joshua; a motion it has had now almost six thousand years; the course it has steered, and steers, so that all parts of the earth, at one season or another, receive benefit by it; and the way it has been guided in, without varying or erring from it all this while. Whoever reflects on these things, must acknowledge it to be

the work of an all wise and almighty agent, we call God; and that it must be upheld, guided, and directed by his hand alone. When we take a view of the earth, of the whole terraqueous globe, hanging on nothing, like a ball in the air, poised with its own weight; the different parts of it, and all disposed for the use of man; stored with immense riches in the heart of it, and stocked with inhabitants upon it; the various sorts of animals, of different forms and shapes, made, some for strength, some for swiftness, some for bearing burdens, and others for drawing carriages, some for food and others for clothing: the vast variety of the feathered birds that cut the air; and the innumerable kinds of fishes that swim the ocean. The consideration of all this will oblige us to say, "Lord, thou art God, which hast made the heaven, earth, and sea; and all that in them is" (Acts 4:25). In short, there is not a shell in the ocean, nor a sand on the shore, nor a spire of grass in the field, nor any flower of different hue and smell in the garden, but what declare the Being of God: but especially our own composition is deserving of our notice; the fabric of the body, and the faculties of our souls. The body, its form and shape; while other animals look downwards to the earth, "os homini sublime dedit Deus", as the poet says, man has a lofty countenance given him, to behold the heavens, to lift up his face to the stars; and for what is this erect posture given him, but to adore his Creator? And it is remarkable that there is a natural instinct in men to lift up their hands and eyes to heaven, when either they have received any unexpected mercy, by way of thankfulness for it; or are in any great distress, as supplicating deliverance from it; which supposes a divine Being, to whom they owe the one, and from whom they expect the other. Each of the parts and members of the body are so framed and disposed, as to be subservient to one another; so that "the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor the head to the feet, I have no need of you". The same may be observed of the other members. The inward parts, which are weak and tender, and on which life much depends, were they exposed, would be liable to much danger and hurt; but these are "clothed with skin and flesh, and fenced with bones and sinews"; and every bone, and every nerve, and every muscle, are put in their proper places. All the organs of the senses, of sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling, are most wonderfully fitted for the purposes for which they are made. Galen, an ancient noted physician, being atheistically inclined, was convinced of his impiety by barely considering the admirable structure of the eye; its various humours, tunics, and provision for its defence and safety. The various operations performed in our bodies, many of which are done without our knowledge or will, are enough to raise the highest admiration in us: as the circulation of the blood through all parts of the body, in a very small space of time; the respiration of the lungs; the digestion of the food; the chylification of it; the mixing of the chyle with the blood; the nourishment thereby communicated; and which is sensibly perceived in the several parts of the body, and even in the more remote; which having been weakened and enfeebled by hunger, thirst, and labour, are in an instant revived and strengthened; and the accretion and growth of parts by all this. To which may be added other things worthy of notice; the faculty of speech, peculiar to man, and the organs of it; the features of their faces; and the shape of their bodies, which all differ from one another; the constant supply of animal spirits; the continuance of the vital heat, which outlasts fire itself; the slender threads and small fibres spread throughout the body, which hold and perform their office seventy or eighty years running: all which, when considered, will oblige us to say, with the inspired Psalmist, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well": and will lead us to ascribe this curious piece of workmanship to no other than to the divine Being, the God of all flesh living. But the soul of man, the more noble part of him, more fully discovers the original author of him;

being possessed of such powers and faculties that none but God could give: it is endowed with an understanding, capable of receiving and framing ideas of all things knowable, in matters natural, civil, and religious; and with reason, to put these together, and compare them with each other, and discourse concerning them; infer one thing from another, and draw conclusions from them: and with judgment, by which it passes sentence on things it takes cognizance of, and reasons upon; and determines for itself what is right or wrong; and so either approves or disapproves: it has a "mind" susceptive of what is proposed unto it; it can, by instruction or study, learn any language; cultivate any art or science; and, with the help of some geographical principles, can travel over the globe, can be here and there at pleasure, in the four parts of the world; and in a short time, visit every city of note therein, and describe the situation of every country, with their religion, manners, customs, &c. it can reflect on things past, and has a foresight of, and can forecast and provide for things to come: it has a "will", to accept or reject, to embrace or refuse, what is proposed unto it; with the greatest freedom of choice, and with the most absolute power and sovereignty: it has affections, of love and hatred, joy and grief, hope and fear, &c. according to the different objects it is conversant with. There is also the conscience, which is to a man as a thousand witnesses, for him or against him; which, if it performs its office as it should do, will accuse him when he does ill, and commend, or excuse him, when he does well; and from hence arise either peace of mind, or dread of punishment, in some shape or another, either here or hereafter: to which may be added the memory, which is a storehouse of collections of things thought to be most valuable and useful; where they are laid up, not in a confused, but orderly manner; so as to be called for and taken out upon occasion: here men of every character and profession lay up their several stores, to have recourse unto, and fetch out, as their case and circumstances may require. And besides this, there is the "fancy or imagination", which can paint and describe to itself, in a lively manner, objects presented to it, and it has entertained a conception of; yea, it can fancy and imagine things that never were, nor never will be: and, to observe no more, there is the power of invention; which in some is more, in others less fertile; which, on a sudden, supplies with what is useful in case of an emergency. But above all, the "soul" of man is that wherein chiefly lay the image and likeness of God, when man was in his pure and innocent state; and though it is now sadly depraved by sin, yet it is capable of being renewed by the spirit of God, and of having the grace of God implanted in it, and is endowed with immortality, and cannot die: now to whom can such a noble and excellent creature as this owe its original? but to the divine Being, who may, with great propriety, be called, the Father of spirits, the Lord, the Jehovah, who "formeth the spirit of man within him".

4. The fourth argument will be taken from the sustaining and government of the world; the provision made for the supply of creatures, and especially of man, and for his safety. As the world, as we have seen, is made by a divine Being, so by him it consists. Was there not such an almighty Being, "who upholds all things by the word of his power", they would sink and fall. Did he not bear up the pillars of the earth, they would tremble and shake, and not be able to bear its weight: the most stately, firm, and well built palace, unless repaired and maintained, will fall to decay and ruin; and so the grand and magnificent building of this world would soon be dissolved, did not the divine agent that made it, keep it up: as he that built all things is God, so he that supports the fabric of the universe must be so too; no less than an almighty hand can preserve and continue it; and which has done it, without any visible appearance of age or decay, for almost six thousand years; and though there is such a vast number of creatures in the world, besides men, the beasts of the field, and "the cattle on a thousand hills", the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea; there is food

provided for them all, and they have "every one their portion of meat in due season": and as for man, he is richly provided for, with a plenty and variety of all good things; not only for necessity, but for delight; every man has a trade, business, and employment of life; or is put into such a situation and circumstances, that, with care, diligence, and industry, he may have enough for himself and family, and to spare: the earth produces a variety of things for food and drink for him; and of others for medicine, for the continuance of health, and restoration of it. And can all this be without the care, providence, and interposition of a wise and almighty Being? Can these ever be thought to be the effects of blind chance and fortune? Is it not plain and clear, that God hereby "has not left himself without a witness of his existence and providence, in that he does good to all his creatures, and gives rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons; filling mens' hearts with food and gladness"; and continuing the certain and constant revolutions of "summer and winter, seedtime and harvest"; as well as night and day, cold and heat; all which have their peculiar usefulness and advantages to human life; and cannot be attributed to anything else than the superintendency of the divine Being. And as there is a provision made for the wants of men, so for their safety: were it not that God had put the fear of man upon the wild beasts of the field, and the dread of him in them, there would be no safety for him, especially in some parts of the world; and had he not put a natural instinct into them to avoid the habitations of men, and to resort to woods and deserts, and dwell in uninhabited places; to prowl about for their prey in the night, and in the morning return to their caves and dens, and lurking places; when men go forth to their work, they would be in the utmost danger of their lives: yea, were it not for the overruling providence of God, which governs the world, and restrains the lusts of men, "homo esset homini lupus"; "one man would be a wolf to another"; neither life nor property would be secure; but must fall a prey to the rapine and violence of powerful oppressors. Human laws, and civil magistracy, do something to restrain men, but not everything; notwithstanding these, we see what outrages are committed: and how greater still would be their number, was it not for the interposition of divine providence: and even it is owing to a divine Being that there are human forms of government, and political schemes framed, and laws made for the better regulation of mankind, and these continued; for it is by him "kings reign, and princes decree justice": and particularly, was it not for a divine agency, such is the rage and malice of Satan, and his principalities and powers, whose numbers fill the surrounding air; and who go about our earth like roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour; were they not chained by almighty power, and limited by the providence of God, the whole race of men would be destroyed by them, at least the godly among them.

5. The fifth argument may be taken from the uncommon heroic actions, prodigies, wonders, and miraculous things done in the world; which cannot be thought to be done without a superior and divine influence. Heroic actions, such as that of Abraham, who, with three hundred household servants, pursued after, and engaged with four kings who had beaten five before, and recovered the goods they had taken away: of Shamgar, who fought with and killed six hundred Philistines with an ox goad: and of Samson, who slew a thousand of them with the jawbone of an ass: of Jonathan, and his armour bearer, who attacked and took a garrison of the same people, and threw a whole army of theirs into a panic and confusion; who had been for some time a terror to the whole land of Israel: and of David, a stripling, fighting with and conquering Goliath, a monstrous giant. These are scripture instances; and if scripture is only regarded as a common history; these merit our notice and credit, as any of the relations in profane history; in which are recorded the magnanimous actions of heroes, kings, and generals of armies; their wonderful successes, and

amazing conquests; as of the Babylonians, Persians, Grecians, and Romans; which made such strange revolutions and changes in kingdoms and states; all which can never be supposed to be done without superior power, and the overruling, influencing providence of the divine Being; who inspired men to do things beyond their natural skill and courage; prodigies, strange and wonderful events; for which no natural cause can be assigned; such as the strange sights seen in the air, and voices heard in the temple, before the destruction of Jerusalem; with other things, related by Josephus, and confirmed by Tacitus, an heathen historian; to which might be added many others, which histories abound with: but besides these, things really miraculous have been wrought, such as are not only out of, and beyond the course of nature, but contrary to it, and to the settled laws of it; such as the miracles of Moses and the prophets, and of Christ and his apostles; which are recorded in the scriptures; and others in human writings; which are so well attested as oblige us to give credit to them: now, though these were not done to prove a divine Being; which needs them not; yet they necessarily suppose one, by whose power alone they are performed.

6. The sixth argument may be formed from the prophesies of contingent future events, and the exact fulfilment of them. This is what is challenged and required from heathen deities, to prove their right to such a character; as being what none but God can do: "Let them bring forth and show us what shall happen: or declare us things for to come: show the things that are to come hereafter; that we may know that ye are gods: which is what none but the true God can do, and has done; and which being done, proves there is a God, and one that is truly so; instances of which there are many in the sacred writings; prophesies which relate both to particular persons and to whole kingdoms and states; which have had their exact accomplishment: but not to insist on these, since those who are atheistically inclined, disbelieve the divine revelation; let it be observed, that the heathens have had their auguries, soothsayings, divinations, and oracles; by which pretensions have been made to foretell future events. That there is such a thing as divination, is said to be confirmed by the consent of all nations; and is explained of a presension and knowledge of future things: now this being granted, it may be reasoned upon, that if there is a foretelling of future things, which certainly come to pass, there must be a God; since none but an omniscient Being can, with certainty, foretell what shall come to pass, which does not depend on necessary causes; and cannot be foreseen by the quickest sight, and sharpest wit, and sagacity of a creature.

7. The seventh argument may be urged from the fears of men, and the tortures of a guilty conscience, and the dread of a future state. Some are terribly frightened at thunder and lightning, as Caligula, the Roman Emperor, used to be; who, at such times, would hide himself in, or under his bed; and yet this man set himself up for a god. Now these fears and frights are not merely on account of the awful sound of the thunder, and the dreadful flashes of lightning; but because of the divine and tremendous Being who is supposed to send them: the Heathens were sensible that thunder is the voice of God, as the scriptures represent it, and therefore called their Jove, "Jupiter tonans"; "the thundering Jupiter". Many have been so terrified in their consciences on account of sin, that they could get no rest, nor enjoy peace any where, or by any means: as Cain, under the terrors of an evil conscience, fancied that "everyone that found him would slay him": and those wicked traitors, Catiline and Jugurtha: and those wicked emperors, those monsters in impiety, Tiberius and Nero, and especially the latter, who was so tortured in his conscience, as if he was continually haunted by his mother’s ghost, and by furies with burning torches: and Hobbes, our English atheist, as he was reckoned, was wont to be very uneasy when alone in the dark: and

Epicurus, the philosopher, though he taught men to despise death, and out brave it; yet, when he perceived that he himself was about to die, was most terribly frightened; and this has been the case of many others: bold and "strong spirits", as atheistical persons love to be called, have been sometimes found to be very timorous and fearful. And, indeed, this is natural to all men, and which is proof of a superior Being. Thus a wild Greenlander argued, before he had knowledge of the true God: "Man has an intelligent soul, is subject to no creature in the world; and yet man is afraid of the future state: who is it that he is afraid of there? That must be a great Spirit that has dominion over us, O did we but know him! O had we but him for our friend!" Now what do all these fears and tortures of conscience arise from, but from the guilt of sin, and a sense of a divine Being; who is above men, and will call them to an account for their sins, and take vengeance on them? And, indeed, the eternal punishment that will be inflicted on them, will greatly lie in the tortures of their conscience, which is the worm that will never die; and, in a sense of divine wrath, which is that fire that will never be quenched.

8. The eighth and last argument shall be taken from the judgments in the world; not only famine, sword, pestilence, earthquakes, &c, but such that have been inflicted on wicked men, atheistical persons, perjured ones, blasphemers, and the like. Not to take notice of the universal flood, which swept away a world of ungodly men; and of the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, with other cities of the plain, by fire and brimstone from heaven; which yet are abundantly confirmed by the testimonies of heathen writers; nor of the awful instances in the New Testament, of Herod being smitten by an angel, and eaten of worms, and died, while the people was shouting him as a God, and he assented to their flattery; and of Ananias and Sapphira, being struck dead for lying unto God: besides these, there are innumerable instances of judgments, of the same or a like kind, in all ages and countries, recorded in the histories of them; and in our nation, and in our age, and within our knowledge; and who now can hear or read such awful judgments, and disbelieve the Being of God?

02. Of the Blessedness of God

Of The Blessedness Of God. That the nature of God is most blessed, as well as eternal, Epicurus himself asserted; and Velleius, an Epicurean, in Cicero, is made to say[1], that nothing can be thought of more blessed than the life of God, nor more abounding with all good things: he rejoices in his own wisdom and virtue, and assuredly knows that he ever shall be in the highest and eternal pleasures: this God, says he, we rightly call blessed; thought he wrongly represents him as neither doing nor designing any thing. Euryphamus, a Pythagorean philosopher, more clearly expresses himself; God, says he[2], needs no external cause; for he is fusei by nature good, and fusei, by nature blessed, and is of himself perfect. From this attribute of blessedness the scriptures often style God the "blessed" One, and "the blessed God"; Christ is called, "the Son of the Blessed", (Mark 14:61-62) the Creator of all things is said to be, "God blessed for ever", (Romans 1:25; 2 Corinthians 11:31; 1 Timothy 1:11) and Christ, as a divine person, is so called, (Romans 9:5) and nothing is more common with the Jews, in their writings and prayers, than to speak of God as the holy and blessed God. This attribute may be strongly concluded from the last treated of; for if God is a sufficient, and self-sufficient, and an all-sufficient Being, he must be happy; as well as from all the perfections of God put together, before discoursed of; his simplicity, immutability, infinity, eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, justice, holiness, truth, and faithfulness, all-sufficiency and perfection; he that is possessed of all these, and in whom no perfection is wanting, must needs be completely blessed. It might be argued from his sovereign, extensive, and endless power and dominion; and from that light, glory, and majesty with which he is arrayed; by all which he is described, (1 Timothy 6:15-16) "who is the blessed and only potentate", &c. he is a "potentate", has power over others, but is not under the power of any; he is higher than the highest, the most high God; he is over angels and men; he rules in his own right, in right of creation; not by a delegated power; "who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?" (Job 34:13) he has the charge of the earth, and disposes of the whole world, and all persons and things in it; but has his authority for it of himself, and not another; he has no rival, competitor, nor partner with him in his throne; he is not accountable to any, nor to be controlled by any; he is "King of kings, and Lord of lords"; and so most blessed and happy as a potentate; and as such will always continue. "Who only hath immortality" of himself, and gives it to others: and what mars the happiness of the greatest potentates on earth is, that they must and do die, like other men, (Psalms 82:6-7) and such is his light and splendour he is clothed with, so striking and dazzling, that none can bear to come unto it, and gaze upon it; "dwelling in the light" of his own essence; for he is light itself; and such is his glory and terrible majesty, as, that "no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see"; and which glory arises not from any single perfection of his, as his holiness, or any other, but from an assemblage of them all (see Exodus 33:18-19; Exodus 34:6-7). In which glory lies his complete and perfect happiness; and which he gives not to another. The blessedness of God may be considered,

1. First, As it is in himself; and lies chiefly in these two things, in a freedom from all evils, and in the possession of all good things.

1a. In a freedom from all evils[3]; particularly, from the evil of evils, sin; and so from all the consequences of it. Sin is an evil and bitter thing in its own nature; it is exceeding sinful, and extremely pernicious; it is the source of all disorders, disasters, distresses, and calamities that befall any of the creatures; sin has made some of the angels, and Adam and his posterity, once in a most happy state, exceeding unhappy; and it is the infelicity of good men, in the present state, that sin dwells in them, which wars against there, breaks their peace and comfort, and mars their happiness, and obliges them to say, "O wretched" men that we are! but God is just and true, there is no iniquity in him, (Deuteronomy 32:4) no darkness of this kind at all to eclipse his light, glory, and felicity: as holiness is the happiness of the elect angels, and glorified saints, who, being thoroughly holy, are completely happy; so even the most consummate and perfect holiness, is the happiness of God; yea, he is so happy as not to be tempted with the evil of sin, nor can be, (James 1:13) whereas good men, in the present state, are often sadly harassed, and made unhappy, by Satan’s temptations; being sifted by him as wheat is sifted; and so much trouble is given them, by being buffered by him, and having his fiery darts thrown at them; but God is out of the reach of all; and as he is not affected with sin, nor can be tempted to it, so he is clear from all the evil consequences of it, all hurts and damages by it.

Such is his "knowledge" of all things, that he cannot make choice of anything that will be to his detriment; men, through ignorance, mistaking one thing for another, choose what is abominable, and issues in their hurt and ruin: and such is his "wisdom", that he cannot be imposed upon, circumvented, deceived, and drawn into anything that may make him unhappy; as Eve was, through the subtlety of the serpent; but "there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel, against the Lord", (Proverbs 21:30) and such is his power, that he cannot be overcome, nor oppressed by any: with respect to men, there is, oftentimes, "power on the side of their oppressors", to crush and distress them, and make them unhappy; but there is no power superior to the divine Being, to do him the least hurt, or give him the least uneasiness. It has been observed, that properly speaking, there are no affections and passions in God to be wrought upon, or worked up, so as to disturb and disquiet him, as there are in creatures; such as grief and sorrow indulged, and wrath and anger provoked, and raised to a pitch; these are only ascribed to God, speaking after the manner of men; and because some things are done by God similar to what are done by men, when they are grieved and provoked to wrath, &c. otherwise, he is invariably and unchangeably the same, and so most blessed for evermore.

1b. His blessedness lies in the possession of all good. He has all good in him; he comprehends all that can be called good; he stands in no need of anything; he is perfect and entire, wanting nothing; he is the fountain of all goodness; all good things come from him; he gives all things richly to enjoy; he is good, and does good, yea, he is good to all; he gives to all, and receives from none; and therefore must be happy; for "it is more blessed to give than to receive", according to the saying of Christ, (Acts 20:35) he is the "summum bonum", the chief, the chiefest good; in whom only happiness is to be found; when all nature is surveyed, and every place and thing searched into, it can be thought to be in God only, and he is found to be that; "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that desire besides thee" (Psalms 73:25). Such and such persons, in such and such circumstances, may be thought to be happy; but happy, thrice happy, are the people whose God is the Lord! who, besides the good things he bestows on them here, he has laid up such goodness for them hereafter, which the heart of man cannot conceive of. How

blessed and happy then must he himself be! name whatsoever it may be thought happiness consists in, and it will be found in God in its full perfection. Does it lie in grandeur and dominion? with God is terrible majesty; he is the blessed and only potentate; his kingdom rules over all, and is an everlasting one. Does it lie in wealth and riches? "The gold is mine, and the silver is mine, saith the Lord", (Haggai 2:8) all the gold and silver in the world, that, and all the fulness of it, are his; the riches of both Indies are his property; the mines and metals of the earth, the fowls of the heaven, the beasts of the field, and "the cattle on a thousand hills", in the latter of which the substance of men formerly lay (Psalms 24:1; Psalms 50:10-12). Does it lie in wisdom and knowledge, where Solomon sought for happiness, and had of all men the greatest share of it? these are in God in the highest perfection; "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Romans 11:33). Does it lie in might, power, and strength, as Samson's excellency did? God is "mighty in strength: if I speak of strength", says Job, "Lo, he is strong"; there is no strength nor power comparable to his; "Who is a strong Lord like unto thee?" (Job 9:4; Job 9:19; Psalms 89:8). Does it lie in pleasure; in which also Solomon sought for it, but found it not? "In the presence of God is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore", (Psalms 16:11) and if such as to make his creatures happy, angels and men, then certainly to make himself happy also. Does it lie in fame, in credit, and the high esteem of others? How excellent is the name of God in all the earth! his works praise him, his saints bless him, angels celebrate his glory; yea, his glory is above the heavens; his name is great from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. To happiness knowledge is necessary; whatever excellencies may be in creatures, if they know them not, they are not happy in them. Hence happiness is denied of brutes; for though there are many things which they excel in, as strength, swiftness, &c. as the horse and the mule, yet being without understanding, are not happy: but God knows all the excellencies and perfections in his nature; there is no searching of his understanding, and therefore most happy. That happiness is the greatest which is independent; the happiness of angels and men is dependent on God; they have nothing but what they have received, and therefore cannot glory, as though they received it not; and this is a restraint upon, and a limitation of their happiness: but the happiness of God is infinite and independent; of him, and through him, and for him, are all things (Romans 11:36). Add to all this, that his blessedness endures for ever; he is God blessed for ever, from everlasting to everlasting: could his happiness cease, or be known that it would, it would detract from it, even for the present; but this can no more cease than his Being.

2. Secondly, What may serve further to prove and illustrate the blessedness of God is, that he is the cause of all blessedness in his creatures, angels and men. Angels have their beings from him; it is he that has made them the spirits they are, and what excellencies, as of wisdom, knowledge, strength, &c. they have, are all from him; that they are chosen in Christ, and confirmed by grace in him, see the face of God, and enjoy his favour, in which their greatest blessedness lies, all flow from his sovereign will and pleasure. The temporal happiness of men is from him; that they have a being, are preserved in it, and have all the necessaries and comforts of life; that they are blessed in basket and store; that they have health and wealth, and an increase in their families, flocks, and herds; on account of which it behooves them to say, "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits" (Psalms 68:19). Their spiritual blessings come from him, who is himself their covenant God and Father, the chief of their blessings, and therefore cannot want any good thing, nor need fear any evil they have Christ, and all the blessings of goodness with him; the Spirit, and all his graces, faith, hope, and love, joy and peace; the blessings of pardoning grace, and a

justifying righteousness, and in which their blessedness greatly lies, and from whence peace and comfort flow (Romans 4:6-8; Romans 5:1; Romans 5:11). They are blessed also with the word and ordinances; which are the means of increasing grace, and spiritual peace; and hereafter will be blessed with eternal happiness; with the blessed hope, or the blessedness laid up in heaven, they are hoping for, which they enter upon at death, and enjoy to all eternity. Now if such blessedness comes from God, how blessed must he be in himself!

3. Thirdly, God is his own blessedness; it is wholly within himself and of himself; he receives none from without himself, or from his creatures; nothing that can add to his happiness; and he himself is the blessedness of his creatures, who are made happy by him; whose blessedness lies in likeness to him; which is begun in this life, in regeneration; when newly born souls are made partakers of the divine nature, is increased by sights of the glory of God in Christ, and will be perfected in the future state, when they shall awake in his likeness, and bear his image in a more perfect manner: and also it lies in communion with God; it is the happiness of saints now, and what they exult in, when they enjoy it, that their fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; and it will be the blessedness of the new Jerusalem state, that the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will dwell with them; and of the ultimate glory the saints shall then have, everlasting and uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and partake of endless pleasures in the divine presence: and it will, moreover, lie in the vision of God; which, because of the happiness of it, is usually called the beatific vision; when they shall "see God for themselves, and not another"; see him as he is in Christ, and behold the glory of Christ; see no more darkly through a glass, but face to face, and know as they are known. Wherefore,

4. Fourthly, God is pronounced, declared, and owned to be blessed, by all his creatures; hence the frequent form of blessing him used, "Blessed be the Lord God", &c. (Genesis 9:26; Psalms 72:18; Luke 1:68; Ephesians 1:3). Thus he is blessed by angels, who, as they are called upon to bless him, do ascribe honour, glory, and blessing to him, (Psalms 103:20; Revelation 5:11-12; Revelation 7:11-12) and by the saints, who call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless his holy name for all benefits bestowed upon them (Psalms 103:1-3; Psalms 145:10). Which is done, not by invoking a blessing on him; for there is none greater than he, to invoke and ask one of, much less by conferring any upon him; for as he needs none, a creature can give him nothing but what is his own. Besides, without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the greater; the creature of the Creator, and not the Creator of the creature: but this is done by congratulating his greatness and blessedness, and ascribing it to him, and praising him for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, bestowed on them by him; and which, as they come from him, are proofs of the blessedness that is in him. And here ends the account of the attributes of God; which all centre and terminate in his blessedness.

ENDNOTES:

[1] De Natura Deorum, l. 1.

[2] Fragment. ad Culcem, Laert.

[3] So the Stoics say of God, that he is perfect and intellectually happy; kakou pantov anepidekton, unsusceptible of any evil, Laert. 1. 7. in Vita Zeno.

02. Of the Burial of Christ

Of the Burial of Christ The last degree of Christ's humiliation, and which it ended in, is his burial, or his being laid in the grave; where he continued under the dominion of death for a time. This is one of the articles of the Christian faith, "that he was buried—according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:4). Therefore it will be proper to observe, 1. First, That Christ was to be buried, according to scripture prophecies and types of it; and what they were.

1a. First, Scripture prophecies; which are the following.

1a1. Psalms 16:10. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," or body in the grave. The whole Psalm is concerning Christ, and this verse particularly is applied to him, and strongly argued to belong to him, and not to David, by two apostles, Peter and Paul (Acts 2:25-31; Acts 13:34-37). Indeed, they produce it in proof of Christ's resurrection; but it is, at the same time, a proof of his burial in the grave, from whence he was raised. Some understand it, of his "descent into hell;" as it is expressed in some creeds, that of the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds, though foisted into them in later times; and which the papists interpret of the local descent of the soul of Christ into hell, as it signifies the place of the damned, at least into an apartment of it, they call "limbus patrum;" whither they say he went, to complete his sufferings; to preach the gospel to the Old Testament saints; to fetch their souls from thence, and to triumph over Satan. But it is certain, that the soul of Christ, upon its separation from his body, went not to hell, but to heaven, being committed by him into the hands of his Father: nor needed he to go thither to complete his sufferings, which ended on the cross, when he said, "It is finished": nor to preach the gospel, which belongs to the present life, and not to the state of the dead; and which had been preached to the old testament saints in their lifetime: nor to fetch their souls from thence, which were in heaven; as not only Enoch and Elijah, both in soul and body; but the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and all the rest of the saints: nor to triumph over the devil and his angels, that he did when on the cross (Colossians 2:15). The passages of scripture which all this is chiefly grounded upon, and brought for the confirmation of, are in 1 Peter 3:19-20; 1 Peter 4:6 which are misunderstood, and wrongly applied; for the words are to be understood, not of Christ's going down into the prison of hell, after his death, and preaching to the spirits there; but of his preaching by his Spirit, to the disobedient ones, who lived in the times of Noah; whose spirits, for their disobedience to it, were, in the apostle's time, in the prison of hell. In like manner the dead, to whom the gospel is said to be preached, in 1 Peter 3:4-6 are those that were then dead when the apostle wrote, but were alive when the gospel was preached unto them. Nor are the words in the sixteenth Psalm, and with which the article in the creed is allowed by some to agree, to be understood of the soul sufferings of Christ; the anguish and distress of his mind, under a sense of wrath, and under divine desertion; which have been spoken of in the preceding chapter: though Calvin, and many that follow him, so interpret the phrases, both in the Psalm and in the Creed: but these were what he endured in the garden and on the cross, before his death, and not after it. By "hell," is meant the grave; and so the word is used in many places (Genesis 42:38; 1 Samuel 2:6; Isaiah 38:18). And by "soul," is meant the dead body of Christ; as the word "nephesh" sometimes signifies; (see Leviticus 21:1)

and then the sense is, that God would not leave his dead body in the grave, at least not so long as to see corruption, to purify and corrupt, as bodies begin to do, usually, on the fourth day of their being laid in the grave (John 11:39), but Christ was to be, and was raised, on the third day, which prevented that. Now this prophecy manifestly implies that Christ's dead body should be laid in the grave, though it should not be left there; and though it should not lie there so long as to be corrupted, or that any worm or maggot should have power over him, as the Jews [1] express it.

1a2. Another passage is in Psalms 22:15. "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death;" not only to death, but to dust after death; to lie in the dusty grave, according to the threatening; "To dust thou shalt return" (Genesis 3:19), and to which the body does return when laid in the grave; and the soul to God that gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7). So Kimchi interprets the passage; "I am ready to be put into the grave, which is the dust of death. "

1a3. Some take the words in Isaiah 11:10 to be a prophecy of Christ's burial; "And his rest shall be glorious;" that the passage belongs to the Messiah, is clear from Isaiah 11:1-2 and following; and from the quotation and application of it to the times of Christ (Romans 15:12). And the Vulgate Latin version of the words is, "His grave shall be glorious": and the grave, as it is a resting place to the saints, so it was to Christ; where his "flesh rested in hope" of the resurrection from the dead (Psalms 16:9). And though his being buried was an instance of his humiliation, and a proof of the low estate into which he was brought; yet it was, in some sense, glorious, inasmuch as he was honorably interred in the grave of a rich man; as the next prophecy suggests.

1a4. In the passage in Isaiah 53:9 "and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death;" in which words there is some difficulty: could they be transposed thus, "he made his grave with the rich, and he was with the wicked in his death," facts would exactly answer to it; for he died between two thieves, and so was with the wicked in his death; and he was buried in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, and so had his grave with the rich; but it might be using too much freedom with the text to transpose it at pleasure. The general sense of the words may be this, that after his death both rich men and wicked men were concerned in his burial, and were about his grave; Joseph and Nicodemus, two rich men, in taking down from the cross his body, and laying it in the tomb, enwrapped by them in linen with spices; and wicked soldiers were employed in guarding the sepulchre: or the first clause may respect the intention of the Jews, "he" or "it," the Jewish people and nation, "gave," appointed and intended that his grave should be with "the wicked," that he should be interred in the common burying place for malefactors; and the latter clause may respect the will of God, but "he made it," that is, God in his providence ordered it, that it should be "with the rich in his death;" that he should be buried in a rich man's grave when dead. Aben Ezra says the word twmb translated "in his death," signifies a structure over a grave, a sepulchral monument; and so the sense may be, that though his grave was put under the care and watch of the wicked soldiers, yet he had a famous monument erected at the charge of a rich man, where he was laid [2].

1b. Secondly, There was a scripture type of his burial, and which our Lord himself takes notice of; "for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40), that is, as Jonah was as it were buried so long in the belly of the whale, so Christ should lie a like time under the earth, called "the heart of it," as elsewhere "the lower parts" of it, into which Christ "descended," that is, the

grave (Ephesians 4:9).

2. Secondly, As Christ should be buried according to prophecy and type, so in fact he was buried, as all the evangelists relate (Matthew 27:59-60; Mark 15:46-47; Luke 23:53; Luke 23:55; John 19:39-42), though with different circumstances, yet not contradictory; what is omitted by one is supplied by another; and from the whole we learn,

2a. That the body being begged of Pilate by Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, it was taken down from the cross, and was wrapped or wound about in fine clean linen, as was the manner of the Jews; (see John 11:44), when he was bound hand and foot like a prisoner; and which may denote the dominion death had over him; for when the apostle says, "death hath no more dominion over him" (Romans 6:9), it supposes that it once had; as it had when he was bound with grave clothes and was laid in the grave, until he was loosed from the pains or cords of death, and declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead: the fine clean linen, in which he was wrapped, may be an emblem of his innocence, purity, and holiness; who notwithstanding all appearances and charges, was holy, harmless, and as a lamb without spot and blemish; and likewise of his pure and spotless righteousness, now wrought out, and brought in by his active and passive obedience completely finished, called fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints (Revelation 19:8), and in which his dead members, his people, who are in themselves dead in law, and dead in sin, being enwrapped, or having his righteousness imputed to them, it is unto justification to life.

2b. Nicodemus, another rich man, brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight; which spices, along with the linen clothes, were wound about the body of Christ; which may denote the savoriness and acceptableness of the righteousness of Christ to God, and to sensible sinners; all whose garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, as those his sepulchral garments did (Psalms 45:8), so the smell of the church’s garments, which she has from Christ, is like the smell of Lebanon, or like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed; as the smell of Jacob in his brother’s garments was to Isaac (Song of Solomon 4:11; Genesis 27:27), also the savoriness of Christ’s death and sacrifice, how agreeable to God, being satisfactory to his justice, and so of a sweet smelling savor to him (Ephesians 5:2), and the savor of a crucified Christ diffused through the preaching of the gospel, which is like a box of ointment poured forth, and emits such a sweet savor as attracts the love and affections of souls unto him; and whereby the ministers of it become a sweet savor to God and men (2 Corinthians 2:14-15; Song of Solomon 1:3).

2c. The body being thus enwrapped was laid in Joseph’s own tomb, a new one, in which no man had been laid; and this was cut out of a rock. As Jacob, the patriarch and type of Christ, was honorably buried by his son Joseph, so Christ, the antitype of him, and who is sometimes called Israel, was honorably buried by another Joseph, and he a "rich" man, which fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 53:9. Christ was laid, not in his own, but in "another’s" tomb; which, as it is expressive of his meanness and low estate, who in his lifetime had not where to lay down his head to sleep in, and at his death had no tomb of his own to lay his dead body in; so it denotes, that what he did and suffered, and was done to him, were not for himself but for others; he died not for his own sins, but for the sins of others; and he was buried, not so much for his own sake, but for others, that they and their sins might be buried with him; and so he rose again for their justification: it was

a "new" tomb in which Christ was laid, who wherever he comes makes all things new; he made the grave for his people quite a new and another thing to what it was; as, when he is formed, and lies, and dwells in the hearts of men, old things pass away, and all become new: and in this tomb "was never man yet laid;" and which, as the former circumstance, was so ordered in providence that it might not be said that not he but another man rose from the dead; or that he rose not by his own power, but by the touch of another body, as a man once rose by the touch of the body of Elisha (2 Kings 13:20), moreover this tomb was "hewn out in the rock," as was sometimes the manner of rich men to do, to prepare such sepulchres while living for the greater security of their bodies when dead (Isaiah 22:16), and this prevented any such objection to be made to the resurrection of Christ, that the apostles through some subterraneous passages got to the body of Christ and took it away; and to all this may be added, that at the door of this new tomb hewn out of a rock a great stone was rolled, and this stone sealed by the Jews themselves; so that no pretence could be made for a fraud or imposture in this affair.

2d. The tomb in which Christ's body was laid was "in a garden;" nor was it unusual for great personages to have their sepulchres in a garden, and there to be buried. Manasseh and Amon his son, kings of Judah, were buried in a garden (2 Kings 21:18; 2 Kings 21:26). Christ's sufferings began in a garden, and the last act of his humiliation was in one; this may put us in mind of the garden of Eden, into which the first Adam was put, and out of which he was cast for his sin; and may lead us to observe, that as sin was first committed in a garden, whereby Adam and his posterity came short of the glory of God, so sin was finished in a garden; there it was buried, there the last act Christ's humiliation for it was performed; and hereby way was made for our entrance into the garden of God, the heavenly paradise above. A garden is a place where fruit trees grow, and fruit is in plenty; and may direct us to think of the fruits of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; who compares himself to a grain of wheat, which unless it falls into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit (John 12:24), such as redemption, reconciliation, pardon of sin, &c. as also that as Christ's remove from the cross was to a garden, so the remove of saints at death will be from the cross of afflictions and tribulations, to the garden of Eden, the paradise of God, where there are pleasures for evermore.

2e. The persons concerned in the burial of Christ, and attended his grave, were many and of various kinds, and on different accounts: the persons principally concerned in the interment of him were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, both rich men; and though before they did not openly profess Christ, yet now being wonderfully animated, influenced, and strengthened by the power and grace of God, boldly appear in his cause, and are not ashamed to own him, and act on his behalf, though crucified and slain, and lay under so much ignominy and contempt. And this was so ordered by the wise providence of God, that it might appear, that though Christ was loaded with the reproaches of the multitude of the people of all sorts, yet he had some friends among the rich and honorable, who had courage enough to espouse his cause; and such faith in him, and love to him, as publicly to do the kind offices they did to him, in his greatest debasement and lowest state of humiliation. There were some women also who attended his cross, and followed him to his grave; and continued sitting over against the sepulchre, saw where he was and how his body was laid there; and who went and prepared spices to anoint it, and with which they came early on the first day of the week; but were prevented doing it by his resurrection from the dead; here the power and grace of God were seen in spiriting and strengthening the weaker vessels to act for Christ,

and show their respect to him, when all his disciples forsook him and fled; and this conduct of the women was a rebuke of theirs. Besides these, there were the Roman soldiers, who were placed as a guard about the sepulchre; and which, not only gave proof of the truth of his death, and of the reality of his burial; but also of his resurrection; though they were tampered with to be an evidence against it. The continuance of Christ in the grave, was three days and three nights; that is, three natural days, or parts of them; which answered the type of Christ's burial, Jonah; who lay so long in the belly of the whale (Matthew 12:40). Christ was buried on the sixth day, and so lay in the grave part of that natural day, and the whole seventh day, another natural day, and rose again on the first day, and so must lie a part of that day in it; and in like manner, and no longer, it may reasonably be supposed, Jonah lay in the whale's belly.

3. Thirdly, The ends, uses, and effects of Christ's burial, require some notice.

3a. To fulfil the prophecies and type before mentioned; for as this was predicted of him, it was necessary it should be fulfilled in him.

3b. To show the truth and reality of his death; for though there were other proofs and evidences of it; yet this must be a very convincing one, since he was taken down from the cross, and buried, not by his enemies, but by his friends, who would never bury him alive; nor, indeed, did Pilate, nor would he deliver the body to them until he was certified by the centurion that he was really dead; and if any doubt could remain after that, it must be removed by the burial of him.

3c. That it might appear, that by his death and sacrifice, he had made full satisfaction for sin, and a complete atonement for it; that as by his hanging on the tree, it was manifest that he bore the curse, and was made a curse for his people; so by his body being taken down from the cross, and laid in the grave, it was a token that the curse was at an end, and entirely abolished, agreeable to the law in Deuteronomy 21:23.

3d. To sanctify the grave, and make that easy and familiar to saints, and take off the dread and reproach of it: Christ pursued death, the last enemy, to his last quarters and strong hold, the grave; drove him out from thence, and snatched the victory out of the hand of the grave; so that believers may, with pleasure, go and see the place where their "Lord lay;" which is now sanctified, and become a sleeping and resting place for them until the resurrection morn; and may say and sing, in the view of death and the grave; "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" For,

3e. In Christ's burial, all the sins of his people are buried with him; as the "old man was crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Romans 6:6). So being dead, that, and its deeds, are buried with him; these may be signified by the grave clothes with which he was bound, and from which being loosed, he left them in the grave; signifying that the sins of his people, with which he was held, but now freed from, having atoned for them, would never rise up against them; being left in his grave, and cast into the depths of the sea, and, by the Lord, behind his back, so as never to be seen and remembered more; and which is emblematically represented in the ordinance of baptism, designed to exhibit to view the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and of believers in him (Romans 6:4-6; Colossians 2:12).

3f. This is an instance of the great humiliation of Christ; not only to be brought to death, but to the dust of death. The man, when laid in the grave, is a "vile" body, mean, abject, and contemptible; it

is sown in dishonor and weakness; and so was the body of Christ; he descended into, and lay in the lower parts of the earth, where death and the grave had dominion, and triumphed over him for a while; and so did the enemies of Christ, as the enemies of the two witnesses will, over their dead bodies, saying, as in prophetic language, "And now that he lieth," that is, in the grave, "he shall rise up no more" (Psalms 41:8). But they were mistaken; though he died once, he will die no more; death shall have no more dominion over him; though while he was in the grave it had dominion over him; but now he is loosed from the cords and pains of death, and lives for evermore, having the keys of hell and death; and he is quickened and justified in the Spirit; and is risen again for the justification of his people: which is the next thing to be considered.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Midrash apud Kimchium, in v. 9.

[2] See my Book of the Prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in Jesus, p. 166.

02. Of the Causes of Redemption by Christ

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Secondly, The next thing to be considered are the causes of redemption; what it springs from, by whom, and by what means it is obtained; and for what ends and purposes it is wrought out.

I. First, the moving cause of it, or from whence it springs and flows; and that is, the everlasting love of God; which, as it is the source and spring of every blessing of grace; as of election, regeneration, and effectual calling; so of redemption. The gift of Christ to be the Redeemer of his people flows from this love. Christ was given to be a Redeemer before he was sent; when he was given for a covenant to the people he was given in covenant to be the Redeemer of them; and this gift was the effect of love; to this Christ himself ascribes it; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son"; that is, to he their Redeemer; hence, before he came, Job had knowledge of him as his living Redeemer; and all the Old Testament saints waited for him as such. The mission of Christ in the fulness of time, to be the propitiation for the sins of men, and to redeem them from them, is given as a manifest, clear, and undoubted instance of his love; "In this was manifested the love of God", &c. "Herein is love", &c. (1 John 4:9-10) and God’s not sparing his Son, but delivering him into the hands of justice and death, to die in the room and stead of sinners, while they were such, is a full demonstration and high commendation of his great love unto them (Romans 5:8). The free grace of God, for grace, if it is not altogether free is not grace; and which is no other than unmerited love, clear of all conditions, merit and motives in the creature; it is at the bottom of our redemption by Christ; for as we are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ"; so that redemption that is in and by Christ is of free grace; the gift of Christ is a free grace gift; his being sent and delivered up to death are owing to the grace of God; it is "by the grace of God he tasted death for everyone"; for everyone of the sons of God: and this cannot be attributed to any merit or desert in those for whom Christ died; since they were without strength, ungodly wicked sinners, the chief of sinners, and enemies in their minds, by wicked works (Romans 5:6-8; Romans 5:10). Mercy, which is no other than the love and grace of God, exercised towards miserable creatures, gives rise to this blessing of redemption: God first resolved to have mercy on sinful men; and then determined to redeem and save them by his Son; and it is through the tender mercy of our God, that Christ, the dayspring from on high, visited and redeemed his people; and so performed the mercy promised to men (Luke 1:68-69; Luke 1:72; Luke 1:78), hence God is said to save men according to his mercy; and mercy is glorified in their salvation and redemption by Christ; and they are under obligation to sing of mercy, to praise the Lord, and give thanks unto him, on account of it (Titus 3:5; Psalms 107:1-2; Psalms 136:23-24), it is now, by the love, grace, and mercy of God to sinful men, that his will is determined, and his resolution fixed, to redeem them; for redemption is according to an eternal purpose he has purposed in Christ; who was foreordained before the foundation of the world, to redeem men from a vain conversation, with his precious blood: he was set forth, in the decrees and purposes of God, to be the propitiation for sin; God appointed him to be the Redeemer and Saviour; and appointed men, not unto wrath, which they deserved, but to obtain salvation by him; even the vessels of

mercy afore prepared for glory; and being moved, from his love, grace, and mercy, within himself, to determine upon the redemption of them, his wisdom was set to work to find out the best way and method of doing it: upon this a council was held; God was, in Christ, forming a scheme of peace, reconciliation, and redemption; in which he has "abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence", in fixing upon the most proper person, and the most proper means, whereby to effect it: and hence the scheme of redemption, as formed in the eternal mind and council of God, is called "the manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 1:7-8; Ephesians 3:10). But of the wisdom of God, as it appears in redemption by Christ, I have more largely treated when on the attribute of Wisdom. All these workings in the heart and will of God, issued in a covenant between him and his Son; in which he proposed to his Son, that he should be the Raiser up, Restorer, and Redeemer of his people, both among Jews and Gentiles; and to which he agreed, and said, "Lo, I come to do thy will!" which was no other, than to work out the redemption of his people (Isaiah 49:5-6; Psalms 40:7-8). Hence this covenant is by some called, the covenant of redemption, in which this great affair was settled and secured. Now upon all this, the love, grace, and mercy of God, the good will and purpose of his heart, his council and covenant, the plot of man’s redemption is formed; this is the source and spring of it.

II. Secondly, The procuring cause, or author of redemption, is Christ, the Son of God; he was appointed to it, and assented to it; was prophesied of as the Redeemer that should come to Zion; he was sent to redeem them that were under the law; and he has obtained eternal redemption; and in him believers have it, through his blood, and he is of God made redemption to them.

1. If it be asked, how Christ came to be the Redeemer? it may be answered, as the love, grace, and mercy of God the Father moved him to resolve upon redemption, and appoint his Son, and call him to this work; so like love, grace, and mercy, wrought in the heart of the Son of God to accept of this call, and engage in this work; the love of Christ, which was in his heart from everlasting, and was a love of complacency and delight; this showed itself in various acts, and especially in giving himself for his people to redeem them; in giving himself an offering and a sacrifice for their sins; in laying down his life for them; all which is frequently ascribed to his love (Titus 2:14; Ephesians 5:2; Ephesians 5:25; 1 John 3:16), and this love is unmerited, as appears from the characters of the persons for whom he died, observed before; and so is called the grace of Christ, free grace, unmoved and unmerited by anything in the creature; and to this is attributed the whole affair of our redemption and salvation by Christ (2 Corinthians 8:5), pity and compassion in his heart towards his people in their miserable and enthralled state, moved him to undertake and perform the work of their redemption: "in his love and in his pity he redeemed them", as he did Israel of old (Isaiah 63:9). This love, grace, and mercy, influenced and engaged him to resolve upon the redemption of them; hence he said, "I will ransom them, I will redeem them"; as from the grave and death, so from every other enemy (Hosea 13:14), and as he entered into covenant engagements with his Father from everlasting, he considered himself as under obligation to perform this work, and therefore spoke in language which imports the same; as that he must work the works of him that sent him, of which this is the principal; that he "ought" to suffer and die as he did; and that he "must" bring in those the Father gave him, and he undertook for, and bring them safe to glory.

2. The fitness of Christ to be a Redeemer of his people is worthy of notice. As he engaged in it he was every way fit for it; none so fit as he, none fit for it but himself; no creature, man or angel: no

man, for all have sinned, and so everyone needs a redeemer from sin, and can neither redeem himself nor any other; nor could an angel redeem any of the sons of men; God has put no trust of this kind in those his servants the angels, knowing that they were unequal to it: the angel Jacob speaks of, that redeemed him from all evil, was not a created but the uncreated angel; the angel and messenger of the covenant, the Messiah. Now Christ's fitness for the work of redemption lies in his being God and man in one person. It was the Son of God that was sent to redeem men, who is of the same nature, and possessed of the same perfections his divine Father is; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; who was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal to him: this Son of God is the true God, the great God, and so fit to be the Redeemer and Saviour of men; and a mighty redeemer he must be, since he is Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, and therefore equal to such a work as this (Galatians 4:4; 1 John 5:20; Titus 2:13; Jeremiah 50:34), and he is both God and man; he is the child born, as man, and the son given, as a divine person; he is Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, God manifest in the flesh, and so fit to be a mediator between God and man; and to be an umpire, a daysman to lay hands on both; and to do the work required of a redeemer of men, to make reconciliation for their sins, and to take care of things pertaining to the glory of God, his justice and holiness. As man he could be made, as he was made, under the law, and so capable of yielding obedience to it, and of bearing the penalty of it; which it was necessary he should, as the surety and redeemer of men; as man, he had blood to shed, with which most precious blood he could redeem them unto God; had a life to lay down, a sufficient ransom price for his people, and was capable of suffering and dying in their room and stead, and so of making full satisfaction for them. As God, he would be zealously concerned for the glory of the divine perfections, and secure the honour of them in the redemption wrought out by him; as such, he could put an infinite virtue into his blood, and make it a full and adequate price for the purchase of his church, and the redemption of it; as such, he could support the human nature under the load of sin and of sufferings for it, and of carrying it through the work, otherwise insupportable; and as both God and man he had a right to redeem; as Lord of all, he had a right as well as power to redeem them that were his; and being, as man, their near kinsman, the right of redemption belonged to him, and therefore bears the name of Gaol which signifies a redeemer, and a near kinsman; see the law in Leviticus 25:47-49 and who so fit to be the redeemer of the church as he who is her head and her husband?

3. The means by which redemption is wrought out by Christ; and that is by his blood, his life, to which it is often ascribed (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:9), this was shed, and shed freely, for the remission of sins, and for the redemption of men; had it been shed involuntarily, by accident, or by force, against his will, it would not have been a proper redemption price, or have answered such an end; but it was purposely and voluntarily shed, and with full consent; Christ, as he had the full disposal of his own life, freely gave his life a ransom price for many; "I lay down my life for the sheep", says he, as a ransom price for them; "I lay it down of myself" (Matthew 20:28; John 10:15; John 10:18), and the blood that was thus freely shed was the same with that of those for whom it was shed, which was necessary; not the blood of bulls and goats, which could not be an adequate price of redemption, but human blood; Christ partook of the same flesh and blood with the children for whom he died; only with this difference, it was not tainted with sin as theirs is; which is another requisite of the ransom price; it must be the blood of an innocent person, as Christ was: much notice is taken in scripture of the innocence, holiness, and righteousness of the Redeemer; that he was holy in his nature, blameless in life, knew no sin,

nor ever committed any; that he, the just and Holy One, suffered for the unjust; a great emphasis is put upon this, that the price with which men are redeemed is "the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19), for if he had had any sin in him, he could not have been a redeemer from sin, nor his blood the price of redemption: and yet more than all this, it is necessary to make this price a full and adequate one, it must not be the blood of a mere creature, but of one that is God as well as man, and such is Christ; hence God, who is Christ, is said to "purchase the church with his own blood"; being God and man in one person, this gave his blood a sufficient virtue to make such a purchase; and a peculiar emphasis is put upon his blood, being the "blood of" Jesus Christ "the Son of God", which cleanses from all sin (Acts 20:28; 1 John 1:7). Now this price is paid into the hands of God, whose justice is offended, whose law is broken, and who is the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy; and against whom all sin is committed: and who will not clear the guilty unless his justice is satisfied; for he is the judge of all the earth, who will do right; wherefore Christ is said "to redeem" men "unto God by his blood" (Revelation 5:9). The price of redemption, which is the blood of Christ, was paid unto God, whereby redemption from vindictive justice was obtained; it was not paid into the hands of Satan, or any other enemy that had power over the redeemed; for the power of Satan was only an usurpation; he had no legal right to hold them captives; and therefore the delivery of them out of his hand is by power and not by price: but the justice of God had a legal right to shut them up, and detain them as prisoners, till satisfaction was given; and therefore redemption from avenging justice, which is properly the redemption that is by Christ, is by a price paid to justice for the ransom of them.

III. Thirdly, The final cause, or causes, or ends, for which redemption was wrought out and obtained by Christ in this way; and they are these.

1. That the justice of God might be satisfied in the salvation of a sinner; that God might appear to be just, while he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and be just and faithful in forgiving sins, and cleansing from all unrighteousness; that the attributes of his justice, holiness, truth, and faithfulness, might be glorified in the redemption of men, as well as the other perfections of his (Romans 3:25-26; 1 John 1:9; Psalms 85:10).

2. That the people of God might be reconciled unto him, and have peace with him, and joy through believing in Christ; for the price of redemption being paid for them, and satisfaction given, they are reconciled to God by the death of his Son; even to his justice, as they always stood in his love and favour; and peace being made by the blood of Christ on such a footing, they may joy in God through Christ, by whom they have received the atonement (Romans 5:10-11).

3. Another end of redemption by Christ is, that the redeemed might enjoy the blessing of adoption; for so it is said, that God sent his Son "to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons", (Galatians 4:4-5) for though the saints are predestinated to the adoption of children in the purpose of God from everlasting; and this blessing is provided and secured in the covenant of grace; yet sin having thrown an obstruction in the way of the enjoyment of it in their own persons, consistent with the holiness and justice of God, this is removed by the redemption which is through Christ; so that they come to receive and enjoy this blessing of grace in themselves in virtue of their redemption by Christ, and through believing in him.

4. The sanctification of God’s elect is another end of redemption by Christ; "who gave himself for them, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14), and again, Christ is said to love the church, and give himself for it, a ransom price for it, "that he might sanctify and cleanse it" (Ephesians 5:25-26) and the redeemed are said to be redeemed by his blood "from a vain conversation" (1 Peter 1:18), for in consequence of redemption by Christ, the Spirit of Christ comes as a Spirit of sanctification, and begins and carries on that work in the souls of God’s people; and by applying the grace and benefit of redemption, lays them under the highest obligation to holiness of life and conversation; see Galatians 3:14.

5. In a word, the end of Christ’s redeeming his people is, that they might be freed from all evil, from every enemy, and all that is hurtful, sin, Satan, the world, law, hell, and death; and that they might be put into the possession of every good thing. "Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, that the blessing of Abraham", even all the blessings of the covenant of grace, in which Abraham was interested, "might come on them through Jesus Christ" (Galatians 3:13-14).

6. And lastly, The subordinate end of redemption is the everlasting salvation of God’s elect, and their eternal life and happiness; and the ultimate end is the glory of God, of his grace and justice, and of all the perfections of his nature.

02. Of the Conflagration of the Universe

Of the Conflagration of the Universe The effects of Christ's second coming and personal appearance are many; as the resurrection of the just, of which we have treated at large already; and the burning of the world, and making new heavens and a new earth, and the reign of Christ there with his saints a thousand years; and thou the general judgment: of all which in their order. And to begin with the universal conflagration; which is strongly and fully expressed by the apostle Peter (2 Peter 3:10; 2 Peter 3:12), where he says, "the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up": which is to be understood of the burning of the whole sublunary and visible world; signified by the heavens and the earth, taken in a literal and not in a figurative sense.

1. First, not figuratively, as some [1] interpret them, of the Jewish church, and of the Mosaic elements, the ceremonial laws, and the abolition of them; and who suppose, that the "new heavens" and the "new earth", in a following verse, design the evangelical church state, or gospel dispensation, which took place upon the removal of the former. But,

1a. Though the civil state of the Jews is sometimes expressed by the heavens and the earth, and the removing of it by the shaking of them (Hebrews 12:26-27), and sometimes by the "world", at the end of which Christ came, and upon whose apostles the ends of it were (Hebrews 9:26; 1 Corinthians 10:11), yet the Jewish church is never called the world; for, in opposition to that, the Gentiles are called the world; the name of church the Jews took to themselves, that of the world they gave to the Gentiles, (Romans 11:12; Romans 11:15) hence the love of Christ in dying for the Gentiles is expressed by this phrase (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2).

1b. Though the commandments of the ceremonial law are called elements or rudiments, in allusion to the elements or rudiments of a language, to which children are put to learn; under which the Jews were while children; and while under the law, as a schoolmaster (Galatians 4:3; Galatians 4:9; Colossians 2:20), yet they are never so called, in allusion to the elements, which belong to the system of the natural world, such as air and earth, which are only capable of being burnt; for surely the burning of a few papers or parchments of the law cannot be meant here.

1c. The abrogation of the ceremonial law is expressed by other phrases usually; as by the fleeing away of shadows, the breaking down the middle wall of partition, the abolishing of the law of commandments, and a disannulling of it; but never by burning, melting, and dissolving.

1d. The Mosaic elements, or the ceremonial law and its precepts, were already abolished when Peter wrote this epistle; these had their end in Christ, and were done away at his death; signified by the rending of the temple vail asunder; and Peter knew this, who was the first to whom it was made known, by letting down before him a sheet, in a visionary way, with all kind of creatures in it, which he was bid to slay and eat; and from whence he learnt that now nothing was to be reckoned common and unclean, that law which made the distinction being abrogated; whereas the melting of the elements was a future thing in his time, and is yet so, And likewise,

1e. The new heavens and the new earth, if by them are meant the evangelic state, or gospel church state; that also had already taken place, and Peter was au instrument in the forming of it; he had the keys of the kingdom of heaven given him, and opened the door of faith by preaching the gospel to Jews and Gentiles; and on the day of Pentecost three thousand were converted and baptized, and added to the church, which was the first gospel church in Jerusalem; and therefore this was not a state to be looked for as to be in future time. But,

2. Secondly, the words are to be understood literally; yet not of a partial bursting of some particular place or city; not of the burning of Jerusalem, the city and temple, and inhabitants of it; which is the sense some [2] put upon them; and which some take into the former sense, and so make a motley sense of them, partly figurative and partly literal; but such a sense of the words cannot be admitted; for,

2a. This would not afford a sufficient answer to the objection to the promise of Christ's coming, taken from the continuation of all things in the same situation as they were from the creation (2 Peter 3:4), for what change in the system of the universe would the burning of a single city, and of a temple in it, make? Changes and revolutions in single states, kingdoms, and cities, had been frequent, and these objectors could not be ignorant of them: but nothing less than such a change as was made by the flood could strengthen the answer to the objection and serve to remove it. Wherefore,

2b. The destruction here spoken of is of equal extent with the destruction of the world by the flood; as the world, the whole world that then was, was overflowed by the flood and perished; so the heavens and the earth which are now will be dissolved and burnt by fire; and nothing short of such a dissolution of the whole frame of nature can answer such a description. Besides, it may be further observed, as it has been [3],

2c. That the apostle's quoting a passage in 2 Peter 3:8 from Psalms 90:4 seems to suppose, that the time of Christ's coming might be then a thousand years off, as in fact it was, and much more, and yet be a short time with God, and might be spoken of as such; but to make mention of a thousand years must seem very improper, with respect to an event that was not twenty years to come; and which Christ had assured would be in that generation (Matthew 23:36; Matthew 23:38-39; Matthew 24:3; Matthew 24:34).

2d. No such events as here mentioned happened at the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple; as the passing away of the heavens with a great noise, a fervent heat in them, to the liquefaction of the elements; with the burning of the earth and all works in it; for even the land of Judea itself was not thus burnt up, with the cities, towns, villages, and inhabitants of them, and all things in them.

2e. Nor was this destruction so desirable a thing as to be looked for with pleasure, and the coming of Christ to effect it, to be hastened to, as in 2 Peter 3:12 whereas Christ's coming to judge the quick and dead, at his appearing and kingdom, will be glorious, and is to be looked for and loved. To say no more,

2f. The destruction here prophesied of is expressly said to be at the day of judgment, against which day the heavens and the earth are reserved unto fire (2 Peter 3:7), so that, upon the whole, nothing else can be meant but the general conflagration of the world by fire, in a literal sense. The

nature and extent of this burning will be more particularly considered after we have proved that such a conflagration is possible and probable, yea, certain; as will appear,

2f1. First, from partial burnings, which may be considered as types, emblems, and presages of the universal burning; as,

2f1a. The burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain; which were set forth for "an example of suffering the vengeance of eternal fire"; and why not then be considered as an emblem of the burning of the world at the last day? These cities were destroyed by fire which came down from heaven; and on a day, when in the morning there was no appearance nor likelihood of it, a fine, bright, sunshine morning (Genesis 19:23-24), and when the inhabitants of it were thoughtless and secure, and indulging themselves in pleasures; and thus, says our Lord, "shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed", that is, in flaming fire, to take vengeance on the wicked (Luke 17:28-30), and if God could destroy these cities, and all in them, by fire from heaven, what should hinder but that he can destroy the whole world in like manner?

2f1b. The destruction of Jerusalem, and the burning of the temple, were emblems of the destruction of the world by fire; hence in answer to the question, put by the disciples of Christ unto him; "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3). Our Lord gives such as were common, both to the destruction of Jerusalem, near at hand, and of the whole world, at the end of it, the one being typical of the other: and so these signs had a double accomplishment; first in the destruction of Jerusalem, and then in the final dissolution of the world. And so the destruction of the Jews is sometimes expressed in such language as suits with the destruction of the whole world; particularly in Deuteronomy 32:22. "For a fire is kindled in my anger", &c. And, indeed, this conflagration here spoken of may be thought to reach further than the land of Judea, though that seems principally designed; even other parts of the earth, and to terminate in the destruction of the whole world; and so Justin Martyr [4] interprets it of the general conflagration. And though Jerusalem and the temple were not burnt by fire from heaven, yet the hand of God was so manifest therein, that Titus, the heathen emperor himself, could observe it; who strove, by all possible means, to prevent the burning of the temple, but could not do it; for God, as the historian observes, had condemned it to the fire [5]; as, indeed, it was: our Lord foretold the burning of the city by the Romans (Matthew 22:6) and the blaming of the temple is prophesied of in Zechariah 11:1 there called Lebanon, because built of the cedars of Lebanon.

2f1c. The burning of the beast, of antichrist, and of the antichristian states. The judgment which will issue in that is described in such manner as if the last and the great day of judgment was intended, and the dissolution of all things at hand; yet nothing else follows upon it, but the body of the beast being destroyed and committed to the burning flame (Daniel 7:9-11), and the destruction of Idumaea, which seems to be a type of Rome and of the antichristian states, is expressed in such language as agrees very well with the dissolution and burning of the whole world (Isaiah 34:4-6; Isaiah 34:9-10) of the burning of Rome, see Revelation 18:8-18.

2f1d. The destruction of Gog and Magog, or the Turk, will be by fire; which will be at the beginning of the spiritual reign of Christ; and when the Jews are converted, and restored to their own land, which will irritate the Turk to bring his armies against them, the Lord will "rain upon him an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone" (Ezekiel 38:22), this is said of Gog; and the like is said of Magog (Ezekiel 39:6). And I will send a fire on Magog: these are different from

the Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:8-9 who are no other than all the wicked dead raised; whereas these are the Turks: and they will appear at a different time; the one at the beginning of the spiritual reign of Christ, as before observed; and the other at the end of the personal reign of Christ, or the millennium; and so the fire that comes down from heaven on the one is of a different nature from that which comes on the other; the one is a material fire, the other the wrath of God. Now these several partial burnings, as they are types and presages of the universal burning of the world, so they at least make that possible and probable.

2f2. Secondly, the probability of the universal conflagration may be argued from the preparations in nature which are made and making for it; for the apostle says, that "the heavens and the earth which are now", which are now in being, "are by the same word", the word of God, "kept in store", as a treasure, and are treasured up among the stores of vengeance, "reserved unto fire"; for which preparations are making in them; "against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men", when it will break forth and destroy the universe and all things in it. Preparations are making in the earth for this general burning. Not to take notice of the central fire, supposed by some to be in the midst of the earth, since it is doubtful whether there is such a thing or not; it is certain there are various volcanoes, or burning mountains, in different parts of the world; besides Mount Etna, in Sicily [6], which has been burning for many ages, as also has Vesuvius, near Naples; and the island of Strombilo, in the sea, which lies between them both, and is thought to have a communication with them under the bottom of the sea; and Lipara, near Sicily: and so far north as Iceland, there are three burning mountains; one of them called Hecla, which oftentimes rages no less than Etna, vomiting out prodigious stones, with a terrible noise; besides hot springs in abundance. In the East Indies, in the island of Java, not far from the town Panacura, a mountain broke out in 1586, for the first time; discharging such quantities of burning brimstone, that above ten thousand persons in the country round about were destroyed. The mount Gonnapi, in one of the islands of Banda, in the same year, which had been burning seventeen years, broke from the rest, throwing out a most dreadful quantity of burning matter, and great red hot stones, &c. There is another mountain on the island of Sumatra, which smokes and flames just like Etna. The earth, in the Molucca islands, casts out fire in several places; as in Sorea and Celebes; especially a mountain in Ternata. In one of the Moorish islands, about one hundred and twenty miles from those of the Molucca, there happen very often earthquakes, with eruptions of fire and ashes. In Japan, and the islands about it, there are many little, and one great burning mountain; nay, it is said [7], there are eight "volcanos" in Japan, besides many hot springs. In Tandaja, one of the Philippine islands, are found many small fire mountains; and one in the island Mariudica, not far from them. The like are found in North America, in the province of Nicaragua. And in South America, in Peru, among those mountains that make the ridge of the Cordillera, near the city Arequipa, there flames a mountain continually. There is likewise one near the valley Mullahalo, which being opened by fire, casts out great stones. There are also several burning mountains in the district that lies on the east side of the river Jeniscea, in the country of the Tongesi, some weeks journey from the river Oby, according to the relation of the Muscovites; as also near another water called Besida. Near the island Santorini, no longer ago than the year 1707, sprung up a new island from the bottom of the sea; in which, about the end of August that year, the subterraneous fires, after a terrible rumbling, burst out with such violent noise as if six or seven pieces of cannon were discharged at once; and frequently a great quantity of ashes, glowing stones, and huge pieces of burning rocks, have been tossed into the air with such a force, that they have been

carried seven miles before they have dropped into the sea [8]! Strabo [9] reports somewhat similar to this, as done near this place some hundreds of years ago. Nor is our island free from symptoms and appearances of subterraneous fires; for by what are the hot waters at Bath and Bristol occasioned, but by them, by which they are heated? Besides, there are eruptions of fire in some places in other parts of the land [10]. And by the above accounts it appears, that not only there have been burning mountains in ages past, in some places, even thousands of years ago; but that new ones, in later times, have broke out: so that the preparation for the general burning of the world is still carried on and is increasing; and which may seem to portend its being near. And there is not only a preparation making in the earth but in the heavens also, where there is great store of materials fit for this purpose provided; witness the fiery meteors in them, the blazing comets, which sometimes appeal and are always in being, though not always seen by us; also those vast bodies of light and fire, the sun and stars, to be made use of on occasion; and the vast quantities of matter which occasion such dreadful thunders and lightnings which, in some parts of the world, are almost continual, and from which they are scarce ever free. Now when these things are considered, the general conflagration of the world will seem neither impossible nor improbable; but rather it may be wondered at, and thought a miracle, that the earth has not been destroyed by fire long ago. Let the atheist, the infidel, the profane and careless sinner tremble at this. Pliny [11] the heathen, observing the many fires in the earth and in the heavens, and how easily fire is kindled by holding concave glasses to the sun, says, ``It exceeds all miracles, that one day should pass and all things not put into a conflagration!''

2f3. Thirdly, what may make the doctrine of the universal conflagration probable, is, that it has been believed in all ages, and by all sorts of persons. Josephus [12] says, that Adam foretold the destruction of all things, at one time by the force of fire; and at another time by the violence and multitude of water; and therefore the posterity of Seth built two pillars, one of brick and the other of stone, on which they inscribed their inventions; that if that of brick was destroyed by the force of showers of rain, that of stone remaining, would show to men what was written on the brick: from hence, or, however, from an early tradition, this notion of the burning of the world has been received and embraced by various nations, both Jews and Gentiles: as for the Jews, they might have it, not only from tradition, but might conclude it from the word of God, as they do; who say [13], that though God has sworn he will not bring a flood of water on the world, yet he will bring a flood of fire; as it is said (Isaiah 66:16). "For by fire will the Lord plead", or judge; hence they speak of the wicked being judged with two sorts of judgments, by water and by fire [14]: and this same tradition got among the Gentiles, and was received by them; as by the Indians [15], the inhabitants of Siam and Pegu, the Egyptians, the Chaldaeans, and the ancient Gauls and Britons, and the Druids among them [16]. And it has been embraced by poets and philosophers, Greek and Latin. Lactantius [17] quotes a prophecy of one of the sybils, that as God formerly destroyed the world with a flood, so he would hereafter destroy mankind for their wickedness by burning. Justin Martyr [18] observes, that the sybil, Hystaspes (the Persian) and the Stoics, assert, that corruptible things shall be destroyed by fire. Orpheus, that very ancient poet, as quoted by Plato [19], affirmed, that in the sixth generation, the world, katakausetai, (so it should be read) shall be burnt; and Sophocles, as quoted by Justin [20], and Clemens of Alexandria [21], speaks of this burning. The verses of Ovid [22], concerning this matter, and so of Lucan [23], are well known. The philosophers make frequent mention of it; Empedocles [24] says, there shall be sometime a change of the world into the substance of fire. And Heraclitus taught [25], that as all things are of

fire, all shall be resolved into it again; and that as the world was generated out of fire, in a course of years the whole world shall be burnt again; and so say Hippasus [26], and Phurnutus [27]; and Zeno [28] expresses himself almost in the words of Peter, that the elements shall be destroyed, or corrupted, by a fiery eruption; and Plato [29], in so many words, says, in length of time, or, as some read it, in a short time, there will be a destruction of the things on the earth by much fire. And it is the observation of many writers, that the Stoic philosophers held an ekpurwsisV, or conflagration of the world by fire; Epictetus [30] speaks of it; and so does Seneca [31], who says, that fire is the "exitus" of the world; nay, Minutius Felix [32] asserts, that this was not only the constant opinion of the Stoics; but that the same was the sentiment of the Epicureans, concerning the conflagration of the elements, and the ruin of the world; and it has been observed, that of all the heretics under the Christian name, none have risen up who have denied the dissolution of the world by fire. Now that men of different nations, and ages, and sentiments, should agree in this, makes it probable that so it may be: but we have a more sure word of prophecy, which makes this matter certain to us Christians. Wherefore,

2f4. Fourthly, that the world, and all things in it, shall at last be consumed by fire may be concluded from the sacred scriptures. And,

2f4a. First, from Psalms 3:1-8. "Our God shall come", &c. By "our God", is meant Christ, "Immanuel, God with us"; called "the mighty God" (Psalms 50:1), and is one of his names (Isaiah 9:6), who, as at his first coming, came out of Zion, (Psalms 50:2), so he will when he comes again (Joel 3:16), of which second coming these words are to be understood; as appears by his order to gather his saints to him (Psalms 50:5), which order will be given to his angels, to gather his elect from the four winds, when raised from the dead, at his coming (Matthew 24:30), and by his appearing under the character of a Judge (Psalms 50:6), to judge his people (Psalms 50:4), and even all the inhabitants of the earth, who will be called from one end of it to the other (Psalms 50:1), and be judged in righteousness; and so the Targum applies the text to the judgment of the great day [33], when he will "not keep silence". His descent from heaven will be with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; when his voice will be heard from the rising of the sun to the going down of it; and reach the dead in their graves, who will hear it and come forth; and then a "fire shall devour before him", and consume all in the way, dissolve the heavens, melt the elements, and burn the earth, and all in it, and be "tempestuous round about him"; which agrees with Peter’s account of the conflagration, that the heavens shall pass away with a "great noise", roizhdon, like that of a storm and tempest; and now, in a literal sense, will the Lord rain upon the wicked fire and brimstone, and "an horrible tempest!"(Psalms 11:6).

2f4b. Secondly, from Psalms 97:3-5. "A fire goeth before him", to make way for him, by destroying everything combustible; "and burneth up his enemies round about", who would not have him to reign over them, reject him as a Saviour, despise his gospel, and submit not to his ordinances; so the fire with which the world shall be burnt is "for the perdition of ungodly men", all the wicked inhabitants of the earth; it will leave none: "his lightnings lightened the world"; such dreadful thunder and lightning will be in the heavens, that the coruscation thereof will blaze all over the world; the sight of which will be so awful and tremendous, that "the earth", the inhabitants of it, will "see and tremble", fearing the flashes of it will consume them: "the hills melted like wax" before the fire, "at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth"; who will now come to judge the world with righteousness, and the people with equity; as at the close of the

preceding Psalm, with which this is connected; when "righteousness and judgment" will be "the habitation of his throne", and he will sit on his throne judging righteously; when he will come in the "clouds" of heaven, and be surrounded with them (Psalms 97:2), and when he will take to himself his great power and "reign", which will cause joy and gladness to his people (Psalms 97:1), for his judging of quick and dead, will be at his appearing and kingdom (2 Timothy 4:1), for all these things go together; Christ's appearance in the clouds, taking possession of his kingdom, the judgment of quick and dead, and the burning of his enemies.

2f4c. From Isaiah 24:1-23 which is a prophecy, not of the destruction of a single state and kingdom, but of the whole world; as appears from Isaiah 24:1; Isaiah 24:3-4; Isaiah 24:19-20 and which is expressed by a "dissolution" of it, and by "burning the inhabitants" thereof (Isaiah 24:19; Isaiah 24:6), and is spoken of as what will immediately precede the personal and glorious reign of Christ (Isaiah 24:23).

2f4d. Fourthly, from Isaiah 66:15-16. "For behold the Lord will come with fire", &c. which perfectly agrees with the account of Christ's coming to burn the world, and take vengeance on the wicked, given in the New Testament (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8; 2 Peter 3:10). "For by fire, and by his sword", which proceeds out of his mouth, "will the Lord plead with all flesh", with all mankind, or "judge" them; for of Christ's coming to judgment must this be understood; for the judgment is universal. In the former part of the chapter are various prophecies concerning the spiritual reign of Christ, the conversion of the Jews, and a large addition to the church from among the Gentiles, and of the great peace and prosperity of it (Isaiah 66:7-13), an hint is given of the resurrection of the dead (Isaiah 66:14). "Your bones shall flourish like an herb" [34]; compare with it Isaiah 26:19 which will be at Christ's second coming; and after this, mention is made "of the new heavens and the new earth" (Isaiah 66:22), which will succeed the old heavens and earth that will perish in the conflagration of the universe.

2f4e. Fifthly, from the various passages in the minor prophets; particularly in Nahum 1:3-5 for though the prophecy is concerning the destruction of Nineveh, yet God is described as what he will appear to be, and by what he will do at the dissolution of all things; "the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm"; and in such an one the heavens will pass away, according to the apostle Peter: "And the clouds are the dust of his feet"; in these the Lord of the whole earth, the Son of man, will come to judgment. "He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers"; which yet was never done; but will be done at the conflagration of the world; hence John says, "The first heaven, and the first earth, were passed away, and there was no more sea" (Revelation 21:1), being dried up at the general burning. "Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth"; the trees, herbs, and flowers, which covered and adorned these mountains, being all consumed by the fire; "and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence; yea, the world, and all that dwell therein!" than which nothing can more filly agree with the description the apostle Peter gives of the dissolution of all things (2 Peter 3:10).

Some passages in Zephaniah 1:2-3; Zephaniah 1:18 seem to look this way; for though the destruction of the land of Judea is particularly threatened; yet they seem to have a further view, even to all the nations and kingdoms of the whole world, and to all the earth, which shall be devoured with the fire of God's jealousy (Zephaniah 3:8), and the time of it is called, "the great day of the Lord" (Zephaniah 3:14), the day of judgment, the judgment of the great day, as that is called

in the New Testament; against which the fire that shall burn the world is reserved (Jude 1:6; 2 Peter 3:7), but especially the prophecy in Malachi 4:1-3 in the ultimate completion of it, may be thought to respect the general conflagration; for though it may be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Jews in it, and to Christ's coming to take vengeance on them, yet only as a type and emblem of this; "for behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven"; the day of the Lord, as Peter expresses it, which will burn like an oven indeed, with great fury and fierceness; so that the heavens shall pass away, the elements melt, and the earth, and all therein, be burnt up; and "all the proud", the despisers of Christ and his gospel, "and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble"; fit for such an oven, and which the fire will soon and easily consume; "and shall burn them up, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch"; not one wicked man will escape the conflagration, all will be burnt in it, yet the wicked only; for the righteous dead, who will then he raised, and the living saints, who will be changed, will be caught up together into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and will be carried up far enough to be out of the reach of the devouring flames; and these are they who are meant by such that fear the Lord, to whom "the Sun of righteousness shall arise"; Christ shall appear to them as bright and as glorious, as comfortable and delightful, as the sun; and arise on them "with healing in his wings"; so that they, the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth, which will now be formed, "shall not say, I am sick"; these will be the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and "the wicked shall be ashes under the soles of their feet": which words will be literally fulfilled; for the wicked being burnt, and their ashes mixed with that matter which shall form the new earth, and be interred in it, the saints that dwell on it, will, in a literal sense, tread on them; and they will be, not as ashes, but really ashes, under the soles of their feet.

It will be needless to take notice of passages in the New Testament; since the famous one in Peter, which so fully asserts, and so clearly describes the conflagration, has been thoroughly considered, and its sense established; and the text in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 has been often quoted, or referred to; only it may be proper to take notice of what our Lord says shall be at the end of the world, at the dissolution of it, and which plainly suggests it shall be by fire; that "as the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be at the end of the world"; the wicked shall be gathered and separated from the righteous, and be cast into a furnace of fire; and such the world will be when destroyed by fire, and all the wicked in it (Matthew 13:40-42; Matthew 13:49-50). Proof being thus given of the general conflagration, I proceed,

2f5. Fifthly, to answer some queries relative to it; as with what sort of fire the world will be burnt? what the extent of this burning? and whether the earth will be destroyed by it as to its substance, or only as to its qualities?

2f5a. First, with what sort of fire the world will be burnt? Not with fire taken in a figurative, but in a literal sense; not with metaphorical, but material fire. Fire is sometimes taken figuratively for the wrath of God, whose fury is poured forth like fire (Nahum 1:5; Psalms 18:8; Psalms 79:5). But though the burning of the world will be the effect of God's wrath against sinners for their sins, yet that will be executed by means of material fire: the world will be burnt with such fire as will come from heaven, and break forth out of the earth; with such fire from heaven by which Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain were destroyed; with which Aaron's two sons were consumed; with which the two hundred and fifty men of Korah's company were destroyed; with which the two captains, and their fifties, perished, who came to take the prophet Elijah; of the

same sort with that which fell on Job's sheep, and the servants that kept them, and killed them; and such as very often flashes from heaven, and destroys houses, buildings, men, and cattle: and such fire as breaks out of the earth, of which various instances have been given, in volcanoes, and other eruptions; and like that which the historian [35] speaks of, which many hundreds of years ago broke out of the earth in Germany, and burnt towns, villages, and fields everywhere, and was with great difficulty extinguished. So that the world will be destroyed by fire much in the same manner as it was by water: the flood was brought upon it partly by the windows of heaven being opened above, which let down rain; and partly by the fountains of the great deep being broke up below, which sent forth great quantities of water; and both meeting together, drowned the world: so the stores of fire in the heavens being opened, and great quantities issuing out of the bowels of the earth, these joining together will set the whole world on fire, heavens and earth, and bring on their speedy dissolution. Some have thought the stars will have a great influence in this affair. Berosus, an ancient writer, says [36], that it will be according to the course of the stars; and that all earthly things will be burnt up, when all the stars shall meet in Cancer: and one Serarius [37], in the last century, because of the conjunction of all the planets in Sagittarius, a fiery sign, conjectured that the burning of the world was near; and Mr. Whiston [38], of the present age, fancied the world will be burnt by the near approach of a comet to it; so the Brahmins [39]. But for such conjectures there is no foundation; the manner seems to be as before described. This fire will be but temporary, it will last but for a time; how long the world will be burning cannot be known; fire usually makes quick dispatch, and consumes presently; and so it is to be distinguished from that fire in which the wicked will be tormented, that is called everlasting fire, fire which cannot be quenched, the smoke of which ascends for ever and ever (Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:44; Revelation 14:10-11).

2f5b. Secondly, what will be the extent of this burning? or how far, and to what will it reach? To the heavens, the elements, the earth, and all the works in it.

2f5b1. To the heavens; not to the third heaven, into which the apostle Paul was caught up, and heard and saw what it was not lawful to utter; for this is the throne of God, the habitation of angels and glorified saints, and now the residence of the glorious body of Christ; but the fire will not reach the palace of Jehovah; nor at all annoy any of his courtiers and friends: it is a question, whether it will reach the starry heaven, or at all affect the luminaries of the sun, moon, and stars; for though the city of the perfect saints, the inhabitants of the new heavens and earth, will stand in no need of the sun and moon to enlighten them, it does not follow that these then will not be; but rather it is implied, that they will be, though the saints will not: need them. Things that are durable, are said sometimes to endure, as the sun, and moon, and stars, for ever and ever; and it seems as if these will be always continued, as monuments of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. But it will be the airy heaven [40], that will be the subject of the conflagration, the atmosphere about us, the surrounding air, and the meteors in it. Some have thought this burning will reach no farther than the waters of the flood did, which verged the highest hills, and it may be reached fifteen cubits higher; but that is no certain rule to go by: however, as the fowls of the heaven or air, were destroyed by that, so they will by this (Genesis 7:23; Zephaniah 1:3).

2f5b2. To the earth, and all the works that are in it; to the whole terraqueous globe, both land and sea: it may seem a difficulty, how that part of the globe which contains such vast quantities of water, as are in the main ocean, in other seas, and in the rivers, should be consumed hereby; yet

this will be none, when the omnipotence of God is considered, and what the prophet says of him with respect to this affair; "He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers" (Nahum 1:4), which will be the case, represented to John, in a vision, who saw the first heaven and earth pass away, and new ones succeed; and "there was no more sea", that being dried up; see Amos 7:4. This fire will reach to all the living creatures in the earth, land, and sea, the works of God's hands: as the fowls of the air, so the fishes of the sea, and "the cattle on a thousand hills"; all the beasts of the field, and all men found on the earth; all wicked of the earth, who will be all burnt up root and branch, not one will escape. This fire is reserved for the perdition of ungodly men. It will extend to all the works of nature, mountains, hills, and rocks, metals and minerals in the bowels of them, and all that cover and ornament them, trees, herbs, plants, and flowers; for, as the prophet says in the above place, "Bashan languisheth, and Carmel and the flower of Lebanon languisheth", being stripped of all their glory; the same will be true of all other mountains and hills: It will consume all the works of art, towers, palaces, and stately buildings, which it was thought would have continued for ever; all the utensils and instruments of various manufactories; and all the curious things wrought by the hands of men. Likewise all literary works, the archives and records of kingdoms, states, and cities; the treaties, covenants, and agreements of princes; compacts between men; bonds, bills, deeds of conveyance of right to estates, lands, possessions, and inheritances; all the writings of men, good and bad: all that good men have written for the use of the church, which will be continued to this time, will now be destroyed, there being no further need of them, and use for them. Some think that moral works and actions are included, and that these are the works that will be burnt up, and this the fire the apostle speaks of in 1 Corinthians 3:13-15 but such works are not the subjects of fire: nor is it such fire the world will be destroyed with that is there meant: the "day" that shall declare every man's work, is the bright day of the gospel, in the spiritual reign of Christ; the light of which will be as the light of seven days, when the people of God, ministers and others, will see eye to eye; every truth will be seen in its true light, and be easily distinguished from error: and the "fire" designs the gospel, which will then burn bright and clear, and burn up everything contrary to it; and so by "works" are meant doctrines, some comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones, which will bear the test of this day, and the fire; and others like wood, hay, and stubble, which will not be able to stand before them: and it should be observed, that the apostle is speaking of good men and ministers, who were on the foundation themselves, and laid the foundation, Christ, ministerially; but laid different things on this foundation, some very good, others good for nothing, and a mixture of both; which, when the day, the time comes spoken of, will be declared and distinguished; such as will abide the scrutiny and test, shall be rewarded in the kingdom state; but such as will not, will be condemned, as not agreeable to the word, though the ministers of them, as to their persons, shall be saved, being on the foundation, Christ.

Here let it be observed, for the comfort of the saints, that there are many things which will escape the general conflagration; as the "book of life", in which the names of God's elect are written; the "covenant of grace", which contains the "magna charta" of their salvation; the "word of God", as it is the engrafted word in their hearts; their "title" to the heavenly inheritance; the "inheritance itself", which is incorruptible, and reserved in the heavens: nor shall they themselves destroyed in it; the wicked will be all burnt in it, not one will escape that will then be found on the earth: but as for the saints, the dead bodies of all who have died from the beginning of the world will be raised, and their souls being brought by Christ along with him, will be reunited to them; and they, with the living

saints then on earth, who will be changed, shall be caught up together into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and shall be carried up high enough, and be with him out of the reach of this fire [41]; so that it may be said of them, as of Daniel's three companions in the furnace, that not an hair of their heads shall be singed, nor the smell of fire pass upon their garments.

2f5c. Thirdly, the next query is, whether the earth shall be dissolved by fire, as to its substance, or only as to its qualities? There are persons of great note on both sides of the question; and the arguments of each are not despicable: but I rather incline to the latter, that the world will only be destroyed with respect to its qualities; those who are for the destruction of the world as to the substance of it, argue both from reason and scripture.

2f5c1. From reason: they urge, that as the world was made out of nothing, it shall be reduced to nothing again. But this reasoning will not hold good; for there are some beings which are produced out to nothing, which shall not be annihilated; as angels, and the souls of men, neither of which are formed out of any pre-existent matter, but out of nothing; and so being immaterial, are immortal, and shall never die, nor be reduced to nothing. They argue also, that there will be no further use of the world hereafter, and of the things of it; and as God does nothing in vain, therefore it will not be continued any longer, as to its substance, men ceasing to be upon it, for whose use it was made. But it is more than we are able to say, that it will be of no use hereafter; there are some things that will be in a future state, that we are not able to assign the uses of; as some parts of the human body, when that shall be raised, as no doubt it will be, with all its parts, some of which are not suited to a state in which there will be no eating nor drinking, nor marrying, nor giving in marriage; yet be raised with the rest, both for the perfection of the body and the ornament of it: and besides, if for nothing else, this world, as to the substance, may be continued as a standing monument of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God; to which may be added, that there will be men to inhabit it, even all the righteous ones, at least for the space of a thousand years. It is further observed, that God usually proceeds from things less perfect, to things more perfect; and so from things temporal to things spiritual and eternal. To which may be replied, that this will be the case, by renewing the earth as to its qualities; it will become more perfect, and be suitable to men in a perfect state, and whose bodies will be raised spiritual and immortal.

2f5c2. They also argue from scripture; as even from the text in 2 Peter 3:10 and observe, that the heavens are said to pass away, the elements to melt, the earth, and all therein, burnt up; which they judge, can intend no other than a substantial destruction of the world. But the phrases are not strong enough [42] to support this; the heavens may pass away into another state and form, as the fashion of the world will, and yet not be dissolved as to their substance: things may be melted, as wax, and other things; which, though they lose their form, do not lose their being; and things being burnt, may be reduced to ashes, yet not annihilated; ashes are something. They urge the text in Psalms 102:26. "They", the heavens, "shall perish, but thou shalt endure; they all shall wax old as a garment, as a vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed". But those on the other side of the question, urge the same text in favour of their sentiment; since the perishing of the heavens is explained by changing them; and all change does not suppose a destruction of substance; and a garment that is waxed old, may be refitted, and put into a new form, and be for more and after use; and besides, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, interprets this change by a folding up a vesture, which is done in order to be laid up, and made use of hereafter. A similar place is produced by them, in Isaiah 51:6. "The heavens shall vanish away like smoke"; but then

smoke is something, and that vanishes into air, and that air is something; "And the earth shall wax old like a garment"; but that, as before observed, may be fitted up in another manner, and be for the better; "And they that dwell therein shall die in like manner": but if the heavens and the earth perish in like manner as men do, they do not perish as to their substance, neither with respect to body nor soul; the body, at death, returns to the earth and dust, from whence it was, and the soul to God that gave it. They instance also in Isaiah 65:17. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth"; and therefore the old heavens and earth must be destroyed, as to their substance, since the new ones are not formed out of them, but are created; and creation is a production of things out of nothing. But it may be observed, that the word "create" does not always so signify; but sometimes only the renovation of what already is; as in Psalms 51:10. They likewise make use of all those scriptures which speak of the heavens, and the earth, and the world, passing away (Matthew 5:18; Matthew 24:35; 1 John 2:17), in what sense they may be said to pass away, as in (2 Peter 3:10 has been observed already. The first of those scriptures only says, "till heaven and earth pass", which will never be; and so not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass till all be fulfilled: the other indeed asserts, that "heaven and earth shall pass away"; but then the sense may be only comparatively, that sooner shall heaven and earth pass away, as they never shall, than that "Christ's words shall pass away": the last of them refers to the fashion of the world, and the lusts in it, which shall pass away, and have no place in the new earth; in which, not worldly and sinful lusts, only righteousness shall dwell. All such passages of scripture, likewise, which speak of "the end of the world", are brought into this argument: but these, some of them, have only reference to the end of the Jewish state: as 1 Corinthians 10:11 and Hebrews 9:26 and others only refer to the present state of things in the world; but not to the destruction of it; as Matthew 28:20 and such passages which only respect the mutability of the things of this world, and the temporary enjoyment of them, can be of no use in this controversy; as Hebrews 13:14 and 2 Corinthians 4:18. So likewise, when the Angel swore "that time shall be no more", it can be understood only of antichristian time, or of the time of the reign of antichrist; of the holy city being trodden under foot by the Gentiles; of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; and of the church being in the wilderness; which will be finished at the period referred to: but then all time, in every sense, is not then to be no longer; for not only after that, but after the first resurrection, and the general conflagration, there will be a time of a thousand years at least, in which the saints will dwell with Christ on earth.

Those who suppose that the world will he only destroyed, as to the qualities of it, argue also from reason and scripture.

2f5c2a. From reason: they observe that the old world which perished by the flood, was not destroyed as to its substance; for after the waters were removed from off the earth, Noah, with his family, and all the creatures with him in the ark, went out of it upon the earth; and he built an altar on it, and sacrificed; and he and his sons repeopled the earth. And in like manner, the earth will not be destroyed by fire, as to its substance; but renewed, so as to be inhabited again. They further observe, that man, who is a microcosm, a little world, a world in miniature, when he perishes by death, it is not a destruction of him as to his substance, neither of soul nor body, as before observed. Besides, if God meant to annihilate the world, he would not make use of fire; for fire, though it divides and separates the parts of matter, it does not destroy it; it purges, purifies, and refines; but does not reduce the substance of anything to nothing. Besides, bodies raised,

must have a place to be in, to stand before God in, at judgment; and to be either in a state of happiness or misery afterwards; for which there would be no place found, if the world, as to the substance of it, was dissolved.

2f5c2b. They likewise produce passages of scripture, and argue from them, against the substantial destruction of the world, and for the change of it only, as to qualities. That the earth, as to the matter and substance of it, shall always abide, they urge (Psalms 104:5; Ecclesiastes 1:4). They argue from some of the places brought by others for the utter destruction of the world; as Psalms 102:26; Isaiah 51:6 on the former of which they observe, with Jerom on the place, that the words do not express the utter destruction of the world, but a change of it for the better: and on the latter, that the words suggest, that the heavens and the earth will perish in like manner as men do at death; which is not a destruction of their being, but a change of them into another form and state. They reason from all those scriptures which speak of a new heaven and a new earth; that these signify renewed ones, not new as to substance, but quality: as a new heart, and a new spirit, do not design a new soul of man, new powers and faculties; but a renewing of the same as to qualities. They observe what the apostle says, "The fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Corinthians 7:31), the scheme, the figure, and form of it, in its present situation; not the matter and substance of it. And they further observe, that the state of the world at this time, is expressed by a "regeneration" of it (Matthew 19:28), and by a "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21), which signify a forming and restoring them to a more pure and glorious state. I take no notice of (Romans 8:19, &c. commonly made use of on this subject, because I think it belongs to something else [43], and to another time; and from the whole, those on this side the question conclude, that the dissolution of the world by fire, will be only a purging, purifying, and refining it, as to its form and quality, and a removing from it everything included in the curse, which the sin of man brought upon it; and so will become an habitation fit for the second Adam, and his holy, spiritual, and perfect offspring. But of this more in the following chapter.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Lightfoot’s Works, vol. ii. p. 626, 1074. And Owen. Theologoumena, l. 3. c. 1. p. 153.

[2] Hammond in Loc.

[3] See Ray’s Dissolution of the World, p. 244, 245.

[4] Apolog. 2. p. 93.

[5] Josephus de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 4. s. 5, 6.

[6] Pliny speaks of the burning of Etna in his time, and says of it, that nature not only raged in it, but that it threatened and denounced the burning of the world; and he makes mention of several places then always burning, as in Phaselis, Lycia, Bactria, Media, Persia, Ethiopia, Babylonia, &c. Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 106, 107.

[7] Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 3. p. 621.

[8] See Nieuwentyt’s Religious Philosopher, vol. 2. contempt. 21. s. 18. p. 621, 622. Philosophical Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 391-394. and vol. 5. part. 2. p. 196, &c.

[9] Geograph. l. 1. p. 39. vide Justin. e Trogo, l. 30. c. 4.

[10] Of a burning spring at Brosely in Shropshire; see Philosophical Transactions abridged, vol. 4. part 2. p. 195.

[11] Ut supra, c. 107.

[12] Antiq. l. 1. c. 2. s. 3.

[13] T. Bab. Zebaehim, fol. 116. 1.

[14] Zohar in Gen. fol. 50. 4. & 51. 1.

[15] Ross's View of all Religions, p. 51, 52.

[16] Strabo, l. 4. p. 136.

[17] De Ira Dei, c. 23.

[18] Apol. 2. p. 66.

[19] In Philebo, p. 406. vid Plutarch. de Oracul. Defect. p. 415.

[20] De Monarchia, p. 105.

[21] Stromat. l. 5. p. 606.

[22] "Esse quoque in fatis", &c. Metamorph. l. 1. fab. 7.

[23] Pharsalia, l. 7. v. 812, &c.

[24] Apud Clem. Alex. Stromat. l. 5. p. 599.

[25] Laert. l. 9. in Vita Heracliti. vid. Hesychium de Philosoph. p. 35.

[26] Plutarch. de Placit. Philosoph. l. 1. p. 877.

[27] De Naturn Deorum, p. 39.

[28] Laert, l. 7. in Vita Zenonis.

[29] In Timaeo, p. 1043.

[30] Arrian. Epictet. l. 3. c. 13.

[31] Nat. Quaest. l. 3. c. 13. vid. Consolat. ad Marciamm, c. 26.

[32] Octav. p. 37.

[33] So Austin de Civ. Dei, l. 20. c. 24.

[34] Ubi Resurrectionem Corporum Strinxit, Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. 20. c. 21.

[35] Tacit. Annal. l. 13. c. 57.

[36] Apud Senecae. Nat. Quaest. l. 3. c. 29.

[37] Apud Heidegger. Dissert. 24. de Signis Coelest. s. 8.

[38] New Theory of the Earth, b. 4. c. 5.

[39] Bedang, c. 1. apud Dow's Hist. of Hindostan.

[40] So Augustin. de Civ. Dei, l. 20, c. 18, 24.

[41] "Futuros eos esse in superioribus partibus, quo ita non ascendit flamma illus incendii", Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 20, c. 18.

[42] "Sed puto quod praeterit, transit, transibunt, aliquando mitius dicta sunt quam peribunt", Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 20. c. 24. "Mutatione namque rerum, non omnino interitu transibit hic mundus-----figura ergo praeterit, non natura", ibid. c. 14.

[43] See my Exposition of Rom. viii. 19, &c. See Gill on "Romans 8:19".

02. Of the Corruption of Human Nature

Of The Of The Corruption Of Human Nature.

Having proved the imputation of the guilt of Adam’s sin to his posterity, what follows upon this is, the corruption of nature derived unto them from him; by which is meant, the general depravity of mankind, of all the individuals of human nature, and of all the powers and faculties of the soul, and members of the body.

1. First, I shall prove that there is such a depravity and corruption of mankind.

1a. The heathens themselves have acknowledged and lamented it; they assert, that no man is born without sin [1]; that every man is naturally vicious [2]; that there is an evil disposition, or vicious affection, that is implanted and grows up in men [3]; and that there is a fatal portion of evil in all when born, from whence are the depravity of the soul, diseases, &c. [4] and that the cause of viciousness is rather from our parents, and from first principles, than from ourselves [5]: and Cicero [6] particularly laments that men should be brought into life by nature as a stepmother, with a naked, frail, and infirm body, and with a mind or soul prone to lusts.

1b. Revelation asserts it; the Scriptures abound with testimonies of it, affirming that no man can be born pure and clean; that whatever is born of the flesh, or comes into the world by ordinary generation, is flesh, carnal and corrupt; that all men, Jews and Gentiles, are under sin, under the guilt, pollution and dominion of sin; that the imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart is only evil, and that continually; that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; and that out of it proceeds all that is vile and sinful (Job 14:4; John 3:6; Romans 3:9; Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19).

1c. Reason confirms it, that so it must be; that if a tree is corrupt, it can bring forth no other than corrupt fruit; that if the root of mankind is unholy, the branches must be so too; if the fountain is impure, the streams must be so likewise; if immediate parents are unclean, their posterity must be unclean, since a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; and if God has made of one man’s blood all nations that are upon the face of the earth, and that blood is tainted with sin, all that proceed from him by ordinary generation must have the same taint.

1d. All experience testifies the truth of this; no man was ever born into the world without sin; no one has ever been exempt from this contagion and defilement of nature, "there is none that doeth good, no not one" (Romans 3:10) that does good naturally and of himself; the reason is, because there is none by nature good; of all the millions of men that have proceeded from Adam by ordinary generation, not one has been found without sin; there is but one individual of human nature that can be mentioned as an exception to this, and that is the human nature of Christ; and that is excepted because of its wonderful production, and did not descend from Adam by ordinary generation.

1e. The necessity of redemption by Christ, and of regeneration by the Spirit of Christ, shows that men must be in a corrupt state, or there would have been no need of these. The redemption of men from sin, and from a vain conversation, supposes them to be under the power of sin, and the influence of it, to lead a vain sinful life; and if men were free from the pollution of sin, the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin would have been unnecessary; his being made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to them, implies that they were foolish and unwise, that they were unrighteous and unholy, and slaves to sin and Satan: regeneration and sanctification are absolutely necessary to a man's enjoyment of eternal happiness; "except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"; and "without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (John 3:3; Hebrews 12:14), but what occasion would there have been for man's being born again, or having a new or supernatural birth, if he was not defiled by his first and natural birth; or of being sanctified, if he was not unholy and unclean? (see 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

2. Secondly, The names by which this corruption of nature is expressed in scripture deserve notice, since they not only serve to give more light into the nature of it, but also to confirm it; it is often called "sin" itself, being a want of conformity to the law of God, and contrary to it; it is represented as very active, working all manner of concupiscence, and death itself; deceiving, slaying, killing, and as exceeding sinful, even to an hyperbole, being big with all sin, and the source of all (Romans 7:8; Romans 7:11; Romans 7:13). It has the name of "indwelling sin"; the apostle speaks of it as such with respect to himself, "it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Romans 7:17; Romans 7:20), it is not what comes and goes, or is only a visitor now and then, but an inhabitant, and a very troublesome one; it hinders all the good, and does all the evil it can; and it abides, and will abide, as long as men are in this tabernacle, the body, and even in the saints, until the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved; it is like the spreading leprosy in the house, which was not to be cured until the house was pulled down, and the stones and timber carried into an unclean place: so the tabernacle of the body will not be rid of the corruption of nature, until it is unpinned and taken down, and carried to the grave. It is said to be the "law of sin", and a "law in the members"; which has force, power, and authority with it; it reigns like a king; yea, rather as a tyrant; for it reigns unto death, unless grace prevents it; it enacts laws, and requires obedience to them; and obedience is yielded to the lusts of it; men serve divers lusts and pleasures (Romans 7:23; Romans 8:2; Romans 6:12; Romans 5:21; Titus 3:3). Sometimes it is called the "body of sin", because it consists of various parts and members, as a body does; it is an aggregate, or an assemblage of sins, and includes all in it (Romans 6:6; Colossians 3:5). Sometimes it goes by the name of the "old man", because it is the effect of the poison of the old serpent; it is near as old as the first man; and is as old as every man in whom it is; it exists as early as man himself does (Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22). Very often it is called flesh, because it is propagated by the flesh, and is carnal and corrupt, and is opposed to the spirit or principle of grace, which is from the Spirit of God; and in which no good thing, nothing that is spiritual, dwells (John 3:6; Galatians 5:17; Romans 7:18; Romans 7:25). Once more, it is named, "lust" or "concupiscence"; which is sin itself, and the mother of all sin; it consists of various branches, called fleshly lusts, and worldly lusts, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (Romans 7:7; James 1:15; 1 John 2:15). The Jews commonly call it, the evil figment, or imagination.

3. Thirdly, This corruption of nature is universal,—

3a. With respect to the individuals of mankind. Our first parents were, and all descending from them by ordinary generation are tainted with it. This corruption immediately upon the sin of our first parents, took place in them; as appears from the shame, confusion, and fear they were at once filled with; from their gross stupidity and folly, in thinking to hide themselves from God among the trees of the garden; from their attempts to conceal, palliate, and excuse their sin, the woman by laying the blame on the serpent, the man on the woman, and ultimately on God himself. Their immediate offspring took the contagion from them; the first man born into the world, Cain, the corruption of nature soon appeared in him, in his wrathful and envious countenance, when his brother's sacrifice was preferred to his; nor could he be easy until he had shed his brother's blood, which he did: and though Abel is called righteous Abel, as he was, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and on account of the new man created in him unto righteousness and true holiness; in consequence of which he lived soberly and righteously; yet he was not without sin, or otherwise why did he offer sacrifice, and by faith looked to the sacrifice of Christ, which was to be offered up to make atonement for his sins, and those of others? In the room of Abel, whom Cain slew, God raised up another seed to Adam, whom he begot in his own likeness, after his image; not in the likeness and image of God, in which Adam was created; but in that which he had brought upon himself, through his sin and fall: the posterity of this man, and of Cain, peopled and filled the whole world before the flood. And what is the account that is given of them? It is this, that the earth was corrupt through them; that all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth; and that only one man found grace in the sight of God; and that the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually (Genesis 4:25; Genesis 5:3; Genesis 6:5; Genesis 6:8; Genesis 6:11-12). And as for the inhabitants of the new world, who sprung from Noah and his three sons, who descended in a right line from Seth, much the same is said of them (Genesis 8:21). In short, all nations of the earth, which may be divided into Jews and Gentiles, and which include the whole, are all under sin, under the guilt and pollution of it; not the Gentiles only, whose times of ignorance God winked at, and whom he suffered to walk in their own ways, which were sinful ones; but even the people of Israel, whom God chose to be a special and peculiar people, these were always rebellious, from the time they were a people; all the while Moses was with them; in the times of the Judges; and when under the government of Kings; as their several captivities testify; they were a seed of evil doers, a people laden with iniquity; in every age or period of time, whenever God took a survey of the state and condition of mankind, this was the sum of the account; "They are corrupt", &c. (Psalms 14:1-3; Romans 3:9-12). The contentions, quarrels, and wars which have been in the world, in all ages, are a strong, constant, and continued proof of the depravity of human nature; "for these come of lusts that war in the members" (James 4:1), which, as it is true of the war between flesh and spirit in the soul; and of the animosities and contentions among professors of religion; so of wars among nations, in a civil sense; and which have been from the beginning, and still continue: a quarrel there was between the first two men that were born into the world, which issued in bloodshed; and as soon as kingdoms and states were formed, and kings over them, we hear of wars between them. Look over the histories of all ages, and of all nations in them, and you will find them full of accounts of these things; all which have risen from the pride, ambition, and lusts of men. Yea, this depravity and corruption of nature has appeared, not only among the men of the world in all ages, but even among the people of God, and after they have been called by grace: there never was a just man that did good, and sinned not; in many things, in all things, they sin and offend; in them, that is, in their flesh, their corrupt part, no good thing

dwells: such that say they have no sin, deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them.

3b. This corruption of nature is general, with respect to the parts of man, to all the powers and faculties of his soul, and to the members of his body.

3b1. To the powers and faculties of the soul of man, to all that is within him; his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; his inward part is wickedness itself; the thoughts of his heart are evil, vain, and sinful; yea, the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, the very substratum of thought, the first motions that are in man that way; the mind and conscience, are defiled, and nothing can remove the pollution but the blood of Jesus: the understanding is darkened through the blindness and ignorance that is in it; so that a mere natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God; whatever knowledge men have of things natural and civil, they have none of things spiritual; wise they are to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge; they know not, nor will they understand: the will is averse to that which is good; the carnal mind is enmity to God, and not subject to the law of God; nor can it be, without his grace; it is hard, stiff, obstinate, and perverse, until the stony heart is taken away, and a heart of flesh is given. The affections are inordinate, run in a wrong channel, are fixed on wrong objects; men hate what they should love, and love what they should hate; they hate the good, and love the evil; they are lovers of pleasures, of sinful lusts and pleasures, rather than lovers of God, good men, and good things. In short, there is no place clean, no part free from the pollution and influence of sin.

3b2. All the members of the body are defiled with it; the tongue is a little member, and is a world of iniquity itself, and defiles the whole body; the several members of it are used as instruments of unrighteousness; several of them are particularly mentioned in the general account of man’s depravity, (Romans 3:1-31 as the throat, lips, mouth, and feet, all employed in the service of sin.

4. Fourthly, The time when the corruption of nature takes place in man; the lowest date of it is his youth; "The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21), that is, as soon as he is capable of exercising his reason, and of committing actual sin; and which, at this age, chiefly appears in lying and disobedience to parents; and this is said, not of some particular men, or of some individuals, but of men in general; and not only as in the times of Noah, but in all succeeding generations to the end of the world. This depravity of nature is in some passages carried up higher, even to a man’s birth; "The wicked are estranged from the womb"; that is, from God, alienated from the life of God; being under the power of a moral death, or being dead in trespasses and sins; "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalms 58:3), that is, as soon as they are capable of speaking; and the sin of lying, children are very early addicted to; and this is said, not only of such who in the event turn out very wicked, profligate and abandoned sinners, but even such as are born of religious parents, have a religious education, and become religious themselves, are "called transgressors from the womb" (Isaiah 48:8), that is, as soon as capable of committing actual transgression. David carries the pollution of his nature still higher, when he says; "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalms 51:5), which he observes, not to extenuate, but rather to aggravate, his actual transgression he was confessing, in that he had been so early and so long sinful; and that whereas he was not ignorant of the corruption of his nature, and how prone he was to sin, that he should be no more upon his guard against it. He does not say, "my sin, and my iniquity", though it was his, being in his nature; but "sin" and "iniquity", being what was common to him with the rest of

mankind; and what had attended him at the formation of him in the womb, and so before he could commit any actual sin; and therefore must design the original corruption of his nature; and that as soon as soul and body were united together he was a sinful creature. To this sense of the words it is objected, that David speaks only of his mother's sin; and broad hints are given that her sin was the sin of adultery. This shows how much the advocates for the purity of human nature are pinched with this passage, to betake themselves to such an interpretation of it, at the expense of the character of an innocent person, of whom nothing of this kind is suggested in the sacred writings; but, on the contrary, that she was a pious and religious person; David valued himself upon his relation to her, and pleads to be regarded for her sake (Psalms 86:16; Psalms 116:16). Besides, if this had been the case, David would have been illegitimate; and, by a law in Israel, would have been forbid entering into the congregation of the Lord, and could not have bore any office in church or state; nor did it answer the scope and design of David, to expose the sins of others, especially his own parents, while he is confessing and lamenting his own; nor does the particle "in" belong to his mother, but to himself; the sense is not, that his mother being in sin or that she in and "through sin" conceived him; but that he was conceived being in sin, or that as soon as the mass of human nature was shaped and formed in him, and soul and body were united together, he was in sin, and sin in him; or he became a sinful creature. Some who do not go the above lengths, yet suppose that the sin of his immediate parents, in begetting and conceiving him, though in lawful wedlock, is meant; but this cannot be; since the propagation of the human species by generation, is a principle implanted in nature by God himself, and so not sinful. It was the first law of nature, "Increase and multiply"; given in the state of innocence. Marriage was instituted in Paradise, and has been always esteemed honorable when the bed is undefiled. Besides, one of the words used, translated "shapen", is in the passive form, and respects what neither David nor his parents could be active in; and the whole refers to the amazing work of his formation, which he so much admires, (Psalms 139:14-16. It is objected by others, that he goes no higher than his mother; and takes no notice of Adam. Nor was there any need of it; for since the corruption of nature goes in the channel of generation, he had no occasion, in speaking of that, to take notice of any other but his immediate parents, through whom it was conveyed to him: it is further urged, that David speaks not of other men, only of himself. But that all mankind are corrupted in the same manner, other passages are full and express for it (Job 14:4; John 3:6; Psalms 58:3; Ephesians 2:3). And if David, a man so famous for early piety and religion, one after God's own heart, whom he raised up to fulfil his will, was tainted with sin in his original formation, then surely the same must be true of all others; who, after him, can rise up and say, it was not so with him? Lastly, some will have these words to be figurative and hyperbolical, and only mean, that he had often sinned from his youth: but men, in confessing sin, do not usually exaggerate it, but declare it plainly, ingenuously, just as it is; and, indeed, the sinfulness of nature, cannot well be hyperbolized; and, if such a figure was attempted, it might be allowed of, without lowering it; (see Romans 7:13).

5. Fifthly, The way and manner in which the corruption of nature is conveyed to men, as to become sinful by it.

5a. It cannot be of God, or by infusion from him; he is of purer eyes than to behold it; he has no pleasure in it; it is abominable to him, and therefore would never infuse and implant it in the nature of men. Some of the ancient heretics fancied, there were two first principles, or beings; the one good, and the other evil; and that all that is good comes from the one; and all that is evil from the

other: but this is to make two first causes, and so two gods; and those diametrically opposite to each other.

5b. Nor can it be by imitation of parents, either first or immediate; there are some who never sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, and yet die; which they would not, were they not guilty and polluted; there are many born into the world who never knew their immediate parents, and therefore could not imitate them. Some their fathers die before they are born; and some lose both parents before capable of imitation; and if the taint is at their formation, and before their birth, it is impossible to be by imitation.

5c. Nor does this come to pass through souls being in a pre-existent state. Some of the heathen philosophers, as Pythagoras and Plato, held a pre-existence of souls before the world was; and which notion was adopted by Origen, who held, that souls in this pre-existent state sinned each separately for themselves; and for their sins were thrust in time into human bodies, or into others, in which they suffer. Some think this notion was embraced by some of the Jews in Christ's time, and even by some of his followers; as is urged from John 9:1-3 but then it is not allowed of by him. And some modern Christians have imbibed the same heathenish and Jewish notion; who, observing that some passages of scripture speak of the pre-existence of Christ, in his divine nature, or as a divine Person, have interpreted them of the pre-existence of his human soul; and have proceeded to assert the pre-existence of all souls, but without any color of reason or scripture authority.

5d. Nor is this to be accounted for by the traduction of the soul from immediate parents; or by the generation of it, together with the body, from them. Could this indeed be established, it would greatly remove the difficulty which attends the doctrine of the propagation of the corruption of nature by natural generation; hence Austin was once inclined to it on this account; but it is so big with absurdities, as has been seen in a preceding chapter, that it cannot be admitted; as, that spirit is educed out of matter, and generated from it, and therefore must be material, corruptible, and mortal; for whatever is generated is corruptible, and consequently the soul is not immortal; a doctrine never to be given up: and, besides, according to the Scriptures, the soul is immediately created by God (Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:9). That this corruption of nature is conveyed by generation, seems certain; (see Job 14:4; John 3:6; Ephesians 2:3), for since nature is conveyed in that way, the sin of nature also must come in like manner. But how to account for this, consistent with the justice, holiness, and goodness of God, is a difficulty, and is one of the greatest difficulties in the whole scheme of divine truths; wherefore some have thought it more advisable to sit down and lament this corruption, and consider how we must be delivered from it, than to inquire curiously in what way and manner it comes into us; as a man that is fallen into a pit, does not so much concern himself how he came into it, as how to get out of it, and to be cleansed from the filth he has contracted in it. But a sober inquiry into this matter, with a due regard to the perfections of God, the sacred Scriptures, and the analogy of faith, may be both lawful and laudable. The difficulty is chiefly occasioned by the manner in which the case is put; as, that a soul that comes pure and holy out of the hand of God, should be united to a sinful body, and be defiled by it; blot if it can be made out, that neither of these is the fact, that the body is not properly and formally sinful, when the soul is first united to it, nor the soul pure and holy when created by God; that is, not in such sense as the soul of Adam was when created; the difficulty will be greatly lessened, if not entirely removed.

5d1. Let it be observed, then, that the contagion of sin does not take place on the body apart, nor on the soul apart; but upon both when united together, and not before: it was not the body apart in the substance of Adam's flesh that sinned; nor was the soul apart represented by him; but both as in union, and as one man, one person; for not bodies and souls separately, but men, were considered in Adam, and sinned in him; and so as the imputation of the guilt of his sin is not made to the body apart, nor to the soul apart, but to both as united; when, and not before, it becomes a son of Adam, a member of him; so the corruption of nature, derived from him, takes place on neither apart, but upon them as united together, and constituted man. The body, antecedent to its union to a rational soul, is no other than a brute, an animal, like other animals; and is not a subject either of moral good or moral evil; as it comes from a corrupt body, and is of a corruptible seed, it has in it the seeds of many evils, as other animals have, according to their nature; but then these are natural evils, not moral ones; as the savageness, fierceness, and cruelty of lions, bears, wolves, &c. But when this body comes to be united to a rational soul, it becomes then a part of a rational creature, it comes under a law, and its nature not being conformable to that law, its nature, and the evils and viciousness of it, are formally sinful. It has before a disposition, an aptitude to what is sinful; and contains fit fuel for sin, which its vicious lusts and appetites kindle, when these become formally sinful, through its becoming a part of a rational creature; and these increasing, operate upon and gradually defile the soul. Should it be said, that matter cannot operate on spirit; this may be sooner said than proved. How easy is it to observe, that when our bodies are indisposed through diseases and pain, what an effect this has upon our minds; from the temperament and constitution of the body many incommodities and disadvantages arise unto the soul: persons that have much of the "atra bilis", or black choler in them, a melancholy and bodily disorder, what a gloominess does it throw upon the mind! and to what passion, anger, and wrath, are men of a sanguine complexion subject? and to what is insanity owing, but to a disorder in the brain? and to a defect there must it be attributed, that some are idiots, and others of very mean capacities, and very short memories; and where the bodily organs are not well attempered and accommodated, the soul is cramped, and cannot duly perform its functions and offices; and a man must be inattentive to himself, if he does not observe, that as by thoughts in the mind motions are excited in the body, whether sinful, civil, or religious; so motions of the body are often the means and occasion of exciting thoughts in the mind.

5d2. It is not fact that souls are now created by God pure and holy; that is, as Adam's soul was created, with original righteousness and purity; with a propensity to that which is good, and with power to do it. But they are created with a want of original righteousness and holiness; without a propensity to good, and without power to perform; and a reason will be given presently, why it is so; and why it should be so. And such a creation may be conceived of without any imputation of unrighteousness to God, and without making him the author of sin. It may be conceived of without any injury to the perfections of God; as, that he may create a soul in its pure essence, with all its natural powers and properties, without any qualities of moral purity or impurity, holiness or unholiness; or that he may create one with a want of righteousness, and with an impotence to good, and without any propensity to it; since by so doing he does not put any fulness into the soul, nor any inclination to sin. And that the souls of men should be now so created, it is but just and equitable, as will appear by the following considerations: Adam's original righteousness was not personal, but the righteousness of his nature; he had it not as a private single person, but as a public head, as the root, origin, and parent of mankind; so that had he stood in his integrity, it

would have been conveyed to his posterity by natural generation; just as he having sinned, the corruption of nature is derived to them in the same way; what he had, he had not for himself only, but for his posterity; and what he lost, he lost not for himself only, but for his posterity; and he sinned not as a single private person, but as the head, root, origin, and parent of all his offspring; they were all in him, and sinned in him as one man; so that it was but just that they should be deprived, as he, of the glory of God, that is, of the image of God, which chiefly lay in original righteousness, in an inclination to good, and a power to perform it; and, being stripped of this, or being devoid of it, an inclination to sin follows upon it, as soon as it offers; and in the room of it unrighteousness and unholiness take place; for, as Austin says, the loss of good takes the name of evil; and this being the case, how easily may it be accounted for, that a soul without any fence or guard, wanting original righteousness, be gradually mastered and overcome by the corrupt and sensual appetites of the body. And to all this agrees what a learned author [7] well observes, "God is to be considered by us, not as a Creator only, but also as a Judge; he is the Creator of the soul, as to its substance; in respect to which it is pure when created. Moreover, God is a Judge, when he creates a soul, as to this circumstance; namely, that not a soul simply is to be created by him; but a soul of one of the sons of Adam: in this respect it is just with him to desert the soul, as to his own image lost in Adam; from which desertion follows a want of original righteousness; from which want original sin itself is propagated." Should it be said, that though the justice and holiness of God are cleared from all imputation, in this way of considering things; yet it does not seem so agreeable to the goodness and kindness of God to create such a soul, and unite it to a body, in the plight and condition before described; since the natural consequence of it seems to be unavoidably the moral pollution of them both. To which may be replied, that God in this proceeds according to the original law of nature, fixed by himself; and which, according to the invariable course of things, appears to be this, with respect to the propagation of mankind: that when matter generated is prepared for the reception of the soul; as soon as that preparation is finished; that very instant a soul is created, and ready at hand to be united to it, and it is. Now the law for the propagation of mankind by natural generation, was given to Adam in a state of innocence, and as soon as created, "Increase and multiply"; he after this corrupted and defiled the whole frame of his nature, and that of all his posterity. Is it reasonable now, that because man has departed from his obedience to the law of God, that God should depart from his original law, respecting man’s generation? It is not reasonable he should, nor does he, nor will he depart from it: this appears from cases, in which, if in any, he could be thought to do so; as in the case of insanity, which infects a man’s blood and family, and becomes a family disorder; and yet to put a stop to this God does not depart from the order of things fixed by him; and so in the case of such who are unlawfully begotten in adultery or fornication; when what is generated is fit to receive the soul, there is one prepared and united to it. And sometimes in this way God brings into the world some that belong to the election of grace; one of our Lord’s ancestors came into the world in this way (Genesis 38:29; Matthew 1:3). What if Adam eats the forbidden fruit, and men drink water out of another’s cistern, stolen waters, which are sweet unto them, and thereby transgress the law of God; must he forsake his own stated law and order of things? No; nature itself does not do so: a man steals a quantity of wheat, and sows it in his field; nature proceeds according to its own laws, fixed by the God of nature; the earth receives the seed, though stolen, into its bosom, cherishes it, and throws it out again, and a plentiful crop is produced. And shall nature act its part, and not the God of nature? He will; and the rather he will go on in his constant course, that the sin of men

might be manifest, and that sin be his punishment. And in this light, indeed, we are to consider the corruption of nature; a moral death, which is no other than a deprivation of the image of God, a loss of original righteousness, and an incapacity to attain to it, was threatened to Adam, and inflicted on him as a punishment. And since all his posterity sinned in him, why should not the same pass upon them? and, indeed, it is by the just ordination of God that things are as they be, in consequence of Adam's sin, who cannot do an unjust thing; there is no unrighteousness in him; he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; and so in this. And here we should rest the matter; in this we should acquiesce; and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Which Plato calls kakofuia, and defines it kakia en fusei, an evil in nature, Plato, Definitiones. "Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur—", Horat. Satyr, l. 1. satyr 3. v. 68.

[2] "Unicuique dedit vitium natura creata", Propert. l. 2. eleg. 22 ver. 17.

[3] Laertius, l. 2. in vita Aristippi.

[4] Plutarch, de Consol. ad Apoll. vol. 2. p. 104.

[5] Timaeus Locrus de Natura Mundi, p. 21.

[6] De Republica, l. 3. apud August. contr. Julian l. 4. c. 12.

[7] Sandford or Parker de Descensu Christi ad inferos, I. 3. s. 65. p. 121, 122.

02. Of the Covenant of Grace - David to Christ

Of the Covenant of Grace, as Exhibited in the Times of David, and the Succeeding Prophets, to the Coming of Christ

Christ, the great blessing of the covenant, was spoken of by all "the holy prophets which have been since the world began;" by the patriarch prophets; by Moses and others; but more abundantly by the prophets of a later date; God, who at sundry times, in different ages of the world; "and in divers manners," as by angels, by vision, by dreams and impulses on the mind; "spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets," concerning his mind and will, the covenant of his grace, and the blessings of it; to which dispensation of things is opposed that which is by Christ; "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Luke 1:70; Hebrews 1:1-2). From whence it appears, that the first administration of the covenant of grace, as has been observed, reached from the beginning of the world, or near it, to the coming of Christ; and now having traced it from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to David; I shall next consider it as more clearly manifested in the times of David, and by succeeding prophets, to the coming of Christ. And begin,

1. First, with David, who was a prophet, and by whom the Spirit of God spake concerning Christ, and the covenant of grace made with him (Acts 2:30; Acts 1:16; 2 Samuel 23:2-5). The grace of the covenant was displayed in him, the blessings of it were bestowed on him, the covenant itself was made with him; not only the covenant of royalty, concerning the succession of the kingdom of Israel in his family; but the special covenant of grace, in which his own salvation lay; a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and an everlasting one (2 Samuel 23:5). This was made with him, as he declares, that is, made manifest and applied unto him, and he was assured of his interest in it. He was an eminent type of Christ, who is therefore often called by his name (Psalms 89:3; Psalms 89:20; Ezekiel 34:23-24; Ezekiel 37:24; Hosea 3:5). In his person, in the comeliness of it; in his character and employment, as a shepherd; in his offices, of prophet and king; in his afflictions and persecutions; and in his wars and victories. And great light and knowledge he had of things respecting Christ and his grace, as the book of Psalms, written by him, under divine inspiration, abundantly shows; as, of the person of Christ; of his divine and eternal sonship; of his being the eternal begotten Son of God, to whom this was first, at least, so clearly made known (Psalms 2:7). From whence are taken all those expressions in the New Testament, of Christ's being the only begotten Son, the only begotten of the Father, his own and proper Son: phrases expressive of Christ's co-essentiality, co eternity, and co-equality with his Father. David speaks of the humanity of Christ, of a body being prepared for him in covenant, of the formation of it in the womb of the virgin; of his being of his seed, and springing from him as man, as he did (Psalms 40:6; compared with Hebrews 10:5; Psalms 139:15-16; Psalms 132:11; Psalms 132:17; Acts 13:23). He speaks very expressly of his sufferings and death in (Psalms 22:1-31), uses the very words Christ uttered on the cross; exactly describes the persons that surrounded him, and mocked at him when on it, as well as the manner of his death, by crucifixion, signified by his hands and feet being pierced; and also the dreadful pains and agonies was then in, by which he was brought to

the dust of death; yea, some minute circumstances of his sufferings are observed, as casting lots on his vesture, and parting his garments; and elsewhere, the giving him gall and vinegar to drink (Psalms 69:21). He foretells his burial in the grave, which should not be so long as to see corruption, and his resurrection to an immortal life (Psalms 16:10-11; Acts 2:25-31). His ascension to heaven (Psalms 68:18 compared with Ephesians 4:8-10). His session at the right hand of God (Psalms 110:1; Hebrews 1:13). He treats of his suretyship engagements, and of his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King (Psalms 40:6-9; Psalms 110:4; Psalms 2:6; Psalms 89:27; Psalms 72:8).

2. Secondly, Solomon, the Son of David, and his successor in the kingdom, had not only the covenant of royalty established with him, but the special covenant of grace was made with him, or made known unto him; "I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son" (2 Samuel 7:14). He was both a preacher and king of Israel; and, no doubt, a good man, notwithstanding his fall; his prayer at the dedication of the temple shows it; as well as his being the amanuensis of the Holy Spirit, in various writings: an eminent type he was of Christ, who is therefore called Solomon (Song of Solomon 3:7; Song of Solomon 3:9; Song of Solomon 3:11; Song of Solomon 8:11-12), in his name, which signifies peaceable, and agrees with Christ, the Prince of peace; in his scent, the Son of David; in his wisdom, in which Christ is greater than Solomon; in his wealth and riches; and in the peaceableness and extent of his kingdom. Much of Christ, and the blessings of grace through him, were made known unto him. He writes of him under the name of Wisdom, as a divine Person, the same with the Logos, the Word, and Son of God; of his eternal existence; of the eternal generation of him; of his being brought forth, and brought up as a Son with his Father from everlasting, as is declared in the eighth of Proverbs; which when one reads, might be tempted to think he was reading the first chapter of John, there being such a similarity, yea, sameness of diction, sentiment, and doctrine. Solomon or Agur speaks of Christ under the names of Ithiel and Ucal; the one signifies, "God is with me;" as he always was with Christ, and Christ with him: the other, "the mighty One," or, "I am able," I can do all things; as he could, being the Almighty. He speaks in the same place of the infinite, omnipresent, and omnipotent Being, whose name, that is, his nature is incomprehensible and ineffable; and to whom he ascribes a Son, as a divine, distinct Person from his Father; as of the same incomprehensible and ineffable nature with him, and so co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal with him (Proverbs 30:1; Proverbs 30:4). The book of Cantitles, written by Solomon, is a rich display of the glories and excellencies of Christ, of his great love to his church, and of the covenant blessings of grace bestowed upon her. Pass we on now.

3. Thirdly, To the prophets who lived in the succeeding reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah; as Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. who were holy men of God, and spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of God was in them, and spoke by them; and the sure word of prophecy they delivered, was as a light or lamp in a dark place; the gospel day not as yet being broke, nor the shadows of the ceremonial law fled, nor Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, yet up and risen. These,

3a. Speak much of the covenant of grace. Of it as a covenant of life and peace, in which provision is made for the spiritual and eternal life of the covenant ones; and in which the plan and model of their peace and reconciliation by Christ was formed (Malachi 2:5; Isaiah 54:10). Of it as an everlasting one, which should continue for ever, and never be altered, nor removed (Isaiah 55:3; Isaiah 54:10). Of the persons who engaged and entered into it, Jehovah and the branch, that should build the temple of the Lord, between whom the council of peace was; yea, Jehovah the

Father, the Word of God, and his Spirit, who were each of them concerned in the covenant of grace (Zechariah 6:12-13; Haggai 2:4-5). Of Christ, as the sum and substance of it, said to be the covenant of the people, in whom are all the blessings and promises of it, called the sure mercies of David; and whose blood is said to be the blood of the covenant, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and he is spoken of as the messenger of it (Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:8; Isaiah 55:3; Zechariah 9:11; Malachi 3:1). Mention is made by them of the persons on whose account the covenant of grace was made, the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles (Isaiah 49:5-6; Isaiah 49:8), yea, they speak of the new covenant, or of the administration of it under the New Testament dispensation, and give the several articles of it; which would be more clearly known, and more powerfully have their effect (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Which may lead on to observe,

3b. That the prophets in this period of time speak very plain of the blessings of the covenant of grace, even more plainly and fully than heretofore. As of,

3b1. The blessing of pardon of sin through Christ, which is a blessing of the covenant (Hebrews 8:10; Hebrews 8:12). Not only Moses relates, that God appeared to him, and caused his goodness to pass before him, and proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; and David describes the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and instances in himself (Exodus 34:6-7; Psalms 32:1-2; Psalms 32:5). But the apostle Peter observes, that to Christ "give all the prophets witness," that "through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). They speak of it as belonging to God, and him only, even every act of it, and as flowing from his mercy; on which account there is none like unto him (Daniel 9:9; Micah 7:18), and of his being abundant in it, or abundantly pardoning, even all that apply to him for it; and all their sins and transgressions, thou ever so many and great (Isaiah 55:7; Isaiah 1:18), and of the freeness of pardon, as the effect of the free favour, love, grace, and mercy of God, which is very strongly expressed in Isaiah 43:25 after so many aggravated sins of omission and commission are observed; and yet they speak of it as founded upon the sufferings of Christ, and redemption, reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction procured thereby (Zechariah 3:9; Isaiah 44:22; Daniel 9:24). They also describe the persons that share in this blessing, even such whom God has reserved for himself in election, and in the covenant of grace, and who are the remnant of his heritage, his portion, and the lot of his inheritance (Jeremiah 50:20; Micah 7:18).

3b2. The blessing of justification by the righteousness of Christ; which though a doctrine more clearly revealed under the gospel dispensation, yet is "witnessed by the law and prophets" (Romans 3:21-22). The prophets speak of the righteousness by which men are justified as an everlasting righteousness, that was then to be brought in by Christ, the Surety and Saviour of his people (Daniel 9:24), and as "well pleasing to God," because by it the "law is magnified," all its demands answered, and it made "honorable," and more so than it could have been by the most perfect obedience of angels and men (Isaiah 42:21). They speak of Christ as the author of it; and hence he is called by them, "The Lord our Righteousness;" and "the Sun of Righteousness;" because righteousness is wrought out by him, and springs from him, as light from the sun (Jeremiah 23:6; Malachi 4:2). They speak of Christ as the justifier of them that know him, and believe in him (Isaiah 53:11). And of the seed of Israel being justified in him, and glorying of him, as the Lord their Righteousness, even all the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles; and the church is represented by them as expressing her strong faith of interest in the righteousness of Christ, as

her justifying one; "Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah 45:24-25). Under the emblem of Joshua, the high priest, accused of, and charged with sin and guilt, yet acquitted by Christ, the Angel of the Lord is represented an elect sinner, charged with sin by law and justice, by Satan and his own conscience; but cleared from all by the application and imputation of the righteousness of Christ, to him expressed by those strong terms, "causing his iniquity to pass from him, and clothing him with change of raiment" (Zechariah 3:1-4). The same with the garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness, the church declares she was clothed and covered with, and in which she rejoiced (Isaiah 61:10).

3b3. The blessing of adoption is another covenant blessing, spoken of by the prophets; not national adoption, included in the national covenant made with the people of Israel; but adoption by special grace. The prophets speak of God’s putting some among the children that were unlovely, unworthy, and deserving of his displeasure, and yet were the objects of his love and delight; his dear sons and pleasant children, and whom he owned in such a relation (Jeremiah 3:19; Jeremiah 31:20), of some that were given to Christ as his children, and to whom he stood in the relation of an everlasting Father (Isaiah 8:18; Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 2:13). And though the saints under the former dispensation for the most part had not such a measure of the Spirit of adoption, as under the New Testament, yet they were then heirs, and so children; and some of them had a strong assurance of their interest in God, as their Father; "Doubtless, thou art our Father" (Isaiah 63:16). And the prophets also speak of a large number of adopted sons and daughters of God, as in the latter day, in each of the parts of the world, both among the Gentiles and among the Jews (Isaiah 43:6; Isaiah 45:11; Hosea 1:10).

3b4. Salvation, spiritual and eternal, in general, is the great blessing of the covenant of grace (2 Samuel 23:5), and this the prophets inquired after, and diligently searched into and spoke of; of the author of it, declaring it was not in hills and mountains, nor to be expected from thence, but in the Lord God only; they affirm that Christ was appointed as God’s salvation to the ends of the earth; that he would come and save, and as having salvation; they represent him as mighty to save, yea as if salvation was then already wrought out by him (Jeremiah 3:23; Isaiah 49:6; Isaiah 35:4; Isaiah 63:1; Isaiah 63:5; Zechariah 9:9). They speak of the nature of it as an everlasting salvation, and describe the persons interested in it as the Israel of God, both Jews and Gentiles; even such who are at the ends of the earth, and who are encouraged to look to Christ for salvation (Isaiah 45:17; Isaiah 45:22), and they speak of the time when it should be wrought out (Daniel 9:24; 1 Peter 1:10-11).

3c. There are various things relating to Christ, his person, office and grace, which are copiously and frequently spoken of by the prophets in this period of time; as his incarnation, which though not till many hundred years after, is spoken of as if then done, because of the certainty of it in the purpose and promise of God, "to us a child is born" (Isaiah 9:6), his birth of a virgin, with the name given him, Immanuel, God with us; and which is represented as wonderful, new and unheard of, as it justly might (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Jeremiah 31:22; Daniel 2:45). The place of his birth, Bethlehem Ephratah (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:4-6; John 7:41-42). Some things following his birth, as the murder of the infants about Bethlehem; his being carried to Egypt, and called again from thence, and residing in Nazareth (Jeremiah 31:15; Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:13-23). The parts where he should chiefly live, converse, and minister (Isaiah 9:1; Matthew 4:13-14). His state of humiliation, sufferings, and death, which are particularly described in Isaiah 53:1-12. The

circumstances of his being sold for thirty pieces of silver by one of his disciples, forsaken by them all, and his side pierced with a spear (Zechariah 11:12-13; Zechariah 13:7; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 27:3-10; Matthew 26:31; John 19:34-37). The prophets also speak of the time of his coming and of his sufferings: Daniel fixes the exact time of them, from a date given; and Haggai and Malachi declare he should come into the second temple, and give it a greater glory than the former; so that he must come and suffer as he did, before the destruction of that (Daniel 9:24; Daniel 9:26; Haggai 2:7; Haggai 2:9; Malachi 3:1). And the same prophets, with Zechariah, who were the last of the prophets, speak of his near approach, that he was just at hand, and would soon, Suddenly, and at unawares, come into his temple; and of his forerunner (Zechariah 3:8; Zechariah 6:12; Zechariah 9:9; Haggai 2:6; Malachi 3:1; Malachi 4:5), but though the prophets mentioned were the last of the inspired writers, prophecy did not wholly cease with them; as appears by the instances of Zechariah the father of John the Baptist, who prophesied of him, and of the Messiah; and good old Simeon, to whom it was revealed by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ; and Anna the prophetess, who spoke of him to those that looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 1:67; Luke 2:25-26; Luke 2:36; Luke 2:38). So true it is what our Lord says, that "the law and the prophets were until John;" which finishes the Old Testament dispensation, and the first and old administration of the covenant of grace; after which the kingdom of God, or gospel of Christ, was preached more clearly and fully, and God spake no more by the prophets, but by his Son (Luke 16:16; Hebrews 1:1-2), when the second and new covenant, or administration of it, took place; of which we shall treat in the next chapter. And from what has been observed it appears, that the former administration of the covenant of grace, reaching from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, was by types and figures, by shadows and sacrifices, and by promises and prophecies of future things, which are now fulfilled; Christ, the sum and substance of all, being come, the great blessing of the covenant of grace, and in whom all are included.

Chapter 50

02. Of the Covenant of Grace - Mosaic

Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of Grace Under the Mosaic Dispensation

Having traced the manifestation and application of the Covenant of Grace from the times of our first parents, through the patriarchal state, to the times of Moses; I shall now consider it as exhibited in his time, and unto the times of David and the prophets; and shall begin,

1. With Moses himself, who was a great man of God; and though the law was by him, he had large knowledge of Christ; of his person, offices, and grace; of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it. "Had ye believed Moses," says Christ to the Jews, "ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Moses was an eminent type of Christ, in whom the grace of Christ, and of the covenant, was eminently displayed. The apostle in Hebrews 3:1-14 runs the parallel between Moses and Christ, though he gives the preference to Christ, as it was just he should; they were both, he observes, concerned in the house of God; both faithful therein; with this difference, Moses as a servant, and Christ as a Son in his own house. Moses was a mediator when the covenant on Sinai was given, at the request of the people of Israel, and by the permission of God; and stood between God and them, to deliver his word to them (Galatians 3:19; Deuteronomy 5:5), in which he was a type of Christ, the Mediator of the new and better covenant, and the Mediator between God and man. He was a prophet, and spoke of Christ as who should be raised up a prophet like unto him, and was to be hearkened to; and who has been raised up; and God has spoken by him all his mind and will to the sons of men. When Moses and Elias were with Christ on the mount, which showed harmony and agreement between them; a voice was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him," as the great Prophet of the church; (see Deuteronomy 18:15; Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 17:5). Moses was a priest, and officiated as such before Aaron was appointed to that office; and he, indeed, invested him with it by the offering of sacrifices (Exodus 29:1; Psalms 99:6), in which he prefigured Christ in his priestly office, who became man, that he might be a merciful and sympathizing one; and being holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, was fit to be one, and to offer a pure sacrifice for sin. Moses was also a king and a lawgiver under God; a ruler and governor of the people of Israel (Deuteronomy 33:4-5). Christ is King of Zion and King of saints; by the designation of his Father, and with the acknowledgment of his people, who own him, and submit to him as such; and of whose government there will be no end (Psalms 2:6; Isaiah 33:22; Isaiah 9:7). Once more, Moses was a deliverer or redeemer of the people of Israel, out of that state of bondage in which they were in Egypt (Acts 7:35), and in this bore a figure of Christ the Redeemer of his people, from a worse than Egyptian bondage, the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; and herein and hereby through him were held forth the grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it in Christ to the faith of God’s people.

There were many things done by him, and under him, and in his time, which exhibited and showed forth the covenant of grace, and the things contained in it. The whole ceremonial law was nothing else than a shadowy exhibition of it; it was a shadow of good things to come by Christ, the great

high Priest, which are come by him; as peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation. The priests, their garments, and their sacrifices, with other numerous rites, all prefigured Christ, and the grace of the covenant, which is by him: the ceremonial law was the gospel of the Israelites, it was their pedagogue, their schoolmaster, that taught them the A B C of the gospel in their infant state. Christ was the mark and scope it aimed at, the end of it, and in whom it had its full accomplishment; the Israelites, by reason of darkness, could not see to the end of those things, which are now abolished, and which we with open face behold. It would be too tedious to go over the various particulars in the former dispensation, which held forth the grace of Christ, and of the covenant to the faith of men. It may be sufficient to instance in three or four of them, which were for a time, or of longer continuance; and were either stated ordinances, or extraordinary works of providence, which typified spiritual things. The passover, which was instituted at the time of Israel's going out of Egypt, was kept by faith; not only of deliverance from Egyptian bondage, but in the faith of a future redemption and salvation by Christ; hence he is called "Christ our passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:23). The passover was a lamb without blemish, slain by the congregation of Israel, between the two evenings; it was then roasted with fire, and eaten whole with bitter herbs, and its blood was sprinkled upon the doorposts of the houses of the Israelites; that when the destroying angel passed through Egypt, to destroy their firstborn, seeing the blood where it was sprinkled, passed by the houses in which the Israelites were, and left them unhurt; and hence the institution had the name of the passover; (see Exodus 12:1-51). All which was typical of Christ, who is the Lamb of God, without spot or blemish; who was taken by the Jews and crucified and slain; who endured the fire of divine wrath, whereby his strength was dried up like a potsherd; is to be, and is fed upon by faith; even a whole Christ, in his person, and offices, and grace, attended with repentance and humiliation for sin; believers in him, when they look to him by faith, mourn; and a profession of him is, more or less, accompanied with bitter afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions; and his blood, which from hence is called the blood of sprinkling, that being shed and sprinkled on the hearts of men, not only purges their consciences from dead works, but secures them from the wrath and justice of God; who, looking upon this blood, which is ever in sight, is pacified towards them, and passes by them, when he takes vengeance on others. The manna was another type of Christ; that was typical bread, Christ is the true bread; hence Christ, speaking of the manna, and of himself, says, "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven" (John 6:32), meaning himself, the truth of the type; the manna was only a shadow, Christ is the substance, the solid and substantial food, signified by it, and therefore is called "the hidden manna" (Revelation 2:17), which every believer in Christ has a right to eat of, and does; so the Old and New Testament saints "all eat of the same spiritual meat" (1 Corinthians 10:3). The Israelites being in the wilderness, and hungry, complained for want of food, and murmured; God promised to give them bread from heaven, which he did: this when they first saw, they knew not what it was; and asked one another, What is it? it was small in bulk, white in color, and sweet in taste; this they gathered every day for their daily food, as they were directed; and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans: and on this they lived while in the wilderness, until they came to the land of Canaan; (see Exodus 16:1-36 and Numbers 11:1-35 and Joshua 5:12). All which pointed to Christ and his grace, the food of faith; who, when he came into the world, the world knew him not; nor is he known to the Israel of God before conversion; they are without Christ, without the knowledge of him while unregenerate; until it pleases God to call them by his grace, and reveal his Son in them. And he is entirely hidden from the men of the world; in whose eyes, and in the eyes

of carnal professors, he is little, mean, and contemptible; yet white and ruddy, comely and beautiful, pure and holy, and desirable, to truly gracious souls; to whose taste his fruits, the blessings of his grace, his doctrines, his word, and ordinances, are sweet and pleasant; and a crucified Christ, whose sufferings are signified by the manna being ground, beaten, and baked, is the food of believers in this present state; what is their daily food, and which they live upon while they are in the wilderness, till they come to Canaan's land, and eat of the "old corn," the things which God from all eternity has prepared for them that love him. The water out of the rock the Israelites drank of in the wilderness, was another emblem and representative of Christ and his grace; hence called "spiritual drink," and the rock a "spiritual rock; and that Rock was Christ," (1 Corinthians 10:4). The Israelites wanting water in the wilderness, murmured, when Moses was ordered by the Lord to smite a rock at two different times and places, from whence water gushed out for the supply of them, their flocks, and herds. Christ was signified by the rock, who may be compared to one for height, shelter, strength, and duration; and with which they are followed and supplied while they are in this world: and as it was by the rod of Moses the rock was smitten; so Christ was stricken and smitten in a legal and judicial way, being the surety and representative of his people, by which means the blessings of grace flow unto them; as justification, pardon, &c. just as the blood and water sprung from his side when pierced with the spear; and this rock being thus smitten for believers, they have a never failing supply of grace through the wilderness. The brazen serpent was another figure of Christ and his grace. The Israelites being bitten with fiery serpents, of which many died; Moses was ordered by the Lord to make a fiery serpent of brass, and set it on a pole, that whoever was bitten might look unto it and live; which was done accordingly, and the promised effect followed (Numbers 21:6-9). Our Lord takes notice of this very significant type himself, and applies it to himself (John 3:14-15). The serpent Moses made had the form of a serpent, but not the nature of one: Christ was in the likeness of sinful flesh, but his flesh was not sinful; he was without the poison of the serpent, sin, original or; actual: it was a fiery one, denoting either the wrath of God sustained by Christ, or the vengeance he took on his and our enemies when on the cross; or rather, it may denote his flaming love to his people, expressed in his sufferings and death. It being of brass, denoted not only his lustre and glory, but his strength; who, being the mighty God, is able to save to the uttermost all that come and look unto him for salvation. The situation of the serpent of Moses on a pole, may signify the crucifixion of Christ, which he himself expressed by being lifted up from the earth (John 12:32), or his exaltation at the right hand of God; or rather, the setting of him up in the ministry of the gospel, where he is erected as an ensign and standard to gather souls to him; and where he is held forth evidently as crucified and slain, as the object and ground of hope. And as the end of the erection of the serpent was, that such who were bitten by the fiery serpents might look to it and live; so the end of Christ's crucifixion, and of the ministration of him in the Gospel is, that such who are envenomed with the poison of the old serpent, the devil, and whose wound is otherwise incurable, might, through looking to Christ by faith, live spiritually, comfortably, and eternally; as all such do who are favored with a spiritual sight of him (John 6:40).

2. Besides Moses, there were others in his time, in whom the grace of the covenant was remarkably displayed and manifested; particularly Aaron, his brother, called "the saint of the Lord" (Psalms 106:16), the Holy One, with whom were the Urim and Thummim (Deuteronomy 33:8), a type of Christ, in whom all lights and perfections are; and though Christ, as a priest, was not of the order of Aaron, but of another; yet Aaron, in his priestly office, prefigured him; he was taken from

among men, from among his brethren, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin, and did not take this honour to himself, but was called of God to it; "so Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest;" but was made so by his divine Father (Hebrews 5:4-5), and has offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people, of a sweet smelling savour to God; which the sacrifices of Aaron and his sons were typical of, by which the faith of believers in those times was led to the great and better sacrifice of Christ. Aaron was also a type of Christ in his intercession, as well as in his sacrifice; he could speak well, and therefore was appointed the spokesman of Moses unto the people (Exodus 4:14-16). Christ is an advocate for his people; he can speak well to their case for them, and ever lives to appear in the presence of God, and to make intercession for them, and is always heard.

3. Joshua, the successor of Moses, was also a type of Christ, and in him the grace of Christ, and of the covenant, was evidently displayed. Their names agree, both signify a Saviour; Joshua is called Jesus (Hebrews 4:8). Moses conducted the people of Israel through the wilderness, to the borders of the land of Canaan, but was not allowed to lead them into it; intimating, that it is not by the works of the law, or by the works of righteousness, done by men, that they are or can be saved; that a man must have a better righteousness than his own, or he will never enter into the kingdom of heaven; there is no salvation but in and by the name of Jesus, the antitype of Joshua: as Joshua led the people of Israel into the land of Canaan, and settled them there; so Christ, by his blood and righteousness, has opened a way for his people into the heavenly state, and gives them an abundant entrance into his kingdom and glory. Joshua did not give the true rest in Canaan; for then another would not have been spoken of; it was only a typical one he gave; but Christ, our spiritual Joshua, gives spiritual rest here, and eternal rest hereafter. The scarlet thread which Rahab the harlot was ordered by the spies in the times of Joshua, to bind at her window, that her house might be known by them, in order to save her, and all in it, when Jericho was destroyed, was an emblem of the blood of Christ, by which are peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation for the chief of sinners; for Gentile sinners, as well as Jews; and through which is security from wrath, ruin, and destruction. Joshua was favored with an appearance of Christ unto him, with a sword drawn in his hand, who declared unto him, that he came as the Captain of the host of the Lord, to animate, encourage, and assist him. Christ is the Captain of salvation, who has fought the battles of his people for them; conquered all their enemies, and made them more than conquerors through himself. There were later appearances of Christ to others in this period of time, as to Manoah and his wife, who declared to them his name was "Pele," a Wonder, or Wonderful, which is one of the names of Christ (Isaiah 9:6), and to Gideon, Samuel, and others, I shall take no further notice of.

02. Of the Covenant of Grace - Patriarchal

Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of Grace in the Patriarchal State

Through the administration of the covenant of grace may be considered in a three fold state; as in the patriarchal state, before the giving of the law; and then under the Mosaic dispensation; and last of all under the gospel dispensation: yet more agreeable to the apostle’s distinction of the first and second, the old and the new covenant, observed in the preceding chapter, I shall choose to consider it in the distinct periods under these two; and I shall begin with the administration of it under the first testament, as reaching from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, and consider it as held forth in the several periods in that long interval of time.

1. The first period shall be from Adam to Noah. And those in this period to whom the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it were manifested and applied, were,

1a. Our first parents themselves, Adam and Eve, and that both by words and actions. By words, and these spoken not directly to them, nor by way of promise to them; but to the serpent, and threatening-wise to him; and yet were the first dawn of grace to fallen man (Genesis 3:15), from whence it might be at once concluded by Adam and Eve, that they should not immediately die, but that a seed should be of the woman who would be the ruin of Satan, and the Saviour of them; which must spring light, life, and joy, in their trembling hearts: and though these words are short and obscure, yet contain some of the principal articles of faith and doctrines of the gospel; as the incarnation of the Son of God, signified by the "seed of the woman," who should be made of a woman, born of a virgin, unbegotten by man, and without father as man; the sufferings and death of Christ for the sins of men, signified by the serpent’s "bruising his heel," bringing him to the dust of death in his inferior nature, sometimes expressed by his being bruised for the sins of his people; and may hint at the manner of his death, and crucifixion, since his feet could not well be pierced with nails without bruising his heel; also the victory he should obtain over Satan signified by "bruising his head," destroying his power and policy, his schemes and works, his authority, dominion, and empire; yea, him, himself, with his principalities and powers; and may express the bruising him under the feet of his people, the deliverance of them from him; the taking the captives out of the hand of the mighty, and the saving them with an everlasting salvation. Which is the sum and substance of the gospel, and matter of joy to lost sinners. The grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it, were manifested and applied to our first parents, by certain actions and things done; as by the Lord God making "coats of skin," and "clothing them with them," which were emblems of the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, Christ has wrought out; that righteousness which God imputes without works; and is unto all, and upon all them that believe, as their clothing and covering: and those coats being made of the skins of slain beasts, very probably slain for sacrifice, which man was soon taught the use of; may have respect to the sacrifice of Christ, the woman’s seed, which should be offered up, as was agreed on in the covenant of grace, and by which atonement would be made for sin, and upon which justification from it proceeds; all which are momentous articles of faith. The "cherubim" and "flaming sword," placed at the East end

of the garden of Eden, to keep the way of the tree of life, were not for terror, but for comfort; and were an hieroglyphic, showing that God in succeeding ages would raise up a set of prophets, under the Old Testament, and apostles and ministers of the gospel, under the New Testament, who should hold forth the word of light and life; that word which is quick and powerful, sharper than any twoedged sword; that has both light and heat in it; and who should show to men the way of salvation, and observe unto them the true tree of life, and the way to it; even Christ, the way, the truth, and the life;(see Genesis 3:21; Genesis 3:24).

1b. Abel, the Son of Adam, is the next person to whom an exhibition of the covenant and of the grace of it, was made; he was an instance of electing grace, according to which the blessings of the covenant are dispensed: a hint was given in the serpent's curse, that there would be two seeds in the world, the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman; this distinction took place in the first two men that were born into the world. Cain was of the wicked one, the seed of the serpent; Abel was one of the spiritual seed of Christ, a chosen vessel of salvation; and, in virtue of electing grace, was a partaker of the blessings of grace in the covenant; particularly of justifying grace: he is called righteous Abel, not by his own righteousness, but by the righteousness of faith, by the righteousness of Christ received by faith; for he had the grace of faith, which is a covenant grace, bestowed on him; by which he looked to Christ for righteousness and eternal life; "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain; by which he obtained witness that he was righteous" (Hebrews 11:4). His sacrifice was a more excellent one; not only as to its kind, being a lamb, and so typical of the Lamb of God; but as to the manner in which it was offered, by faith, in the view of a better sacrifice than that; even the sacrifice of Christ, by which transgression is finished, sin made an end of, reconciliation for it made, and an everlasting righteousness brought in; all which Abel, by faith, looked unto, and God had respect to him, and to his offering; which he testified in some visible way; perhaps by sending down fire upon it; which drew the envy of his brother upon him, who could not rest until he had slain him: in this Abel was a type of Christ, as well as in his being a keeper of sheep; who, through the envy of the Jews, who were in some sense his brethren, was delivered to the Roman governor, to be put to death; so that they are justly said to be the betrayers and murderers of him; and a like punishment of their sin came on them as on Cain; as he was drove from the presence of God, was an exile from his native place, and wandered about in another land; so they were carried captive by the Romans, and dispersed throughout the nations of the world, among whom they wander about to this day. Abel was a type of Christ also in his intercession; for as he "being dead, yet speaketh;" so Christ, though he was dead, yet is alive, and ever lives to make intercession, to speak on the behalf of his people, and be an Advocate for them; and his blood has a speaking voice in it, and speaks better things than that of Abel; it calls for peace and pardon.

1c. Seth, the other seed appointed in the room of Abel, whom Cain slew, is not to be overlooked; since the appointment of him was of grace, and to fill up the place of righteous Abel, and be the father of a race of men that should serve the Lord; and was put, set, and laid as the foundation, as it were, of the patriarchal church state, as his name signifies; and was a type of Christ, the foundation God has laid in Zion: and in the days of his son Enos, as an effect of divine grace, and the displays of it, "Men began to call upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4:25-26), not but that they called upon the Lord personally, and in their families, before; but now being more numerous, families joined together, and set up public worship; where they met, and socially served the Lord,

and called upon him in the name of the Lord, in the name of Christ, who, as Mediator, might be more clearly manifested; or they called themselves by the name of the Lord, of the Lord's people, and the sons of God, in distinction from the sons of men, the men of the world, irreligious persons, profane and idolatrous; which distinction took place before the flood, and perhaps as early as the times of Enos; (see Genesis 6:2).

1d. Enoch is the only person in this period besides, who is taken notice of for the grace of God bestowed on him; though, no doubt, there were thousands who also were made partakers of it. He was "trained" up in a religious way, as his name signifies; he was eminent for his faith, and was high in the favor of God: he had a testimony that he pleased God, which could not be without faith, by which he drew nigh, had much nearness to, fellowship and familiarity with him; he "walked with God," enjoyed much communion with him, and had large communications of grace, light, and knowledge from him; was even favored with a spirit of prophecy, and foretold a future judgment, and the coming of Christ to it; and as he was made acquainted with the second coming of Christ, so, no doubt, with his first coming to save lost sinful men: and as Abel was a type of Christ in his low estate, in his sufferings and death, Enoch was a type of him in his ascension to heaven; for he "was not" on earth any longer than the time of his life mentioned; "for God took him," translated him from earth to heaven took him to himself; so Christ, when he had finishes his work on earth, was taken to heaven, a cloud received him out of the sight of his apostles, and he ascended to his God and their God, to his Father and their Father.

2. Secondly, The next period of time in which an exhibition of the covenant of grace was made, is that from Noah to Abraham. And Noah is the principal person taken notice of in it. His father, at his birth, thought there was something remarkable in him, and designed to be done by him, and thus expressed himself; "This same shall comfort us concerning our work" &c. (Genesis 5:29), and therefore called his name Noah, which signifies comfort, and is derived from Mxn, to "comfort," the last letter being cut off. And in this Lamech has respect, not so much to things temporal, and to that benefit that should be received through Noah's invention of instruments for the more easy cultivating of the earth, and by bringing agriculture to a greater perfection, as he did; whereby the curse of the earth was, in a great measure, removed, which made it very difficult, through great toil and labour, to get a livelihood; but not so much to these as to things spiritual, respect is had by Lamech; and if he did not think him to be the promised Seed, the Messiah, the Consolation of Israel; yet he might conclude, that he would be an eminent type of Christ, from whom all comfort flows, the Saviour of men from their sins, their evil works, and from the curses of the law, on account of them; and who has eased them from the toil and labour of their hands, to get a righteousness of their own for their justification, having wrought out one for them. However, in this person, Noah, there was a rich display of the grace of the covenant.

2a. In his person, both in his private and public capacity. He found grace in the eyes of the Lord; that is, favour and good will, which is the source of all the blessings of grace, of electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace; of all the graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, &c. all which Noah was a partaker of, and this in the midst of a world of ungodly men; which showed it to be free and distinguishing: he was a just, or righteous man; not by his own works, by which no man can be justified, but by the righteousness of faith, of which he was an heir (Hebrews 11:7), even the righteousness which is by the faith of Christ: and he was "perfect in his generations;" not in himself, but in the righteousness of Christ, by which he was justified, and

was a truly sincere and upright man, and walked with God, as Enoch did, and was favored with much communion with him: and in his public capacity he was a "preacher of righteousness;" of righteousness to be done between man and man; of the righteousness of God in bringing a flood upon the world to destroy it; and also of the righteousness of Christ; for no doubt he was a preacher of that of which he was an heir, and so had knowledge of and faith in it: the persons to whom he preached, or Christ in him by his Spirit, were the spirits that are now in prison; but then in the days of Noah, while he was preparing the ark, were on earth; to whose ministry they were disobedient, and so it was without success; (see 2 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 3:19-20).

2b. There was a display of the grace of God in the ark which Noah was directed to make for the saving of his family (Hebrews 11:7), which may be considered either as an emblem of the church of God, which is to be formed in all things according to the pattern given by God himself, as that was; and which weathers the storms and tempests, and beatings of the waters of affliction and persecution, as that did in a literal sense; and in which are carnal professors, hypocrites, and heretics, as well as God's chosen people, and truly gracious souls; as there were all sorts of creatures in the ark: or else the ark may be considered as a type of Christ, the cover and shelter from the storm and tempest of divine wrath and vindictive justice, and in whom spiritual rest is to be had for weary souls; just as the dove let out of the ark found no rest until it returned to it again; and as in the ark few souls were saved, only Noah and his family, and none but those that were in the ark; so there are but few that seek and find the way of salvation, and eternal life by Christ; and there is salvation in no other, but in him; nor are there any saved, but who are saved in and by him.

2c. This sacrifice of Noah, after he came out of the ark, was typical of the sacrifice of Christ, both with respect to the matter of it, clean creatures; expressive of the purity of Christ's sacrifice, who is the Lamb of God without spot or blemish; and who offered himself without spot to God; and who, having no sin himself, was fit to be a sacrifice for the sins of others: and also with respect to the acceptance of it; "God smelled a sweet savour;" that is, he was well-pleased with, and graciously accepted of Noah's sacrifice; and the same phrase is used of the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice (Ephesians 5:2; Genesis 8:20-21).

2d. The covenant made with Noah, though it was not the special covenant of grace, being made with him and all his posterity, and even with all creatures; yet as it was a covenant of preservation, it was a covenant of kindness and goodness in a temporal way; and it bore a resemblance to the covenant of grace; inasmuch as there were no conditions in it, no sign or token to be observed on man's part; only what God himself gave as a token of his good will, the rainbow in the cloud; and seeing that it is a covenant durable, lasting, and inviolable; (see Isaiah 54:9-10). The rainbow, the token of it, showed it to be a covenant of peace, which is one of the titles of the covenant of grace in the text referred to. So Christ, the Mediator of it, is said to have a rain-bow upon his head; and a rainbow is said to be round about the throne, signifying, that access to the throne of grace is only through the peacemaker Jesus Christ (Revelation 10:1; Revelation 4:3). To which may be added, that if this covenant of preservation had not taken place; but mankind had been now destroyed; the covenant of grace would have been made void, and of no effect; since the promised Seed, the great blessing of that covenant, was not yet come, and if so, never could, in the way promised.

2e. Noah’s blessing of Shem is not to be omitted; "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem!" in which is a display of covenant grace; for to be the Lord God of any person, is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace, which always runs in this style, "I will be their God," Moreover, Noah foretold spiritual blessings of grace which should be enjoyed by his posterity in future time; "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem" (Genesis 9:26-27). The tents of Shem signify the church of God in its tabernacle state; and which continued among the Jews who were of the race of Shem, until the coming of Christ; and then God sent the gospel into the Gentile world, among the posterity of Japhet, and enlarged, or "persuaded" them, as some choose to render the word, to come and join with the believing Jews in the same gospel church state; whereby they became of the same body, and partakers of the same promises and blessings of the covenant; by which the above prophecy was in part fulfilled, and will be more completely in the latter day; (see Isaiah 60:1-8).

3. Thirdly, The next period of time in which an exhibition was made of the covenant and of the grace of it, is that from Abraham to Moses. And,

3a. Abraham himself stands foremost in it; he was an eminent instance of the grace of God, of the electing and calling grace of God. He was born in an idolatrous family, and lived in an idolatrous land; and he was called from his own country, and his father’s house, to forsake it, and go elsewhere and serve the Lord; and to be separate from them, and the rest of the world; as the people of God are, when effectually called: he was an eminent instance of justifying grace; he was justified, but not by works, and so had not whereof to glory before God; but he was justified by faith in the righteousness of Christ; "He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). Not the act of faith, but the object of it, what he believed in, the Lord and his righteousness; for what was imputed to him, is imputed to all that believe in Christ, Jews or Gentiles, in all ages; now whatsoever may be said for Abraham’s faith, being imputed to himself for righteousness; it can never be thought, surely, that it is imputed to others also for the same. Besides, it is the "righteousness of faith," the righteousness of Christ received by faith, which Abraham, when uncircumcised, had; and which is imputed to them also that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised (Romans 4:2-3; Romans 4:11; Romans 4:13; Romans 4:22-24). To which may be added, that the gospel was preached to Abraham; the good news of his spiritual seed, those that walk in the steps of his faith, whether Jews or Gentiles, being blessed with all spiritual blessings in the Messiah, who should spring from him (Galatians 3:8). But what more especially deserve attention, are the various appearances of God unto Abraham, and the manifestations of the covenant of grace then made unto him. The first appearance was at the time of his call from his idolatrous country and kindred, when the covenant of grace was broke up to him, and he was assured of the blessings of it (Genesis 12:1-3), as it is to the chosen ones in effectual calling; and that it was this covenant that was then made known to Abraham, is clear from Galatians 3:17 where it is said to be "confirmed before of God in Christ;" which certainly designs the covenant of grace; for what else could be said to be thus "confirmed?" and which indeed was made with him, and confirmed in him in eternity, and was now made manifest to Abraham; and from the time of the manifestation of it to him at his call from Chaldea, to the giving of the law on mount Sinai, were four hundred and thirty years there mentioned. The next appearance of God to him I shall take notice of, (for I propose not to consider everyone) is that which is recorded in Genesis 15:1 where in a vision God said unto him, "I am thy shield, and thy

exceeding great reward;" his shield, to protect him from all enemies, temporal and spiritual; his reward, portion, and inheritance in this life and that to come; and which is an exceeding great one, and is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace. Another appearance of God to Abraham was, when he was ninety nine years of age; when, besides the covenant of circumcision, God gave to him, and his natural seed of the male gender, and a promise of the land of Canaan to his posterity, as he had done before, he made himself known to him as the almighty God, or God all sufficient; whose power and grace were sufficient to support him in his walk before him, and bring him to a state of perfection (Genesis 17:1), and particularly in Genesis 17:4 he said to him, "As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations;" which the apostle explains of his being the father of all that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised; even of all that walk in the steps of his faith, and believe unto righteousness, as he did; these are blessed, with faithful Abraham, with all the blessings of the covenant of grace, as he was (Romans 4:9-17; Galatians 3:9; Galatians 3:29). Once more, the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre. Three appeared to him in an human form, two of them were angels, and one was Jehovah, the Son of God; who not only foretold the birth of a son to Abraham, but made known to him the design to destroy Sodom; and gave an high encomium of his piety and justice; and allowed him to expostulate with him about the destruction of Sodom; admitted him to stand before him, and he communed with him. All which showed him to be a friend of God, and interested in the covenant of his grace (Genesis 18:3; Genesis 18:10; Genesis 18:17; Genesis 18:22; Genesis 18:33). At the time of the offering up of his son Isaac, by the command of the Lord, he appeared to him, and restrained him from the actual performance of it; upon which he called the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will see, or will appear in the mount of difficulties, as he had to him; and when he made a further manifestation of the covenant of grace in that important article; "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:14-18), meaning the promised Seed, the Messiah, that should spring from him, as he did, and is called the Son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1), in whom all the elect are blessed with all spiritual blessings, the blessings of the everlasting covenant. Not to omit the interview Abraham had with Melchizedek, who met him upon his return from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him in the name of the most high God; this man was an eminent type of Christ; his name and title agree with his, king of righteousness, and king of peace; the righteous and peaceable king; a priest continually, and of whose order Christ was; and whose eternity is shadowed forth in his genealogy being unknown, in which he was made like unto the Son of God, the eternal Son of the eternal Father: it may be our Lord has respect to this interview, when he says, "Abraham saw my day, and was glad;" saw him in the promise, and saw him in this type (John 8:56; Hebrews 7:1-3; Genesis 14:18-19).

3b. Isaac, the son of Abraham, is the next instance of covenant grace in this period of time; in his line from Abraham it was promised the Messiah should come, and did: the same covenant of grace that was exhibited to Abraham, was manifested to Isaac in the same words (Genesis 26:3-4). And he was himself an eminent type of Christ, the promised Seed, and the great blessing of the covenant, both in his sacrifice and in his resurrection. Isaac was Abraham’s own son, his only son, his beloved son, whom he took to offer on mount Moriah; Isaac went with him without reluctance, carrying the wood on which he was to be laid, and was laid; by which it appeared that Abraham withheld him not. So Christ, who has been offered a sacrifice by the will of God, is his own Son, his begotten Son, his only begotten Son, and his beloved Son, when it was his pleasure to make his soul an offering for sin, he willingly went, as a lamb to the slaughter, bearing on his

shoulders the cross on which he was crucified; and was not spared by his divine Father, but delivered up for us all. And though Isaac died not, yet he was reckoned by Abraham as dead; who accounted that God was able to raise him from the dead; from "whence also he received him in a figure" (Hebrews 11:19), a ram caught in a thicket being shown him, and which he offered in his room; and so Isaac was delivered, and went home alive to his father's house; and this was on the third day from the time Abraham reckoned him as a dead man. So Christ was "put to death in the flesh," signified by the ram in the thicket; and "quickened in the Spirit," typified by Isaac saved alive; who, after his resurrection, went to his God and our God, to his Father and our Father; and his resurrection was on the third day, according to this scripture type of him.

3c. Jacob, the son of Isaac, is another instance in whom there was a display of covenant grace, in the period of time between Abraham and Moses. He was an eminent and illustrious instance of electing grace, according to which the blessings of the covenant are dispensed. He and Esau were brothers, twins, and if any, Esau had the precedence; yet before their birth it was notified to Rebekah, that "the elder should serve the younger" (Genesis 25:23) which the apostle makes use of to illustrate and exemplify the grace of God in election (Romans 9:11-13). The same covenant of grace that was manifested to Abraham and Isaac, was repeated and made known to Jacob (Genesis 28:13-15). Christ also was represented to him by a ladder, whose top reached to heaven, and on which he saw the angels of God ascending and descending (Genesis 28:12). The same is said of Christ (John 1:51), who in his divine nature reached to heaven, and was in heaven when in his human nature he was here on earth; and to whom angels ministered, and who is the only Mediator between God and man, and the way of access to God, and communion with him. Christ in an human form appeared to Jacob, and wrestled with him, with whom Jacob had so much power as to prevail, and obtain the blessing from him, and got the name of Israel (Genesis 32:24-28). The Messiah was prophesied of by him, under the name of Shiloh, the prosperous and the peaceable; in whose hands the pleasure of the Lord prospered, and who made peace for men by the blood of his cross; and that he should spring from his son Judah, and out of his tribe, as he did; and that he should come while civil government, in some form or another, was in Judah; and that when he came, there should be a great gathering of the Gentiles to him; all which have been exactly fulfilled: and for Christ, as the author of salvation, provided and promised in the covenant of grace, did the patriarch Jacob wait (Genesis 49:10; Genesis 49:18).

3d. Within this period of time, about the time the children of Israel were in Egypt, and before the times of Moses, lived Job, and his three friends: who, though they were not of Israel, but of the race of Esau, yet the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it, were made known to them, as a pledge and earnest of what would be done in later times. Job was an eminent instance of the grace of God; his character, as given by God himself, is, that he was "a perfect and upright man;" perfect, as justified by the righteousness of Christ; upright and sincere, as sanctified by the Spirit; and who, in his walk and conversation, appeared to be "one that feared God and eschewed evil" (Job 1:8), and as he was a man of great knowledge of natural and civil things, so of things divine, spiritual, and evangelical; of the impurity of nature; of the insufficiency of man's righteousness to justify him before God; and of the doctrine of redemption and salvation by Christ. How many articles of faith, and doctrines of grace, are contained in those words of his; "I know that my Redeemer liveth?" &c. from whence it appears, that he knew Christ as the Redeemer, and as his Redeemer, provided and promised in the covenant of grace; that he then existed; that he would be

incarnate, and dwell among men on earth; and come a second time to judge the world; and that there would be a resurrection of the same body, and a beatific vision of God in a future state; (see Job 9:2; Job 9:20; Job 9:30-31; Job 14:4; Job 19:25-27). Job’s three friends, though they mistook his case, and misapplied things to him, yet were men that knew, much of divine things; of the corruption of nature; of the vanity of self-righteousness; this, indeed, was their quarrel with Job, imagining, though wrongly, that he was righteous in his own eyes: and how gloriously does Elihu speak of the great Redeemer as the "Messenger" of the covenant, the uncreated Angel, Christ; as "an Interpreter" of his Father’s mind and will; One among a thousand, the Chiefest of ten thousand, whose office it is "to show unto men his uprightness," his own righteousness, to declare and preach it (Psalms 40:9). And as a Ransom found in council and covenant; a proper Person to give his life a ransom for men: (Job 4:17-18; Job 15:14-16; Job 25:4-6; Job 33:23-24). Thus the covenant of grace was exhibited, held forth, displayed, and manifested in the grace and blessings of it in the times of the patriarchs.

02. Of the Covenant with Adam

Of the Law Given to Adam, and the Covenant Made with him in his State of Innocence; in which he was the Federal Head and Representative of his Posterity. The manner in which God governs rational creatures is by a law, as the rule of their obedience to him, and which is what we call God’s moral government of the world; and as he gave a law to angels, which some of them kept, and have been confirmed in a state of obedience to it; and others broke it, and plunged themselves into destruction and misery: so God gave a law to Adam, and which was in the form of a covenant, and in which Adam stood as a covenant head to all his posterity. And I shall endeavour to show what that law was, that it was in the form of a covenant, and that Adam was a federal head in it.

1. First, The law given him was both of a natural and positive kind. God, who is the Creator of all, Judge of all the earth, and King of the whole world, has a right to give what laws he pleases to his creatures, and they are bound as creatures, and by the ties of gratitude, to observe them. The natural law, or law of nature, given to Adam, was concreated with him, written on his heart, and engraved and imprinted in his nature from the beginning of his existence; by which he was acquainted with the will of his Maker, and directed to observe it; which appears from the remains of it in the hearts of all men, and even of the Gentiles; and from that natural conscience in every man, which, if not by some means lulled asleep, that it does not perform its office, excuses men from blame when they do well, and accuses them, and charges them with guilt when they do ill (Romans 2:14-15), and likewise from the inscription of this law, in a spiritual and evangelic manner, on regenerate persons, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jeremiah 31:33), so that they become the epistle of Christ, having the law as from him, and by his Spirit written in them, and the Spirit put into them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, and keep his judgments, and do them; and this law that was written on Adam’s heart, and is re-inscribed in regeneration, is the same with the Decalogue, as to the substance of it; and, excepting such things in it as were peculiar to the Jews, all of a moral nature; and which is comprised in these two precepts, to which it is reduced by Christ; "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thou heart; and thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself"; this was binding on Adam, and on all his posterity.

Besides, This natural law, or law of nature, given to Adam, there were others of a positive kind, which were positive institutions of God, such as man could never have known by the light of nature; but were made known by the revelation of God; such as relate to divine worship, and the manner of it; that there was a God, and that he was to be worshipped, Adam knew by the light of nature; but how, or in what manner, and with what rites and formalities he would be worshipped, this he could not know, but by divine revelation. In all dispensations there have been ordinances of divine service; there now are; and there were under the former dispensation; and so in a state of integrity; which were appointed of God, and revealed to man; for the law that forbid the eating of the fruit of a certain tree, is not the only positive law of God; however, it is certain that was one; "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat" (Genesis 2:17), which was given as

a trial of man’s obedience to the will of God, whether he would observe it or not; for the evil of the act of eating did not arise from the nature of the tree, and its fruit, which was as good for food as perhaps any tree in the garden; but from its being disobedience to the will of God. And be it what it may, in which God is disobeyed, it matters not; and by so much the lesser that is which is forbidden, by so much the greater is the sin of disobedience, the more aggravated, and the more inexcusable.

2. Secondly, This law given to Adam, taken in its complex view, as both natural and positive, was in the form of a covenant; the same to be both a law and a covenant, is not at all inconsistent; so the law given to the people of Israel from mount Sinai, is also called a covenant (Exodus 24:7; Deuteronomy 5:1-3), yea, the covenant of grace is called a law, the law of Christ’s mediatorship, which was in his heart to fulfil; even the covenant he made with his Father, and his Father with him (Psalms 40:8). The law given to Adam, as it was a law, sprung from the sovereignty of God, who had a right to impose a law upon him, whatsoever he thought fit; as it was a covenant, it was an act of condescension and goodness in God, to enter into it with man, his creature; he could have required obedience to his law, without promising anything on account of it; for it is what God has a prior right unto, and therefore a recompence for it cannot be claimed; if, therefore, God thinks fit, for the encouragement of obedience, to promise in covenant any good, it is all condescension, it is all kindness.

Moreover, It may be observed, that the law given to Adam is expressly called a covenant, as it should seem in Hosea 6:7 "but they, like men", (or like Adam) "have transgressed the covenant": the sense of which seems to be, that as Adam transgressed the covenant God made with him; so the Israelites had transgressed the covenant God made with them; for as well may Adam’s transgression of the law or covenant be referred to here, as his palliating his sin, after the commission of it, is referred to in Job 31:33. Besides, the terms by which the positive law given to Adam is expressed, manifestly imply a covenant; as that if he eat of the forbidden fruit, he should surely die; which implies, that if he abstained from it, he should surely live; which formally constitute a covenant; even a promise and a threatening. To which may be added, the distinction of two covenants of grace and works, called the law of faith, and the law of works; and a twofold righteousness and obedience yielded to the one, and to the other, the righteousness which is of faith, and the righteousness which is of the law (Galatians 4:24; Romans 3:27; Romans 10:5-6), for without the law of Adam, as a covenant, two covenants cannot be fairly made out; for though in Hebrews 8:7; Hebrews 8:13 we read of a first and second, an old and a new covenant; yet these respect one and the same covenant, under different dispensations; and though in the passage referred to, the covenant at Sinai may be intended as one, yet as a repetition, and a new edition of the covenant made with Adam. This covenant is by divines called by various names; sometimes a covenant of "friendship", man being in friendship with God when it was made with him; of which there are many instances; as the placing him in the garden of Eden, putting all the creatures in subjection to him, and providing an help meet for him; appearing often to him, and talking friendly with him, and granting him communion with him; and it was an act of friendship to him to enter into covenant with him; and while Adam observed this he remained in friendship with God; and it was the breach of this covenant that separated chief friends. Sometimes they call it a covenant of "nature", it being made with Adam as a natural man, and a natural head of his posterity; and promised natural blessings to him and his; was coeval with his nature; and was made with all

human nature, or with all mankind, in Adam. it is also called a covenant of "innocence"; because made with man in his innocent state; and who, as long as he kept this covenant, continued innocent; but when he brake it, he was no more so. And it is frequently called the "legal" covenant, the covenant of "works", as the Scripture calls it, "the law of works", as before observed; it promised life on the performance of good works; its language was, "Do this and live". And it sometimes has the name of the covenant of life from the promise of life in it; though not in such sense as the covenant with Levi, as a type of Christ, is called, the covenant of life; for it is life of a lower kind that was promised to Adam, than what was promised to Christ, for his people, as will be seen hereafter.

3. Thirdly, As in all covenants there are contracting parties, so in this.

3a. God is one of the parties in this covenant; nor was it unworthy of God to enter into a covenant with Adam; for if it was not unworthy of God to make a covenant of conservation with Noah; a covenant of circumcision with Abraham; and a covenant of royalty with David; a covenant respecting the kingdom, and the continuance of it in his family; men in a fallen state; then it could not be unworthy of God to make one with Adam in his perfect state; yea, even since, on the behalf of his people, he makes a covenant with the beasts of the field, the fowls of heaven, and the creeping things of the ground, Hosea 2:18. Besides, to make a covenant with Adam, was a display of his goodness to him. As he was the work of his hands, he must have a regard to him; as every artificer has for his work; and would not despise him, but be concerned for his good; and therefore in covenant promised good things to him, in case of obedience to his will: this his covenant also flowed from his sovereignty; since all his good things are his own, and he can do with them as he pleases; make promises of them in a covenant way; in like manner he disposed of some of them in such a way to Adam.

3b. The other contracting party was Adam; who gave a full and hearty assent to what was proposed to him. The stipulation on the part of God, was proposing and promising good, on condition of obedience. The stipulation, or restipulation on the part of man, was his free and full consent to yield the obedience proposed, in expectation of the promise fulfilled; and this may be concluded from the law he was to obey being written on his heart; which he had full knowledge of, approved of, and assented to; for which he had the most sincere affection; and the inclination and bias of his will were strongly towards it: and as for the positive law, which forbid him to eat of a certain tree; his will was to observe it; his resolution to keep it; as appears from what Eve said to the serpent, tempting her; "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Genesis 3:3), which shows, that she and her husband believed what God had said; judged it to be reasonable to hearken to it; and were determined to observe it: and man had also power to keep this covenant; being made after the image, and in the likeness of God; pure and upright, possessed of a clear understanding of it, a strong affection for it, and a full resolution to keep it; for it was not till sin took place, that the nature of man was weakened, and he unable to keep the law; "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh", &c. or what man could not do in fulfilling the law, his nature being weakened by sin; for then, and not before, was it in such an incapacity. Though it should be observed, that man was not left to his liberty; it was not at his option, whether he would assent to the proposal in the covenant, and the condition of it; he had not an alternative given him, to agree or not agree, since obedience was due to God, whether he promised him anything or not. Wherefore this covenant differs from any covenants among men; in

which the parties not only freely agree to make a covenant, but it is at the option of the one, whether he will accept of and agree to the proposal of the other. So that this covenant made with Adam, is not strictly and properly a covenant, such as is among men; but is rather a covenant on one side, as a covenant of promise is; and a covenant of God with man, rather than a covenant of man with God. The obedience required of man in this covenant, was personal, perfect, and perpetual. It was personal; it was to be performed in his own person, and not by another for him; as is the obedience of Christ, which is not personal to them, who are made righteous by it; or as would have been the obedience of Adam, had he stood, as reckoned to his posterity; which, though personal to him, would not have been so to them; as his disobedience, by which they are made sinners, is not personal to them (Romans 5:19). It was "perfect" obedience that was required of him, both as to parts and as to degrees; it was to be yielded to all the commandments of God, without exception, and to be performed in the most perfect manner; as to matter, all the commands of God, natural and positive, were to be observed; and as to manner, just as the Lord commanded them. And then this obedience was to be "perpetual"; it was not to be done for a time only, but always; life, and the continuance of it, depended on it; otherwise, if a stop was made in it, the law condemned, and the man became accursed; "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10). So that man was bound by it for ever, as a law; but as considered as the condition of a covenant, it was to be yielded to as such, until man was confirmed in his estate, as the angels are; and, as some divines think, until he had children arrived to an age capable of obeying or sinning.

4. Fourthly, The law given to Adam, as it had the nature of a covenant, it contained a promise in it, and had a sanction annexed to it.

4a. It contained a promise; which was a promise of life, of natural life to Adam, and of a continuation of it so long as he should observe the condition of it; just as life was promised to the Israelites, and a continuance in it, in the land of Canaan, so long as they should observe the law of God; for neither the law of Moses, nor the law of nature, made promise of any other than of a natural life. Some divines, and these of great name and figure in the churches of Christ, think, and indeed it is most generally received, that Adam continuing in his obedience, had a promise of eternal life. I cannot be of that mind. There is, indeed, an ambiguity in the phrase "eternal life"; if no more is meant by it than living for ever in his present life, it will not be denied; but if by it is designed such a state of glory and happiness, which saints shall enjoy in heaven to all eternity; that must be denied for the following reasons:

4a1. Adam’s covenant was but a natural covenant; and which was made with a natural man, as Adam is called by the apostle (1 Corinthians 15:46-47), and which covenant promised no supernatural blessing, neither grace nor glory; for as for spiritual blessings, these the elect are blessed with only in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

4a2. It was in another covenant more early than that of Adam’s, in which eternal life was promised and secured; God, that cannot lie, promised it before the world began; and this promise was put into Christ’s hands, even from all eternity; and the blessing itself was secured in him for all for whom it was designed (Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:1; 1 John 5:10).

4a3. Eternal life is only through Christ as the Mediator of the covenant of grace; it comes by no other hands but his; it is "through Christ Jesus our Lord"; he came to open the way of it, that "we

might have life, and that more abundantly"; a more abundant, durable, and excellent life, than Adam had in innocence: Christ, as Mediator, had a "power to give eternal life" to as many as the Father has given him; and he does give it to all his sheep, that know his voice, hearken to him, and follow him (Romans 6:23; John 10:10; John 17:3; John 10:28).

4a4. If eternal life could have been by Adam's covenant, it would have been by works; for that covenant was a covenant of works; and if by works, then not of grace; it would not have been the gift of God, as it is said to be; "The gift of God is eternal life", carisma, a free grace gift. Eternal life is no other than consummate salvation in the future state; and that is said to be of grace, and denied to be of works; (see Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9). Should the question of the young man in the gospel, and Christ's answer to it, be objected (Matthew 19:16-22). "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments"; it may be observed, Christ answers him, and deals with him on his own principles; the man was upon the bottom of his own good works, and seeking for eternal life by them; and since he sought for life that way, Christ directs him to keep the commands, there being no good thing better than keeping them; the young man asked him what they were; he tells him; upon which he was very alert, and thought himself in a very good way for heaven: but Christ, further to try him, and to convince him that eternal life was not to be enjoyed by any good thing done by him, bids him, if he would be perfect, sell all that he had, and give to the poor; on which he went away sorrowful, unwilling to part with his possessions; and so found that eternal life was not to be had by doing.

4a5. Life and immortality, or an immortal, eternal life, and the way to it, are only brought to light by the Gospel (2 Timothy 1:10), not by the light of nature, nor by the law of Moses; only by the Gospel of Christ.

4a6. There is no proportion between the best works of man, even sinless obedience and eternal life; wherefore, though the threatening of death to Adam contains in it eternal death, it does not follow that the promise of life includes eternal life; since, though eternal death is the just wages and demerit of sin; yet eternal life is not the wages and merit of the works of men; it is the free gift of God (Romans 6:23).

4b. The sanction of the law and covenant made with Adam, was death; "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17), which includes death corporal, spiritual, or moral, and eternal.

4b1. A corporal death; which lies in a separation of soul and body; as this was threatened, so the sentence of it was pronounced on the day man eat of the tree; "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return" (Genesis 3:19). Adam was at once stripped of the immortality of his body, that gift was at once withdrawn from him, and he became a mortal man; the seeds of death took place in him; and he was immediately subject to diseases, disorders, and miseries, which issue in death.

4b2. A spiritual, or rather moral death seized upon him; which lies in a separation of the soul from God, and communion with him; in an alienation from the life of God; in a deformation of the image of God; in a corruption and defilement of the several powers and faculties of the soul; in an impotency and disinclination to that which is good; he became dead in trespasses and sins, as all his posterity are.

4b3. An eternal death, which lies in a separation of soul and body from God; in a loss of the divine presence, and in a sense of divine wrath; both which are contained in these words, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"; a symbol of which was the ejection of Adam out of paradise; as eternal life is the gift of God, so eternal death is the wages of sin (Matthew 25:41; Romans 6:23).

5. Fifthly, In this covenant Adam acted not as a private person for himself only, but as a federal head [1]and representative of his whole posterity; and in this he was alone; Eve was not a federal head with him, he was alone, before an help meet was found for him; yet she was included in it, being formed out of him; and all his posterity, who spring from him; but the man Christ Jesus is to be excepted, since he descended not from him by ordinary generation, and was a Mediator, the Head of another and better covenant. But as to his natural posterity, it may be observed, there were many things which were common to him and them; and in which they had an equal concern; as in dominion over the creatures, the increase and propagation of their species, the food granted them, and the law of marriage (Genesis 1:28-29; Genesis 2:24). However, that in the covenant with him he was the federal head of them, appears,

5a. From Adam being a figure or type of him that was to come; that is, of Christ (Romans 5:14). Now in what was Adam a type of Christ, but in his being the federal head of his posterity? Not as a man; so all his sons might be: nor on account of his extraordinary production; for though that of both was in an uncommon way, yet in a different way; the one was created out of the earth; the other, though not begotten of man, was born of a woman, as other men be; but they were both covenant heads to their respective offspring; and the parallel between them as such, is formed by the apostle in the context of the place referred to; that as the one, Adam, as an head, conveyed sin and death to all his natural seed; so the other, Christ, as an head, conveyed grace, righteousness, and life to all his spiritual offspring.

5b. From Adam being called the first man, and the first Adam, and described as natural and earthly, in distinction from whom, Christ is called the second man, and the last Adam, and described as spiritual, and the Lord from heaven; and these are represented as if the only two men in the world, because the two heads of their respective offspring.

5c. From the threatening taking place upon the sin of Adam, not on himself only, but on all his succeeding offspring; as they were in him, they sinned in him; and death, the sentence of death, passed on them in him. In him they all died; through his offence death reigned over them, and judgment came upon them all to condemnation, and by his disobedience they were made, accounted, and charged as sinners (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:15-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22).

5d. It was no unusual thing with God to make covenants with men, and their posterity, unborn; thus God made a covenant with Noah, and all that should descend from him, that he would no more destroy the earth with a flood; and with Abraham, and his natural seed, a covenant of circumcision, which should continue till the Messiah came; and the covenant at Horeb, with the children of Israel, was not only with them that were then present, and on the spot, but with those that should be hereafter descendants of them (Genesis 9:9; Genesis 17:4; Deuteronomy 29:14-15). And so the covenant of grace was made with Christ, as the Head of his chosen ones, who were considered in him, and had grace and all spiritual blessings given them in him before the world was.

5e. Nor have any of Adam's posterity reason to complain of such a procedure; since if Adam had stood in his integrity, they would have partook of all the blessed consequences of his standing, and enjoyed all the happiness that he did; and therefore should not murmur, nor esteem it any injustice in God, in putting their affairs in his hand, that they share in the miseries of his fall; for if they would have received good things through him, had he stood, why should they complain of receiving evil things through his fall? And if this does not satisfy,

5f. Let it be considered, that since God in his infinite wisdom, thought proper that men should have an head and representative of them, in whose hands their good and happiness should be placed; who so fit for it as the first man, the common parent of mankind, made after the image of God, so wise, so holy, just, and good? and could it have been possible for all men to have been upon the spot at once, and it had been proposed to them to choose an head and representative for themselves; who would they, who could they have chose, but the first man, that was their natural parent, of whose blood they were made; and who, they might reasonably think, had the most tender affection for them, and would take the greatest care of them, and of their good, put into his hands? so that it is reasonable to conclude, they would all to a man have united in the choice of him. But,

5g. To silence all complaints and murmurings, let it be observed, that what God gave to Adam, as a federal head, relating to himself and his posterity, he gave it in a way of sovereignty; that is, he might, and might not have given it; he was not obliged to it; it was his own that he gave, and therefore might choose whom he pleased in whose hands to deposit it; and who can say to him, What dost thou?

ENDNOTES:

[1] The Jews had a notion of Adam being a head to all mankind; see Gill on "Romans 5:12" and some think Plato, who borrowed many of his notions from the Jews, gives an hint of it, when he speaks of a corruption en kefalh, in an head, derived from the first birth, in Timaeo, p. 1087. ed. Ficin.

02. Of the Creation of Angels

Of The Creation Of Angels. From considering the creation in general, I descend to particulars; not to all the creatures that are made; to treat of the nature, form, figure, and qualities of every creature in heaven, earth, and sea, would be a work too large and tedious, and what belongs to naturalists and philosophers, and not divines: I shall only consider angels, the chief of God’s works in the heavens; and man, the principal of his creatures on earth. And begin with the angels.

Though the creation of angels is not expressly mentioned in the account of the creation by Moses, yet it is implied in it; for the heavens include all that are in them; which are said to be created by God; and among these must be the angels: besides, Moses, in closing the account of the creation, observes, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (Genesis 2:1). Now of the hosts of heaven, the angels are the principal part; they are expressly called, the heavenly host, and the armies of heaven (Daniel 4:35; Luke 2:13), and therefore must have been created within the six days of the creation; though on what particular day is not certain, whether on the first, second, third, or fourth; all have been pitched upon by one or another; most probably the first, on which day the heavens were created; and that first, and then the earth; so that the angels might be created with the heavens, whose nature is most similar to the heavens, and the heavens the habitation of them; and accordingly might be present at the forming and founding of the earth, on the same day, and sing on that occasion (Job 38:7), which if the sense of that text, the time of their creation is plainly pointed out by it; for though they were created very early, some time within the creation of the six days, since some of them fell before man did; and one of the apostate angels was concerned in the seduction of our first parents, and was the instrument of their fall and ruin, quickly after their creation; yet they were not created before the world was, as some have fancied, and which is a mere fancy; for there was nothing before the world was, but the supreme Being, the Creator of all things; "Before the world was", is a phrase expressive of eternity, and that is peculiar to God, and whose eternity is expressed by the same phrase; "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God" (Psalms 90:2). Besides though angels have not bodies, and so are not in place circumscriptively; yet, as they are creatures, they must have an "ubi", a somewhere, in which they are definitively; so that they are here, and not there, and much less every where: now where was there an "ubi", a somewhere, for them to exist in, before the heavens and the earth were made? it is most reasonable therefore to conclude, that as God prepared an habitation for all the living creatures before he made them; as the sea for the fishes; the expanse, or air, for the fowls; and the earth for men and beasts; so he made the heavens first, and then the angels to dwell in them: and these were made all at once and together; not like their kindred, the souls or spirits of men, which are made one by one, as their bodies are; for they are created, not without them, but in them, by God, "who formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1). But the angelic spirits were made altogether; for "all" those morning stars, the sons of God, were present, and shouted at the foundation of the earth; and all the host of heaven, which must be understood chiefly of angels, were made by the breath of God, when the heavens were created by his word (Job 38:7; Psalms

33:6), and their numbers are many; there was a multitude of them at the birth of Christ (Luke 2:13), and our Lord speaks of twelve legions of them and more, that he could have had at asking them of his Father (Matthew 26:53). According to the vision in Daniel 7:10 thousand thousands of these ministering spirits, ministered to the Ancient of days, and which number is greatly exceeded in the vision John saw (Revelation 5:11) where those in worship with the living creatures and elders are said to be ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, and may well be called an innumerable company (Hebrews 12:22), and yet the passages referred to only speak of good angels; the evil angels are many also; we read of a legion of them in one man (Mark 5:9), perhaps those that fell, may be as many as those that stood; and if so, how great must be the number of them all together, at their creation? Now these are all the creatures of God; "who maketh his angels spirits" (Psalms 104:5), they are made by Jehovah the Father, who is called from hence, as well as from his making the souls of men, "the Father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9), and by Jehovah the Son, "for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible"; and among the latter, angels must be reckoned; and who are further described by "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers"; these "all were created by him and for him" (Colossians 1:16). Nor is Jehovah the Spirit to be excluded from a concern in the creation of them, since, as "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, so all the host of them", the angels, "by the breath", or Spirit, "of his mouth" (Psalms 33:6). Concerning these excellent creatures of God, the following things may be observed:

1. First, Their names: as for proper names, though there are many of them in the Apocryphal and Jewish writings, yet in the sacred scriptures but few, perhaps no more than one, and that is Gabriel, the name of an angel sent with dispatches to Daniel, Zacharias, and to the Virgin Mary (Daniel 8:16; Daniel 9:21; Luke 1:19; Luke 1:26), for as for Michael, the Archangel, he seems to be no other than Christ, the Prince of angels, and Head of all principality and power; who is as God, like unto him, as his name signifies; yea, equal with him. The names, titles, and epithets of angels, are chiefly taken from their nature, qualities, appearances, and offices; some that are ascribed to them, do not seem to belong to them, as "cherubim" and "seraphim", which are names and characters of ministers of the word, as I have shown in a sermon of mine published [1]; and the "Watchers", in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, thought to be angels by many, more probably are the divine Persons in the Godhead, the same with the Holy Ones, and the most High (Daniel 4:17; Daniel 4:24). The name of Elohim is their principal one, translated "gods" (Psalms 97:7), and interpreted of angels (Hebrews 1:6), the same word is translated angels (Psalms 8:5), and which is justified by the apostle (Hebrews 2:9). Now angels have this name because they have been sent with messages from God, in his name, to men; and they have spoken in his name, and been his representatives; and may be called so, as magistrates sometimes are, because God’s vicegerents, and act under him, and for a like reason have the names of "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" (Colossians 1:16). Not because of any hierarchy, or order of government, established among themselves, which does not appear; but rather because of the dignity they are advanced unto, being princes in the court of heaven; and because of that power and authority which, under God, and by his direction, they exercise over kingdoms, provinces, and particular persons on earth: and if the text in Job 38:7 is to be understood of angels, it furnishes us with other names and titles of them; as "morning stars", and "sons of God"; and they may be called "morning stars", because of the brightness, splendor, and glory of their nature; and because of the clearness of their light, knowledge, and understanding; in which sense they are "angels of light";

and into one of which Satan sometimes transforms himself, who was once a bright morning star: and these may be said to be sons of God; not by grace and adoption, as saints are; much less by divine generation, as Christ is; "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?" (Hebrews 1:5), but by creation, being made in the image of God, which consists in wisdom and knowledge, in righteousness and holiness; and being his favorites, and beloved of him. They sometimes have the name of men given them; because they have appeared in an human form; such were two of those who appeared like men to Abraham, and afterwards to Lot; and two others seen by the women at Christ's sepulchre (Genesis 18:2; Genesis 19:1; Genesis 19:5; Genesis 19:8; Luke 24:4). The more common name given to these celestial spirits, is that of angels; the word for which in the Hebrew language, and which is used of them in the Old Testament, signifies "messengers"; and so the uncreated Angel, Christ, is called the Angel, or Messenger of the covenant (Malachi 3:1), and it comes from a root, preserved in the Ethiopic dialect, which signifies to "send," [2] because these spirits have been often sent with messages and dispatches to the children of men: the word "angels" we use, comes from a Greek word [3], which signifies the same; and are so called, from their being sent on, and bringing messages, which they declare, publish, and proclaim.

2. Secondly, The nature of angels, which is expressed by the word spirits; so good angels are called spirits, and ministering spirits (Hebrews 1:7; Hebrews 1:14), and evil angels, unclean spirits, Christ gave his apostles power to cast out of the bodies of men (Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:17; Luke 10:20), that is, spiritual subsistence, they are real personal beings, that subsist of themselves. There was a sect among the Jews, the Sadducees, who said there was "neither angel nor spirit" (Acts 23:8), and our modern Sadducees are not less absurd, who assert that good and evil angels are no other than good and evil thoughts; but this is to be confuted, from the nature and names of angels; from the offices they bear, and are employed in; from the works and actions ascribed unto them; from the powers and faculties of will, understanding, and affections they are possessed of; and from the happiness and misery assigned to them that do well or ill. From all which it appears, that they are not imaginary, or "entia rationis"; nor mere qualities, but personal beings; and they are of a "spiritual" nature; not compounded of parts, as bodies are; and yet they are not so simple and uncompounded as God is, who is a Spirit; in comparison to him, they approach nearer to bodies; wherefore Tertullian, and some other of the fathers, asserted them to be corporeal, though with respect to bodies they are incorporeal. It is difficult for us to form any idea of a spirit; we rather know what it is not, than what it is; "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," says Christ (Luke 24:39), was it corporeal, a legion of spirits could never have a place in one man; nor penetrate and pass through bodies, through doors bolted and barred, as these angelic beings have: nor is it any objection to their being "incorporeal", that they have sometimes appeared as men, since they have only seemed so; or they have assumed bodies only for a time, and then laid them aside: nor that they ascend and descend, and move from place to place; for this is said of the souls of men, which are incorporeal; and being spirits, or of a spiritual nature, they are possessed of great agility, and with great swiftness and speed descend from heaven, on occasion; as Gabriel did, who flew swiftly, having his order to carry a message to Daniel, at the beginning of his prayer, and was with him before it was ended; who must move as swift as light from the sun, or lightning from the heavens: and being without bodies, they are invisible, and are among the invisible things created by the Son of God, as before observed; and though it was a notion that obtained among the Jews in Christ's time, and does among the common people with us, that a spirit may be seen;

it is a vulgar error (Luke 24:37). Indeed, when angels have assumed an human form they may be seen, as they were by Abraham and Lot; and so when they appeared in the forms of chariots and horses of fire, around Elisha, they were seen by his servant, when his eyes were opened; but then these bodies seen were not their own; and these appearances were different from what they really were in themselves. Once more, being incorporeal and immaterial, they are "immortal"; they do not consist of parts of matter capable of being disunited or dissolved; and hence the saints in the resurrection will be like them in this respect, that "neither can they die any more" (Luke 20:36). God, who only has immortality originally and of himself, has conferred immortality on the angelic spirits; and though he can annihilate them, he will not; for even the evil spirits that have rebelled against him, though they die a moral and an eternal death, yet their beings, their substances, continue and perish not; everlasting fire, eternal punishment, is prepared for the devil and his angels.

3. Thirdly, The qualities and excellencies of angels may be next considered; and they are more especially three, holiness, wisdom, or knowledge, and power.

3a. Holiness; they are holy creatures, called "holy angels" (Mark 8:38), and so they were created, even all of them: not indeed so holy as God is; for "there is none holy as the Lord" (1 Samuel 2:2), in comparison of him all creatures are unholy; "the heavens are not clean in his sight" (Job 15:15), that is, the inhabitants of them, the angels; nor were they created immutably holy, but so as that they were capable of sinning, as some of them did; who, being left to the mutability of their own free will, departed from their "first estate", which was a state of holiness, as well as happiness; and "abode not in the truth", in the truth of holiness, in that uprightness and righteousness in which they were created; and they are called the "angels that sinned", (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6; John 8:44). But others of them stood in their integrity, and are become impeccable; not owing to the power of their free will, and their better use of it than the rest; but to the electing grace of God, and the confirming grace of Christ, who is the Head of all principality and power (1 Timothy 5:21; Colossians 2:10). These now, as they persist in their obedience, they are perfect in it; hence the petition Christ directed his disciples to; "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), they are subject to the same laws and rules of morality and righteousness that men are, excepting such as are not suitable to their nature; as some duties belonging to the fourth, fifth, seventh, eighth, and tenth commands of the Decalogue; but to the rest in such manner as their nature will admit of; with all other orders, prescriptions, and directions of the divine will, they cheerfully and constantly yield an obedience to; for they "do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word" (Psalms 103:20).

3b. Wisdom and knowledge; angels are very wise and knowing creatures; it is an high strain of compliment in the woman of Tekoah to David; "My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God; to know all things that are in the earth" (2 Samuel 14:20), yet it shows the general opinion entertained of the wisdom of angels; though in comparison of the all wise and only wise God, they are by him chargeable "with folly" (Job 4:18). Very wise and knowing creatures no doubt they are; but they are not omniscient; they know much, but not everything; they know much of themselves, through the strength and excellency of their nature, being rational and intelligent creatures, of the highest form and class: and by observation and experience, for which they have had a long time, and great opportunity; and also by divine revelation, through which they are acquainted with many things they otherwise would not know: they know much of God, being

always in his presence, and beholding his face, and whose perfections displayed in his works, they have the clearest knowledge of; and much of their fellow creatures, of the same species with them, the holy angels; who, having a language peculiar to themselves, can converse with, and communicate to each other; and much of the apostate angels, who they are set to oppose, conflict with, and counterwork; and much of men, of wicked men, on whom, by divine direction, they inflict the judgments of God; and of good men, the heirs of salvation, to whom they are sent, as ministering spirits: they know much of the mysteries of providence, in the execution of which they are often employed; and of the mysteries of divine grace, not only by divine revelation, but by the church, and by the ministry of the word, they attending the congregations of the saints; though it seems that this their knowledge is imperfect, since they bow their heads, and desire to pry more into these things: and there are many things which they know not unless by marks and signs, in a conjectural way, or by a particular revelation; as the thoughts of men's hearts, which of others, men themselves know not, only the spirits of men within them; and which to know, peculiarly belongs to God, the searcher of the hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men: nor do they know future contingencies, or what shall be hereafter, unless such as necessarily and ordinarily follow from natural causes, or may be guessed at, or are revealed unto them of God, in order to impart them to others; of the day and hour of the end of the world, and the last judgment, as no man knoweth, so neither the angels of heaven (Matthew 24:36; Revelation 1:1).

3c. Power is another excellency of the angels; they are called "mighty" angels, and are said to "excel in strength"; that is, other creatures (2 Thessalonians 1:7; Psalms 103:20), their strength is great, and their power and authority under God very large, yet finite and limited; they are not omnipotent, nor sovereign; they do not preside over the celestial bodies, move the planets, dispose of the ordinances of heaven; bind or loose their influences, and set their dominion in the earth; they have not the power of the air, nor the command of the earth; the world is not in subjection to them: they are capable indeed, under a divine influence, and by divine direction, help, and assistance, of doing great and marvelous things; of holding the four winds of heaven; of quenching the violence of fire; and of stopping the mouths of lions; and of restraining other hurtful things: they have great power over the bodies of men, of moving them from place to place; as an evil spirit, by permission, carried Christ, and set him upon the pinnacle of the temple; and a good spirit caught away Philip, and carried him to Azotus: they have power, when they have leave, or are ordered, to smite the bodies of men with diseases; as the men of Sodom with blindness, yea, with death itself, as seventy thousand Israelites, on account of David's numbering the people; and a hundred and forty-five thousand Assyrians in one night, as they lay encamped against Jerusalem; and Herod the king, who, being smitten by an angel, was eaten of worms, and died. But the power of angels will still more appear under the following head, concerning, 4. Fourthly, Their office and employment.

4a. First, With respect to God; their work is to praise him, to celebrate the glory of his perfections; "Praise ye him, all his angels" (Psalms 148:2), and to worship him with his saints; we find them sometimes joining with men, with the living creatures and elders, in John's visions, in ascribing blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power, and might unto God; and the same, in the same company, to the Lamb that was slain (Revelation 5:11-12; Revelation 7:11-12), and their work also lies in keeping the commandments of God, and doing his will in heaven and in earth; these are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the

earth, to do his will and work in it; they wait his orders, and immediately go forth and execute them, (Zechariah 6:4-5).

4b. Secondly, With respect to Christ, on whom they are said to ascend and descend, as they did on Jacob's ladder, a type of him (Genesis 28:12; John 1:51), these attended at the incarnation of Christ; one informed the Virgin of her conception of him, removed her doubts about it, and explained to her the mystery of it; another encouraged Joseph to take her to wife, who thought to put her away, because of her pregnancy; and a third published the news of his birth to the shepherds; and who was presently joined with a multitude of them, who in chorus celebrated the glory of God, displayed therein. Yea, when God brought him, his first begotten, into the world, and manifested him to it in human nature, he gave orders to all the angelic host, to do him homage and worship, saying, "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Luke 1:30-35; Matthew 1:19-20; Luke 2:10-14; Hebrews 1:6), these had the care and charge of him in his state of humiliation; they were solicitous for the preservation of his life in his infancy; when Herod sought to take it away, an angel gave notice of it to Joseph, in a dream, and directed him to take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt: and I see no reason why those wonderful escapes of Christ out of the hands of his enemies, in later years, when just going to destroy him, may not be ascribed to the ministration of angels; since it is most certain, that God gave his angels charge over him, to keep him in all his ways; (see Matthew 2:13; Luke 4:29-30; John 8:59; Psalms 91:11). When he had fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness, these same excellent creatures came and ministered food unto him (Matthew 4:11), and one of them attended him in his agony in the garden, and strengthened and comforted him (Luke 22:43), they were present at his resurrection, and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; and declared to the women at it, that he was risen from the dead (Matthew 28:2; Luke 24:4; Luke 24:6; Luke 24:23), they accompanied him at his ascension to heaven, even thousands of them; though only in the Acts of the Apostles two are mentioned; by whom he was seen, and escorted through the region of the air, the territory of Satan, in triumph; and was received and welcomed to heaven (Psalms 68:17-18; Acts 1:10-11; 1 Timothy 3:16), and by whom he will be attended at his second coming; for they will make a part of his glorious appearing, which will be in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father, and in the glory of his holy angels (2 Thessalonians 1:7; Luke 9:26).

4c. Thirdly, With respect to the saints, to whom they are sent as ministering spirits; for though in some instances they may have a concern with others, yet that is chiefly in the behalf of the church and people of God, who are more especially their charge and care, both in respect to things temporal and spiritual.

4c1. With respect to things temporal, instances of which are,

4c1a. Preserving them in their infant state; there is a special providence concerned with the elect; as soon as they are born they are under the particular watch and care of it, and are distinguished by it; which is what the apostle means when he says, that "God separated him from his mother's womb" (Galatians 1:15), and which providence may be thought to be chiefly executed by the ministry of angels; for though it is not certain, which yet some scriptures countenance (Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15), that everyone has his guardian angel, since sometimes more angels are deputed to one, and sometimes but one to many; yet doubtless saints from their birth are under the care of angels, and are preserved by them to be called; it is not known how many difficulties

and dangers they are preserved from in infancy, in childhood, and in youth, as well as in later years, by means of angels.

4c1b. Providing food for them when in want of it, or that they might not want it; as they ministered food to Christ in the wilderness; and prepared manna, called angels food, because prepared by them in the air, and let down by them from thence, for the Israelites during their forty years' travels; and as an angel dressed food for the prophet Elijah, and called upon him to arise and eat (Matthew 4:11; Psalms 78:25; 1 Kings 19:5-8).

4c1c. Keeping off diseases from them, and healing of them according to the promise, "He shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence—neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; for he shall give his angels charge over thee" &c. (Psalms 91:3; Psalms 91:7; Psalms 91:10-11), and if evil angels can, by divine permission, inflict diseases, as appears from the case of Job, and doubtless they would oftener do it, was it not for the interposition of good angels, why may not good angels be thought capable of healing diseases? and those many strange and wonderful cures wrought when all means have been ineffectual, may be ascribed, at least many of them, to the good offices of angels in directing to simple things, whose nature and virtue they are well acquainted with; and even they have cured diseases in a miraculous way, witness the pool of Bethesda, whose healing virtue for all diseases was owing to the agitation of its waters by an angel (John 5:4).

4c1d. Directing and protecting in journeys, and at other times; thus Abraham, when he sent his servant to Mesopotamia to take a wife for his son Isaac, assured him that God would send an angel before him to direct and prosper him, which the servant found to be true, and blessed God for it (Genesis 24:7; Genesis 24:27; Genesis 24:48), so Jacob, as he was travelling, was met by the angels of God, who divided themselves into two hosts for his guard, and one went on one side of him and the other on the other; or one went before him, and the other behind him; wherefore he called the name of the place where they met him Mahanaim, which signifies two camps or armies (Genesis 32:1-2), and even all that fear the Lord have such a guard about them, for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him" (Psalms 34:7).

4c1e. Keeping from dangers, and helping out of them: when Lot and his family were in danger of being destroyed in Sodom, the angels laid hold on their hands and brought them forth, and set them without the city, and directed them to escape for their lives to an adjacent mountain (Genesis 19:15-17), the preservation of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, in the furnace of fire, and of Daniel in the lions' den, is ascribed to angels (Daniel 3:28; Daniel 6:22), the opening of the doors of the prison where the apostles were, and setting them free; and the deliverance of Peter from prison, whose chains fell from him, and the gate opened before him, were done by angels (Acts 5:19-20, Acts 12:7, Acts 12:10).

4c2. With respect to things spiritual.

4c2a. Angels have been employed in revealing the mind and will of God to men. They attended at mount Sinai, when the law was given; yea, it is said to be ordained by angels, and to be given by the disposition of angels, and even to be the word spoken by angels (Deuteronomy 32:2; Acts 7:59; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2). And an angel published the gospel, and brought the good news of the incarnation of Christ, and salvation by him (Luke 2:10-11). An angel made known to

Daniel the time of the Messiah's coming; as well as many other things relating to the state of the church and people of God (Daniel 8:16-19; Daniel 9:21-27; Daniel 12:5-13). And an angel was sent to signify to the apostle John the things that should come to pass in his time, and in all ages to the end of the world (Revelation 1:1).

4c2b. Though the work of conversion is the sole work of God, yet as he makes use of instruments in it, as ministers of the word, why may he not be thought to make use of angels? they may suggest that to the minds of men which may be awakening to them, and may improve a conviction by a providence, which may issue in conversion. However, this is certain, they are acquainted with the conversions of sinners; and there is joy in heaven, and in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance (Luke 15:7; Luke 15:10).

4c2c. They are useful in comforting the saints when in distress; as they strengthened and comforted Christ in his human nature, when in an agony, so they comfort his members, as Daniel, when in great terror, and the apostle Paul, in a tempest (Daniel 9:23; Daniel 10:11; Daniel 10:19; Acts 27:23-24), and as when in temporal, so when in spiritual distresses; for if evil angels are capable of suggesting terrible and uncomfortable things, and of filling the mind with blasphemous thoughts, and frightful apprehensions; good angels are surely capable of suggesting comfortable things, and what may relieve souls distressed with unbelief, doubts, and fears, and the temptations of Satan; for

4c2d. They are greatly assisting in repelling the temptations of Satan; for if they oppose themselves to, and have conflicts with evil angels, with respect to things political and civil, the affairs of kingdoms and states, in which the interest and church of Christ are concerned; (see Daniel 10:13; Daniel 10:20; Revelation 12:7), they, no doubt, bestir themselves in opposition to evil spirits, when they tempt believers to sin, or to despair; so that they are better able to wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickednesses in high places (Ephesians 6:12; Zechariah 3:1-4).

4c2e. They are exceeding useful to saints in their dying moments; they attend the saints on their dying beds, and whisper comfortable things to them against the fears of death; and keep off the fiends of hell from disturbing and distressing them; and they watch the moment when soul and body are parted, and carry their souls to heaven as they carried the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22), and thus Elijah was carried to heaven, soul and body, in a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which were no other than angels, which appeared in such a form, for the conveyance of him (2 Kings 2:11).

4c2f. Angels, as they will attend Christ at his second coming, when the dead in Christ shall rise first; so they will be made use of by him, to gather the risen saints from the four quarters of the world, and bring them to him; to gather the wheat into his garner, and to take the tares, and even all things out of his kingdom that offend, and burn them (Matthew 13:40-41; Matthew 24:31). From the whole it appears, that angels are creatures, and so not to be worshipped; which kind of idolatry was introduced in the apostles' time, but condemned (Colossians 2:18), the angels themselves refuse and forbid it (Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:8-9), yet, notwithstanding, they are to be loved, valued, and esteemed by the saints, partly on account of the excellency of their nature, and partly because of their kind and friendly offices; and care should be taken to give them no offence,

in public or private; (see 1 Corinthians 11:10) for the saints are highly honored, by having such excellent spirits to wait upon them, and minister unto them, and be guards about them; and it is no small part of their gospel privileges, for which they should be thankful, that they are come to an innumerable company of angels, (Hebrews 1:14; Hebrews 12:22).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Called the Doctrine of the Cherubim opened and explained from Ezekiel 10:20. printed in 1764.

[2] dal “legavit, misit nuncium”, Ludolf. Lexic. Ethiop. p. 19. vid. Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 5. p. 88.

[3] aggellw “nuntio, nuntium affero”, Scapula.

02. Of the Creation of Man

Of The Creation Of Man.

Man was made last of all the creatures, being the chief and masterpiece of the whole creation on earth, whom God had principally and first in view in making the world, and all things in it; according to that known rule, that what is first in intention, is last in execution; God proceeding in his works as artificers in theirs, from a less perfect to a more perfect work, till they come to what they have chiefly in view, a finished piece of work, in which they employ all their skill; and which, coming after the rest, appears to greater advantage. Man is a compendium of the creation, and therefore is sometimes called a microcosm, a little world, the world in miniature; something of the vegetable, animal, and rational world meet in him; spiritual and corporal substance, or spirit and matter, are joined together in him; yea, heaven and earth center in him, he is the bond that connects them both together; all creatures were made for his sake, to possess, enjoy, and have the dominion over, and therefore he was made last of all: and herein appear the wisdom and goodness of God to him, that all accommodations were ready provided for him when made; the earth for his habitation, all creatures for his use; the fruits of the earth for his profit and pleasure; light, heat, and air for his delight, comfort, and refreshment; with everything that could be wished for and desired to make his life happy.

Man was made on the sixth and last day of the creation, and not before; nor were there any of the same species made before Adam, who is therefore called "the first man Adam": there have been some who have gone by the name of Praeadamites, because they held there were men before Adam. So the Zabians held; and speak of one that was his master; and in the last century one Peirerius wrote a book in Latin [1], in favour of the same notion; which has been refuted by learned men over and over. It is certain, that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, by one man, even the first man Adam; from whom death first commenced, and from whom it has reigned ever since (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:14). Now if there were men before Adam, they must have been all alive at his formation; there had been no death among them; and if they had been of any long standing before him, as the notion supposes, the world, in all probability, was as much peopled as it may be now; and if so, why should God say, "Let us make man", when there must be a great number of men in being already? And what occasion was there for such an extraordinary production of men? Why was Adam formed out of the dust of the earth? and Eve out of one of his ribs? and these two coupled together, that a race of men might spring from them, if there were men before? But it is certain that Adam was the first man, as he is called; not only with respect to Christ, the second Adam; but because he was the first of the human race, and the common parent of mankind; and Eve, the mother of all living; that is, of all men living. The apostle Paul says, that God "has made of one blood", that is, of the blood of one man, "all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26), and this he said in the presence of the wise philosophers at Athens, who, though they objected to the new and strange deities, they supposed he introduced, yet said not one word against that account he gave of the original of mankind. But what puts this out of all question, with those that believe the divine revelation, is, that it is expressly said, that

before Adam was formed, "there was not a man to till the ground" (Genesis 2:5).

Man was made after, and upon a consultation held concerning his creation; "Let us make man" (Genesis 1:26), which is an address, not to second causes, not to the elements, nor to the earth; for God could, if he would, have commanded the earth to have brought man forth at once, as he commanded it to bring forth grass, herbs, trees, and living creatures of all sorts, and not have consulted with it: nor is it an address to angels, who were never of God's privy council; nor was man made after their image, he being corporeal, they incorporeal. But the address was made by Jehovah the Father to, and the consultation was held by him, with the other two divine Persons in the Deity, the Son and Spirit; (a like phrase see in Genesis 3:22; Genesis 11:7; Isaiah 6:8), and such a consultation being held about the making of man, as was not at the making of any of the rest of the creatures, shows what an excellent and finished piece of work God meant to make. Concerning the creation of man, the following things may be observed.

1. The author of his creation, God; "So God created man" (Genesis 1:27). Not man himself; a creature cannot create, and much less itself; nor angels, for then they would be entitled to worship from men, which they have refused, because their fellow servants, and it might be added, their fellow creatures. But God, who is the Creator of the ends of the earth, was the Creator of the first man, and of all since; for we are all his offspring, and therefore are exhorted to "remember our Creator" (Ecclesiastes 12:1), or "Creators"; for so it is in the original text; for as there were more concerned in the consultation about man's creation, so in the creation of him; and the same that were in the one, were in the other, even Father, Son, and Spirit; hence we read of God our Makers in various passages of scripture (Job 35:10; Psalms 149:2; Isaiah 54:5) that God the Father, who made the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are, made man among the rest, and particularly made him, will not be questioned; nor need there be any doubt about the Son of God; since "without him", the eternal Word, "was not anything made that was made"; then not man; and if all things were made and created by him, whether visible and invisible, then man was made by him, who must be reckoned among these all things (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16). The character and relation of an husband to the church, more particularly belongs to Christ; and her husband is expressly said to be her maker, (Isaiah 54:5 compare also Psalms 95:6-8 with Hebrews 3:6-7). Nor is the Holy Spirit to be excluded from the formation of man, who had a concern in the whole creation (Genesis 1:3; Job 26:13; Psalms 33:6), and to whom Elihu particularly ascribes his formation (Job 33:4), and why not the first man made by him also? yea, the act of breathing into man the breath of life, when he became a living soul, seems most agreeable to him, the Spirit and Breath of God; and who has so great a concern in the re-creation, or renovation of man, even in his regeneration. Wherefore the three divine Persons should be remembered as Creators, and be feared, worshipped, and adored as such; and thanks be given them for creation, preservation, and for all the mercies of life, bountifully provided by them. It is pretty remarkable that the word "created" should be used three times in one verse, where the creation of man is only spoken of; as it should seem to point out the three divine Persons concerned therein, (Genesis 1:27).

2. The constituent and essential parts of man, created by God, which are two, body and soul; these appear at his first formation; the one was made out of the dust, the other was breathed into him; and so at his dissolution, the one returns to the dust from whence it was; and the other to God that gave it; and, indeed, death is no other than the dissolution, or disunion of these two parts; "the body without the Spirit is dead"; the one dies, the other does not.

2a. First, The body, which is a most "wonderful" structure, and must appear so when it is considered, with what precision and exactness every part is formed for its proper use, even every muscle, vein, and artery, yea, the least fiber; and that every limb is set in its proper place, to answer its designed end; and all in just symmetry and proportion, and in a subserviency to the use of each other, and for the good of the whole: to enter into a detail of particulars, more properly belongs to anatomy; and that art is now brought to such a degree of perfection, that by it most amazing discoveries are made in the structure of the human body [2], as the circulation of the blood, &c. so that it may well be said of our bodies, as David said of his, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalms 139:14). The erect posture of the body is not to be omitted, which so remarkably distinguishes man from the four footed animals, who look downward to the earth; and by which man is fitted and directed to look upward to the heavens, to contemplate them, and the glory of God displayed in them; and even to look up to God above them, to worship and adore him, to praise him for mercies received, and to pray to him for what are wanted; as well as instructs men to set their affections not on things on earth, but on things in heaven; and, indeed, it is natural for every man, whether in any great distress, or when favored with an unexpected blessing, and when he receives tidings that surprise him, whether of good or of bad things, to turn his face upwards. In the Greek language man has his name anqrwpon [3], from turning and looking upwards. The body of man is very fair and beautiful; for if the children of man, or of Adam, are fair, as is suggested (Psalms 45:2), then most certainly Adam himself was created fair and beautiful; and some think he had the name of Adam given him from his beauty; the root of the word, in the Ethiopic [4] language, signifies to be fair and beautiful; and though external beauty is a vain thing to gaze at, and for men to pride themselves with, in this their fallen state, when God can easily by a disease cause their beauty to consume away as a moth; yet it is a property and quality in the composition of man at first not to be overlooked, since it greatly exceeds what may be observed of this kind in the rest of the creatures. The body of man was also originally made immortal; not that it was so of itself, and in its own nature, being made of the elements of the earth, and so reducible to the same again; and was supported, even in the state of innocence, with corruptible food; but God, who only has immortality, conferred it on the body of man; so that if he had never sinned, his body would not have been mortal, or have died: nor is it any objection to it, that it was supported with food; for God could have supported it with or without food, as long as he pleased, or for ever: he could have supported it with food, not to take notice of the tree of life, which some think was designed as the means of continuing man’s life perpetually, if he had not sinned; but without that, as God could and did support the body of Adam with food, even when it became mortal, through sin, for the space of nine hundred years and more; he could have supported it for the space of nine thousand, and so onward, had it been his pleasure; and therefore there can be no difficulty in conceiving that he could have supported it in an unfallen state, when it had the gift of immortality, in the same way for ever. Besides, God could, by a new act of his special grace and goodness, have translated Adam to heaven, or to an higher state of life, to greater nearness and communion with him, and supported his body without food for ever; as the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, translated, that they should not see death; and have been some thousands of years supported without food; and as the body of Christ is, and the bodies of the saints that rose at his resurrection are; and all the bodies of men, after the resurrection, will be; and it is most clear from the word of God, that death did not arise from a necessity of nature; but from sin: "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin—and, through the offence of one, many be dead—the wages of sin is death"

—yea, it is expressly said, "the body is dead because of sin" (Romans 5:12, Romans 5:15, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:10), and, indeed, to what purpose was that threatening given out, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17), if man of necessity must have died, whether he had sinned or not? as say the Pelagians and Socinians [5]; and which, if they could, they would maintain, in order to avoid the force of the argument, in favour of original sin, they deny, from death being the fruit, effect, and punishment of the sin of Adam. But now, though this body was so wonderfully and beautifully formed and gifted with immortality, yet it was made out of the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7), that is, macerated with water, and so properly clay; hence man is said to be made out of the clay, and the bodies of men to be like bodies of clay; and to have their foundation in the dust (Job 4:18; Job 13:12; Job 33:6; Isaiah 64:8). Hence some think that Adam had his name from "adamah", earth, out of which he was formed, red earth, as Josephus [6] calls it; as in Latin he is called "homo", from "humus", the ground. And this is an humbling consideration to proud man, and especially in the sight of God, when compared with him; and still more, as this clay of his is now, through sin, become frail, brittle, and mortal; and his dust, sinful dust and ashes (Genesis 18:27), and it may serve to take down the haughtiness and pride of some men, who vaunt over their fellow creatures, and boast of their blood, and of their families, when all are made out of one mass and lump of clay, and of one blood all the nations of men are formed.

2b. Secondly, The soul is the other part of man created by God; which is a "substance", or subsistence; it is not an accident, or quality, inherent in a subject; but is capable of subsisting of itself; it is not a good temperament of the body, as some have fancied; nor is it mere thought; it is indeed a thinking substance, in which thought is, and is exercised by it, but is distinct from it; it cannot be a mere quality, or accident, because that is not properly created, at least by itself, but is concreated, or created with the subjects in which it is; whereas the spirit of man is formed or created of God within him (Zechariah 12:1), it is itself the subject of qualities, of all arts and sciences, and in its depraved state, the subject of vices, and of virtues and graces; it is an inhabitant of the body, dwells in it, as in a tabernacle, and removes from it at death, and exists in a separate state after it; all which show it is a substance, or subsistence of itself. It is not a corporal [7] but a "spiritual" substance; not a body, as Tertullian [8], and others, have thought; but a spirit, as it is often called in scripture (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 26:41; Acts 7:59). And the souls of men are called the spirits of all flesh, to distinguish them from angelic spirits, which are not surrounded with flesh, as the spirits of men are (Numbers 16:22). The soul is immediately breathed from God, as Adam’s soul was; and in it chiefly consists the image of God in man, and therefore trust be a spirit, as he is, though in a finite proportion, a created spirit; it is also "immaterial"; it does not consist of flesh, and blood, and bones, as the body does, and so is "immortal", and dies not when that does; when that goes to the dust, the soul returns to God: the body may be killed by men, but not the soul; when they have killed the one, they can proceed no farther; the soul survives the body, and lives for ever [9], it consists of various powers and faculties, the understanding, will, &c. and performs various operations of life, either immediately by itself, or mediately by the organs of the body, in the vegetable, animal, and rational way; and therefore is called the "spirit", or "breath of lives" (Genesis 2:7), and yet is but one; for though sometimes mention is made of soul and spirit, as if they were distinct (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12), yet this only respects the superior and inferior powers and faculties of one and the same soul; for otherwise the scriptures always represent man as having but one soul; and this is created by God; it is not uncreated, as he is; nor is it created by angels, as some have fancied; nor

of itself; nor is it generated by and derived from immediate parents. The soul of Adam was most certainly created of God, and immediately, and breathed into him; and the same may be believed of the soul of Eve; for it cannot be thought that that was contained in, and educed out of the rib, from which her body was made; but that when that was made, God breathed into her the breath of life, as he did into Adam; and there is no reason why the souls of all men should not be made, or created, in like manner.

Some have been, and are of opinion, that the souls of men are "ex traduce", as Tertullian; or generated by and derived from their parents, with their bodies. But against this it may be observed, that Christ was made in all things like unto us, having a true body and a reasonable soul; which soul of his could not be generated by and derived from his parents, not from a father, because he had none, as man; nor from his mother, for then she, being a sinful woman, it must have been infected and defiled with the contagion of sin, the corruption of nature; whereas he was holy and harmless, without spot and blemish. Moreover, if souls are by natural generation from their immediate parents, they must be derived either from their bodies, or from their bodies and souls, or from their souls only; not from their bodies, for then they would be corporeal, whereas they are not; not from both bodies and souls; for then they would be partly corporeal, and partly incorporeal, which, they are not; not from their souls only, for as an angel is not generated by an angel, so not a soul by a soul. Besides, if the souls of men are derived from the souls of parents, it is either from a part of them, or from the whole; not from a part, for then the soul would be partible and divisible, as matter is, and so not immaterial; and as not a part, so neither can their whole souls be thought to be communicated to them, for then they would have none, and perish; to such absurdities is this notion reducible. Besides, what is immaterial, as the soul is, can never be educed out of matter; if the soul is generated out of the matter of parents, then it is and must be material; and if material, then corruptible; and if corruptible, then mortal; and it is a maxim, that what is generated, may be corrupted; and if the soul may be corrupted, then it is not immortal; the doctrine of the soul’s immortality, becomes indefensible by this notion; for if this be admitted, the other must be relinquished [10]. But what puts this matter out of all doubt is, the distinction the apostle makes between the "fathers of our flesh", and the "Father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9). Man consists of two parts, of "flesh" and "spirit", body and soul; the former the apostle ascribes to immediate parents, as instruments thereof; and the latter to God, as the Father, Author, and Creator of it. Nor is it an objection of any moment, to the soul being of the immediate creation of God, that then a man does not generate a man: to which it may be replied, that he may be said to generate a man, though strictly speaking he only generates a part of him; as when one man kills another, he is truly said to kill a man, though he only kills his body; so a man may be said to generate a man, though he only generates the body; from whence in this case man is denominated. Moreover, as in death, the whole man may be said to die, because death is a dissolution of the whole, though each part remains; so the whole man may be said to be generated, because in generation there is an union and conjunction of the parts of man; though one part is not generated, yet because of the union of the parts, the whole is said to be so. Nor is it an objection of greater weight, that man does not do what other creatures do, generate the whole of their species; as a horse a horse, not only the flesh, but the spirit of it; since it is not at all derogatory to man, but it is his superior excellency, that his soul is not generated as the spirit of a beast is, but comes immediately from the hand of God. Such who are otherwise right in their notion of things, give into this, in order to get clear of a difficulty attending the doctrine of original sin, and the manner of its propagation, which they think

is more easily accounted for, by supposing the soul derived from parents by natural generation, and so corrupted; but though this is a difficulty not easily to be resolved, how the soul coming immediately from God, is corrupted with original sin; it is better to let this difficulty lie unresolved, than to give up so certain a truth, and of so much importance, as the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is; which, as has been seen, must be given up, if this notion is received; but there are ways and methods for the clearing of this difficulty, without being at the expense of the loss of such an important truth; as will be shown when we come to treat of the doctrine of original sin. In the meanwhile, let us take it for granted, that souls are of God's immediate creation; the making of them he claims to himself; "The souls that I have made" (Isaiah 57:16; Jeremiah 38:16). The souls of men were not made in eternity, but in time. The pre-existence of all human souls before the world was, is a notion held by Plato among the heathens, and espoused by Origen, among Christians; but is exploded by all wise, thoughtful, and judicious men; for whatsoever was before the world was, is eternal; if souls were created before the world, then they are eternal; whereas there was nothing before the world but God, to whom eternity only belongs (Psalms 90:2), nor were souls created together, as angels were; but they are created one by one, when their bodies are prepared to receive them; they are not created without the body, and then put into it; but they are formed in it; "Who formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1), not brought quraqen, from without, as Aristotle [11] expresses it; but when the embryo is fit to receive it, it is created by God, and united to it; but how it is united, and what is the bond of that union, we must be content to be ignorant of; as well as of the particular place of its abode, whether diffused through the whole body, as some think, or has an apartment in the brain, or has its seat in the heart, which is most likely, and most agreeable to scripture, and to that known maxim, that the heart is the first that lives, and the last that dies.

3. The difference, of sex in which man was created, is male and female (Genesis 1:27), that is, man and woman; not that they were created together; though on the same day, and perhaps not long one after the other: the male was created first, and out of him the female, as the apostle says, "Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Timothy 2:13), which he observes, to show that the woman should not usurp authority, over the man, since he was before her; and by which it appears, that "the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man", as he elsewhere asserts (1 Corinthians 11:9), and therefore ought to be in subjection to him: nor were they made out of the same matter, at least not as in the same form; their souls, indeed, were equally made out of nothing, out of no preexistent matter, but their bodies differently: the body of Adam was formed out of the dust of the earth, and the body of Eve out of a rib of Adam, though both originally dust and clay, to which they both returned: the woman was very significantly made out of man's rib; not out of the upper part of man, lest she should be thought to have a superiority over him; nor out of the lower part of man, lest she should be despised and trampled upon; but from a rib of him, to signify that she should be by his side, a companion of him, and from a part near his heart, and under his arm, to show that she should be the object of his love and affection, and be always under his care and protection: and thus being "flesh of his flesh", as he himself owned, it became him to nourish and cherish her as his own flesh. Man is a social creature, and therefore God in his wisdom thought it not proper that he should be alone, but provided an help meet for him, to be a partner and companion with him, in civil and religious life; and in this difference of sex were they created for the sake of procreation of children, and of the propagation of their species, in their successive offspring, to the end of the world; and there were but one male and one female, at first created,

and which were joined together in marriage by the Lord himself, to teach, that but one man and one woman only are to be joined together at one time in lawful wedlock; and these two, male and female, first created, were made after the same image; for the word man includes both man and woman; and Adam was a name common to them both in their creation, and when said to be made after the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 5:1-2), which image, as will hereafter be seen, lies much in righteousness and holiness. Now God made man, that is, both man and woman, upright; but they, Adam and Eve, sought out many inventions, sinful ones, and so lost their righteousness: nor is it any objection to the woman being made after the image of God, part of which lies in dominion over the creatures, as will hereafter be observed, that she is in subjection to the man; for though her husband ruled over her, yet she had equal dominion with him over the creatures. Which leads on to consider,

4. The image of God, in which man was created; "God, said, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness--so God created man in his own image" (Genesis 1:26-27). Whether image and likeness are to be distinguished, as by Maimonides [12], the one respecting the substantial form of man, his soul; the other certain accidents and qualities belonging to him; or whether they signify the same, is not very material; the latter seems probable; since in Genesis 1:27 where image is mentioned, "likeness" is omitted; and, on the contrary, in Genesis 5:1 the word "likeness" is used, and "image" omitted. Now though this is only said of man, that he is made after the image and likeness of God [13], yet he is not the only creature so made; angels are like to God, and bear a resemblance to him, being spirits, immaterial, immortal, and invisible, and are also righteous and holy in their nature, and are sometimes called Elohim; yet the image of God in man, differs in some things from theirs: as that part of it especially, which lies in his body, and in his connection with and dominion over the creatures; and yet he is not in such sense the image of God, as Jesus Christ the Son of God is, who is the image of the invisible God, yea, the express image of his Father’s Person, having the same divine nature and perfections he has; but man, though there was in him some likeness and resemblance of some of the perfections of God; which are called his imitable ones, and by some communicable; as holiness, righteousness, wisdom, &c. yet these perfections are not really in him, only some faint shadows of them, at least not in the manner and proportion they are in God, in whom they are infinite, in man finite; and though the renewed and spiritual image of God in regenerate persons; which is of an higher and more excellent kind than the natural image of God in Adam, is called a partaking of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), yet not to be understood as if any partook of the nature and essence of God, and the perfections of it; only that that is wrought in them, and impressed on them, which bears some resemblance to the divine nature. The seat of the image of God in man, is the whole man, both body and soul; wherefore God is said to create man in his image; not the soul only, nor the body only; but the whole man (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:1). Even as the whole man, soul and body, are the seat of the new and spiritual image of God in regeneration and sanctification; The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; which the apostle immediately explains of their whole spirit, and soul and body, being preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; when and at the resurrection of the dead, the saints will most fully appear to bear the image of the heavenly One (1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 15:49).

4a. First, The first man was made in the image of God in his "body" in some respect; hence this is given as a reason why the blood of a man’s body is not to be shed, because, "In the image of God

made he man" (Genesis 9:6), though this image must not be thought to consist in the lineaments and figure of man's body; this would be to conceive of him as altogether such an one as ourselves, and as the Anthropomorphites do; who, because they find bodily members ascribed to God in scripture, as eyes, hands, &c. fancy that he has a body like ours, and that our bodies are like his; but, as Job says, "Hast thou eyes of flesh?" (Job 10:4). No; he has not; and the same may be observed of other members ascribed unto him; for we are not to entertain such gross notions of God as if he was corporeal, or that man was like unto him in the structure of his body; not but that there, is something divine and majestic in the countenance of man, in comparison of brute creatures; and what is super excellent to them, is the erectness of his posture, as has been before observed; which fits and directs him to look up to God, whereby he has a nearness to him, and communion with him, through which he becomes more like unto him. And it may be observed, that the perfections of God, many of them, are represented by the members of the human body; as his omniscience and all-seeing providence by "eyes", which go to and fro throughout the whole earth. His omnipresence and close attention to the petitions of his people, and readiness to help and assist them, by "ears" open to their cries; and his might and power to deliver, protect, and defend them, by an arm and hand; and his pleasure and displeasure, by his face being towards good men, and against bad men; with others that might be added. Some qualities in the body of the first man, he had from God, which made him in some sense like unto him: such as "immortality"; for not only the soul of man breathed into him, was immortal, but his body also, as has been before observed; and in this there was in him some likeness to God, who only hath immortality, in the highest sense of it. Likewise "righteousness" and holiness, another branch of the divine image, as will be hereafter taken notice of; of which the body, as well as the soul, is the seat; for as that is defiled, since the fall, with the corruption of nature; so before, it was pure and holy; as when sanctified by the Spirit of God, it becomes a temple, in which he dwells; and particularly at the resurrection, when it is raised a powerful, incorruptible, spiritual, and glorious body, saints will then awake in the likeness of God, and appear to bear the image of the heavenly One, as in soul so in body; and whereas another branch of this image lies in dominion over the creatures, that is chiefly exercised by the organs of the body. To say no more, I see no difficulty in admitting it; that whereas all the members of Christ's human body were written and delineated in the book of God's eternal purposes and decrees, before they were fashioned, or were in actual being; and God prepared a body for him in covenant, agreeable thereunto; or it was concluded in it, he should assume such a body in the fulness of time (Psalms 139:16; Hebrews 10:5). I say, I see no difficulty in admitting that the body of Adam was formed according to the idea of the body of Christ in the divine mind; and which may be the reason, at least in part, of that expression; "Behold, the man is", or rather "was, as one of us"; and so as Eve was flesh of Adam's flesh, and bone of his bone, the members of Christ are also flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone (Genesis 3:22; Genesis 2:23; Ephesians 5:30). But,

4b. Secondly, The principal seat of the image of God in man, is the soul, which was immediately breathed of God into man, and so bears the greatest resemblance of him; and thus the spiritual image of God, stamped in regeneration and renovation, is chiefly seated in the soul; "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Ephesians 4:23). And this appears,

4b1. In the nature of the soul, which is spiritual, immaterial, immortal, and invisible, as God is; God is a Spirit, most simple and uncompounded; more so than any created spirit can be supposed to

be; yet the soul, which is often called a spirit, bears some likeness to him: he is expert of all matter, and only hath immortality; and so the soul is not a material being, but a spirit, it has not flesh and bones, as a body has; and is not capable of being brought to the dust of death, or to be killed: and as no man has seen God at any time, he is the King eternal, immortal, and invisible; so the soul is not to be seen; who ever saw his own soul, or the soul of another? Moreover, the soul carries some shadow of likeness to God in its powers and faculties, being endowed with understanding, will, and affections; which are, in some respects, similar to what is in God; or there is that in God which these are a faint resemblance of; and though it consists of various faculties, there is but one soul; as God, though his perfections are many, and his Persons three, yet there is but one God.

4b2. The image of God in the soul of man, of the first man particularly, appeared in the qualities of it; especially in its wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and in its righteousness and holiness; for if the spiritual image in regeneration consists in these things, though in a higher and more excellent manner, and of a superior nature; it may be reasonably thought, the natural image of God in man consisted of these things in a natural way; (see Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24).

4b2a. It lay in knowledge and understanding. Adam, in his state of innocence, had a large share of natural knowledge; he knew much of himself, both of the, constitution of his body, and the powers of his mind; he knew much of the creatures made and given for his use, and over which he had the dominion, and to whom he gave names suitable to their nature; he had a large knowledge of God, as his Creator and Benefactor in a natural way, through the creatures; for if God, and the perfections of his nature, are in some measure to be known from his works by the light of nature, now man is fallen, and so as to be left without excuse; a much greater degree of knowledge of him, must man unfallen be supposed to have: and who, doubtless, had knowledge of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, since they were so manifestly concerned in the creation of all things, and particularly in his own; and this seems necessary, that he might yield that worship and adoration which was due from him to each of them; but then he knew nothing of Christ, as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; this was not revealed to him until after his fall, nor did he need it before; on which it was made known to him, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, and be the Saviour of him and his posterity: nor did he know anything of pure, spiritual, and evangelic truths, and which were not suitable to the state in which he was; such as justification by the righteousness of Christ; pardon of sin through his blood; atonement by his sacrifice; and eternal life, as the free gift of God through him: these were things his eye had not seen, nor his ear heard of, nor did it enter into his heart to conceive of before his fall, and the revelation of them to him, which was made upon that; but then he knew all things necessary to be known by him; all things natural, moral, and civil; yea, he had some things revealed to him, and which he knew under a prophetic spirit; some things past, as the formation of Eve out of his rib; and, no doubt, his own formation, and the manner of it; and the whole creation, and the order of it, in six days; and other things to come, as that Eve should be the mother of all living; and that marriage, as it was appointed, would be continued in the world for the propagation of his species.

4b2b. The image of God in Adam, further appeared in that rectitude, righteousness, and holiness, in which he was made; for "God made man upright"; a holy and righteous creature (Ecclesiastes 7:29), which holiness and righteousness were, in their kind, perfect; his understanding was free from all error and mistakes; his will biased to that which is good; his affections flowed in a right channel, towards their proper objects; and there were no sinful motions and evil thoughts in his

heart; nor any propensity and inclination to that which is evil; and the whole of his conduct and behavior was according to the will of God. And this righteousness of his was natural, and not personal and acquired; it was not obtained by the exercise of his free will; it was lost, but not got that way; had it been personal, and acquired his own power, and made up of acts of his own, when lost, it would only have been lost for himself; and his posterity would have had no concern in it; but it was the righteousness of his nature, it was co-created, or created with it, and so common to it; and had he stood in it, would have been propagated to his posterity; but, on the contrary, he sinning, whereby his nature was defiled, a corrupt nature is propagated instead of it. The papists, and those of the same complexion with them, say that Adam was created in his pure naturals; their meaning is, that he was created neither holy nor unholy; neither righteous nor unrighteous; but capable of being either the one or the other, as he made use of the power of his free will. This notion is advanced in favour of man's free will, and to weaken the doctrine of original sin.

4b2c. This image also lies in the freedom of the will, and the power of it. As God is a free agent, so is man; and as the freedom of the divine will does not lie in an indifference and indetermination to good and evil, but is only to that which is good; so was the will of man in his state of integrity: as likewise the will of the good angels and glorified saints. And man had a power to obey the will of God, and do his commands; and as he had not only a positive law given him to abstain from the forbidden fruit, as a trial of his obedience; so he had the moral law written on his heart, as the rule of his obedience, and had power and ability to keep it; for as it was required of him to love the Lord his God with all his heart, and soul, and strength; so he could, if he would, have performed the same; and such strength and ability were due unto him, from the laws of creation; for if God required of him obedience to his holy law, it was but fit and right that he should give him a conformity of nature and will to it, and power to obey it; though, he was not obliged to give him grace and strength to persevere, nor to render him impeccable and immutable; wherefore, leaving him to the mutability of his will, he sinned, and fell from his former estate, which on that account is called "vanity" (Psalms 39:5).

4b3. The image of God in the whole man, soul and body, or in his person, lay in his immortality, natural to his soul, and conferred on his body; and also in his dominion over the creatures; for this was the end God proposed in the creation of him, that he might have dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea; and accordingly all were put in subjection to him (see Genesis 1:26; Genesis 1:28; Psalms 8:6-8); in which he resembled God, the Governor of the universe; and hence kings, governors, and civil magistrates are called gods, because they bear such a likeness to him (Psalms 82:6).

4b4. And lastly: this image lay in the blessedness of man, in his original state; for as God is God over all and blessed, and is the blessed and only Potentate; so man, in a lower sense, was blessed above all the creatures; having an healthful constitution, an immortal body, and everything grateful and suitable to it; and a soul knowing, wise, holy, just, and good; and he placed in the most delightful spot in the whole globe, with all the profusion of nature about him, and all creatures subject to him, enjoying communion with God, through the creatures, though but in a natural way; and God was pleased sometimes to appear to him, and talk with him; and yet man, being thus in honour, abode not long, but became like the beasts that perish; so that we may look back and see from what an high estate man is fallen, and to what a low estate sin has brought him, by means of which he is come short of the image and glory of God, in which he was created; and yet may adore

the grace and wisdom of God, which has brought us into a more excellent state by Christ; a state more spiritual, firm, and secure. Adam's knowledge was natural knowledge; his holiness and righteousness natural holiness and righteousness; the covenant made with him a natural covenant; the communion he had with God was in a natural way; and all his benefits and blessings natural ones: but believers in Christ are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and have a spiritual image stamped upon them, which can never be lost; and into which they are changed from glory to glory, till it becomes perfect.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Sepher Cosri, par. l. s. 61. p. 27.

[2] See Nieuwentyt's Religious Philosopher, vol. 1.

[3] Vide Platonem in Cratylo.

[4] Vide Ludolpb. Hist. Ethiop. l. 1. c. 15.

[5] Socinus de Statu primi hominis ante lapsum, s. 8, 9, 10. & de Servatore, par. 3. c. 8. & par. 4. c. 6.

[6] Antiq. l. 1. c. 1. s. 2.

[7] Aristotle says, that thn yuchn aswmaton, Laert. l. 5. in Vita ejus.

[8] De Resurrectione Carnis, c. 17.

[9] The arguments proving the immortality of the soul are reserved to the doctrine of a future state, and the resurrection of the body to be considered with them.

[10] "Nam de mortalibus non potest quicquam nisi mortale generari", Lactant. de Opificio Dei. c. 19.

[11] De Generat. Animal. l. 2. c. 3.

[12] Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 1.

[13] So Plato de Republ. l. 6. p. 682 from Homer represents the human form as qeoeidhs, for Homer often speaks of one man and another as qeoeikelos and qeoeidhV, Iliad. 1. v. 131. and 2. 623. and 3. 16. and 6. 290. Eurysus the Pythagorean says, that the Maker in making man used himself as an exemplar, Apud Clement. Alex. Stromat. l. 5. p. 558.

02. Of the Death of the Body

Of the Death of the Body The death to be treated of, is not the death of the soul, which dies not, as will be seen hereafter; nor the moral or spiritual death, which has been discoursed of elsewhere; nor the death of the soul and body in hell, the second and eternal death: but, the death of the body, in a strict and proper sense. The things to be inquired into, are what death is? who the subjects of it? what the causes of it, and its properties?

1. First, what death is. To say what it is, is difficult; we know nothing of it practically and experimentally, though there are continual instances of it before our eyes; our friends and relations, who have gone through this dark passage, have not returned to us to tell us what they met with in it; nor what they felt when the parting stroke was given; nor what they were surprised into at once. We know nothing of death but in theory; it is defined by some a cessation of the motion of the heart, and of the circulation of the blood, and of the flow of the animal spirits, occasioned by some defects in the organs and fluids of the body: no doubt such a cessation follows upon death, and such the effects of it; but what it is, is chiefly to be known from the scripture, by which we learn,

1a. That it is a disunion of the soul and body, the two constituent parts of man; the one consists of flesh, blood and bones, of arteries, veins, nerves, &c. and goes by the general name of "flesh"; and the other is a spiritual substance, immaterial and immortal, and consists of several powers and faculties, as the understanding, will, and affections, and goes by the name of "spirit"; (see Matthew 26:41), between these two there is a nexus, or bond, which unites them together; though what that is none can tell; this puzzles all philosophy, to say by what bands and ligaments things of such a different nature as matter and spirit be, should be coupled and fastened together. Now death is a dissolution of this union, a separation of those two parts in man [1]. The "body without the spirit", cwriV, separate from it, "is dead" (James 2:26), when that is removed, the body is left a lifeless lump of clay.

1b. It is a dissolving this earthly house of our tabernacle (2 Corinthians 5:1), the body is compared to a tabernacle, as is the body of Christ, of Peter and others (Hebrews 8:2; 2 Peter 1:13; 2 Corinthians 5:4), in allusion either to military tents or tabernacles, pitched by soldiers when they encamp; or to those of shepherds, which were removed from place to place for the sake of pasturage for their flocks, by which the brevity of human life is expressed (Isaiah 38:12), such tents or tabernacles were commonly made of haircloth, stretched upon and fastened to stakes with cords or pins, as allusions to them show (Isaiah 33:20; Isaiah 54:2), and the body and its various parts are fastened together with various cords; we read of a "silver cord", which is loosed at death (Ecclesiastes 12:6), which whether it means the bond of union between the soul and body in general, or some particular part and ligament of the body about which interpreters are not agreed, is not easy to say. However, besides what compacts the joints together, there are certain fibers or small cords, like threads, by which those parts are fastened on which life mostly depends; there are certain valves of the veins through which the blood is discharged into the heart, which are

fastened to the sides of the ventricles of it with many tendinous fibers to secure them when they are shut; which fibers are fastened to some protuberances or "pins" of the sides of the heart: now in case one of these valves should be out of order, and unfit to perform its function; yea if one of these little fibers which are fastened to them should "break", or be either too short or too long to do their service, the tabernacle would fall down at once: on such slender things hangs the life of every man, even of the greatest monarch upon the throne, as well as of the meanest peasant [2]. Now death is a pulling up the stakes of this tabernacle, the body; a loosening and breaking its cords; an unpinning it, a taking it down as it were by parts, and laying it aside for a time.

1c. It is signified by a departure out of this world to another: so the death of Christ and some others is expressed in such language (John 13:1; Luke 2:29; Php 1:23; 2 Timothy 4:7), it is like going from one house to another: with the saints, it is a departure from their earthly house to an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; from houses of clay, which have their foundation in the dust, to everlasting habitations, to mansions in Christ's Father's house. It is like loosing from the port, as the sailor's phrase is; (see Acts 13:3; Acts 27:13; Acts 28:11) and launching into the ocean, and sailing to another port; the port loosed or departed from at death, is this world, which some loose from willingly, others not so; the port or haven to which saints are bound, is heaven, the heavenly and better country, to which desired haven they arrive at death, and by death. Death is the ship or boat which wafts them over to the shores of eternity. The heathens had by tradition notions somewhat similar to these, though more coarse; for who has not heard of the Elysian fields, the Stygian lake, and old Charon's boat? by which are represented death's wafting men over the black lake to fields of pleasure. But these images stand in a more beautiful light in the sacred pages; where the saints are represented as quietly wafted over the swellings of Jordan to the land of Canaan, a land of rest and pleasure.

1d. Death is expressed by going the way of all the earth; so said Joshua when about to die, "Behold this day I am going the way of all the earth" (Joshua 23:14), and so said David (1 Kings 2:2), it is a "going"; so Christ describes his death (Luke 22:22) it is a going a journey, to a man's long home; it is a going from "hence", from this world, and a going "whither" we shall not return any more to this world to be and live in it as formerly; it is going to an invisible state, to the world of spirits, of which we now have but little knowledge, and very imperfect conceptions; (see Psalms 39:13; Job 10:21-22) the way lies through a dark valley, but God is the guide of his people through it; he is not only their guide unto death, but through it safe to glory; and this is the way all men go and must go; it is a common track [3], a beaten path, and yet unknown by us; all must tread it, none can avoid it.

1e. Death is called, a returning to the dust and earth of which the body is formed (Ecclesiastes 12:7), the body is originally made of earth and dust; and while it is in life, it is nothing but dust and ashes, as Abraham confessed he was; and when it dies it turns to dust (Genesis 3:19), the body at death is turned into corruption, rottenness, and dust; it is interred in the earth, and mixes with it, and becomes that; which is an humbling consideration to proud man, who if he looks back to his original, it is dust; if he considers himself in the present life, he is no other than a heap of dust; and if he looks forward to his last end, it will be the dust of death; his honour, in every view of himself, is laid in the dust; and this shows the knowledge and power of God in raising the dead, who knows where their dust lies, and will collect it together, and raise it up at the last day.

1f. Death is frequently expressed by sleeping (Daniel 12:2; John 11:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:14), and is so called because sleep is an image and representation of death [4]; in sleep the senses are locked up and are useless for a time, as in death a man is wholly deprived of them; sleep is but for a short time, and so is death; after sleep a man rises, and being refreshed by it is more fit for labour; so is death to the saints; it is a rest unto them; and they will rise in the morning of the resurrection, fresh, lively, and active, and more fit for divine and spiritual exercises.

2. Secondly, who are the subjects of death. Not "angels", for they being simple, uncompounded, incorporeal, and immaterial, are incapable of death; they "die not" (Luke 20:36), but men, even all men, a few only excepted, as Enoch and Elijah, under the Old Testament; the one was translated that he should not see death, the other was taken up to heaven soul and body in a chariot and horses of fire; and those saints that will be found alive at Christ's second coming, who will not die but be changed: otherwise all men die; "all flesh is grass", every man is withering, mortal, dying, and dies; all have sinned, and so death comes upon all men.

2a. Persons of every sex, male and female; of every age, young and old; small and great; some die in infancy, who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; some in childhood, others in youth; some in the prime of their days, and in their full strength; and some in old age, and those that live the longest yet die, as Methuselah the oldest man did. Look over the account of the antediluvian Patriarchs (Genesis 5:1-32), there it may be observed, that at the close of the account of each it is said, "he died"; such an one lived eight hundred years and old, and "he died"; and such an one lived nine hundred years and old, and "he died".

2b. Of every rank and class and condition in life, high and low, rich and poor; kings die as well as their subjects: Job wishes he had died as soon as born, then he had been with kings and counselors of the earth, and with princes whose houses had been filled with gold and silver: riches cannot keep off nor buy off the stroke of death, nor deliver from it; the rich and the poor meet together in the grave, where they are upon an equal foot.

2c. Persons of every character among men; it may be seen and observed in instances without number, that wise men die, and also the fool and brutish person; yea often so it is, that a wise man dies as a fool dies; Solomon, the wisest of men, died. Learning, in all its branches and in its highest pitch, cannot secure from dying men learned and unlearned die.

2d. Persons of every character in the sight of God, wicked men and good men; the wickedness of the wicked, of those who are the most addicted and abandoned to it, such as have made a covenant with death and with hell, are at an agreement, as they imagine; such covenant and agreement will not stand, nor be of any avail unto them to protect them from death; though they put away the evil day far from them, it will come upon them suddenly, while they are crying peace, peace, and promise themselves a long life of prosperity: and good men, they die also, "The prophets, do they live for ever?" they do not (Zechariah 1:5), merciful and righteous men are often taken away in mercy from the evil to come; true believers in Christ, such who live and believe in him, or have a living faith on him, shall never die a spiritual death, nor the second death; but they die a corporal one, even though Christ has died for them, and by dying has satisfied for sin, and abolished death. Yet,

2e. Their death is different from that of wicked men; they die in Christ, in union to him, and so are secure from condemnation; they die in faith of being for ever with him; they die in hope of eternal life; and their end is different from others: the end of a perfect and upright man is peace; he departs in peace, he enters into peace, he receives the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul; when the wicked man goes into everlasting punishment, he goes into everlasting life.

2f. The reason of which is, death is abolished as a penal evil, though it was threatened as such for sin, and is inflicted as such on some; yet being bore by Christ as a penalty, in the room and stead of his people, it ceases to be so to them; the sting of it, which is sin, is taken away by Christ; the curse of it is removed, Christ being made a curse for them; death is become a blessing to them, for blessed are they that die in Christ; and hence it is desirable by them, and there is good reason for it; since it puts an end to sin and sorrow, enters into the joy of the Lord, and fulfils it.

3. Thirdly, the causes of death, on what account it comes upon men, and to whom and what it is to be ascribed.

3a. First, the efficient cause is God, who is the sovereign disposer of life and death; it is he that gives life and breath, and all things to his creatures; life is a favour granted by him to men, and he upholds their souls in life; and since he is the author, giver, and supporter of life, he may with propriety be called the God of their lives; and he that gives life has only a right to take it away; and he is a sovereign being, and may do it at his pleasure; and he has particularly expressed his sovereignty in this instance, saying, "I kill, and I make alive" (Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6), he is God the Lord, to whom belong the "issues from death"; or rather, the issues to it, the ways which lead to it, and issue in it; for as the poet says [5], it has a thousand ways to come upon men, attack and dispatch them.

3a1. No man has a right to take away his own life, nor the life of another; Christ, the Prince of life, who had the human nature united to his divine Person, had power to dispose of his human life, to lay it down, and take it up again; which none besides has: suicide, of all the kinds of murder, is the most unnatural and execrable; it has been committed by wicked men; as Saul, Judas, &c. Samson is no instance of it; what he did, was not with an intention to destroy his own life, but the lives of the enemies of God, and of his people, in doing which his own life fell a sacrifice; and was done in a devout and pious manner, praying unto God: and besides, he acted not as a private man, but as a civil magistrate, and judge in Israel; and whatever may be charitably hoped of some persons, who have been left to destroy themselves, care should be taken not to encourage, nor give any countenance to so sinful a practice. Nor ought any man to take away the life of another; since the life of man was neither to be taken away by another, in the heat of passion and wrath, or for sordid and sinister ends to obtain their property; God made a law, and it was one of the first he made after the flood, that "He that shed man’s blood, by man should his blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6), that is, by the order of the civil magistrate; and a person convicted of this capital crime, ought not to be pardoned; the law is express and peremptory. And though this sin may be ever so privately committed, yet, generally speaking, it is discovered, and is punished in this life; and it is sure to meet with its reward in the world to come; such sinners are always reckoned among those who shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but shall have their portion in the lake which burns with fire, which is the second death; unless the grace of God is displayed in giving them repentance and remission of sin.

3a2. Satan, though he is said "to have the power of death" (Hebrews 2:14), yet this is not to be understood as if he had a power and right to inflict death at pleasure on men; for if so, such is his malice and rooted enmity to men, that the race of mankind would have been extinct long ago. The case of Job shows that he lies under the restraint of God in this matter: he may have been, by divine permission, in some instances, the executioner of death to the enemies of God, and to such who have given up themselves to him, and sold themselves to work wickedness. He was the introducer of sin into the world, the cause of death; and both are the works of the devil, which Christ came to destroy, and has destroyed; and Satan, because of his concern in the ruin of our first parents, by his temptations, and so of all mankind, he is said to be a "murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44).

3a3. Death of right is of God only; it is he who threatened with it in case of sin; and made it the sanction of his law. Death, whenever he comes and attacks men, it is by a commission from God. He is sometimes represented as a person coming up at our windows, and into our palaces and houses, like a bailiff to arrest men; and sometimes as on horseback and armed, and power given him to kill men with various sorts of judgments, as famine, pestilence, sword, and wild beasts; (see Jeremiah 9:21; Revelation 6:8), and whatever are the means of the death of men, whether extraordinary or ordinary, they are all of God, and under his direction; every disorder, disease, and sickness, are servants sent by him to execute his pleasure; insomuch that death is frequently spoken of as his act, and as inflicted by him; it is expressed by taking men away; by taking away their life or soul; by gathering the breath and Spirit of men to himself; by prevailing against man, and causing him to pass away; and by changing his countenance, and sending him away (Job 27:8; Job 32:22; Job 34:14; Job 14:20).

3a4. Death is by his appointment; it is the statute law of heaven (Hebrews 9:27). The grave is the house appointed for all men living (Job 30:23). All things leading to death, and which issue in it, are under a divine appointment. All afflictions, diseases, and disorders, are of God; these are not fortuitous events, that come by chance, or spring out of the dust; but come by the appointment of God, to bring about the dissolution by death: all the circumstances of it are according to the determinate counsel and will of God; as what death, and by what event, a man shall die; and the manner of his death, and the place where; for though we are told where we were born, and know where we now live; yet no man knows where he shall die; none but God knows this, who has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of men’s habitations, where they shall live, and where they shall die. The time of a man’s death is appointed by God; for there is a time for every purpose of God, for the execution of it: "A time to be born, and a time to die" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2), there is an appointed time for man on earth, when he shall come into the world, how long he shall continue in it, and when he shall go out of it; and before this time no man dies. The Jews sought to lay hold on Christ, to take away his lifts, but they could not, because his hour was not come; and the same holds good of every man. Nor can any live longer than the appointed time; "The time drew nigh that Israel must die" (Genesis 47:29), there was a time fixed for it, and that was at hand, when he must die, and there was no going beyond it. Job says of a man, "his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass" (Job 14:5), a man cannot lengthen out his days, nor another for him; no man "can add one cubit unto his stature", or rather, "to his age" (Matthew 6:27). The days of men are compared to an hand’s breadth (Psalms 39:5), and to this hand’s breadth, a cubit, nor indeed any

measure at all, can be added, with all the thought, care, and means, that can be made use of; physicians, in this respect, are physicians of no value; they cannot prolong the life of men; they may make life a little more easy and comfortable while it lasts; but they cannot protract it one moment: nor can men that abound with wealth and riches, give to God a ransom for themselves and others, that they should "still live for ever, and see no corruption" (Psalms 49:6-9).

There are several things objected to this; but are what have been mostly answered already; as that Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his days; and some men not living out half their days, and dying before their time [6], (Psalms 55:23; Ecclesiastes 7:17). As for the objection taken from the insignificancy and uselessness of means, and temptations to lay them aside, if things are so, that no man can live longer, nor die sooner, than the appointed time: it should be known, that in general, with respect to things civil or sacred, the means are equally appointed as the end, and to be used in order to it; this appears in the case of Hezekiah; though the decree was express and peremptory, that fifteen years should be certainly added to his days; yet the prophet that brought the message from the Lord, and the King that received it, both agreed to have a plaster of figs laid upon his boil, for the recovery of his health, and the continuance of his life (Isaiah 38:21; Acts 27:31).

3b. Secondly, the procuring or meritorious cause of death, is sin; it was threatened in case of sin; and when sin entered the world, death came in by it; it is the wages and demerit of sin; "The body is dead because of sin"; it is become mortal, and dies, on account of it (Romans 5:12; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:10). Man was originally made an immortal creature; the soul, in its own nature, is such, being immaterial; and though the body is composed of matter, and such as was capable of being reduced and resolved into the elements of which it was made, for sin; yet it was gifted by God with immortality; and had man continued in his state of innocence, this gift would have remained with him; for the death of the body is not the fruit and effect of nature, as say the Socinians [7]; but of sin; for if man would have died, according to the course of nature, whether he had sinned or not; to what purpose was the threatening, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die", if he would and must have died, whether he eat or not? But it was through sinning that he became mortal, like the beasts, and perish or die, as they do. Otherwise man would have continued immortal; and, by means directed to, would have been supported in his present life, without dying, or any fears of it; or would have been translated to an higher kind of life, for evermore.

3c. Thirdly, the instrumental causes, or means of death, are various; or which, and who, are employed in the execution of it. Angels are sometimes made use of to inflict it; thus an angel in one night slew, in the Assyrian camp, an hundred fourscore and five thousand (2 Kings 19:35). Multitudes are cut off by the sword of justice, in the hand of the civil magistrate, and that by the order and appointment of God. God has his four judgments, sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, by which sometimes great havoc is made among men; the ordinary means by which death is instrumentally brought about, are disorders and distempers of the body; which operate sometimes in a quicker, and sometimes in a slower way; yet sooner or later they are the cause of men’s drawing to the grave, and their life to the destroyers.

3d. Fourthly, the properties of death, which serve to lead into the nature, power, and use of death.

3d1. It is but once; "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Hebrews 9:27). Ordinarily men die but once; they do not soon return to life again, and then die again; they go by death whither they shall not return to their houses, and families, and friends again, and to their business in life, as before; when they die, they lie down in the grave, and rise not till the heavens be no more; that is, until the second coming of Christ, when the heavens shall pass away; or until the resurrection morn, which will be when Christ himself shall descend from heaven to judge the world, from whose face the heaven and earth shall flee away; (see Job 7:10; Job 10:21; Job 14:10-12). There have been some instances in which men have died, and have been raised again to a mortal life, as it should seem, and then have died again; otherwise it is not easy to say, how Christ could be called the firstborn from the dead, if any were raised before him to an immortal life, never to die more; since some were raised before; as the "son" of the widow of Sarepta, by Elijah; and the son of the Shunammite, by Elisha; and the man that revived upon touching the prophet's bones: and also others by Christ himself; as Jairus's daughter, the widow of Naim's son, and Lazarus; of whom it is particularly observed, that after his resurrection he sat at table as a guest, at supper time, to eat and drink; which supposes the life he was raised to was a mortal one, and that he was supported in the manner mortals are, and died again (John 12:2). But commonly men die but once, as Christ the Saviour did.

3d2. Death is certain; it is certain by the appointment of God, which cannot be frustrated; Israel must die, and so must every man; though the time when is very uncertain; the Son of man comes in an hour men know not of; therefore they should be ready, and watching, and waiting for him. Nothing is more certain than death, as all experience in all ages testily; and yet nothing more uncertain than the time when a man shall die.

3d3. Death is mighty, powerful, and irresistible; what is stronger than death? No man has power over his spirit, to retain the spirit one moment, when it is called for: when God says, this night thy soul is required of thee, it must be given up: there is no resisting nor withstanding: when it is said, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee", thou must go; when death comes and calls for a man, he must go with him; strugglings and entreaties are to no purpose.

3d4. Death is insatiable; it is one of those things that is never satisfied; and the grave, which follows it, is another (Habakkuk 2:5; Proverbs 30:16), though it has been glutting itself from the beginning of the world, it is as greedy of its prey as ever; and though it sometimes makes such a carnage of men, as in a battle, that thousands are slain in one day, and great numbers in a short time, by famine and pestilence, yet it never has enough.

3d5. Death is necessary; not only by the appointment of God, which must be accomplished; but for the truth of God, in his threatening with it, in case of sin; and for the justice of God on sinners, which requires it: and besides, it is also necessary to the saints, for their good; that they may be free from indwelling sin and corruption, which they cannot be as long as they are in this tabernacle; this earthly house in which the spreading leprosy of sin is, must be pulled down, ere a thorough riddance can be made of it; it is necessary to deliver the saints from all the troubles of this life, and to introduce them into the joy of their Lord. Wherefore,

3d6. Though death is formidable to nature, and to natural men; yet it is desirable by good men; they seek their dismission from hence by it; they choose rather to depart, and to be with Christ, which is much better than a continuance in a life of sin and sorrow; they are willing rather to be

absent from the body, that they might be present with the Lord.

ENDNOTES:

[1] So Plato says, “Death, as it seems to me, is nothing else than dialusiV thV yuchV kai tou swmatoV ap, allhloin a dissolution (of those two things) soul and body from one another.” Gorgias, p. 357. and elsewhere, says he, “is not this called death, lusiV kai cwrismoV yuchV apo swmatoV, the solution and separation of the soul from the body?” Phaedo, p. 51. Ed. Fiein.

[2] See Nieuwentyt’s Religious Philosopher, vol. 1. contempl. 6. s. 7. 8. p. 77, 78, 79.

[3] “------omnes una manet nox, et calcanda semel via lethi”, Horat.

[4] “Stulte, quid est somnus, gelidae nisi mortis imago?” Ovid.

[5] “Mille viae lethi”, Lucan.

[6] See Vol. I. B. III. Chap. 4. P. 473. (see on topic 895).

[7] Socinus de Servatore, par. 3. c. 8. p. 208. & de Statu primi Hominis, p. 276. et Praelection. Theolog. c. 1.

02. Of the Decree of Rejection

Of The Decree Of Rejection, Of Some Angels, And Of Some Men.

I make use of the word "rejection" in this article, partly because it is a scriptural phrase and ascribed to God, and partly because it is that act of God which gives the name of reprobate to any; and is the foundation of that character, "reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them", (Jeremiah 6:30) and stands opposed to election, (1 Samuel 15:26; 1 Samuel 10:24) but chiefly because the other word reprobation, through wrong and frightful ideas being affixed to it, carries in it with many a sound harsh and disagreeable; or otherwise they are of the same signification, and no amendment is made in the doctrine or sense of it, by using the one instead of the other. This doctrine of rejecting some angels and some men from the divine favour, is spoken of but sparingly in scripture, yet clearly and plainly; though chiefly left to be concluded from that of election, and from whence it most naturally and rationally follows. I shall begin with, 1. The rejection of some of the angels, which consists of two parts:

1a. A non-election, or preterition of them, a passing over them or passing by them, when others were chosen; and which may be concluded from the choice of others; for if some were elect, others must be non-elect; if some were chosen, others were not; if some were taken, others must be passed by and left: that some of them are elect is certain, they are expressly called "elect angels", (1 Timothy 5:21) and consequently are distinguished from others who are not elected; or otherwise the title and character of "elect" must be insignificant and impertinent. Both these were considered alike, upon an equal foot, when the one were elected, and the other not; they were viewed as not yet created and fallen, but as lying in the pure mass of creatureship or creability; God saw in his power what creatures of this kind he could produce into being, as he also saw in his will whom he would; and of those he could and would create, he determined to choose some and leave others, and both for his own glory; for they could not be considered as fallen creatures, or in the corrupt mass, since the elect angels never fell; and the moment they were elected, the others were passed by or rejected; and so must be under the same consideration; and consequently the election of the one, and the rejection of the other, must be wholly owing to the sovereign will of God: both these were brought into being as God determined they should, and are equally his creatures, (Psalms 104:4) and were both made pure and holy creatures, angels of light, bright morning stars, shining in the purity and holiness of their nature; for such were Satan and his angels in their original creation; the devil, our Lord says, "abode not in the truth", (John 8:44) which implies that he had been in the truth, though he continued not in it; in his allegiance and fidelity to God his creator; in his integrity, purity, and holiness, as a creature of veracity; but framing lies, he became the father of them. What he was in, but abode not in, is the "first estate", of integrity, innocence, and happiness, in which he was created, but kept it not (Jude 1:6). To some angels God decreed to give, and did give grace to confirm them in the state in which they were created; these are the elect angels, who are said to be "mighty", and to "excel in strength"; not only in natural, but in spiritual strength. To others he decreed not to give confirming grace, but to deny it to them; and which he was not obliged to give, it being what could not be challenged by the laws

and dues of creation, and was mere favour to those on whom it was bestowed; wherefore the others were left to the mutability of their will, which is that weakness and folly the angels were chargeable with in their creation state, (Job 4:18) hence of their own freewill they sinned and fell, and left their habitation, (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6) what their sin was by which they fell, will be considered in course, when we come to the fall of Adam, and of theirs; this leads on to observe the other part of the decree respecting them.

1b. The appointment of them to wrath and damnation; in this they were viewed as sinful, fallen creatures; this decree is meant by their being "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day", (Jude 1:6; 2 Peter 2:4) for by chains are meant the purposes and decrees of God, by which they are bound and held fast, and from which they cannot loose themselves; and as the decrees of God are called "mountains of brass", (Zechariah 6:1) so they may be called chains of iron and brass for the same reasons; namely, their firmness, mutability, and duration; they are "everlasting" chains, and in these they are reserved under darkness; meaning either the state of darkness in which they are, being deprived of that light and knowledge they had; and also being under horror and black despair, without the least gleam of the light of joy and comfort; or that state of darkness to which they are appointed and reserved, even that "blackness of darkness" to which the wandering stars, as these may be said to be, are reserved, (Jude 1:13) and moreover they are appointed and reserved "to the judgment of the great day", to the great day of the last judgment; when they will be brought forth in chains before the judgment seat of Christ, and will have their final sentence passed and executed on them, which as yet seems not to have been done, (Matthew 8:29) then will Christ sit on the throne of judgment, and saints will stand by, together with the good angels, as approvers of the righteous sentence: and therefore saints are said to "judge angels", as well as the world of the ungodly, (1 Corinthians 6:2-3) that is, the evil angels, to which judgment they are appointed by the decree of God; and to endure eternal wrath and damnation; signified by "everlasting fire, prepared", in the decrees and purposes of God, "for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). I proceed to,

2. The decree concerning the rejection of some of the sons of men. It may be observed, that we can hear and read of the non-election and rejection of angels, and of their preordination to condemnation and wrath, with very little emotion of mind: the devils may be cast down to hell, to be everlastingly damned, and be appointed thereunto, and it gives no great concern; no hard thoughts against God arise, no charge of cruelty, want of kindness to his creatures and offspring, and of injustice to them; but if anything of this kind is hinted at, with respect to any of the apostate sons of Adam, presently there is an outcry against it; and all the above things are suggested. What is the reason of this difference? It can be only this, that the latter comes nearer home, and more nearly affects us; it is partiality to ourselves, our nature, and race, to which this is owing; otherwise, far greater severity, if it may be so called, is exercised on fallen angels, than on fallen man; for God has not spared one of the angels that sinned, provided no saviour for them, nor so much as given them the means of grace; but consigned them all over at once to everlasting wrath and ruin: whereas, not only a Saviour is provided for fallen men, and means of grace allowed them, but thousands, and ten thousands, millions and millions of them are saved, by the abundant mercy and grace of God, through Christ. But to go on,

2a. First, I shall prove that there is a non-election, or rejection of some of the sons of men, when others were chosen; and, indeed, from the election of some, may fairly be inferred, the

non-election of others. Common sense tells us, that of persons or things, if some are chosen, others must be left: if there is a remnant of the sons of men, according to the election of grace, then there are others not included in it, which are left unchosen, and are called the rest. "The election", that is, elect men, "hath obtained it", righteousness and eternal life; "and the rest were blinded" (Romans 11:5; Romans 11:7). Our Lord says, "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen", (John 13:18) plainly intimating, that all were not chosen, and it is certain one was not, and whom he calls "the son of perdition"; one, not only deserving of it, but appointed to it; for though chosen to an office, as an apostle, yet not to grace and glory, (John 17:12) and how many such there be, no man can pretend to say; but it is evident there are some, and who are generally described by negative characters; as not known by God and Christ; the elect are God's people, whom he knows; they are elect, according to his foreknowledge; which carries in it love and affection to them; but of others Christ says, "I never knew you"; he knew them by his omniscience, but not with such knowledge as he knows the elect of God; he never knew them as the objects of his Father's love, and his own; he never knew them as the objects of his Father's choice, and his own; he never knew them in the gift of his Father to him, (Matthew 7:23) hence they are represented as "not" loved, which is meant by being hated: "Esau have I hated"; that is, had not loved him, as he had Jacob; for it cannot be understood of positive hatred, for God hates none of his creatures, as such, only as workers of iniquity; but of negative hatred, or of not loving him; which, in comparison of the love he bore to Jacob, might be called hatred: in which sense the word is used in Luke 14:26. Moreover, they are spoken of as "not" being given to Christ; for if there are some that are "given" to him "out of the world", then there must be a world which are not given, and for whom he has not so much concern as even to pray for them, (John 17:6; John 17:9) they are frequently described, as not having their names written, and not to be found written in the Lamb's book of life, (Revelation 13:8; Revelation 17:8; Revelation 20:15). Now as election is signified by the writing of names in the book of life, non-election is expressed by not writing the names of some there; and if those whose names are written there, are the elect, then those whose names are not written these, but are left out, must be non-elect: to which may be added, that our Lord says of these persons, "Ye are not of my sheep", and gives this as a reason why they believed not in him (John 10:26). But the goats he will place on his left hand, pass sentence of condemnation on them, and send them into everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:33; Matthew 25:41; Matthew 25:46).

Moreover, from the effects of election not having place in some persons, it may be concluded, that there are such who are non-elect. The effectual calling is a certain fruit and effect of election; "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called", (Romans 8:30) not only externally, but internally, with an holy and heavenly calling, to grace here, and glory hereafter. But are all called in this manner? No; there are some who have not so much as the outward call by the ministry of the word, have not the external means of grace; but as they sin without law, perish without it (Romans 10:14; Romans 2:12). Those who are chosen, are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ; they are chosen to holiness, and through sanctification of the Spirit. But are all made like to Christ, and conformed to his image? do not many bear the image of Satan, imitate him, and do his lusts? are all men made holy, or have they the sanctification of the Spirit? Whom God predestinates he justifies, by the righteousness of his Son. But are all men justified? No; for though he justifies some of all sorts and nations; as the circumcised Jews by faith, and the uncircumcised Gentiles through faith, yet not every individual; yea, there is a world that will be condemned, and

consequently not predestinated to life (1 Corinthians 11:32). They that are chosen, are predestinated to the adoption of children, and enjoy both the grace and inheritance of children. But are all children and heirs? is there not such a distinction among men, as children of God, and children of the devil; between whom there is, and will be, an eternal difference? (1 John 3:10) and therefore there must be an election, and a non-election among them. Moreover, whom God has predestinated, or chosen to life and happiness, these he glorifies, (Romans 8:30) they obtain the glory of Christ, which his Father has given him for them, and to which they are chosen and called (John 17:22; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). But are all glorified? do not some go into perdition, even into everlasting punishment? and therefore must be considered as non-elect (Revelation 17:8; Matthew 25:46). To all which may be added, that those that are given to Christ, which is but another phrase for being chosen in him; these, he says, shall come to him, and he will in no wise cast them out; yea, that they are his sheep, whom he must bring to his Father, to himself, to his fold, to grace and glory (John 6:37; John 10:16). But are there not some whom Christ will drive away from him, and to then, say, "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire" (Matthew 7:23; Matthew 25:41). All this put together most clearly and fully proves, that there are some who are not chosen of God, but rejected by him.

2b. Secondly, The parts of this decree, concerning the rejection of men, are commonly said to be preterition and pre-damnation.

2b1. Prov..eterition is God’s passing by some men, when he chose others: and in this act, or part of the decree, men are considered as in the pure mass of creatureship, or creability; in which state they are found, when passed by or rejected, and in which they are left, even just as they are found, nothing put into them; but were left in the pure mass, as they lay, and so no injury done them; nor is God to be charged with any injustice towards them: in this act sin comes not into consideration, as it does in a following one; for in this men are considered as not created, and so not fallen; but as unborn, and having done neither good nor evil (Romans 9:11). And this is a pure act of sovereignty in God, and to his sovereign will it is to be ascribed; who has the same sovereign power, and greater, than the potter has over his clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour (Romans 9:19-20; Romans 9:22). This being expressed, as before observed, by negative phrases, is, by some, called negative reprobation.

2b2. Pre-damnation is God’s appointment, or preordination of men to condemnation for sin; and is what is spoken of in Jude 1:4. "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation"; and who are described by the following characters, "ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and, or even our Lord Jesus Christ"; which, when observed, is sufficient to clear this decree of God from the charge of cruelty and injustice: and this, by some, is called, positive reprobation. The word krima, translated "condemnation", in the above quoted text, some render "judgment", and interpret it of judicial blindness and hardness of heart; which appeared in the persons embracing and spreading false and pernicious doctrines spoken of; and this is, indeed, what they are foreordained, or appointed to, as a punishment of former sins; for this hardness, &c. presupposes former sins, and an obstinate continued course in them; either against the light and law of nature, which they like not to walk according to, and therefore God gives them up, pursuant to his decree, to a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient, (Romans 1:24; Romans 1:28) or against divine revelation, precepts, counsels, and admonitions, like Israel of old, hearkening not to the voice of the Lord, in

his word, nor paying any regard to his instructions; and therefore he gives them up, as he determined to do, to their own hearts' lusts, and to walk in their own counsels, (Psalms 81:11-12) and this is the sense of the word in John 9:39. God hardens some mens' hearts, as he did Pharaoh's, and he wills to harden them, or he hardens them according to his decreeing will; "Whom he will he hardeneth", (Romans 9:18) this he does not by any positive act, by infusing hardness and blindness into the hearts of men; which is contrary to his purity and holiness, and would make him the author of sin; but by leaving men to their natural blindness and hardness of heart; for the understanding is naturally darkened; and there is a natural blindness, hardness, and callousness of heart, through the corruption of nature, and which is increased by habits of sinning; men are in darkness, and choose to walk in it; and therefore God, as he decreed, gives them up to their own wills and desires, and to Satan, the god of the world, they choose to follow, and to be led captive by, who blinds their minds yet more and more, lest light should break in unto them, (Ephesians 4:18; Psalms 82:5; 2 Corinthians 4:4) and also God may be said to harden and blind, by denying them that grace which can only cure them of their hardness and blindness, and which he, of his free favour, gives to his chosen ones, (Ezekiel 36:26-27) but is not obliged to give it to any; and because he gives it not, he is said to hide, as he determined to hide, the things of his grace from the wise and prudent, even because it so seemed good in his sight, (Matthew 11:25-26). Hence this blindness, hardness, insensibility, and stupidity, are represented as following upon non-election; not as the immediate effect of it, but as consequences of it; and such as neither judgments nor mercies can remove; and bring persons to a right sense of sin, and repentance for it (Romans 11:7-10). The sin and fall of Adam having brought him into a state of infidelity, in which God has concluded him: and he does not think fit to give to every man that grace which can only cure him of his unbelief, and without which, and unless almighty power and grace go along with the means they have, they cannot believe; whereby the decrees, predictions, and declarations of God are fulfilled in them, (John 12:37-40) yea, as Christ is said to be set, or appointed, "for the fall of many in Israel", (Luke 2:34) so many are appointed to stumble at the Word, at him, the Stone of stumbling, and Rock of offence, being children of disobedience, and left as such; when, to those who are a chosen generation, he is a precious cornerstone, and they believe in him, and are saved by him, (1 Peter 2:7-9) hence we read of some, who, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, to them are sent by God strong delusions, and they are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned; not that God infuses any delusion or deceit into them, but because of their disbelief of, and disrespect to him and his Word, he suffers their corruptions to break forth and prevail, not giving restraining grace to them; so that they become a prey to them that lie in wait to deceive; and being easy and credulous, they believe lies spoken in hypocrisy; which issue in their damnation; while others, beloved of the Lord, and chosen from the beginning to salvation, obtain the glory of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:10-14). But though all this is a most certain truth, and is contained in the decree we are speaking of, yet condemnation, or everlasting punishment, seems to be meant in the passage quoted; or, however, this is what some men are foreordained unto.

Some will have it, that this refers to something forewritten, as they choose to render the word; to some prophecy concerning the condemnation of those persons, and particularly to that of Enoch, (Jude 1:14-15) but it is not certain that prophecy was ever written; besides, a prophecy, or prediction, of anything future, is founded upon an antecedent predetermination and appointment; God foretells by his prophets what will be, because he has determined it shall be; if, therefore, the

condemnation of those persons was foretold in any written prophecy, it was because God had decreed it should come upon them, or they be brought into it. It seems to have the same sense with God's appointing men unto wrath; which, though not in so many words expressed, is manifestly implied; as when the apostle says, "God hath not appointed us to wrath", who yet were children of wrath, and deserving of it as others; "but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ": it suggests, that though he had not appointed them, yet he had appointed others to wrath, and who are therefore called "vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction", by their own sins and transgressions (1 Thessalonians 5:9; Romans 9:22). With which agrees what is said of some wicked men, who are "reserved" in the purposes and decrees of God, "to the day of destruction"; in consequence of which, "they shall be brought to the day of wrath", which God has appointed for the execution of his wrath; and hence the casting of the fury of his wrath, in all the dreadful instances of it, is called "the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed; unto him of God", (Job 21:30; Job 20:23-29) and this is the sense of Proverbs 16:4, for the meaning of the text is not, nor is it our sense of it, as some misrepresent it, as if God made man to damn him; we say no such thing, nor does the text; our sentiment is, that God made man neither to damn nor save him; but he made him for his own glory, and he will be glorified in him, in one way or another: nor that he made man wicked, in order to damn him; for God made man upright; men made themselves wicked by their own inventions; which are the cause of damnation: but the true sense of the passage is, that "the Lord hath made", that is, has appointed "all things for himself", for his own glory: and should it be objected, that the wicked could not be for his glory, it is added, "Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil"; that is, he has appointed the wicked for the day of evil, to suffer justly for their sins, to the illustration of the glory of his justice.

2c. Thirdly, The causes of this act.

2c1. The efficient cause is God; it is the Lord, that makes all things for his own glory, and the wicked for the day of evil; it is God that appoints to wrath, and foreordains to condemnation; what if "God willing to show his wrath", &c (Proverbs 16:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:9; Romans 9:22). And,

2c1a. It is an act of his sovereignty, who does what he pleases in heaven and in earth; he does according to his will in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth; as he does all things, so this, according to the counsel of his will; for though it is sovereign, it is not in such sense arbitrary as to be without reason and wisdom; it is a wise counsel of his, for his own glory. The objector, introduced by the apostle, supposes this, that it is an act of his sovereign will; and therefore says, "Why does he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" and which the apostle denies not, but reasons upon it, and confirms it (Romans 9:19-22).

2c1b. It is agreeable to his justice: the same apostle treating on this subject asks, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" that is, to love one and hate another, to choose one and not another, before they were born, or had done good or evil; and he answers, "God forbid"; since in his act of passing by one, when he chose another, he left him as he found him, without putting, or supposing, any iniquity in him; without any charge of any sin or laying him under a necessity to commit any. In the act of pre-damnation, he considers him as a sinner, and foreordains him to punishment for his sins; and if it is no injustice in God to punish men for sin, it cannot be unjust in him to determine to punish for it: if the judgments of God on antichrist are true and righteous, and display his holiness and justice, it cannot be unrighteous in him to decree to inflict these judgments

on him, and his followers, here and hereafter: if it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble his people, and so to them that commit any other sin, it must be agreeable to his justice to appoint them to indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; even every soul of man that does evil, if he pleases.

2c1c. Nor is this act contrary to his goodness; all persons and things are his own, and he may do with them as he pleases, without an impeachment of this or any other perfection of his; "Is thine eye evil", says he, "because I am good?" (Matthew 20:15). What distinguishing grace and goodness has been exercised towards fallen man, when no degree of sparing mercy was shown to fallen angels! and what goodness has been laid up, and wrought out, for many of the sons of Adam, though others have been rejected! and even on them that are rejected, what riches of providential goodness have been, and are bestowed on them, in the most plentiful and liberal manner! with what lenity, patience, forbearance, and "longsuffering", has God "endured the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction", fitted by themselves! (Romans 2:4; Romans 9:22). This act of God is neither contrary to the mercy, nor to the wisdom of God, nor to the truth and sincerity of God, in his promises, declarations, calls, &c. nor to the holiness and justice of God; as I have elsewhere [1] made abundantly to appear.

2c2. The moving, or impulsive cause of God’s making such a decree, by which he has rejected some of the race of Adam from his favour, is not sin, but the good pleasure of his will: sin is the meritorious cause of eternal death, wrath, and damnation; wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, and comes upon the children of disobedience, whom God leaves in it; the wages, or demerit of sin, is death, even death eternal: but then it is not the impulsive cause of the decree itself; not of preterition, because that, as election, was before good or evil were done, and irrespective of either; nor of pre-damnation, God, indeed, damns no man but for sin; nor did he decree to damn any but for sin; but yet, though sin is the cause of damnation and death, the thing decreed, it is not the cause of the decree itself: it is the cause of the thing willed, but not the moving cause of God’s will; for nothing out of God can move his will; if it could, the will of God would be dependent on the will and actions of men; whereas, his purpose, whether with respect to election or rejection, stands not on the works and will of men, but on his own will and pleasure: besides, if sin was the cause of the decree itself, or of God’s will to reject men, then all would be rejected, since all fell in Adam; all are under sin, all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; all are, by nature, children of wrath, and deserving of it: what then could move God to choose one and reject another, but his sovereign goodwill and pleasure? that then is the sole moving and impulsive cause of such a decree; when we have searched the scriptures most thoroughly, and employed our reasoning powers to the highest pitch, and racked our invention to the uttermost; no other cause of God’s procedure in this affair can be assigned, but what Christ has expressed; "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight"; as to hide the things of his grace and gospel from some, and reveal them to others; so to decree and determine within himself, to act in this manner, (Matthew 11:25-26).

2c3. The final cause, or end of this decree, is his own glory; this is the ultimate end of all his decrees and appointments, and so of this, appointing the wicked for the day of evil; it was for this purpose he raised up Pharaoh, and decreed all he did concerning him, that he might show his power in him, his sovereignty and dominion over him, and that his name and glory might be declared throughout all the earth: and the same view he has with respect to all the vessels of

wrath, namely, to show his wrath, and to make his power known, in their destruction, which is of themselves; it is not the death and damnation of the sinner, in which he delights not, that is his ultimate end; it is his own glory, the glory of his perfections, and particularly the glory of his justice and holiness (Proverbs 16:4; Romans 9:17; Romans 9:22).

2d. Fourthly, The date of this decree is as ancient as eternity itself; wicked men are "before of old", said to be "ordained to condemnation" (Jude 1:4). Some who would have the word rendered, "before written", as already observed, suppose the text refers to a written prophecy, concerning the condemnation of those men, and that regard is had to a parallel place in 2 Peter 2:1-3. So Grotius. But if Jude had that in his view, he would never have said that they were "of old", a long time ago, before written, and prophesied of; since, according to the common calculation, that epistle of Peter was written in the same year that this of Jude's was: the date of election and rejection must be the same; Esau was hated, as early as Jacob was loved, or rejected when he was chosen; and both were done before they were born. If men were chosen from the beginning, that is, from eternity to salvation; then those that were not chosen, or not ordained to eternal life, were foreordained as early to condemnation; and so is the Syriac version of the text in Jude, "were from the beginning ordained"; the same date that is given of election in 2 Thessalonians 2:13. And, indeed, there can be no new decree, appointment, or purpose, made by God in time; if the decree of election was from eternity, that of rejection must be so too; since there cannot be one without the other; if some were chosen before the foundation of the world, others must be left, or passed by, as early; and, indeed, those whose names are left out of the book of life, are expressly said to be "not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 17:8). And from the whole,

2e. Fifthly, The properties of this decree will appear to be much the same with those of the decree of election, and need be but just mentioned: as,

2e1. That it is an eternal decree of God. This did not arise in the mind of God in time, as no new act does, but was made before the foundation of the world.

2e2. That it is free and sovereign, owing to his own will and pleasure, not moved to it by anything out of himself; "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth", (Romans 9:18) and so he determined to do.

2e3. It is immutable and irrevocable; is it expressed by a decree, a preordination? all the decrees of God are unalterable, there is an immutability in his counsel, let it be concerning what it may. Is it expressed by a writing or a forewriting, as in Jude 1:4? It is such a writing as ever remains in full force. Did Pilate say, "what I have written, I have written", signifying it should remain without any alteration? (John 19:22). Then it may be concluded, that what God has written shall remain, and never be revoked; for he is in one mind, and none can turn him.

2e4. It is of particular persons; it does not merely respect events, characters, and actions; but the persons of men; as they are persons who are chosen in Christ, and appointed, not to wrath, but to obtain salvation by him; so they are persons who are foreordained to condemnation, whose names are left out of the book of life, while others are written in it.

2e5. It is a most just and righteous decree; and no other but such can be made by God, who is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

ENDNOTES:

[1] See my book, The Cause of God and Truth, part 3. chap. 1, 2.

02. Of the Delight of God in Himself

Of The Complacency And Delight God Had In Himself, And The Divine Persons In Each Other, Before Any Creature Was Brought Into Being.

Having finished what I had to say concerning the internal acts of God, and the eternal transactions between the three divine Persons, before any creature, angel or man, was made; I should now have entered upon the external acts and works of God in time, but that I thought it might be proper, first, to observe the complacency, delight, and satisfaction God had in himself, in his own nature and perfections, before any creature existed; and would have had, if none had ever been brought into being: as also the pleasure he took in the foreviews of his eternal purposes and decrees being executed in time; and of the success of those transactions, which were between the divine Persons in God, in the council of peace, and covenant of grace; and especially the mutual delight and complacency each divine Person had in one another, when alone, in a boundless eternity, and all of them had in the chosen vessels of salvation.

1. First, The complacency, delight, and satisfaction, which the divine Being had in himself, in his own nature and perfections, before the existence of any creature; and would have had the same if no creature had ever existed: in his nature, in the contemplation of the unspeakable glories of Deity, and in the special properties and mutual relations of the three persons to each other, and in the perfections of his nature. God is a most perfect being, entire and wanting nothing; he is El-shaddai, God all-sufficient, who has a sufficiency in and of himself, and needs nothing from creatures; he is the blessed one, God blessed for evermore; completely happy in himself, as has been proved, when his perfections were considered; whatever perfection or excellency is in creatures, angels or men, it is all from him, and is in him to the highest degree, and therefore as in them can add nothing to his pleasure and happiness: the perfections of God are indeed displayed in the creatures in a glorious manner; the heavens declare his glory, and the earth is full of it; but then these displays are made not for his own sake, but for the sake of others, that they may understand his eternal power and Godhead, or be left without excuse; and though his perfections are very brightly displayed herein, yet they are clearer in himself, and so can give him no new pleasure and satisfaction, nor add anything to his felicity and blessedness; for though it is said, "For thy pleasure they are and were created", (Revelation 4:11) "pleasure" there does not signify delight but will; and so it should be rendered by thy will, or according to it, "they are and were created"; and though when they were made, and he had reviewed them, they appeared to him all very good, and he expressed his well pleasedness in them; yet this raised no new joy in him, nor added anything to his happiness, complete in himself; which would have been the same if a creature, or any of the works of creation had never been made, nor if any of the sons of men had ever been redeemed; for the benefit arising from the redemption of men by Christ, and the satisfaction made for them by him, redounds not to God, but to the redeemed, and for whom the satisfaction is made; "My goodness extendeth not to thee", says Christ, "but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight", (Psalms 16:2-3) nor does he need the worship and obedience of angels or men; nor does he receive any additional pleasure and

happiness from them; what are the highest and loudest praises of angels, to him who is exalted above all blessing and praise? or the prayers and petitions of indigent creatures? the benefit from them is to them, and not to him; what is all the righteousness, and what are the best works done by men to him? "Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Can a man by all this be profitable to God?" No, he cannot; when the best of men have done all they can, they must own they are but "unprofitable servants", with respect to him. "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again; for of him, and through, him, and to him are all things?" (Job 22:2-3; Job 35:7; Luke 17:10; Romans 11:35-36). Since then nothing in time, in and from creatures, add anything to the essential glory, bliss, and happiness of the divine Being; it clearly appears, that his going forth in the works of creation, did not arise from necessity of nature, but was according to his sovereign will; and that he had infinite delight, pleasure, and complacency in himself, before any creature was made, and would have had the same, if they had never been.

2. Secondly, As Jehovah took delight and pleasure in himself, in his own nature, and the perfections of it, so in the internal and eternal acts of his mind; his purposes and decrees, formed in his eternal mind, according to the good pleasure of his will; these concern all things done in time, from the beginning to the end of the world; the formation of the heaven, earth, and sea, and all that are in them; everything that has been, is, or shall be, since the world began to the consummation of all things; for there is a purpose for everything under heaven, and a time for every purpose (Ecclesiastes 3:1). And these all lay before God, at once and together, in his all-comprehending mind; he saw the end from the beginning, and every intervening thing; "Known unto God are all his works from eternity", (Acts 15:18) and he delighted in them, as he saw them in himself, in his mind and will, and in the foreviews of the accomplishment of them in time; who calls things that are not, as though they were; they stood all before him in his view, as if really in execution; nor does the execution of them add any new joy and pleasure to him: particularly all those purposes and resolutions of his mind, concerning the redemption, conversion, and salvation of his chosen ones, and the state and condition of his church, in all the periods of time, were viewed within himself, with the utmost delight and pleasure; the plan of their peace and reconciliation, drawn in the council of peace, and everything respecting their salvation, settled in the covenant of grace. These transactions gave him infinite pleasure and satisfaction; and on these his thoughts have ran ever since, with the utmost delight, in the foreviews of all things, taking place in time and to eternity, according to these ancient settlements. But what I would chiefly attend unto is,

3. Thirdly, The delight and complacency which each divine Person had in one another, before any creature was in being; with respect to two of the divine Persons, this is strongly expressed in Proverbs 8:30. "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him": when all this was, may be learned from the preceding verses; when there were no depths, no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled, while as yet he had not made the earth, &c. (Proverbs 8:24-29) and the third Person is not to be excluded.

3a. First, The delight and complacency of the Father in the Son, is declared in the following expressions; which are borrowed from the delight and pleasure parents take in their children;

being "by" them, "brought up" with them, "nursed" up by them, "playing" before them; which must be understood with a decency becoming the divine Persons, and not be strained beyond their general design, which is to express the mutual delight of the Father and the Son in each other: "Then I was by him", from eternity, or before the world was; I, a person, as the pronoun is expressive of; not a nature, not the human nature of Christ, which is no person; and still less a part of it, the soul of Christ, which then had no existence; but I, a divine Person, the eternal "Logos", the Word and Wisdom of God, who is all along speaking from Proverbs 8:12. "I Wisdom", &c. to this very passage, the same with the Word John speaks of, and much in the same language (John 1:1). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"; to which Word he ascribes the creation of all things, and therefore must be before thine, as well as be a divine Person; and he is in both places represented as a distinct Person, as he must be, from him, by whom, and with whom, he was a Person eternally existing; being not only before Abraham, but before Adam, or any creature was in being; a Person co-existing, as a Son with the Father, being co-essential and co-eternal with his Father; and was by him, and at his side, on a level with him; Jehovah's fellow, equal to him, possessed of the same perfections; and being by him, and in his presence, was infinitely delighted in by him; and was "as one brought up with him", as a Son with a Father, and so denotes his relation to him, being begotten of him, his own Son, the Son of the Father, in truth and love; and the Father's tender regard of him, and delight in him; being, as some render the word, "nursed up" by him, and carried in his bosom, as a nursing Father bears the sucking child; so to express the exceeding great tenderness of the Father to the Son, and his delight in him, the only begotten Son, he is said to be "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18.) Though the phrase may also have respect to Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, who was foreordained and constituted as Mediator by his Father, and trained up in his office, and to whom he pointed out the work he was to do as such; to bring Jacob again, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel; and be his salvation unto the ends of the earth (Isaiah 49:5-6). "And I was daily his delight"; day by day, or every day; not that there are, properly speaking, days in eternity; but the phrase is expressive of the constant and invariable delight the Father had in his Son; as well as the greatness of it is signified by the word in the plural number, "delights"; he was his exceeding great delight, superlatively delightful to him; and so he was, as he was his Son, a Son of delights, the dear Son of his love; whom he loved before the foundation of the world, with a love of complacency and delight; he was always his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; partly because of his likeness to him, being the image of the invisible God, the express image of his Person; as every like loves its like; and partly because of the same nature with him, having the same perfections, even the whole fulness of the Godhead in him: he was also his delight, considered in his office as Mediator; "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth" (Isaiah 42:1). He delighted in him, as engaging in covenant to be the Mediator and Surety of it; as with admiration, so with the utmost pleasure and delight, he said, "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?" (Jeremiah 30:21) to strike hands with me, and become a Surety for my people. And with equal pleasure did he behold him acceding and assenting to his proposals in covenant, saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!" (Psalms 40:7-8). He delighted in him as the God-man; being fit, as such, for the work he assigned unto him; and whereas he proposed to him in covenant, to assume human nature in time, for that purpose, and he agreed unto it, he viewed him henceforward as the God-man; and he bore the repute of it with him, and considered him under this character; he delighted in the foreviews of his future

assumption of human nature; and a little before the time, by Zechariah, one of the last of the prophets, expressed his joy at the near approach of it; "Behold, I will bring forth my Servant, the Branch"; that is, speedily, in a very short time; and again, "Behold the Man, whose name is the Branch, he shall grow up out of his place", (Zechariah 3:8; Zechariah 6:12) which is signified to be future, yet near. And he delighted in the foreviews of that obedience to his will his Son should yield in that nature, by which the law would be magnified and made honourable; and of his sufferings and death in it, whereby full satisfaction would be given for the sins of his people; and of his glorification at his right hand in that nature he had promised him; and of his own glory displayed in the salvation of men by him, and a full accomplishment of that; an affair his heart was so much set upon from everlasting. In the foreviews of all this was Christ as Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, as well as God's own Son, the object of his infinite delight and pleasure from everlasting.

3b. Secondly, The Son of God also had the same delight and pleasure in his divine Father, before the world was; and when there was no creature in being, he was then "rejoicing always before him"; rejoicing in being possessed of the same nature and perfections his Father was, being like and equal to him in all things; and rejoicing that he stood in such a relation to him as a Son to a Father; with what exultation does he repeat the words of his Father to him, declaring this relation; "The Lord hath said unto me", and that was in eternity, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Psalms 2:7). He delighted in the foreviews of his future incarnation, as being agreeable to his Father's will; "A body hast thou prepared me", (Hebrews 10:5) which he spoke with pleasure, and as being willing and desirous to assume it; in which he should do his Father's will and work, and which would be his meat and drink, and accomplish the salvation of his people, which was the "joy set before him"; and he rejoiced in the foreviews of his Father being glorified by it, and of his own glory upon it (John 13:31-32; John 17:1; John 17:4-5).

3c. Thirdly, Though the third Person, the Holy Spirit, is not mentioned in the passage in Proverbs; yet as the Father delights in the Son, and the Son in the Father, so both of them delight in the Spirit, as proceeding from them, and he in them; for these Three are One, of the same nature and perfections, and have a mutual in being in each other, and so a complacency in one another; for as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, (John 10:38; John 14:10) so the Spirit is in them, and they in him; and in consequence must have a mutual delight in each other: the Spirit, as he is of the same nature with the Father and the Son, always took infinite delight in his own nature and perfections; and as he was privy to all the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of God, which are the deep things he searches and reveals; he must have taken pleasure in them, and in the foreviews of the execution of them; and as he approved and assented to all the articles in the council and covenant of peace, he must have had infinite delight in the view of the accomplishment of them, as well as of those things which he himself in covenant undertook to perform.

3d. Fourthly, This mutual delight and complacency which each Person had in one another, lay in and arose from the perfect knowledge they had of each other; "As the Father knoweth me", says Christ, "so know I the Father", (John 10:15) and the Spirit knows them both, and the things that are in them, (1 Corinthians 2:10-11) and hence arises mutual love to each other; the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father, (John 3:35; John 5:20; John 14:31) and the Spirit proceeding from them both, loves them both; and it cannot be otherwise, since there is such a nearness to, and mutual in being in each other. Moreover,

4. Fourthly, The three divine Persons had from eternity, and before any creature was in actual being, the utmost delight and complacency [1] in the elect of God, and in the foreviews of their salvation and happiness. The joy and delight of the Son in them are strongly expressed in Proverbs 8:31. "Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men"; that is, from everlasting; before ever the earth was made, or any creature in it; then was the Son of God "rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth"; in the foreviews of those spots of ground, houses, and cottages, where it was known the chosen vessels of mercy would dwell: for God has "determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation"; and Christ knew beforehand in what places he should have a people, and in which this and that man should be born again, (Acts 17:26; Acts 18:10; Psalms 87:4-6) and as lovers express their love to the objects of their love, by saying they love the ground on which they tread; so Christ having loved his people with a love of complacency and delight, rejoiced in the foresight of those parts of the habitable world, where he saw their habitations would be: the church of God on earth may be called the habitable part of his earth, being the dwelling place which he has chosen for himself as such, and where he delights to dwell, and they were from everlasting his Hephzibah and Beulah. Some respect may be had to the new earth, or the second Adam’s earth; in which only righteous persons will dwell; and where the tabernacle of God will be with men, his chosen ones; and where he will dwell with them a thousand years; and in this also the Son of God was rejoicing in the foreviews of: nor am I averse to take in the human nature of Christ, into the sense of the words; who though with respect to his divine Person, and mediatorial office, is the Lord from heaven; yet, as to his human nature, he was "curiously wrought", by the power and skill of the Holy Ghost, "in the lowest parts of the earth", in the womb of the Virgin, and therefore called "the fruit of the earth", being born of an earthly woman, (Psalms 139:15; Isaiah 4:2) and which human nature is a tabernacle God pitched, and not men; a tabernacle for the eternal Word to dwell in, and where the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily; and in the views of this the Son of God was rejoicing before the world was; and in time expressed his desire of it, and delight in it, before it became his habitation; as may be concluded from his frequent appearances in an human form, before his incarnation, as forshadowing it; as to Adam, Abraham, Jacob, and other patriarchs; he rejoiced in the foreviews of it, as it would be of the same kind with that of the children given him, and he had undertook to redeem and save; and as it would be the produce of the holy Spirit, and so free from sin; and as it would be filled and adorned with his gifts and graces; and as after he had done the will of God in it, it would he crowned with glory and honour, and set down at the right hand of God: and all this joy and delight were with a peculiar respect unto the elect of God, as follows; "And my delights were with the sons of men", the posterity of Adam, fallen creatures, the chosen of God among them, who sinned in him, and on whom judgment came unto condemnation, and who are conceived and born in sin, and are by nature children of wrath as others; and yet the delights of Christ, his exceeding great delight, expressed by the plural number, were with them as they were loved by his Father, chosen in him, and given to him; and as he viewed them redeemed by him, washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness; and as he saw them in the glass of his Father’s purposes and decrees, in all the glory he designed to bring them to, even to be a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Now not only the Son of God took delight and complacency in the elect of God, before the world was; but the Father and Spirit also; for God the Father of Christ loved them, and chose them in him, before the foundation of the world, (2 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 1:4). And this love was a love of complacency and delight;

because he delighted in them, therefore he chose them to be his peculiar people, as he did Israel of old, in a national sense (Deuteronomy 10:15). And from the same delight in them arose the council held by him with the other two Persons concerning them; and the covenant of grace he entered into with them. And so the Holy Spirit, his delights were with the same Persons, as they were chosen in Christ, through sanctification by him; and in the foreviews of their being temples for him to dwell in; and in whom he should abide as the earnest and pledge of their future glory; and as the sealer of them to the day of redemption; and as they should be sanctified and made meet by him for eternal glory and happiness.

Thus we see what delight and complacency, satisfaction and happiness, God had in himself before any creature existed; and would have continued the same, if none had ever been created: so that he needed not for his own sake, to go forth in acts of power, to bring creatures into being, since he would have been as happy without them as with them; wherefore the production of them into being is purely the effect of his sovereign will and pleasure; and we see what the thoughts of God were employed about, and chiefly concerned in, in eternity; and the whole furnishes an answer to those curious questions, if it is proper to make them; What was God doing in eternity? what did his thoughts chiefly run upon then? and wherein lay his satisfaction, delight, and happiness?

ENDNOTES:

[1] Of the love of delight and complacency of God towards the elect, see a Treatise of mine, called the Doctrines of God’s Everlasting Love to his Elect, &c. p. 52, &c.

02. Of the Distinct Peronality/Deity of the Father

Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Father.

Though what has been already observed, clearly shows there is a distinction of Persons in the Godhead, and wherein that distinction lies; yet other things may be added, which will serve to illustrate and confirm it; and which will be produced, not as making it, but as making it more clearly to appear. A person is by some[1] defined, "An individual that subsists, is living, intelligent, is not sustained by another, nor is a part of another;" and which is true of each of the three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit. I shall begin with the personality of the Father; the word "Person" is expressly used of him in Hebrews 1:3 where Christ his Son, by whom he made the worlds, is called, "the express image of his person": the word upostasiv, here used, is translated "substance" in Hebrews 11:1 and some would have it so rendered here; and some of the Latin writers did use the word "substantia, substance": but then they understood it, and made use of it, just in the same sense as we do the word person; but finding it to be an ambiguous word, and that it tended to lead men to imagine there were three distinct divine Beings, they left it off, and chose the word person, as less exceptionable; the Greek writers, and some even before the council of Nice, took the word here used, in the same sense as we do, for "subsistence", or person[2]; and so it is here rendered by many learned men, as Valla, Vatablus, Erasmus, Calvin, Beza, Piscator, Paneus, and others; in which translation we may safely acquiesce. The definition of a person agrees with the Father of Christ, as before observed. The Father of Christ is an individual, and so distinguishable from the divine nature he is possessed of, in common with the Son and Spirit; he subsists of himself, he does not owe his being to another, nor is he upheld in it by another; nor is he possessed only of a part, but of the whole Deity; he is the living Father, has life in himself, and not from another, (John 5:26; John 6:57) and is intelligent, knows himself, his Son and Spirit, and all things (Matthew 11:27). The personality of the Father may be concluded from those personal actions which are ascribed to him; for besides begetting the Son, which is what distinguishes him from the other two persons, there are other acts which illustrate and confirm the distinction made, though they do not make it; as,

1. The creation of all things is ascribed to him; he is said, as the Father of Christ, to make the worlds by him his Son, and to create all things by him; not as an instrument, but as a co-efficient cause (Hebrews 1:2; Ephesians 3:9).

2. The works of providence, as upholding and sustaining all creatures in their being, supplying them with all things necessary, governing the world, ordering and disposing of all persons and things in it, are attributed to him, in distinction from his Son, though in conjunction with him, "my Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17).

3. The mission of his Son into the world to be the Saviour of men, shows his distinct personality from him, which is often said of him; now he that sends, and he that is sent, cannot be the same person, but must be distinct; indeed the Spirit of God is said also to send Christ, as well as the Father, (Isaiah 48:16) but then, though the Son is sent by both, and the Spirit is sent both by the

Father and the Son, yet the Father is never said to be sent by either; he is always the sender, and never the sent.

4. The several distinct acts of grace towards the elect in Christ, will serve to evince the distinct personality of the Father. Men are said to be elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, (1 Peter 1:2) and are said to be chosen by him in Christ unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and therefore must be distinct from Christ, in whom, and to whose salvation they are chosen; and from the Spirit, through whose sanctification they are chosen to the obtaining of the glory of Christ, (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) planning the scheme of man's salvation by Christ; reconciling, or forming the scheme of reconciliation in Christ; consulting in the council of peace with him about it, are personal acts, and distinguish him from Christ; making a covenant with his Son on account of elect men, putting their persons into his hands, blessing them with all spiritual blessings in him, and giving grace to them in him before the world was; as they are personal acts, so they show him to be distinct from his Son, with whom he covenanted, and whom he entrusted with the said persons and things: his drawing them by the powerful influences of his grace in time, to come to Christ and believe in him, (John 6:44) promising and giving the Spirit as a convincer, comforter, enlightener, and strengthener, with many other things, serve to illustrate and confirm his distinct personality. Now we call the Father the first person, not that he is so in order of time or causality, and as if he was "fons Deitatis", the fountain of Deity, as some good men have wrongly called him; for rather the Deity is the fountain of the divine persons, from whence they arise together, and in which they subsist, and in which they have no superiority and preeminence of one another; but as it is necessary to speak of them in some order, it seems most proper to place the Father first, whence we call him the first person, and then the Son, and then the Spirit; in which order they are usually put in scripture; though to show there is a perfect equality between them, this order is sometimes inverted. That the Father of Christ, as he is a person, so a divine person, will not be doubted; nor is his Deity called in question; and yet it may be proper to say something of it, and establish it; which may be done, not only by observing that he is expressly and distinctly called God, (Romans 15:6; Galatians 1:1; Php 2:11) but this may be proved,

1. From his divine perfections: God necessarily exists, owes his being to no other, subsists of himself, and is independent of any; such is the Father of Christ, he "has life in himself" and of himself, and does not derive it from another (John 5:26). God is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning and end; so is the Father of Christ, he is he "which is, and which was, and which is to come" (Revelation 1:4). God is immense and omnipresent, cannot be circumscribed by space, he fills heaven and earth, and is contained in neither; such is the Father of Christ, of whom he often speaks as in heaven, and yet with him on earth, and with all his people, at all times, and in all ages (John 14:23; John 16:32). God is omniscient, knows all persons and things; and so does the Father of Christ, he knows the Son in such sense as no other does, and knows that which neither the angels nor the Son, as man, know, even the day and hour of judgment, (Matthew 11:27; Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7; 2 Corinthians 11:31). God is omnipotent, he can do all things; and so can the Father of Christ, "Abba, Father", says Christ, "all things are possible unto thee" (Mark 14:36; Matthew 19:26; John 10:29). Once more, God is immutable, not subject to any change and variation; God, the Father of Christ, is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, (James 1:17) he is unchangeable in his purposes and promises made in Christ,

and in his love which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. In short, there is no perfection in Deity but what God, the Father of Christ, is possessed of.

2. His Deity will appear from the works which are ascribed to him, and which none but God could do; such as making the heaven, the earth and sea, and all that in them are; and who as the maker of them is addressed by the apostle, (Acts 4:24-27) and hence by Christ called Father, Lord of heaven and earth, (Matthew 11:25) and the works of providence, before observed, are ascribed to him, as supporting the world by his power, governing it by his wisdom, and supplying it by his goodness, which none but God could do: (see Matthew 6:26; Matthew 6:32) And his mighty acts of grace in quickening sinners dead in sins, in doing which the same power is put forth as in raising Christ from the dead, (Ephesians 2:1; Ephesians 1:19) and in forgiving the sins of men, which none but God can do, (Mark 2:7) and for which Christ prayed to his Father on the behalf of his enemies, (Luke 23:34) to which may be added the resurrection of the dead, which is purely a divine work, and requires almighty power. The resurrection of Christ is most frequently ascribed to him, and he will raise the dead at the last day (1 Corinthians 6:14). From these and from many other divine works, may the Deity of the Father be concluded, as well as,

3. From the worship due to him, and given to him. None but God is and ought to be the object of religious worship and adoration; "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve", (Matthew 4:10) now true worshippers of God "worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him", (John 4:23) and the Father of Christ is frequently represented as the object of faith, hope, and love; to whom prayer is to be made, and to whom prayer was made both by Christ and his apostles; how often are grace and peace wished for from him in the several epistles? and he stands first in the form of baptism, which is a solemn act of divine and religious worship.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vid. Wendelin. Christ. Theolog. l. 1. c. 2. p. 93, 94.

[2] See my Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 93.

02. Of the Distinct Personality/Deity of the Son

Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Son. That the Son of God is a person, and a divine person distinct from the Father and the Spirit, cannot be doubted; for since his Father is a person, and he is the "express image of his person", he must be a person too; and he must be the express image of him, as he himself is a divine person, the Son of God, and truly God; and not as he is man and mediator; not as he is man, or as having an human nature, for his Father never had any, and therefore he could not be the image of him in that respect; for though man is the image of God as to some qualities in him, yet is he never called his character or express image, much less the express image of any of the persons in the Deity: nor as mediator, and in an office capacity, for his Father was never a mediator, nor in an office: it remains therefore that it must be the express image of his person, as he himself is a divine person, abstracted from any consideration of his human nature, and of his office. For as Plato[1] says, that which is like must needs be of the same species with that to which it is like. The definition of a Person agrees with him: he is an individual, distinct, though not separate from the divine nature, he has in common with the Father and the Spirit; he subsists of himself in that nature distinctly, and independently; is not a part of another, the whole fulness of the Godhead dwells in him; nor is his human nature, which he assumed in time, a part of his person, nor adds anything to his personality; but being taken up into union with his person, subsists in it; he has life in himself, and is the living God; is intelligent, has understanding and will; knows himself, his Father and the Spirit, and all creatures and things, and does whatsoever he pleases.

Besides the distinctive, relative property, or personal relation of the Son, which is to be begotten, and which gives and makes the distinction of him, as a divine person, from the Father and Spirit, who are never said to be begotten; there are many other things which show, or make him appear to be a distinct person.

1. His being with God as the Word[2], (John 1:1) and with his Father as a Son, as one brought up with him, (Proverbs 8:30) clearly expresses his distinct personality; he must be a person to be with, and to be brought up with another; and he must be distinct from him with whom he is; he cannot with any propriety be said to be with himself, or to be brought up with himself.

2. His being set up from everlasting as mediator, and the covenant head of the elect; the Father making a covenant with him, and putting the persons of the chosen ones, with all the blessings of grace for them, into his hands, show him to be a person; a mere name and character could not be said to be set up, to be covenanted with, or to have persons and things committed to his care and charge; and these show him to be a distinct person from him who set him up, and entrusted him with all these persons and things (see Proverbs 8:23; Psalms 89:3; Psalms 89:28; Deuteronomy 33:3; Ephesians 1:3; 2 Timothy 1:9).

3. His being sent in the fulness of time to be the Saviour of his people, and that under the character of the Son of God, shows him to be distinct from the Father, whose Son he is, and by whom he was sent; if he was not a person, but a mere name, he could not be sent; and he must

be distinct from him that sent him; he that sends, and he that is sent, cannot be one and the same person; or else it must be said, that he sent himself, which is too gross and absurd to be admitted; see (Romans 8:3; Galatians 4:4; 1 John 4:9; 1 John 4:14).

4. His becoming a sacrifice, and making satisfaction for the sins of men, and so the Redeemer and Saviour of them, plainly declare his distinct personality. Was he not a person, he could not offer himself a sacrifice, and he must be distinct from him to whom he offered himself; was he not a person, he could not make satisfaction, or reconcile men to God; or, in other words, make reconciliation and atonement for sin; these are personal acts, and he must be distinct from him to whom the satisfaction, reconciliation, and atonement are made; or to whom men are reconciled by him; if he has redeemed men to God by his blood, as he has, he must be a person that is the redeemer of men, and he must be distinct from him to whom he has redeemed them; for he cannot with propriety be said to reconcile and redeem them to himself; see (Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 9:14; Romans 5:10-11; Revelation 5:9).

5. His ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, show him to be a person that ascended, and is sat down; and though it was in human nature that he ascended and sat down, yet it was God in that nature "God is gone up with a shout" (Psalms 47:5). "Thou", the Lord God, "hast ascended on high", (Psalms 68:17-18). "The Lord said to my Lord, sit on my right hand", (Psalms 110:1) and he must be distinct from his God and our God, from his Father and our Father, to whom he ascended, and cannot be the same person with him at whose right hand he sits, (John 20:17; Hebrews 1:13).

6. His advocacy and intercession with his Father, is a plain proof of his distinct personality. He is said to be an "advocate with the Father", (1 John 2:1) and therefore must be a person to act the part of an advocate; and must be distinct from him with whom he advocates; unless it can be thought he is an advocate with himself; he himself says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter", meaning the Spirit of truth, as next explained (John 14:16-17). Now he must be distinct from the Father to whom he prays, for surely he cannot be supposed to pay to himself; and he must be distinct from the Spirit, for whom he prays. He appears in the presence of God for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them, and must be a person to do this; and must be distinct from him in whose presence he appears, and to whom he makes intercession; for he cannot with any propriety he said to appear in his own presence for his people, and to mediate and make intercession for them with himself (see Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24).

7. His judging the world at the last day, with all the circumstances thereof; gathering all nations before him, dividing them, and setting them, some on his right hand and others on his left, and passing the definitive sentence on them, prove him to be a person, a divine person, and distinct from the Father and the Spirit; for as for "the Father, he judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son", (John 5:22) nor is ever the final judgment of the world ascribed to the Spirit (see Matthew 25:31-41; Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31).

8. It is promised to the saints that they shall be with Christ, where he is; see him as he is, and behold his glory, and shall reign with him for evermore; and he is represented as the object of their praise, wonder, and worship, to all eternity; and that as distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost; all which, and much more, show him to be a person, and to be distinct from them both; for surely he must be a person, a divine and distinct one, whom the saints shall he, live and dwell with

to all eternity; and whom they shall praise, serve, and adore throughout endless ages. The Deity of Christ may he next considered, and proved; or, that he is a divine Person, truly and properly God. Not a made or created God, as say the Arians. He was made flesh, and made of a woman; but not made God; for then he must make himself, which is absurd; since "without him was not anything made that was made; but all things were made by him" (John 1:3). Nor God by office, as say the Socinians; for then he would be God only in an improper sense; as magistrates are called gods; and not truly and properly God: nor God by name only; as there are called lords many, and gods many; such were the gods of the heathens, inanimate, irrational, lifeless beings, and so could have no divinity in them. But he is God by nature; as these were not; having the whole essence and nature of God in him. This will appear,

1. First, From the names which are given to him; he has the same glorious names the most high God has; as Ejeh, I AM that I AM, (Exodus 3:14) to which our Lord refers, and takes to himself, (John 8:58) and Jehovah, which is incommunicable to a creature, and peculiar to the most High, (Psalms 83:18) it is not given to angels; for wherever an angel is so called, not a created but the uncreated angel is meant; nor to the ark, (2 Samuel 6:2) for not the ark, but God, whose the ark was, is there called by the name of the Lord of hosts: nor to Jerusalem, (Jeremiah 33:16) but to the Messiah, (Jeremiah 23:6) for the words may be rendered, "This is the name wherewith he shall be called by her, the Lord our Righteousness": nor to the church absolutely, (Ezekiel 48:35) but in composition, or with addition; and is only symbolical of Jehovah’s presence being with her; and the same may be said of mount Moriah; and of some altars, called Jehovah-Jireh, Jehovah-Nissi, and Jehovah-Shalom; which are only symbolical, and designed to call to remembrance the wonderful appearance of Jehovah; the gracious help, and divine assistance, he granted to his people in those places, (Genesis 22:14; Exodus 17:15; Judges 6:24) nor is this name given to priests and judges, (Deuteronomy 19:17) for Jehovah is not to be explained by them; but is distinguished from them; and though he is joined with them, this only designs his presence in judiciary affairs, agreeable to (Psalms 82:1) if, therefore, it can be proved that the name Jehovah is given to Christ, it will prove him to be the most High over all the earth.

Now we are told that God spake to Moses, and said, "I am the Lord", or Jehovah; by which name he was not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that is, not by that only, or that was not so fully made known to them, as it had been to Moses, and to the Israelites by him, (Exodus 6:2-3; Exodus 3:14) which person that appeared to Moses, and said those words, is called the Angel of the Lord, (Exodus 3:2) not a created angel, (Exodus 3:6) but an uncreated one; and must be understood, not of God the Father, who is never called an angel; but of the Son of God, the Angel of his presence, who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, went before them, and led them through the Red Sea, and wilderness, to the land of Canaan, (Exodus 3:8; Exodus 13:21; Exodus 14:19; Exodus 23:20; Isaiah 63:9) he, whom the Israelites tempted in the wilderness, is expressly called Jehovah, (Exodus 17:7) and nothing is more evident than that this Person was Christ, (1 Corinthians 10:9) he whom Isaiah saw on a throne, making a very magnificent appearance, is not only called Adonai, (Isaiah 6:1) but by the seraphim, Jehovah, (Isaiah 6:3) and so by Isaiah, (Isaiah 6:5), who was bid to say to the Jews, (Isaiah 6:8-9). "Hear ye indeed", &c. which words Christ applies to himself; and observes that, "those things Isaiah said, when he saw his glory and spoke of him" (John 12:39-41). There is a prophecy in (Isaiah 40:3). "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord", or of Jehovah, "make straight in the desert, and

high way for our God", which, by the evangelist Matthew, is applied unto, and interpreted of John the Baptist, (Matthew 3:1-3) wherefore, the Jehovah, whose way he was to prepare, and our God, whose paths he was to make straight, could be no other than Christ; whose harbinger and forerunner John was, and whose way and paths were prepared and made straight by him, through his preaching the doctrine of repentance, administering the ordinance of baptism, and declaring the kingdom of heaven, or of the Messiah, was at hand. Moreover, the Messiah, or Christ, is expressly called, the Lord, or Jehovah, our righteousness, in (Jeremiah 23:6) it being his work, as Mediator, to bring in everlasting righteousness; and is the end of the law for it, and is made righteousness to everyone that believes. Once more, Jehovah promises to pour forth the Spirit of grace and supplication on some persons described in (Zechariah 12:10) and then adds, "They shall look upon me", Jehovah, "whom they have pierced"; which was fulfilled in Christ, when one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, (John 19:34; John 19:37) the same words are referred to, and applied to Christ (Revelation 1:7). Now, since in these, and in many other places, Christ is intended by Jehovah, he must be truly and properly God, since this name is incommunicable to any other.

It may be observed also, that in some places of scripture, Christ is absolutely called God; as in Psalms 45:6, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"; where he is distinguished from God his Father, (Psalms 45:7) and the words are expressly applied to him as the Son of God (Hebrews 1:8). "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God", &c. yea, Christ calls himself God; as he well might, since he is in the form of God, and therefore thought it no robbery to be equal to him; saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else; I have swore by myself", &c. (Isaiah 45:22-23) which last words, in connection with the other, are, by the apostle Paul, applied to Christ (Romans 14:10-12). The evangelist John, says of the Word, or Son of God, who was made flesh, and dwelt among men, and so cannot be understood of any but Christ, that "the Word was God", (John 1:1; John 1:14) and the same inspired writer observes, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us", (1 John 3:16) from whence it follows, that he that laid down his life for men, which can only be said of Christ, and wherein his love to them appeared, must be God. And Christ is not only called God absolutely, but with some additional epithets, with possessive pronouns, as, our God, the Jews were waiting for, and John was the forerunner of, (Isaiah 25:9; Isaiah 40:3) "your God", who should come when miracles would be wrought as proofs of it, (Isaiah 35:4-5) "their God", (Luke 1:16) "my Lord, and my God", by Thomas (John 20:28). Now though angels, magistrates, and judges, are called gods in an improper and metaphorical sense; yet never called our gods, your gods, &c. Christ is said to be Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, that is, God manifest in the flesh, (Matthew 1:22; 1 Timothy 3:16). Some additional characters are given of Christ, when he is called God; which show him to be truly and properly God; as, "the mighty God", in (Isaiah 9:6) which is manifestly a prophecy of him; and who elsewhere is called the most Mighty, the Almighty, (Psalms 45:3; Revelation 1:8) and "over all" God blessed for ever", (Romans 9:5) over all creatures, angels and men, who are made by him; and he is blessed for ever in himself. He is called "the great God", whose glorious appearing, and not the Father’s, saints are directed to look for; besides, this great God, is explained of Jesus Christ our Saviour in the next clause, Titus 2:13: compare with this Revelation 19:17 where he who is called the great God, is the mighty warrior, whose name is the Word of God, and King of kings, and Lord of lords, (Revelation 19:11; Revelation 19:13; Revelation 19:16) Christ is also said to be the "living God", (Hebrews 3:12) for

he only is spoken of in the context; and this is only said of the most high God; which distinguishes him from all other deities, (Jeremiah 10:10) and, to add no more, he is called, "the true God", in opposition to all false and fictitious deities, (1 John 5:20) for what is there said, is said expressly of the Son of God.

2. Secondly, The Deity of Christ may be proved from the divine perfections he is possessed of; "for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead", (Colossians 2:9) not one perfection of the divine nature excepted; or otherwise it could not be said, that all the fulness of Deity was in him. God is necessarily and self-existent, and independent on any; such is Christ, he is autoyeov, God of himself: as man and mediator he has a life given him for himself, and others, and lives by the Father; but, as God, he owes his life and being to none; it is not derived from another; he is over all, God blessed for ever. Eternity is a perfection of God; God is from everlasting to everlasting; Christ was not only before Abraham, but before Adam; and before any creature was in being; for he is the arch, the beginning, the first Cause of the creation of God, (Revelation 3:14) the first born, or rather, the first parent and producer of every creature; as the word prwtotokov, by the removal of the accent[3], may be rendered which best agrees with the apostle's reasoning in the next verse; where all things are said to be created by him; and therefore, as the apostle argues, he must be before all things, (Colossians 1:15-17) as Mediator, he was set up from everlasting; his goings forth in the covenant were of old; the elect were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and had grace given them in him, before that began; all which suppose his eternal existence. Hence he is called Alpha and Omega the first and the last, the beginning and the ending; which is, and was, and is to come; Melchizedek's antitype, having neither beginning of days nor end of life (Revelation 1:8; Hebrews 7:3). Omnipresence, or immensity, is another perfection of Deity, (Jeremiah 23:23-24). Christ, as the Son of God, was in heaven, in the bosom of his Father; when, as the Son of man, he was here on earth, (John 1:18; John 3:13) which he could not be, if he was not omnipresent; nor could he make good his promises to his ministers, churches, and people, to be with them at all times, in all ages, and in all places, wherever they are, (Matthew 18:20; Matthew 28:20) nor walk in the midst of his golden candlesticks, the several churches, in different places; and fill all things and persons in them, as he certainly does, (Revelation 1:13; Ephesians 4:10). Omniscience is another divine perfection, and most manifestly appears in Christ; he knew what was in man, and needed not that any should testify to him what was in man; he could tell the woman of Samaria all that ever she did; he knew from the beginning who would believe in him, and who would betray him; he knew the secret thoughts of the Scribes and Pharisees; and is that Word that is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and he will hereafter let all the world and churches know, that he searches the hearts and reins. In short, he knows all things, as Peter affirmed unto him, (John 2:24-25; John 4:29; John 6:64; Matthew 9:4; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 2:23; John 21:17) and though he is said not to know the day of judgment, this is said of him as the Son of man, not as the Son of God (Mark 13:32). Omnipotence is a perfection that belongs to Christ, and is peculiar to God, who only can do all things; Christ is almighty, and his works declare it; the creation of all things, the sustentation of the universe, the redemption and preservation of his people, and the resurrection of them at the last day; all which are, "according to his mighty power, which is able to subdue all things to himself" (Php 3:21). To observe no more, immutability belongs solely to God; who is without any variableness or shadow of turning; and such is Christ, the same today, yesterday, and for ever, (Hebrews 13:8; see Psalms 102:26 compared with Hebrews 1:12) and since therefore such perfections of the Godhead are in

Christ, he must be truly and properly God.

3. Thirdly, The truth of Christ's proper divinity may be proved from the works done by him; which are the same that are done by the Father; and in which he is a coefficient cause with him; and are done by him omoiwv, in like manner as by the Father, (John 5:17; John 5:19) such as the creation of all things out of nothing; of the whole world and all things in it, visible or invisible, (John 1:2-3; Colossians 1:16) the making of the worlds, the heaven and the earth, are particularly ascribed to the Word and Son of God; and he that built all things is God, (Hebrews 11:3; Hebrews 1:10; Hebrews 3:4) the work of providence, the government of the world, and the disposing of all things in it, Christ is jointly concerned in with the Father; "My Father worketh hitherto; and I work", that is, with him (John 5:17). Christ upholds all things by his power; bears up the pillars of the earth; and by him do all things consist, (Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:17) the miracles Christ wrought on earth in human nature, as they were proofs of his Messiahship, so of his Deity; such as curing the lame, the blind, and dumb, and deaf, and even raising the dead, by a word speaking; which were what none but God could do: these prove that the Father was in him, and he in the Father, (Matthew 11:4-5; John 10:37-38). If he was not the mighty God, he could never have been able to have wrought and obtained the redemption and salvation of his people, by his own arm: what gave virtue and efficacy to his blood, to purchase his church and people, and cleanse them from their sins, is his Deity; and so to his righteousness, to make it a justifying one before God; and to his sacrifice, to make it expiatory of sin, and acceptable to God. The acts of forgiveness of sin, and justification from it, are peculiar to God. None can forgive sin but God; yet Christ has done it, and therefore must be God, (Mark 2:7; Mark 2:9-10) it is God that justifies men from sin, and acquits them from condemnation, (Romans 8:1; Romans 8:33) and so does Christ (Isaiah 53:11). The Resurrection of the dead is a work of almighty power, and which none but God can do; and yet Christ has raised himself from the dead, and thereby is declared to be the Son of God with power; that is, truly and properly God, (Romans 1:4; John 2:19; John 10:18) and he will raise all the dead at the last day, by his mighty power; and at his all commanding voice, the dead will come forth out of their graves, wherein they have lain, (John 5:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). The judgment of the world is committed to him; "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22). Now if he was not God omnipotent and omniscient he would never be able to do what he will do; gather all nations before him, separate them, and place them some on his right hand, and some on his left; bring to light the counsels of the heart, and judge the secrets of it, and give to every man for the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil; pronounce the several decisive sentences, and put them in execution, (Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

4. Fourthly, As a further proof of the Deity of Christ, the worship given him both by angels and men may be observed; for when he, God's firstborn, was brought into the world, he said, "Let all the angels of God worship him", (Hebrews 1:6) which order to the celestial inhabitants, would never have been given, if he was not God: it is also the declared will of the divine Father of Christ, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father"; that is, worship him with the same divine worship; which he would never have declared, who will not give his glory to another besides himself, was not Christ his Son the one God with him (see Psalms 2:12). Men are directed to exercise faith and hope on him; yea, Christ himself directs unto it, equally to be exercised on him, as on his Father; which he would never have done, but that he and his Father are one, one in

nature, and so in power and glory, (John 14:1; John 10:30) yea, if he was not God, but a mere man, instead of men being blessed and happy, who make him their hope, and trust in him, they would be cursed for so doing (Jeremiah 17:5; Jeremiah 17:7). Baptism, a solemn ordinance of religious worship, is ordered to be administered in his name, equally as in the name of the Father, (Matthew 28:19) which, if a mere creature, would be idolatry and blasphemy; for which reason the apostle Paul was so cautious, lest any should think they were baptized by him in his own name (1 Corinthians 1:13-15). Prayer, another branch of religious worship, is often made to Christ; and that not by a single person only, as by Stephen, in his last moments, (Acts 7:59) but by whole churches and communities; who are said in every place to call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord; and how often are grace and peace wished for, by the apostles, as from God our Father, so from the Lord Jesus Christ? (1 Corinthians 1:2-3) all which would never be performed by saints, nor be admitted of by God, was not Christ truly and properly God; nor need we scruple to worship him, nor be fearful lest we should give him too much: and great encouragement we have to commit our souls, and the salvation of them into his hands, and trust him with our all; since he is God the only Saviour.

ENDNOTES:

[1] In Parmenide, p. 1113.

[2] Of this name of the Son of God, the Word, see my Doctrine of the Trinity, c. 5. p. 98-120 [3] Vid. Isidor. Pelusiot. Epist. l. 3. ep. 31.

02. Of the Distinct Personality/Deity of the Spirit

Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Holy Spirit.

What only remains now to be considered, under the article of the Trinity, are the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost; to prove that he is a Person, a distinct Person, from the Father and Son; and a divine Person, or truly and properly God.

1. First, That he is a Person, and not a mere name and character, power or attribute of God; which will appear by observing,

1a. That the description of a Person agrees with him; that it subsists and lives of itself, is endowed with will and understanding, or is a willing and intelligent agent. Such is the Spirit of God; as the Father has life in himself, and the Son has life in himself, so has the Holy Spirit; since he is the author of natural and spiritual life in men; which he preserves unto eternal life; and therefore called, the Spirit of life; which he could not be, unless he had life in himself; and if he has life in himself, he must subsist of himself: he has a power of willing whatever he pleases: the apostle, speaking of his influences, administrations, and operations, says, "All these worketh the one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will", (1 Corinthians 12:11) and that he is an intelligent agent, is clear from his knowing the things of God which none can know but him; and from his teaching men all things, and guiding them into all truth, and giving the spirit of wisdom and knowledge to one and another; now "he that teacheth men knowledge, shall not he know?" (1 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Corinthians 12:8; John 14:26; John 16:13; Psalms 94:10).

1b. Personal actions are ascribed unto him; he is said to be a reprover and convincer of men; to reprove or convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). Now he that convinces another of his mistakes, brings him to a sense and acknowledgment of them, and to repentance for them, must be a Person, and not a mere name and character. He is spoken of as a teacher, that teaches all things, all doctrines necessary to salvation, and all the duties of religion: an human teacher is a person, and much more a divine one, (John 14:26; 1 John 2:27) he is promised as a Comforter, (John 16:7) and which he answers to, by shedding abroad the love of God in the hearts of the Lord’s people; by taking the things of Christ, and showing them to them; by applying to them exceeding great and precious promises; by declaring to them the pardon of their sins; by pronouncing the sentence of justification in their consciences; and by being the earnest and seal of their future happiness; all which are personal actions: he is one of the three witnesses in heaven, (1 John 5:7) who particularly testifies of Christ, of his Deity, sonship, offices, and grace, (John 15:26) and bears witness to the spirits of saints, that they are the children of God, (Romans 8:16) which a mere name and character could not do; but a person. He is represented not only as a Spirit of grace and supplication, and an helper of the infirmities of the saints in prayer, but as making intercession for them, according to the will of God (Zechariah 12:10; Romans 8:26-27). Now as the advocacy and intercession of Christ, prove him to be a Person, and a distinct one from the Father, with whom he intercedes; so the intercession of the Spirit, equally proves his personality, even his distinct personality also: to which may be added,

that the Spirit is the giver of gifts to men, whereby they are qualified for the work of the ministry, (1 Corinthians 12:8-11) and he calls them to that work, and appoints and sets them as overseers of particular churches, to feed them with knowledge and understanding, (Acts 13:2; Acts 20:28) and, to observe no more, he is often described as an inhabitant in the saints, that dwells in their bodies, and in their souls, and will always abide in them, until he has wrought them up for that self-same thing, eternal glory and happiness; now to dwell with any person, or in any place, is a personal action, and describes a person, (John 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Romans 8:9; Romans 8:11).

1c. Personal affections are ascribed to the Spirit; as love, grief, &c. we read of the love of the Spirit, as well as of the Father, and of the Son; and which appears in the regeneration and sanctification of men, and in the application of grace unto them, (Romans 15:30) and of the Spirit's being grieved with the sins of God's people, and their unbecoming behavior towards God and one another, (Ephesians 4:30) and of his being rebelled against, vexed, and provoked; as he was by the Israelites (Isaiah 63:10). All which could not be said of him, was he not a person. He is, moreover, said to be lied unto; as by Ananias and Sapphira, (Acts 5:3) and to be blasphemed, and sinned against with an unpardonable sin, (Matthew 12:32-33) which could never be, nor with propriety be said, was he not a Person, and a divine Person too.

2. Secondly, The Holy Spirit is not only a Person, but a distinct Person from the Father and the Son; and besides his distinctive relative property, spiration, or being the breath of them both, and so distinct from each; the following things may be observed:

2a. His procession from the Father and the Son: of his procession from the Father express mention is made in (John 15:26) and therefore must be distinct from the Father, from whom he proceeds; which, whether it respects his nature or his office, proves the same: it was once a warm controversy between the Greek and Latin churches, whether the Spirit proceeded from the Son or from the Father; which was denied by the former, and asserted by the latter; and which seems most correct; since he is called the Spirit of the Son, (Galatians 4:6) however, since he is the Spirit of the Son, he must be distinct from him whose Spirit he is.

2b. The mission of the Holy Spirit, by the Father and the Son, clearly evinces his distinct personality from them; of his being sent by the Father, see (John 14:16; John 14:26) and of his being sent by the Son (see John 15:26; John 16:7). Now as a mere name and character, quality, power, and attribute, could not be said to be sent, but a Person; so the Spirit that is sent, must be a distinct Person from the Father and Son, said to send him.

2c. The Holy Spirit is called another Comforter, (John 14:16) the Father of Christ is one; he is the God of all comfort; that comforts his people in all their tribulations, (2 Corinthians 1:3-4) and Jesus Christ is also a Comforter; one of his names with the Jews is Menachem, a Comforter[1]; a name well known with the Jews: hence good old Simeon is said to be waiting for the "Consolation of Israel", (Luke 2:25) that is, for the Messiah; whom the Jews expected as a Comforter: and now the Holy Ghost is another Comforter, distinct from both; from the Son, who prayed for him as such; and from the Father, prayed unto on that account.

2d. The Holy Spirit is represented as doing some things distinct from the Father and the Son; particularly, as directing into the love of God, that is, the Father; and into a patient waiting for

Christ; and so is distinguished from them both, (2 Thessalonians 3:5) and also as taking of the things of Christ, called likewise the things of the Father, and showing them to them that are Christ's; in which also he is distinguished from the Father, and from Christ, whose things he takes and shows (John 16:14-15). Song regeneration, renovation, sanctification, and conversion, are distinct things, and very peculiar to the Spirit.

2e. There are some distinct appearances of the Spirit, which show his distinct personality; as at the baptism of Christ, when he descended as a dove and lighted on him; and thereby was distinguished from the Father, whose voice was heard from heaven; and from the Son, who was baptized in Jordan, and on whom the Spirit lighted, (Matthew 3:16-17) and on the day of Pentecost the Spirit descended on the apostles, in the form of cloven tongues, as of fire; and with respect to this the apostle Peter says, that Christ "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear"; meaning the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and his extraordinary gifts; and who is plainly distinguished from the Father, who made promise of him, and from the Son, who received this promise, and shed his gifts in the manner he did.

2f. The Holy Spirit is represented as a distinct person in the ordinance of baptism; and the form of it being to be administered in his name, as distinct from the name of the Father and of the Son, in whose name also it was to be administered, (Matthew 28:19) and so he is mentioned as a distinct witness from the Father and the Word, in the record bore in heaven; for if he is not a distinct person from them, there could not be three testifiers, or three that bore record in heaven (1 John 5:7).

3. Thirdly, The Holy Ghost is not only a person, and a distinct person from the Father and Son, but a divine person, or truly and properly God; which was denied by the Macedonians of old[2], and by the Socinians of late[3]; and generally by all that oppose the divinity of Christ: but the Deity of the Spirit is to be proved by the same mediums and arguments which are to be fetched from the same sources as the Deity of the Son. And,

3a. From the names which are given unto him; as particularly the name Jehovah, peculiar to the most High; it was Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel, that spake by the mouth of all the holy prophets from the beginning of the world; and it is certain that they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, (Luke 1:68; Luke 1:70; 2 Peter 1:21) it was Jehovah, the Rock and God of Israel, that spake by David; and it is clear that it was the Holy Ghost that spake by him; for so Peter says, "This scripture must needs be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spoke before concerning Judas", (2 Samuel 23:2-3; Acts 1:16) it was Jehovah, the Lord God, whom the Israelites tempted, proved, and provoked in the wilderness; and this the Holy Ghost speaks of as done to himself; "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me", me, the Holy Ghost, (Psalms 95:6-7; Hebrews 3:7-9; see Isaiah 63:10) it was Jehovah that said to Isaiah, "Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed", &c. and according to the apostle Paul, the same was the Holy Ghost; for to the Jews he says, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Go unto this people, and say, hearing ye shall hear", &c. (Isaiah 6:8-9; Acts 28:25-26). The Greek word kuriov, used in the New Testament, answers to Jehovah and Adonai in the Old; and this is said of the Holy Spirit, he is that Spirit which is the Lord,

and is called the Lord the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17-18; see also 2 Thessalonians 3:5). Moreover the Holy Spirit is very plainly called God in scripture: when Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost, he is said to lie not unto men but unto God; wherefore if lying to the Holy Ghost is lying to God, it follows that the Holy Ghost must be God (Acts 5:3-4). The saints of God are called the temple of God, and the reason proving it is, because the Spirit of God dwells in them, and because their bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are exhorted to glorify God in their bodies: Now if the Holy Ghost is not called God, or meant by God in these passages, there is no force of reasoning in them (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Moreover the apostle gives to the Holy Ghost the divine names of Spirit, Lord, and God, when he is speaking of the diversities of his gifts, administrations, and operations; for of him only is he speaking by whom all these are (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

3b. The Deity of the Spirit may be proved from the perfections of God, which are manifestly in him, as eternity; hence, as some think, he is called the eternal Spirit, (Hebrews 9:14) however he was present at the creation of the heavens and the earth, and was concerned therein, (Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13) and therefore must be before any creature was, before time was, and so from eternity; as God the Father never was without his Son, so never without his Spirit; when it is said in some places that the Spirit was not yet, and that there were some that had not heard that there was any Holy Ghost; this is to be understood of the wonderful effusion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at Pentecost, which was not to be until after the glorification of Christ; and of which dispensation the disciples at Ephesus had not then heard (John 7:39; Acts 19:2). Omnipresence, or immensity, another divine perfection, is ascribed to the Spirit; says David, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? and whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Psalms 139:7) he is not to be shunned and avoided; there is no going any where from him, for he is every where, otherwise he might be avoided; and if every where, he must be the omnipresent God: the saints are his temples in which he dwells, and he dwells in them all, at all times, in all places; which he could not do if he was not immense and omnipresent. Omniscience is another divine perfection to be observed in the Spirit of God; he knows all things, even the deep things of God, the thoughts, counsels, and purposes of his heart; which he could not know, if he was not the omniscient God (1 Corinthians 2:10-11) nor could he teach the saints all things, nor guide them into all truth, and much less show things to come, (John 14:26; John 16:13) as he did under the Old Testament, when he testified beforehand, by the prophets, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, (1 Peter 1:11) and under the New Testament, witnessing to the apostle Paul that bonds and afflictions should abide him in every city, which he found to be true; and foretelling, by Agabus, that there would be a great dearth throughout the world, which came to pass in the times of Claudius Caesar (Acts 20:23; Acts 11:28). Omnipotence is predicated of him; he is called the power of the Highest, and the finger of God; his concern in creation, and in the formation of the human nature of Christ, the miraculous signs and wonders wrought by his power, the gifts that he bestows, and the grace that he works in the hearts of men, loudly proclaim his omnipotence; and if such perfections, which are peculiar to Deity, are to be found in him, he must be truly and properly God.

3c. The works which are ascribed unto him are a clear and full proof of his divinity: creation, a work of divine power, is attributed to him; he not only moved upon the face of the waters that covered the earth, at the first creation, and brought the rude and unformed chaos into a beautiful order, and garnished the heavens, and bespangled them with the luminaries and stars of light; but by him, the Breath, or Spirit of the Lord, the heavens and the host thereof were made and established,

(Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Psalms 33:6) yea man, the most excellent and curious part of the creation, is made by him, as Elihu owns, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4). The work of providence he is jointly concerned in with the Father and the Son; "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? with whom took he counsel (the Spirit of the Lord) and taught him in the path of judgment? and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?" (Isaiah 40:13-14) that is, how to govern the world, and manage and direct all affairs in it. The editing of the scripture is of him; "All scripture is given by inspiration of God"; by the Breath or Spirit of God, (2 Timothy 3:16) this is a work purely divine, and is of the Spirit; "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). It was the Holy Spirit that formed the human nature of Christ; what was conceived in the Virgin was of the Holy Ghost; that was fearfully and wonderfully made by him, and curiously wrought by him, in the lowest parts of the earth, (Matthew 1:20; Psalms 139:14-15) and was richly anointed by him with his gifts and graces; even above his fellows, and without measure, (Psalms 45:7; Isaiah 61:1; John 3:34) and the miracles of Christ were by him, the finger of God; and those which the apostles wrought for the confirmation of the gospel, were by the power of the Holy Ghost, (Matthew 12:28; Luke 11:20; Romans 15:19; Hebrews 2:3-4) the work of grace in the heart is his work; regeneration and renovation are of the Holy Ghost; sanctification is called the sanctification of the Spirit; this is not by might nor power of man, but by the Spirit of God; and in which there is such a display of the exceeding greatness of divine power, as is equal to that which was exerted in raising Christ from the dead, (Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:2; Zechariah 4:6; Ephesians 1:19) yea, the resurrection of Christ himself from the dead, is attributed to the Spirit of holiness; and it is by him the Spirit which dwells in the saints, that God will quicken their mortal bodies (Romans 1:4; Romans 8:11).

3d. The worship which is due to the Spirit of God, and is given unto him, proves him to be God; for were he not, such worship would never be paid him; not only temples are erected by him, but for him, in which he is worshipped and glorified (Ephesians 2:22; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Baptism, a solemn act of religious worship, is administered in his name, as in the name of the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19). Swearing, which is another act of worship, a solemn appeal to the omniscient God, and is mentioned as a branch of serving him, (Deuteronomy 6:13) is made by the Spirit, and he is called upon as a witness to facts (Romans 9:1). And prayer, a very principal part of worship, is directed to him, sometimes singly, as in (2 Thessalonians 3:5; Song of Solomon 4:16) and sometimes, in conjunction with the other divine Persons (Revelation 1:4-5). All which prove him to be truly and properly God; and therefore we should be careful to give him the honour and glory due unto him, as to the Father and the Son; and as we trust the Son with the whole affair of our salvation, and trust in him for it; so we should trust the Spirit of God with the work of grace upon our souls; and be confident that he that has begun it, will perform it; since "it is God that works in us, to will and to do, of his good pleasure". My Treatise on the Trinity, was written near forty years ago, and when I was a young man; and had I now departed from some words and phrases then used by me, it need not, at such a distance of time, be wondered at: but so far from it, that upon a late revisal of it, I see no reason to retract anything I have written, either as to sense or expression; save only, in a passage or two of scripture, before observed, which then did not stand so clear in my mind, as proofs of the eternal generation of the Son of God; but, upon a more mature consideration of them, I am inclined to think otherwise, and have accordingly altered my sense of them; which alteration, as it is no ways inconsistent with the doctrine as before

held by me, so it serves but the more strongly to confirm it.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Talmud Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

[2] Vid. Aug. de Haeres. c. 52. & Danaeum in ibid.

[3] Cateches. Racov. c. 1. p. 35. & c. 6. p. 214.

02. Of the Elect and Fallen Angels

Of The Confirmation Of The Elect Angels, And The Fall Of The Non-Elect.

Having considered at large the doctrines of creation and providence; I proceed to observe the first and principal events of providence relating to angels and men; and shall begin with the angels, the first of rational creatures that were created, and in whom the providence of God first took place; and whereas there was a distinction made between them, of elect and non-elect, as has been shown in a preceding chapter. I shall take notice,

1. Of the confirmation of the elect angels; for as God chose them to a state of holiness and happiness; as soon as he created them, he confirmed them in that state; the providence of God was not only concerned in the preservation and sustentation of them in their being when created (Colossians 1:16-17), but in the government of them, which are the two parts and branches of providence. Now the government of rational creatures is in a moral way, by giving a law to them, as the rule of their obedience; and such a law was given to angels, not of a positive nature, similar to what was given to Adam, forbidding him on pain of death, to eat of the fruit of a certain tree, as a trial of his obedience to the whole will of God; since we read of no such law, or like it, given to angels; nor a law in the form of a covenant, as to men, since the angels do not appear to have had any federal head, they standing singly and alone, and each for themselves; nor do we ever read of good angels keeping covenant; nor of the evil angels being charged with the breach of covenant; but it was a law implanted in their nature, concreated with them in like manner, as the law of nature was inscribed on Adam’s heart, some remains of which are to be observed in his fallen posterity, and even among the Gentiles (Romans 2:14-15), which is the same in substance with the moral law written; and with which angels are concerned, so far as the precepts of it are suitable to spiritual substances; for such of them, and so much of them, as relate to the body, and to corporeal actions, cannot agree with angels, who are incorporeal; as the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth commands: but such as relate to the fear and worship of God in a spiritual manner; to love to God, and love to fellow creatures; these are binding on angels, and are perfectly obeyed by the good angels; and in this their perfect obedience and holiness, are they immutably confirmed, from the moment of their creation; for this their confirmation is not owing to any merits of theirs, through the good use of the freedom of their wills: some have fancied that they were first in a state of probation, and having stood some time in their obedience, through the power of their free will, merited confirmation in that state from God, but a creature, even of the highest rank, can merit nothing at the hand of God; for "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" (Romans 11:35. The obedience of angels was due to God, and could merit nothing of him; nor was their confirmation owing to the merits of Christ. Christ is a Mediator between God and men; but not between God and angels; for though he may be allowed to be a medium of conservation of angels; yet not a Mediator of peace and reconciliation, which they needed not; he is not a Saviour and Redeemer of them; he merited nothing for them by his incarnation, sufferings, and death; these were not on their account; hence the angels say, "Unto you is born this day (not unto us) a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11; Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:16-17). But

their confirmation is owing to the free favour and good will of God, choosing them to a state of holiness and happiness; and to his putting them under the care and charge of Christ, as the Head of all principality and power (1 Timothy 5:21; Colossians 2:10).

Now in this state of constant obedience and perfect holiness, they are immutably fixed by the will of God, and have from their creation continued in it, and ever will; as appears by their enjoyment of the presence of God perpetually; they always behold the face of God in heaven; they never left their habitation, but have always resided in heaven, where they were first placed; hence called the "angels of heaven" (Matthew 18:10; Matthew 24:36), and by their constant and perfect obedience to the will of God, and which is made the pattern of obedience to it in men; or we are directed to pray that it might be like it; "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"; that is, by the angels there (Matthew 6:10), and by the consummate happiness of the saints at the resurrection being like to theirs; which supposes them to have continued in their original state, and that the saints will be like unto them, not only in the immortality of their bodies, but in perfect holiness and impeccability, as perfectly holy as they, and no more subject to sin than they are (Luke 20:36), and by what is said of them with relation to the second coming of Christ, and their estate to all eternity; as that he shall descend from heaven with his mighty angels; shall come, not only in his own, and in his Father's glory, but in the glory of the holy angels; that he will employ them in gathering in the elect from the four parts of the world; that he will then confess the names of his faithful followers before them; and that the wicked will be tormented with fire and brimstone in their presence; the smoke of whose torment shall ascend for ever and ever; and consequently the holy angels will be free from that torment, and be happy for ever and ever; (see 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Luke 9:26; Matthew 24:31; Revelation 3:5; Revelation 14:10-11).

2. The next remarkable event respecting angels, is the sin and fall of the non-elect angels. The heathens seem to have had some notion of the fall of the evil angels; for Plutarch speaks [1] of demons or devils, as qehlatoi and ouranopeteiV, expelled by the gods, and fallen from heaven. The providence of God was equally concerned in the sustentation and conservation of them in their beings, as of the elect angels; and in which they are and will be everlastingly preserved. The same law also for the government of them, and as a rule of obedience, was given to them; or otherwise they could not be chargeable with sin, as they are; they are called the angels that sinned. Now sin is a transgression of the law; where there is no law there is no transgression (2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 3:4; Romans 4:15). These angels, in their original estate of creation, were in a capacity of obeying the law that was given them; their will was inclined to it; and the bias of their mind was towards it; for they were created holy, just, and good; the estate they are now in, is not that in which they were made; it is expressly said of them, that they "kept not their first estate", and "abode not in the truth" (Jude 1:6; John 8:44), which supposes a better estate than what they are now in, and that they were originally in an estate of truth; that is, of integrity, righteousness, and holiness, though they did not abide in it, but fell from it; for being left to the freedom of their will, which was mutable, and is that folly and weakness which angels in their original state were chargeable with by God, and in comparison of him; they sinned and fell, to which fall of theirs our Lord has respect, when he says, "I beheld Satan, as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18), that is, suddenly, swiftly, and irresistibly, and which proves the existence of Christ before his incarnation; as that not only he was before Abraham, but before Adam; however, before the fall of Adam, for he was before the fall of the angels, he was present at it, and a witness of it. Now

concerning this, the following things may be inquired into.

2a. First, What was the sin of the angels, by which they fell? this cannot be said with precision, the scriptures being silent about it; yet it is generally supposed, and it is probable from the scriptures, that their sin was,

2a1. Pride; and which seems probable from (1 Timothy 3:6). Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil; being guilty of the same sin, he is in danger of the same condemnation; and usually so it is, as the wise man observes, that "pride goes before destruction; and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). And so it might before the fall of the angels, and be the cause of it. They might first begin with contemplating their own perfections and excellencies, which were very great; as their wisdom, knowledge, strength, &c. which might lead on to self-admiration, and issue in an over-weaning opinion of themselves, so as to think more highly of themselves than they ought to have done; and to conclude, that creatures of such an high rank and class, as they were, ought not to be subject to a law, and therefore cast off the yoke of the law, and departed from their allegiance and obedience to God; hence one of the names of Satan is Belial, "without a yoke"; and the children of the devil are called sons of Belial; not being subject to the law of God (2 Corinthians 6:15; 2 Samuel 23:6), upon which they seem to have affected deity; and having revolted from God, set up for gods themselves; and this may be thought to be confirmed from the manner in which they tempted our first parents to rebel against God; to do which they might hope to prevail with them, as it was the snare in which they themselves were taken; "Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5), as also by all the methods they have since taken to get themselves worshipped as gods. Satan has usurped to himself the title of the god of this world; and very early did he introduce into the world the worship of idols, and the offering of sacrifice to them; which to do is no other than to sacrifice to devils (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 10:20), yea, he has prevailed upon the poor Indians, both Eastern and Western, to worship him openly as a devil; and nothing can be a greater instance of his pride, arrogance, and impudence, than the proposal he made to Christ, to give him all the kingdoms of this world, if he would but fall down and worship him (Matthew 4:9).

2a2. Some have thought that envy was the sin of the devils, by which they fell; led thereunto by a saying in the Apocryphal book of Wisdom, "Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side do find it." (Wis 2:24) and, indeed, envy and pride are inseparable; a proud man is always envious at others; he cannot bear that any should be above him, or even equal to him: the apostle joins these sins together (James 4:5-6), the angels might envy the superior power and excellencies of God himself, and therefore withdrew from him, as not bearing his superiority over them, envying that he should be above them, and higher than they; if there was any superior rank and class of angels above these, since some are called dominions, thrones, principalities, and powers, they might be the object of their envy, and be displeased that they were not of the same, or of a superior class; however, it seems highly probable, that they envied the state and happiness man [2], and therefore contrived his fall and ruin; as that he should be made after the image and likeness of God, which is never said of them, however like to God angels may be; and that man should be the lord of the whole world, and all the creatures put in subjection to him; which they might think more properly belonged to them. And especially they might be envious at the Son of God, who they might understand, would in time assume human nature; though the end and design of it they might not know; and that in that

nature he should sit at the right hand of God, which they were not admitted to; and that he should in that nature be the Head of all principality and power; and that angels, authorities, and powers, should be subject to him in it. Now this they could not brook and bear, that the human nature should be advanced above that of theirs; and therefore broke away from God in envy, wrath, and malice; and hence there has been from the beginning, a continued enmity and opposition by the devil, to Christ, the seed of the woman, that should bruise the head of the serpent; hence Satan always sought to oppose Christ in his person and offices, and to lead men into errors and mistakes about them; denying him in one or other of his natures, and depreciating him in his offices; and hence he set up antichrist, whose coming was after the working of Satan; and whose doctrines are doctrines of devils, and diametrically opposite to the glory of Christ.

2a3. Unbelief may also be taken into the account of the sin of the angels; they must disbelieve the eternal power of God, and his truth and faithfulness to his word, or they would not have dared to have sinned against him; and as the apostasy of our first parents began with that, and disregard unto, and a disbelief of the threatening word of God; it may be reasonably thought, that something of the same kind led on to the rebellion and fall of the angels; indeed, their sin seems to be a complication of iniquity, of pride, envy, and unbelief.

2b. Secondly, There are several questions commonly asked, relative to the fall of angels; to which a short answer may be returned; as,

2b1. How and by what means they came to fall? they had no tempter; there were no creatures in being capable of tempting them to sin; not irrational creatures, who could have no influence on them; and if man was then created, as it is a question whether he was or not; and if he was, he had no disposition to anything of this kind; but, on the other hand, his fall was through the temptation of an evil angel; there was none but God to tempt them, and he tempts none, neither angel nor man (James 1:13-14), and this indeed was the case, as before observed; the angels were left to their own free will, which was mutable, and so of themselves, and not through any temptation without them, sinned and fell; this is always spoken of as their own voluntary act and deed, without any force or persuasion used with them; they kept not their first estate, left their habitation, and abode not in the truth. It is very probable, that one of them, famous above the rest for his wisdom and strength, might begin the apostasy; and being in high esteem for his excellent qualifications, he gave the lead, and others followed his example; hence we read of the prince of devils, and of the prince of the power of the air, or of the posse of devils in it, and of the devil and his angels (Matthew 12:24; Matthew 25:41; Ephesians 2:2).

2b2. It is sometimes asked, When the angels fell? to which it may be answered, Not before the sixth day of the creation: as it is probable they might be created on the first day, when the heavens, their habitation, was made, and light was formed; so they continued in their first estate, during the six days of the creation; for on the sixth day, when all the creatures were made, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good"; not only when made, but to this time had continued so. Now if the angels had sinned before, this could not have been said; and yet they must have fallen before Adam fell, because it was the serpent, or the devil in the serpent, either in a real one, or in the form of one, that beguiled Eve, and so was the cause and means of the fall of man. But however, certain it is, that the fall of the angels was very early; since the devil is called, "a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44), a destroyer of mankind, either from the

beginning of the world, that is, quickly after it was made; or from the beginning of his creation, not long after he began to be; or from the beginning of man's creation, who abode not long in his happy state, but soon fell from it, through the temptation of the devil.

2b3. This question is sometimes put, What number of the angels fell? This cannot be said with any precision; some have thought that as many fell as stood; grounding it on a passage in (Ezekiel 41:18), where it is said, that on the wall of the temple were carved, with cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between a cherub and a cherub; by cherubim they understand angels, and by palm trees good men, said to flourish like the palm tree; and who are supposed to fill up the places of fallen angels; and so conclude the same number fell as stood; but as such a sense of the text cannot easily be established, it is insufficient to build such a notion upon. Others have thought, that not so many fell as stood; since evil angels are never said to be innumerable, as the good angels are (Hebrews 12:22). And which they also gather from the words of Elisha to his servant; "Fear not; for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them"; and the servant's eyes were presently opened, and he saw the "mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about"; that is, angels in such forms (2 Kings 6:16-17), but then the comparison is not between good and bad angels; but between the good angels and the Syrian host. Others fancy that a third part of the angels fell; this they take from (Revelation 12:4), where the dragon is said to draw with his tail the third part of the stars of heaven; but by the stars are not meant angels, but such who bore the character of the ministers of the word, who in that book are called stars (Revelation 1:20), whom Satan, through his influence, prevailed upon to drop their character, and desert their office. However, it is certain, that not a few of the angels, but many of them, fell; even as many as to form a kingdom, with a prince at the head of it; and there were so many that possessed one man, as to be called a legion, which consisted of some hundreds; for when the devil in him was asked his name, he answered, "My name is legion, for we are many"; yea, it seems there are various kinds and sorts of them; for when the disciples asked Christ the reason why they could not cast out a certain devil, our Lord, among other things, says, "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 12:24; Matthew 12:26; Matthew 17:19-21; Mark 5:9).

2c. Thirdly, The state and condition into which the angels were brought by sin, may next be considered. They were originally angels of light; full of light, knowledge, and understanding; but by sinning are become angels of darkness; and are called the power of darkness, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, blind, and blinding others (Colossians 1:13; Ephesians 6:12; 2 Corinthians 4:4), for whatever light and knowledge of natural things they retain, and which may be increased by long observation and experience; or whatever notional knowledge they have of evangelic truth, they have no spiritual and experimental knowledge; not the light of faith; nor rejoicing of hope; nor heat of love; no light of spiritual joy and gladness; but all black despair. They were once pure and holy creatures; but through their sin and fall, became impure and unholy; and therefore called "unclean spirits"; who delight in the impurities of sin; and take pleasure in drawing men into them, to the commission of them; the devil is called emphatically and eminently, "the wicked one", being notoriously and superlatively wicked; even wickedness itself (Matthew 10:1; Matthew 13:38; 1 John 3:12; 1 John 5:18). Once they were lovers of God, and of their fellow creatures; but now at enmity to God, and all that is good; and spiteful and malicious to mankind. Satan is called emphatically the enemy, the enemy of God and of Christ, and of all good men; desirous of doing all the harm and mischief to them he can, or gets leave to do; the case of Job

abundantly proves this; whose substance, family, and health, by permission, he destroyed; and would have taken away his life, could he have obtained leave: and as also the possessions of men by him, in the times of Christ show; to the torment of their bodies, and the distraction of their minds; and, indeed, he is always going about seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). These fallen angels, who were once in a guiltless state, are now in the most desperate circumstances; are in chains of darkness and black despair, under irremissible guilt; no pardon for them, nor hope of it for evermore; which leads on to observe,

2d. Fourthly, Their punishment; and which is both of loss and sense; they have lost the favour and presence of God, and they sensibly feel his wrath and indignation on them. Sinning, they were hurled out of heaven, and deprived of their blissful state they left; being forced to leave their habitation there; nor will their place be any more found there; the apostle Peter says, they were "cast down to hell" (2 Peter 2:4), but where that is, it is not easy to say; very probably upon their ejection out of heaven, they fell down into the air, since Satan is said to be the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). Not that he has a power of moving the air, and of raising storms and tempests; but he is the ruler of the posse of devils that dwell in the air [3]; from whence, by divine permission, they descend and patrol; and rove about the earth, in chains, limited and restrained for the punishment of wicked men, and for the trial of the graces of good men; but as yet they do not seem to have their full punishment inflicted on them; or are not yet in full torment; as may be learnt from their words to Christ; "Art thou come hither to torment us before our time?" and are said to be "reserved unto judgment, and unto the judgment of the great day"; when their full sentence will be pronounced upon them, and be carried into execution (Matthew 8:29; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6), which they "believe and tremble" at (James 2:19), and which punishment will be everlasting; there will be no end of it, no deliverance from it; it is called everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; the fire of divine wrath, which will never be quenched, but always burn without intermission, to all eternity; and a "lake of fire and brimstone", where the devil, with the beast and false prophet, will be "tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

ENDNOTES:

[1] De Vitando aere Al. p. 830.

[2] It is an ancient tradition of the heathens, that the evil demons envied good men, Plutarch. in Dio, p. 958.

[3] It was a notion of the Chaldeans, that the air is full of demons, Laert. Proem. ad Vit. Philos. p. 5. and of Pythagoras, ibid. Vit. Philosoph. l. 8. in Vita ejus; and of Plato, Apuleius de Deo Socratis; and of the Jews, so R. Joseph Ben Gekatilia in Shaare ora, fol. 4. 1.

02. Of the Eternal Union of the Elect to God

Of The Eternal Union Of The Elect Of God Unto Him. The union of God's elect unto him, their adoption by him, justification before him, and acceptance with him, being eternal, internal, and immanent acts in God; I know not where better to place them, and take them into consideration, than next to the decrees of God, and particularly the decree of election; since as that flows from the love of God, and is in Christ from everlasting, there must of course be an union to him so early; and since predestination to the adoption of children, and acceptance in the beloved, are parts and branches of it, (Ephesians 1:4-6) they must be of the same date. I shall begin with the union of God's elect in Christ.

I shall not here treat of any time acts of union; as of our nature to the Son of God by his incarnation, when he became our brother, our near kinsman, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; and we and he were of one, that is, of one nature, (Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:16) nor of the vital union of our persons to him in regeneration, when we are quickened by the power and grace of God, Christ is formed in our hearts, and we become new creatures in him, and are in him as living fruitful branches in him, the living vine; which is our open being in Christ, in consequence of a secret being in him from everlasting by electing grace (see Romans 16:7; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Corinthians 12:2). Nor of the more open and manifest union of the saints to God hereafter; who being once in Christ, are always found in him; die in union to him, rise from the dead by virtue of that union; and who will then, in soul and body, be one in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; whose union to one another is the pattern and exemplar of theirs; and for the open manifestation of which Christ prays (John 17:21; John 17:23). But I shall consider the union of the elect to God, as it is in its original, and as an eternal immanent act in God; and which is no other than the going forth of his heart in love to them, and thereby uniting them to himself; which love, as it is from everlasting, (Jeremiah 31:3; John 17:23-24) so it is of a cementing and uniting nature; and, indeed, is the bond of union between God and his chosen people, or that by which he has taken them into near union with himself: love is the bond of union among men, of friendship one to another; it was this which knit the soul of Jonathan to the soul of David, so that he loved him as his own soul; it is the bond of the saints union to each other; their hearts are "knit together in love": hence "charity", or love, is called, "the bond of perfectness", or the perfect bond, which joins and keeps them together (Colossians 2:7; Colossians 3:14). It was love which so closely cemented the hearts of the first Christians to one another, insomuch that the multitude of them were "of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4:32). And now love must operate infinitely more strongly in the heart of God, attracting and uniting the objects of it to himself, giving them such a nearness and union to him which cannot be dissolved; nothing can "separate from the love of God"; not the fall of God's elect in Adam; nor their actual sins and transgressions in a state of unregeneracy; nor their revoltings and backslidings after conversion, (Romans 8:38-39; Ephesians 2:3-4; Hosea 14:4). This bond of union is indissoluble by the joint power of men and devils. In virtue of this, the people of God become a part of himself, a near, dear, and tender part, even as the apple of his eye; have a place in his heart, are engraven

on the palms of his hands, and ever on his thoughts; the desires and affections of his soul are always towards them, and he is ever devising and forming schemes for their welfare; how great is his goodness which he has laid up and wrought for them! (Zechariah 2:8; Psalms 139:17; Song of Solomon 7:10; Isaiah 59:16; Psalms 31:19). The love of Christ to the elect, is as early as that of his Father's love to him and them, and which, it seems, was a love of complacency and delight; for before the world was his "delights were with the sons of men", (John 15:9; Proverbs 8:30-31) and this is of the same cementing and uniting nature as his Father's; it is this which causes him to stick closer than a brother to his people; and nothing can separate from his love to them, any more than from the love of the Father; having loved his own, he loves them to the end. This bond of union remains firm and sure, and gives such a nearness to him the church wished for; "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm" (Song of Solomon 8:6; Proverbs 18:24; Romans 8:35). The same may be said of the love of the Spirit; for it is the everlasting love of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, which is the bond of the union of God's elect to the sacred three; they have all three loved the elect with an everlasting love; and thereby have firmly and everlastingly united them to themselves; and hence because of the Spirit's love of them, and union to them, he, in time, becomes the Spirit of life and grace in them (Romans 15:30). Now of this love union there are several branches, or which are so many illustrations and confirmations of it, and all in eternity; as,

1. An election union in Christ: this flows from the love of God, "electio praesupponit dilectionem", election presupposes love; (see 2 Thessalonians 2:13) particular persons are said to be chosen in Christ, as Rufus, (Romans 16:13) and the apostle says of himself and others, that God had chosen them "in Christ", and that before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). Election gives a being in Christ, a kind of subsistence in him; though not an "esse actu", an actual being, yet at least an "esse representativum", a representative being; even such an one as that they are capable of having grants of grace made to them in Christ, and of being blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and that before the world began, (2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:3-4) and how they can be said to have a being in Christ, and yet have no union to him, I cannot conceive. Besides, in election there is a near relation commences between Christ and the elect; he is given to be an head to them, and they are given as members to him; and as such they are chosen together, he first in order of nature, as the head; and then they as members of him; nothing is more common with sound divines than to express themselves in this manner, when speaking of the election of Christ, and his people in him; particularly, says Dr. Goodwin [1], "an the womb, head and members are not conceived apart, but together, as having relation to each other; so were we and Christ (as making up one mystical body to God) formed together in the eternal womb of election." And in the same place he says, "Jesus Christ was the head of election, and of the elect of God; and so in order of nature elected first, though in order of time we were elected together; in the womb of election he, the head, came out first, and then we, the members."

Now what relation can well be thought of nearer, or more expressive of a close union, than this of head and members? Christ is the chosen head of the church, the church the chosen body of Christ, the fulness of him that fills all in all, (Ephesians 1:22-23) hence is the safety and security of the saints, being in Christ through electing grace, and united to him; and therefore said to be "preserved in" him; herein and hereby put into his hand, made the sheep of his hand, out of whose hands none can pluck them, nor they ever fall (Jude 1:1).

2. There is a conjugal union between Christ and the elect, which also flows from love, and commenced in eternity. By the institution of natural marriage, the persons between whom it is contracted become one flesh, as did Adam and Eve: and a nearer union than this cannot well be conceived of; whose marriage was a shadow and representation of that between Christ and his church; whom, having espoused, he nourishes and cherishes as his own flesh; and they become one, and have one and the same name, Christ, that is, Christ mystical, (Ephesians 5:29-32; 1 Corinthians 12:12). Now though the open marriage relation between Christ and particular persons takes place at conversion, which is the day of their espousals to him, (Jeremiah 2:2) and the more public notification of it will be when all the elect of God are gathered in, and shall in one body be as a bride adorned for her husband, and the marriage of the Lamb shall be come; and this declared in the most open manner, and the nuptials solemnized most magnificently (Revelation 21:2). Yet the secret act of betrothing was in eternity, when Christ, being in love with the chosen ones, asked them of his Father to be his spouse and bride; and being given to him, he betrothed them to himself in lovingkindness, and from thenceforward looked on them as standing in such a relation to him; and which is the foundation of all other after acts of grace unto them: hence, because of his marriage relation to his church, he became her surety, and gave himself for her, shed his precious blood to sanctify and cleanse her from all the impurities of the fall, and other transgressions; that he might present her to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; even just such a church, and in such glory he had viewed her in, when he first betrothed her, (Ephesians 5:25-27). Song with the Jews there was a private betrothing before open marriage, and the consummation of it; at which betrothing the relation of husband and wife commenced, (Deuteronomy 22:23-24) and so Christ is said to be the husband of the Gentile church before she was in actual being (Isaiah 54:5).

3. There is a federal union between Christ and the elect, and they have a covenant subsistence in him as their head and representative. The covenant flows from, and is the effect of the love, grace, and mercy of God; these are spoken of along with it as the foundation of it, (Psalms 89:2-3; Psalms 89:33-34; Isaiah 54:10) hence it is commonly called the covenant of grace, and this was made from everlasting; Christ was set up as the mediator of it, and his goings forth in it were so early, (Proverbs 8:23; Micah 5:2) eternal life was promised before the world began, and blessings of grace so soon provided, (Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:9) all which proves the antiquity of this covenant, of which more hereafter. Now this covenant was made with Christ not as a single person, but as a common head; not for himself, or on his own account only, but for and on the account of his people; as the covenant of works was made with Adam, as the federal head of all his posterity; hence he is said to be the figure or type of him that was to come, (Romans 5:14) so the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the federal head of his spiritual offspring; and for this reason a parallel is ran between them in (Romans 5:1-21; 1 Corinthians 15:1-58) as if they had been the only two men in the world, the one called the first, the other the second man. Christ represented his people in this covenant, and they had a representative union to him in it; all that he promised and engaged to do, he promised and engaged in their name and on their account; and when performed it was the same with God, as if it had been done by them; and what he received, promises and blessings of grace, he received in their name, and they received them in him, being one with him as their common head and representative.

4. There is a legal union between Christ and the elect, the bond of which is his suretiship for them, flowing from his strong love and affection to them. In this respect Christ and they are one in the eye of the law, as the bondsman and debtor are one in a legal sense; so that if one of them pays the debt bound for, it is the same as if the other did. Christ is the surety of the better testament; he drew nigh to God, gave his bond, laid himself under obligation to pay the debts of his people, and satisfy for their sins; who being as such accepted of by God, he and they were considered as one; and this is the ground and foundation of his payment of their debts, of his making satisfaction for their sins, of the imputation of their sins to him, and of the imputation of his righteousness to them. In short, it is the saint's antecedent union and relation to Christ in eternity, in the several views of it in which it has been considered, which is the ground and reason of all that Christ has done and suffered for them, and not for others; and of all the blessings of grace that are or shall be bestowed upon them, and which are denied to others: the reason why he became incarnate for them, and took upon him human nature with a peculiar regard to them, was because they were children given to him; and why he laid down his life for them, because they were his sheep; and why he gave himself for them, because they were his church; and why he saved them from their sins, because they were his people, (Hebrews 2:13-14; John 10:14-15; Ephesians 5:25; Matthew 1:21). In a word, union to Christ is the first thing, the first blessing of grace flowing from love and effected by it; and hence is the application of all others; "of him are ye in Christ Jesus", first loved and united to Christ, and then it follows, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption", (1 Corinthians 1:30). Song Dr. Goodwin [2] observes, that union with Christ is the first fundamental thing of justification and sanctification and all. Christ first takes us, and then sends his Spirit; he apprehends us first; it is not my being regenerate that puts me into a right of all these privileges; but it is Christ takes me, and then gives me his Spirit, faith, holiness, &c.

ENDNOTES:

[1]Works, vol. 1. part 1. p. 62.

[2]Works, vol. 3. part 2. p. 347.

02. Of the Everlasting Council

Of The Everlasting Council Between The Three Divine Persons, Concerning The Salvation Of Men.

Having treated of the internal and immanent acts in the divine mind, and which are eternal; I shall next consider the operations and transactions among the three divine persons when alone, before the world began, or any creature was in being; and which are, chiefly the council and covenant of God, respecting the salvation of men: these are generally blended together by divines; and indeed it is difficult to consider them distinctly with exactness and precision; but I think they are to be distinguished, and the one to be considered as leading on, and as preparatory and introductory to the other, though both of an eternal date; and shall begin with the council of God, held between the three divine persons, Father, Son and Spirit, concerning the affair of man's salvation before the world was. And it will be proper to enquire.

1. First, In what sense counsel, consultation and deliberation, can be ascribed to God, to the divine persons; and,

1a. This is not to be understood as expressive of any want of knowledge, or of the least degree of ignorance in God, or of his being at a loss in forming the scheme of salvation; since he is a God of knowledge, of all knowledge, is perfect in knowledge, wanting nothing; is the only wise and all-wise God, whose understanding is infinite, and reaches to all things, and nothing can escape it: want of knowledge is often the case with men, and therefore they deliberate with themselves, and consult with others; but it is not so with God; wherefore,

1b. Consultation in him is not in order to gain more knowledge, or to obtain more satisfaction, and so more pleasure in the review of things; for since his understanding is infinite, there can be no accession to it, nor increase of knowledge in it: men consult with themselves, and reason on things in their own minds, or consult with others to gain more knowledge; and if this is not the result of it, yet it gives them satisfaction and pleasure, when those they have an high opinion of agree with them, and approve of their schemes; this makes their minds more easy, and confirms and settles them; and thus in the multitude of counsellors there is safety and delight (see Proverbs 11:14; Proverbs 27:9). Nor,

1c. Does a council held between the three divine persons suppose any inequality between them; usually indeed with men, in matters of moment and difficulty, persons supposed to be of superior abilities are consulted, and their judgment taken; as Ahithophel by David, and the Israelites, whose counsel with them was as the oracles of God; but this is not to be supposed here, when the Father consults with the Son and Spirit, it is not because they have knowledge superior to him, or that he needs any information from them; they are one in nature; and are equal in knowledge and understanding; the Father is omniscient, the Son knows all things, and the Spirit searches the deep things of God; and yet may consult together; and three persons of equal knowledge and judgment among men may consult together about an affair of importance, without supposing any

superiority and inferiority in them.

1d. Nor is consultation in God continued, carried on and protracted to any length, as it often is with men, who when they have a matter of difficulty before them, do not suddenly and at once determine; but take time and consider it in every point of view, that they may fix on the wisest and most rational method of acting; consultations on an affair have been sometimes held many days successively; but so it is not with God, counsel with him is as quick as thought, yea, it is no other than his thought, and therefore they go together (Psalms 33:11). But,

1d1. When consultation about the salvation of man is ascribed to God, it is intended to express the importance of it; not things trifling, but those of importance, are what men consult about and deliberate upon; such is the work of mens salvation of the greatest moment, not only to men, to their comfort and happiness here and hereafter, but to the glory of God; the glory of all whose perfections is greatly displayed in it, being so wisely contrived as it is for that purpose; wherefore it is not put upon any footing; nor into any hands, but into the hands of the Son of God (Psalms 21:5; John 17:4).

1d2. This way of speaking is used to set forth the wisdom of God displayed herein; schemes, which are the fruit of consultation and deliberation, are generally the most wisely formed, and best succeed: in the scheme of salvation by Christ, God has abounded in all wisdom and prudence; it is the manifold wisdom of God, in which that is displayed in the greatest fulness and variety; insomuch that angels, those wise and knowing creatures, desire to look more and more into it (Ephesians 1:7-8; Ephesians 3:10).

1d3. This being the effect of a council between the three divine persons, shows their unanimity in it; as they are one in nature, so they agree in one; and as in everything, so in this, the salvation of men; the Father signified his mind that his Son should be sent to be the Saviour of men, when he may be supposed to put such a question as in Isaiah 6:8. "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" the Son, knowing his Father’s will, and assenting to it, declared his agreement with it, "Here am I, send me"; and the Spirit approving of the Father’s motion, and the Son’s consent, joined with the divine Father in the mission of him; "Now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me", (Isaiah 48:16) and what inexpressible pleasure must such unanimity give to a believing soul, to declare which is the design of the divine consultation. These things being observed, I shall endeavour, 2. Secondly, To give some proof that there was a council between the divine persons concerning the salvation of men.

2a. An argument in favour of this may be drawn from the purpose of God; all whose purposes are called his counsels because they are founded in the highest wisdom, (Isaiah 25:1) now the purpose of God respecting the salvation of men, is the basis and foundation of the council held concerning it, in which purpose, as well as council, all the three persons are concerned; for the scheme of salvation, which is, "the manifold wisdom of God, is according to the eternal purpose which he" (God the Father) "purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord", (Ephesians 3:10-11) and the Son was not only privy to this purpose or counsel, and agreed to it; but the Spirit also, who searches "the deep things of God", and approves of them, which are no other than the purposes and counsels of his heart (1 Corinthians 2:10).

2b. It appears there was a consultation held about the salvation of men from the gospel, which is an exhibition and declaration of the scheme of salvation, being called the counsel of God, (Acts 20:27) and the wisdom of God, the hidden wisdom ordained before the world, (1 Corinthians 2:6) for it is no other indeed than a transcript of the council and covenant of grace; the sum and substance of the word and ministry of reconciliation, is that eternal transaction between God and Christ concerning it, which the apostle thus expresses; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses (2 Corinthians 5:19).

2c. It may be reasonably concluded, from the consultation had between the divine Persons, concerning the formation of man, thus expressed, "And God said, Let us make man in our image"; which was said, not to angels, but to the other two divine Persons, the Son and Spirit; and it is not necessary to understand the words as spoken the moment, or immediately before the creation of man, but as spoken in eternity, in council between the divine Persons; for it may be rendered, "God had said"; and, indeed, God had determined on this in the decree of election; for as in the decree of the end, he chose some of the creatures his power could make, to be happy with him, for his own glory; so in the decree of the means, he resolved on the creation of them; as has been before observed; however, be it, that this consultation was immediately before the creation of man, as all the three Persons were concerned in that, and in his creation; it may be reasonably argued, that if there was a consultation of the divine Persons about the making of man at first, then much more about the redemption and salvation of him. But,

2d. What would put this matter out of all doubt, is the sense of a passage in Zechariah 6:13 as given by some learned men, if it can be established; "And the counsel of peace shall be between them both": some, indeed, interpret it of the Kingly and Priestly offices meeting in Christ, and of the unanimity of them in him; since it is before said, "He shall be a priest upon the throne"; but it seems rather to respect persons and things. Others have thought of Zerubbabel the prince, and Joshua the high priest, who were unanimously agreed in building the second temple: but an edifice of another kind, and of a spiritual nature, the church of God, seems to be intended, the building of which is ascribed to a single Person only. Rather by the "counsel of peace", may be meant the gospel, called the counsel of God, and the gospel of peace, which was to be, and has been among Jews and Gentiles, preached to them, both as to them that are nigh, so to them afar off, as in Zechariah 6:15 and which was a means of making peace between them, and reconciling them together, (Ephesians 2:17; Ephesians 6:15) and in this sense of the words I formerly acquiesced [1]: but there is another sense of them embraced by learned men, to whose judgment I pay a great deference; such as Heidegger [2], De Dieu [3], Cocceius [4], Witsius [5], Dr. Owen [6], and others, that this respects the council concerning the peace and reconciliation in eternity, between Jehovah and the Branch, between the Father and the Son, who in time was to become man. My objections to this sense have been that this council in eternity was between the three Persons, and not two only; and that is what is past; whereas this is spoken of as future: but when I consider that Jehovah and the Branch are the only Persons mentioned in the text, and so could only, with propriety, be spoken of, though the council was between the three; and that, in the Hebrew language, tenses are frequently put for one another, the past for the future, and so the future for the past; and things are said to be, when they appear to be, though they are before; the sense may be, that when the Man, the Branch, should grow out of his place, and build the temple, and bear the glory, and sit a priest on his throne, then it should clearly appear, that there had been a

council of peace between them both, which was the ground and foundation of all: and in this light, this sense of the passage may be admitted, and so be a proof of the point under consideration. But if this is not the truth of this text; yet,

2e. That there has been such a transaction between the Father and the Son, which, with propriety enough, may be called the "counsel of peace", we have sufficient warrant from 2 Corinthians 5:19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses"; by the "world" is meant the elect of God, he so loved, as to send his Son to be the Saviour of, and for the life of whom Christ gave his flesh, (John 3:16; John 6:51) and about the peace and reconciliation of those, or in what way to make peace and atonement for them, God was in Christ, or with Christ, consulting, contriving, and planning the scheme of it; which was this, not to impute their sins unto them, but to Christ, now called to be the Saviour of them; and this contains the sum of what we mean by the council of peace. I proceed,

3. Thirdly, To observe, that the three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, and they only, were concerned in this council.

3a. Not angels, for they were not then in being, they were not made till the heavens were. But this council was before the heavens and the earth were made; and besides, the angels are the creatures of God, his ministering spirits, and therefore he would never consult with them; they knew nothing of this transaction until it was revealed unto them: and when it was, many of them, as some think, were offended at it, left their habitation, and apostatised from God; not being able to endure it, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be their Head, and so that nature be advanced above theirs, which they perceived by this step would be the case: and as for those that stood and kept their first estate, they were so far from assisting in this council, that they were entirely unacquainted with it, until it was made known unto them; and when it was, though they highly approved of it, their knowledge of it seemed to be imperfect; since they desire to look more and more into it, and "even do" learn of the church the manifold wisdom of God in it (1 Peter 1:12; Ephesians 3:10).

3b. Nor were men a party in this council; "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" (Romans 11:34) not any of the sons of men; for these also were not then in being, and when they were, were but creatures, and soon became sinful ones, and destitute of true wisdom and knowledge, and so unfit to be of such a council, had it been in time; and had God summoned all the individuals of human nature together, and proposed it to them, that if they could find out a way how they could be saved, consistent with his divine perfections, he would willingly save them; after ever so long a time allowed them for consultation about it; and even if they had the assistance of all the angels in heaven, they must have returned an "ignoramus", and owned they knew not any. No, none but the blessed Three in One were of this council, and fit to be of it; the thing consulted about was "nodus Deo vindice dignus", worthy only of God.

3b1. Jehovah the Father, the first Person in order of nature, though not of time, may reasonably be supposed to give the lead in this affair, and proposed the thing to be debated and advised about; he who, concerning the creation of man, proposed it to the other two Persons, might, with great propriety, move for a consultation about his salvation: who is the Ancient of days, with whom is wisdom, and who hath counsel and understanding, yea, is wonderful in counsel, as well as excellent in working; and so infinitely fit to conduct an affair of this nature (Job 12:12-13; Isaiah

28:29).

3b2. Jehovah the Son, has the same wisdom, counsel, and understanding his Father has; for all that he hath are his; nor does Christ think it any robbery to be equal with him; he is wisdom itself, or "wisdoms", he is possessed of the most consummate wisdom; in him, even as Mediator, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and he himself says, "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom", (Proverbs 1:20; Proverbs 8:14; Colossians 2:3) yea, he is called "the Wonderful, Counsellor", (Isaiah 9:6) which not only respects his capacity and ability to give the best counsel and advice to men, as he does, but to assist in the council of God himself; and so the "Septuagint" interpreters understood that passage, rendering it, "the Angel of the great council"; whereby it seems as if those Jews then had a notion of this great transaction, and of the concern of the Messiah in it; to whom the whole verse belongs: to which may be added, that Christ the Son of God, was as one brought up with his divine Father, lay in his bosom, was privy to his designs, and must be in his council, and was on all accounts fit for it.

3b3. The Holy Spirit had a concern in this council, and was fit to be of it; Epiphanius says [7], as the Son is the Angel of the great council, so is the Holy Spirit; he is not only the Spirit of wisdom to men, and by whom is given to them, to one the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge; and therefore must be possessed of the most perfect wisdom and knowledge himself, (Ephesians 1:17; 1 Corinthians 12:8) but he is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of counsel and knowledge, to and resting on Christ as Mediator, (Isaiah 11:2) and therefore must be a very proper Person to be concerned with the Father and the Son, in this great council; for never was such a council held as this, between such Persons, and on such a momentous and interesting affair. Which,

4. Fourthly, Is next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. Now the affair consulted about, was not the salvation of men merely; nor who should be the persons that should be saved with it; for both that was resolved on, and the persons fixed on who were to enjoy it, in the decree of election, which stands firm and sure on the unalterable will of God; but who should be the Saviour, or be the author of this salvation; and a proper person for this work, could never have been devised, found out, and settled upon, by men and angels; this was the business of this great council. By the decree of election the vessels of mercy were prepared for glory, or were ordained to eternal life, God resolved to have mercy on them, and save them; but who should be the saviour, was referred to this council to agree upon; it is true, indeed, that this was, in some respect, involved and included in the Father’s purpose, according to election, who appointed some, not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Thessalonians 5:9) but then, though this was in the Father’s purpose, it was necessary that the will of the Son should be expressed, and his approbation and consent had; for which this council was called and held. The case stands thus: it was in Jehovah the Father’s thoughts, to save men by his Son; he in his infinite wisdom saw he was the fittest person for this work, and, in his own mind, chose him to it; and this is meant by laying help on One that is mighty, exalting one chosen from among the people; finding David his servant, and anointing him with his holy oil (Psalms 89:19-20). Now in the eternal council he moved it, and proposed it to his Son, as the most advisable step that could be taken, to bring about the designed salvation; who readily agreed to it, and said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God", (Hebrews 10:7) from Psalms 40:7-8 and the Holy Spirit expressed his approbation of him, as the fittest person to be the Saviour, by joining with the Father in the mission

of him, as before observed; and by forming his human nature in time, and filling it with his gifts and graces without measure. The pleasure and satisfaction the three divine Persons had in this affair, thus advised to, consulted, and approved of, is most clearly to be seen and observed at our Lord's baptism (Matthew 3:16-17). But not only it was in this council consulted, who should be the Author of salvation; but also in what way and manner it should be effected, both for the security of men, and for the display of the glory of the divine perfections. Now it should be observed, that the elect of God, the persons to be saved, were considered in this transaction as fallen creatures, which salvation by Christ supposes; as sinners in Adam, on whom judgment came unto condemnation, as obnoxious to the curses of the righteous law, and to the resentments of divine justice; and therefore satisfaction must be made to the law and justice of God, the law must be fulfilled, and justice satisfied, by an atonement made; this was signified to the Saviour found, who approved of it, as a most fit thing to be done; hence God is gracious, and saith, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom", (Job 33:24) this was found by infinite wisdom in this council; and whereas this ransom, satisfaction, and atonement, must be made by obeying the precepts of the law, and by the suffering of death, the penalty of it; this the law required of the transgressor of it; "Thou shalt surely die"; and so of the Surety for him; wherefore, since it was necessary that the Captain and Author of salvation, in bringing many sons to glory, should be made perfect through sufferings; it was proper that he should assume a nature in which he would be capable of obeying and suffering, even a nature of the same kind with that which sinned; this was notified in council to the Son of God, and he approved of it as right and fit, and said, "A body hast thou prepared me", a whole human nature, in purpose; and now in council, signified he was ready to assume it in time. Moreover, it was seen proper and advisable, that the human nature assumed, should be holy and pure from sin, that it might be offered up without spot to God; and be a sacrifice to take away sin, which it could not be, if sinful; now here a difficulty arises, how such a nature could be come at, since human nature would be defiled by the sin of Adam; and who would be able to bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This difficulty infinite wisdom surmounts, by proposing that the Saviour should be born of a virgin; that this individual nature to be assumed, should not descend from Adam by ordinary generation, but be formed in an extraordinary manner by the power of the Holy Ghost; and this was approved in council, by both the Son and Spirit, since the one readily assumed this nature in this way, and the other formed it. Once more, it appeared necessary that this nature should be taken up into personal union with the Son of God; or, that the Saviour should be God and man in one person; that he should be man, that he might have somewhat to offer, and thereby make reconciliation for the sins of the people; and that he should be God, to give virtue to his deeds and sufferings, to make them effectual to the purposes of them, and he be a fit Mediator, a daysman between God and men, and take care of the things belonging to both. In short, the affair debated and consulted between the three divine persons, was the peace and reconciliation of God's elect by Christ, and the way and manner of doing it; and therefore, as before observed, this transaction may, with great propriety, be called, the council of peace; and which issued in a covenant of peace, next to be considered; in this council everything relative to it was advised, consulted, and contrived; and in the covenant the whole was adjusted and settled; and therefore I have considered the council as the preparation and introduction to the covenant.

ENDNOTES:

[1] See my Exposition of Zechariah 6:13. See Gill on "Zechariah 6:13"

[2] Corpus Theolog. loc. 11. s. 12. p. 376.

[3] In loc.

[4] Summa de Foedere, c. 5. s. 88.

[5] Oeconom. Foederum, l. 2. c. 1. s. 7, 8.

[6] In Hebrews, vol. 2. Exercitat. 4. s. 10. p. 54.

[7] In Ancorato, s. 70.

02. Of the Everlasting Covenant of Grace

Of The Everlasting Covenant Of Grace, Between The Father, And The Son, And The Holy Spirit. The council before treated of, is the basis and foundation of the Covenant of grace, and both relate to the same thing, and in which the same persons are concerned. In the former, things were contrived, planned, and advised; in the latter, fixed and settled. The covenant of grace is a compact or agreement made from all eternity among the divine Persons, more especially between the Father and the Son, concerning the salvation of the elect. For the better understanding these federal transactions between them, before the world was, when there were no creatures, neither angels nor men in being; and which lay the foundation of all the grace and glory, comfort and happiness, of the saints in time and to eternity; it may be proper to consider,

1. The etymology and signification of the words used for "covenant", in the writings of the Old and New Testament, by which it will appear with what propriety these transactions may be called a "covenant". The books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew, and the Hebrew word for "covenant", throughout those writings is tyrb "Berith"; which, by different persons, is derived from different roots. There are a set of men [1] lately risen up, who derive the word from rrb "Barar", which signifies, to "purify"; and because the word we translate "make", which usually goes along with "covenant", signifies, to "cut off", they warmly contend, that wherever we meet with this phrase, it should be rendered, "cut off the Purifier" by whom they understand the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, though it will be allowed, that Christ is sometimes called a Refiner and Purifier, (Malachi 3:3) yet not by any word or name derived from this root; nor is it likely, that a "Purifier", or "he that purifies", should be expressed by a noun feminine, as "Berith" is; and not by a noun masculine, or a participle belonging to this root; and though such a version of the phrase may happen to suit tolerably well with a passage or two; yet there are many places in which, were it so rendered, no sense could be made of them. If the word has the signification of purity, as a word of the same letters, though differently pointed has, being twice translated "soap", (Jeremiah 2:22; Malachi 3:2) which is of a detersive, cleansing, and purifying nature. Rather as this is used for covenant, it may denote the purity of intention, and sincerity of heart, that ought to be in all persons that enter into covenant with each other; and which is most eminently true of the pure and holy divine persons, in their covenant engagements. But the word "Berith, covenant", may rather be derived, as it more commonly is, either from arb "Bara"; which, in the first sense of the word, signifies to "create"; a covenant being made with man, as soon almost as he was created, which covenant he transgressed, (Hosea 6:7) but the covenant of grace was made before the creation of man; though it was first made manifest quickly after his fall, which was not long after his creation; the sum and substance of which lies in those words, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head" (Genesis 3:15). The word, in a secondary sense, may signify, to order or dispose of things; as in creation things were disposed and put in an orderly manner, and with this may agree, the words diatiyemai, and diayhkh, used of a covenant in the New Testament, which signify, a disposing of things in a covenant or testamentary way. It is further observed by some, that the same Hebrew word, in another conjugation, signifies to "cut" in pieces and divide, and

think that a covenant has its name from hence, because it was usual at making covenants, to slay creatures for sacrifice, and cut them in pieces, and lay them by each other, and the covenanters to pass between them; of which rite (see Genesis 15:9-10; Genesis 15:17; Jeremiah 34:18) to which way of making a covenant by sacrifice, the allusion may be in Psalms 50:5. Or else the word may be derived from hrb "Barah"; which, among other things, signifies to "eat" food; it being usual, when covenants were made and confirmed, for the parties covenanting, to eat and feast together; as did Abimelech and Isaac, Laban and Jacob, (Genesis 26:30; Genesis 31:46) and it may be observed, that the Lord's Supper, which is a feast, is a commemoration of the ratification of the covenant of grace, by the blood of Christ, and wherein and whereby the faith of God's people is strengthened and confirmed, as to their interest in it. But after all, it may be best to derive the word from this root, as it signifies to select and choose, and the rather, since all those roots, rrb, arb hrb have this signification; and which well agrees with a covenant, into which persons, of their own will and choice, enter; choose the persons to be concerned with them, the terms and conditions on which they covenant with each other, and the things and persons they covenant about; all which entirely agrees with this federal transaction, or covenant of grace we are about to treat of. The word used in the New Testament for "covenant", is diayhkh, by which word the Septuagint interpreters almost always translate the Hebrew word "berith" in the Old, and comes from a word which signifies to "dispose", and that in a covenant way, as in Luke 22:29, where the Father is said to appoint, or dispose, by covenant, a kingdom to his Son, as he also is said to appoint, or dispose by covenant, a kingdom to his people; and the word from it, is used for a covenant in (Acts 3:25) and in other places; and sometimes for a testament, or a man's last will, (Hebrews 9:16-17) and we shall see the use of the word in this sense hereafter, as it may be applicable to the covenant of grace; the word signifies both covenant and testament, and some have called it a covenant testament, or a testamentary covenant; hence the different administrations of the covenant of grace in time, are called the first and second, the Old and New Testament; and even the books of scripture, written under those different dispensations, are so distinguished (see Hebrews 8:1-13; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 2 Corinthians 3:14). In the next place it may not be improper to observe,

2. In what sense the word "covenant" is used in scripture, which may serve to lead into the nature of it. And,

2a. It is sometimes used for an ordinance, precept, and command; so the order for giving the heave offerings to the sons of Aaron, is called a covenant of salt, a perpetual ordinance, (Numbers 18:19) the law for releasing servants after six years service, has the name of a covenant, (Jeremiah 34:13-14) and this may account for the Decalogue, or Ten Commands, being called a covenant, (Deuteronomy 4:13) for whatsoever God enjoins men, they are under an obligation to observe, nor have they a right to refuse obedience to it; and, indeed, the covenant of works made with Adam, was much of the same nature, only he had a will, consenting to obey, the bias of it being to the will of God, as well as power to perform.

2b. A covenant, when ascribed to God, is often nothing more than a mere promise; "This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee", &c. (Isaiah 59:21) hence we read of "covenants of promise", or promissory covenants, (Ephesians 2:12) and, indeed, the covenant of grace, with respect to the elect, is nothing else but a free promise of eternal life and salvation by Jesus Christ, which includes all other promises of blessings of grace in it; "This is the promise that he hath promised us", the grand comprehensive promise, "even eternal life", (1 John 2:25) and

which is absolute and unconditional, with respect to them; whatever condition is in that covenant, lay only on Christ to perform; he and his work are the only condition of it. And so,

2c. We often read of covenants of God only on one side; of this kind is his covenant of the day and of the night, (Jeremiah 33:20) which is no other than a promise that these should always continue, without requiring any condition on the part of the creature, (Genesis 8:22) and the covenant he made with Noah and his posterity, and with every living creature, with which latter especially, there could be no restipulation, (Genesis 9:9-17) and so the covenant he promised to make for his, people, with the beasts of the field, could be no other than a mere promise of security from harm by them (Hosea 2:18). But,

2d. A covenant properly made between man and man, is by stipulation and restipulation, in which they make mutual promises, or conditions, to be performed by them; whether to maintain friendship among themselves, and to strengthen themselves against their common enemies, or to do mutual service to each other, and to their respective posterities; such was the confederacy between Abraham, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; and the covenant between Abimelech and Isaac, and between David and Jonathan (Genesis 14:13; Genesis 26:28; 1 Samuel 20:15-16; 1 Samuel 20:42; 1 Samuel 23:18). Now,

2e. Such a covenant, properly speaking, cannot be made between God and man; for what can man restipulate with God, which is in his power to do or give to him, and which God has not a prior right unto? God may, indeed, condescend to promise that to man, which otherwise he is not bound to give; and he may require of man, that which he has no right to refuse, and God has a right unto, without making any such promise; and therefore, properly speaking, all this cannot formally constitute a covenant, which is to be entered into of free choice on both sides; and especially such a covenant cannot take place in fallen man, who has neither inclination of will to yield the obedience required, nor power to perform it. But,

2f. The covenant of grace made between God and Christ, and with the elect in him, as their Head and Representative, is a proper covenant, consisting of stipulation and restipulation; God the Father in it stipulates with his Son, that he shall do such and such work and service, on condition of which he promises to confer such and such honours and benefits on him, and on the elect in him; and Christ the Son of God restipulates and agrees to do all that is proposed and prescribed, and, upon performance, expects and claims the fulfilment of the promises: in this compact there are mutual engagements each party enters into, stipulate and restipulate about, which make a proper formal covenant (see Isaiah 49:1-6; Isaiah 53:10-12; Psalms 40:6-8; John 17:4-5). Which passages of scripture will be produced, and more fully opened hereafter.

3. The names and epithets given to this federal transaction, or covenant of grace, between the Father and Son, both in the scriptures and among men, may deserve some notice, since they may help to give a better and clearer idea of this transaction.

3a. It is called, "a covenant of life", (Malachi 2:5) for though it is said of Levi, yet of him as a type of Christ; and if the covenant with Levi might be so called, much more that with Christ. Some divines call the covenant of works, made with Adam, a covenant of life, and so it may be; but then only as it respected that natural happy life Adam then lived, and as it contained a promise of continuance of it, and confirmation in it, should he stand the trial of his obedience; but not a promise of eternal

life and happiness, such as the saints enjoy in heaven; for such a life was never designed to be given by, nor could come through a covenant of works (see Galatians 3:21). But the covenant of grace contains such a promise, a promise that was made by God, that cannot lie, before the world was; that is, a promise made to Christ, in the covenant of grace, from eternity, who then existed as the federal Head of his people, to whom it was made, and in whose hands it is put for them; he asked life of his Father for them in this covenant, and he gave it to him, even length of days for ever and ever; and therefore with great propriety may this covenant be called, a covenant of life (see Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:1; Psalms 21:4).

3b. It is called "a covenant of peace" (Malachi 2:5, Isaiah 54:10). As the transaction between the eternal Three, in which the plan and method of the peace and reconciliation of God's elect was consulted, may be called "the council of peace"; because that was a principal article considered in it; so, for the same reason, the covenant may be called the covenant of peace; for what was concerted in the council of peace concerning it, was fixed and settled in the covenant: as, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be the Peace Maker, and should make peace by the shedding of his blood; and hence, in the fulness of time, he was sent to be the Man, the Peace, according to promise and prophecy, founded upon this covenant, (Micah 5:2; Micah 5:5) and had the "chastisement of peace" laid upon him; that is, the punishment for the sins of the elect inflicted on him, whereby their peace and reconciliation was made, (Isaiah 53:6) all which was by his own consent, and in consequence of the covenant made between him and his Father, and which, therefore, is rightly called "the covenant of peace".

3c. It is commonly called by men, "the covenant of grace"; and properly enough, since it entirely flows from, and has its foundation in the grace of God: it is owing to the everlasting love and free favour of God the Father, that he proposed a covenant of this kind to his Son; and it is owing to the grace of the Son, that he so freely and voluntarily entered into engagements with his Father; the matter, sum, and substance of it is grace; it consists of grants and blessings of grace to the elect in Christ; and the ultimate end and design of it is the glory of the grace of God.

3d. It is by some divines called, "the covenant of redemption"; and very truly, because the redemption of God's elect is a principal article in it: the Father proposed to the Son, that he should raise up, restore, redeem Israel, his chosen ones; the Son agreed to it, and hence he was declared and promised, and expected as the Redeemer, long before he came into this world to do this service; Job knew him as his living Redeemer, and all the Old Testament saints waited for him as such, having had a promise of it, which was founded on this covenant agreement; for as it was proposed to him, and he agreed to it, to be the Redeemer, so it was promised him, that upon the condition of giving himself, the redemption and ransom price for the elect, they should be delivered from all their sins, and the effects of them, and out of the hands of all their enemies; see (Isaiah 49:5; Isaiah 59:20; Job 33:24). But then,

3e. This covenant is the same with the covenant of grace; some divines, indeed, make them distinct covenants; the covenant of redemption, they say, was made with Christ in eternity; the covenant of grace with the elect, or with believers, in time: but this is very wrongly said; there is but one covenant of grace, and not two, in which the Head and Members, the Redeemer and the persons to be redeemed, Christ and the elect, are concerned; in which he is the Head and Representative of them, acts for them, and on their behalf. What is called a covenant of

redemption, is a covenant of grace, arising from the grace of the Father, who proposed to his Son to be the Redeemer, and from the grace of the Son, who agreed to be so; and even the honours proposed to the Son in this covenant, redounded to the advantage of the elect; and the sum and substance of the everlasting covenant made with Christ, is the salvation and eternal happiness of the chosen ones; all the blessings and grants of grace to them, are secured in that eternal compact; for they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and had grace given them in him before the world was; wherefore there can be no foundation for such a distinction between a covenant of redemption in eternity, and a covenant of grace in time.

4. The contracting parties concerned in this covenant, are next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. This covenant is commonly represented as if it was only between the Father and the Son; but I see not why the Holy Spirit should be excluded, since he is certainly promised in it both to Head and members; and in consequence of it, is sent down into the hearts of God's covenant ones, to make application of the blessings, promises, and grace of the covenant to them, and to work a work of grace in them; all which must be by agreement, and with his consent; and I think there are some traces, and some footsteps of all the three Persons, as concerned in it, in the dispensation and manifestation of this covenant to the people of Israel (Haggai 2:4-5). However, as in all covenants the contracting parties are,

4a. Distinct from each other, so in this; a covenant is not of one, but of more than one; no man covenants with himself; at least such a covenant is not properly one; Job is, indeed, said to make a covenant with his eyes, (Job 31:1) but that was no other than a resolution within himself to lay a restraint upon his eyes, not to make use of them in such a manner as might tend to sin. The divine Persons of the sacred Trinity are distinct Persons, as has been proved in the article on that subject. And so they appear to be in their federal transactions with each other. He that called his Son to service, and directed him, or proposed the work he should do, "to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel", &c. (Isaiah 49:3; Isaiah 49:5-6) must be distinct from him to whom he proposed all this; and he who in compliance with it said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!" (Psalms 40:7-8; Hebrews 10:7) must be distinct from him whose will he was so ready to do, and whom he calls his Lord and God, as he was, by virtue of his covenant relation to him: and the Spirit, who was sent by them both, in consequence of a covenant agreement, to be the Comforter of the covenant ones, must be distinct from either.

4b. As they are distinct Persons, so they have distinct acts of will; for though their nature and essence is but one, which is common to them all, and so their will but one; yet there are distinct acts of this will, put forth by and peculiar to each distinct Person: thus their nature being the same, their understanding must be the same; and yet there are distinct acts of the divine, understanding, peculiar to each Person; the Father knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father, and they have a distinct knowledge and understanding of one another, and the Spirit knows them both, and they know him. And as their nature and essence, so their affections are the same; and yet there are distinct acts of them, peculiar to each Person; the Father loves the Son, and has put all things into his hands; the Son loves the Father, and is in all things obedient to him; the Spirit loves the Father and the Son, and they both love him: so their will, though the same, there are distinct acts of it, peculiar to each Person; and which appear in their covenanting with each other, and are necessary to it: there is the Father's distinct act of will notified in the covenant, that it is his will and pleasure his Son should be the Saviour of the chosen ones; and there is the Son's distinct act of

will notified in the same covenant, he presenting himself, and declaring himself willing, and engaging himself to be the Saviour of them; which distinct acts of the divine will thus notified, formally constituted a covenant between them; and as the holy Spirit dispenses his gifts and grace, the blessings of this covenant, "severally as he will", (1 Corinthians 12:11) this is pursuant to an agreement, to a notification of his will in covenant also.

4c. These contracting Parties entered into covenant freely and voluntarily, of their own choice, as all covenantors do, or should; hence the Hebrew word for covenant, as has been observed, comes from a root, which signifies to choose; because men choose their own terms and conditions, on which they agree to enter into covenant with each other, not being compelled and forced thereunto. So it is in this everlasting covenant, the Parties were at entire liberty to enter or not into it: the Father was under no necessity, nor under any obligation to save men; he could, in consistence with his justice, and the other perfections of his nature, have destroyed the whole world of men, as he destroyed all the angels that sinned; he was not obliged to make a covenant with his Son to save them; it was of his own choice he did it; who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy: nor was the Son compelled to enter into this covenant; but knowing his Father's will, and agreeing to it, voluntarily engaged in it, and said, "Lo, I come to do thy will": and as the Spirit freely bestows his grace, and the gifts of it in time, so he freely engaged to do it in the covenant in eternity.

4d. What they agreed in covenant, was what was in their power to perform; if one man enters into a covenant with another, and agrees to do what is not in his power, and which he knows it is not, when he enters into covenant, this is a fraud and an imposition on him, with whom he covenants; and in course the covenant is null and void. But the contracting parties in the covenant of grace, are able to perform whatever they covenanted about: the Father is able to make good all that he has promised in it, either to his Son or to the elect in him; and the Son is able to do the work he engaged to do; he had power to assume human nature into union with his divine Person, and to lay down his life in that nature, having such a power over his own life, and to dispose of it at pleasure, as no mere man ever had; and so being God, as well as man, was able to work out the salvation of his people, which he undertook; the Father knew he was able to save them, and therefore laid help on him, and called him to this work; and he knew himself to be equal to it, and therefore engaged in it: and the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of power and might, and so able to perform the part he took in this covenant.

4e. As in all covenants, however, the persons covenanting may be equal in other respects, yet in covenanting there is an inequality and subordination; especially in covenants, in which there is service and work to be done on one side, and a reward to be given in consideration of it on the other; of which nature is the covenant of grace and redemption; and though the contracting parties in it are equal in nature, perfections, and glory, yet in this covenant relation they voluntarily entered into, there is by agreement and consent a subordination; hence the Father, the first Person and Party contracting is called by his Son, his Lord and his God, a phrase always expressive of covenant relation; (see Psalms 16:2; Psalms 22:1; Psalms 40:8; Psalms 45:7; John 20:17) and the Son, the second Person and Party contracting, is called by the Father his Servant; "Thou art my Servant", &c. (Isaiah 49:3) hence the Father is said to be "greater than he", (John 14:28) not merely on account of his human nature, about which there could be no difficulty in admitting it; but with respect to his covenant relation to him, and the office capacity he has taken and sustains in it:

and the Spirit, the third Person and contracting Party, he is said to be sent both by the Father and the Son, to perform that part which he undertook in it: and this economy and dispensation of the covenant, thus settled in subordination among themselves by agreement and consent, is done with great propriety, beauty, and decency, suitable to their natural relations they bear to each other, as equal divine Persons for who so proper to be the proposer of terms in the covenant, to direct and prescribe them, and to exercise a kind of authority, as he who is the first Person in order of nature, and that stands in the relation of a Father to the second Person; and since here was work and service to be done, the salvation of the elect, and that in an inferior nature, in human nature, who so proper to engage in this service, and to assume this nature, and in it yield obedience to the will of God, than the second Person, who stood in the relation of a Son to the First? and with what congruity is the third Person, the Holy Spirit, sent by both, to make application of the grace of both; who is said to be their Breath, and to proceed from both.

4f. As in all covenants some advantages are proposed unto, and expected by all parties concerned, so in this; as God's end in all things, in nature, providence, and grace, is his own glory, so it is in this covenant, even the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit; which must be understood not of any addition unto, or increase of their essential glory, but of the manifestation of it; otherwise, as Christ is represented saying to his Father, "My goodness extendeth not to thee"; thou art not the better for my suretyship engagements in covenant, and the performance of them; thou hast no real profit and advantage thereby; no new accession of glory and happiness accrues to thee by it; but the real profit and advantage resulting from hence is, "to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight" (Psalms 16:2-3). As for the glory promised to Christ, and which he expected and pleaded on his finishing his work, (John 17:4-5) this was either the manifestation of the glory of his divine Person, hid in his state of humiliation; or his glory as Mediator, his kingdom and glory, as such appointed to him, and promised him, upon the performance of his engagements, (Luke 22:29; 1 Peter 1:21; Hebrews 2:9) of which more hereafter; and yet, even the benefit of this redounds to the advantage of God's elect, (John 17:22; John 17:24) it is their salvation and happiness that is the grand thing in view in these covenant transactions; this is "all my salvation" (2 Samuel 23:5). As the sum of the gospel, which is no other than a transcript of the covenant of grace, is the salvation of lost sinners by Christ; so the covenant, of which that is a copy, chiefly respects that, and that is the result of it: hence Christ, the Covenantee, has the name of Jesus, because he undertook to save, and came to save, and has saved his people from their sins, in consequence of his covenant engagements.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Called Hutchinsonians.

02. Of the Faithfulness of God

Of The Faithfulness Of God.

Faithfulness is an attribute that belongs to God; from whence he is denominated the "faithful God" (Deuteronomy 7:9). It is essential to him, and without which he would not be God; to be unfaithful, would be to act contrary to his nature, to deny himself, (2 Timothy 2:13) an unfaithful God would be no God at all; it is a most glorious perfection of his nature; it is "great", like himself; yea, it is infinite; "Great is thy faithfulness", (Lamentations 3:23) it relies to all persons and things God has any concern with; it is all around him; he is, as it were, clothed and covered with it; and there is none in any creature like unto it (Psalms 89:8). There is faithfulness in the holy angels, and in good men, but not like what is in God; and therefore he puts no trust in them, (Job 4:18) his faithfulness is invariably the same; it has never failed in anyone instance, nor never will; it is established in the heavens, and will continue to all generations, (Psalms 89:2; Psalms 89:24; Psalms 89:33; Psalms 119:90; Joshua 23:14) otherwise there would be no firm foundation for trust and confidence in him; but he is the "faithful Creator", and covenant God and Father of his people; to whom they may safely commit themselves, and depend upon him for all mercies promised, both temporal and spiritual, (1 Peter 4:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24) for the faithfulness of God chiefly lies in the performance of his word, which is certain, with respect to all that is spoken by him; for "hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Verily he will (Numbers 23:19; Luke 1:45). And it appears,

1. First, In the performance of what he has said with respect to the world in general; as, that it shall never more be destroyed by a flood, as it once was; and for a token and confirmation of it, God has set the rainbow in the cloud; and now four thousand years are gone since the covenant was made; and God has been faithful to it, though the earth has been sometimes threatened with destruction by violent storms, and sudden inundations; see (Genesis 9:11-16; Isaiah 54:9). Also that the ordinances of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, shall not depart, but always continue in their being, use, and influence; and now they have kept their course, or station, and have done their office, exactly and punctually, for almost six thousand years; see (Jeremiah 31:35-36; Jeremiah 33:25). Likewise that the revolutions of the time, and seasons of the year, should keep their constant course; that, "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease", (Genesis 8:22) and so it has always been, and still is, in one part of the world or another, according to the different climates. Remarkable was the faithfulness of God to the Jewish nation, in that their land required rain only at two seasons of the year, and God promised it to them, and which they always had; though sometimes so ungrateful as not to fear him who gave them rain, "both the former and the latter, in his season", and "reserved" for them "the appointed weeks of the harvest", (Jeremiah 5:24; see Deuteronomy 11:14-15) and whereas God has given reason to expect that his creatures should be preserved in their being, and provided for by him, with the necessaries of life; he has not left himself without a witness to his faithfulness, in all ages and nations, giving rain from heaven and fruitful seasons; and so filling the hearts of his creatures with food and gladness; whose eyes all of

them wait upon him, and he gives them their meat in due season, (Acts 14:17; Psalms 36:5-6; Psalms 145:15-16). And from all this it may be strongly concluded, that whatsoever God has said concerning the world, which is yet to be fulfilled, shall be most certainly done; as the judgment of it, the end and consummation of all things in it, the conflagration of it, and the making new heavens and a new earth, wherein will dwell righteousness (2 Peter 3:7-13).

2. Secondly, The faithfulness of God appears in the fulfilment of what he has said with respect to Christ, and the salvation of men by him; both of what he has said of him, and of what he has said to him: and, indeed, the faithfulness of God is displayed in Christ as in a mirror.

2a. In the performance of what he has said of him; as that he should be born of a woman, be of the seed of Abraham, spring from the tribe of Judah, arise out of the family of David, be born of a virgin at Bethlehem, and converse much in Galilee, (Genesis 3:15; Genesis 22:18; Genesis 49:10; 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:1-2) and suffer, and die, and work out the salvation of his people, (Psalms 22:1-31; Isaiah 53:1-12, Isaiah 25:9, Isaiah 35:4, Isaiah 49:6) all which has been fully accomplished (Matthew 1:1; Matthew 1:18-23; Matthew 2:5-6; Matthew 2:8; Matthew 2:11; Matthew 2:22-23; Matthew 4:13-16; Luke 1:68-72; 1 Corinthians 15:3).

2b. In the performance of what he said to Christ, or promised him; as that he would help him, and strengthen him, as man and mediator, in the great work of redemption and salvation; and which help and strength Christ expected, and believed he should have, and had it, (Psalms 89:21; Isaiah 50:7; Isaiah 50:9; Isaiah 49:8) and that though he should die, and be laid in the grave and buried; yet he would raise him from the dead, and that on the third day; and which was accordingly done, (Psalms 16:10; Hosea 6:2; 1 Corinthians 15:4) and that when he had done his work, being delivered unto death for the sins of his people, and raised again for their justification, he should be glorified at his right hand, in his human nature; and accordingly, Christ having done his work, pleaded this promise, and it was fulfilled, (Psalms 110:1; John 17:4-5; Php 2:9-10) and that he should see his seed have a numerous offspring, which should continue to the end of the world, (Isaiah 53:10; Psalms 89:4; Psalms 89:29; Psalms 89:36) and which has been accomplished in the numerous conversions both among Jews and Gentiles, in the first ages of Christianity; and which have continued, more or less, ever since; and will still more manifestly appear when the nation of the Jews shall be born at once, and the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in.

2c. The faithfulness of God is displayed in the person, office, and works of Christ. This, as all other divine perfections, is common to each person in the Godhead, and shines resplendently in the Son of God, "the brightness of his Father's glory", who has every perfection the Father has; so that he that has seen the Son has seen the Father, the same perfections being in the one as in the other, and this of faithfulness among the rest; which is to be seen in Christ as in a mirror, or glass; and an estimate may in some measure be taken, and judgment made of the faithfulness of God, by what appears in his Son; who has been "faithful to him that appointed him" to his office as Mediator. Moses was faithful in the house of God, as a servant; but Christ as a Son over his own house, (Hebrews 3:2-6) and whose faithfulness may be observed,

2c1. In the performance of his engagements: he engaged to be the Surety of his people; to stand in their place and stead; to do and suffer for them what should be required, and to take care of all their affairs and concerns for time and eternity; and accordingly, he is become the Surety of the better testament, (Hebrews 7:22) he engaged to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; he is

often spoken of as such in the Old Testament; that is, as one who had engaged to work out their redemption and salvation; and which he has now obtained, and become the author of, (Hebrews 5:9; Hebrews 9:12)he engaged to come into the world, in order to do this work, saying, "Lo, I come"; and he is come, and has done it; and that he came into the world, and has done this for sinners, the chief of sinners, is a "faithful saying"; in which the faithfulness of God in his promises, and of Christ in his engagements, is abundantly displayed, (1 Timothy 1:15) he engaged to come and fulfil the law, both its precepts and its penalty, and to become a sacrifice for sin; ceremonial sacrifices being insufficient, (Psalms 40:6-8) and he is accordingly become the fulfilling "end of the law for righteousness to all that believe"; and has offered himself, soul and body, without spot to God; "a Sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour"; and whereby sin has been fully expiated and put away, (Romans 10:4; Hebrews 9:14; Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 10:5-10) he engaged to pay off the debts of his people, and by being their Surety, become responsible for them, and to clear off all their scores; which he has done to the uttermost farthing, and blotted out the handwriting of ordinances against them. In short, he engaged to feed the flock of God, to take the whole care and oversight of it; and he does feed his flock like a shepherd, and has shown himself to be the good and faithful one, by laying down his life for the sheep, (Zechariah 11:4; Zechariah 11:7; Isaiah 40:11; John 10:14).

2c2. The faithfulness of Christ is seen in his discharge of the trust reposed in him, which is very large and great; the Father hath "given all things into his hand", (John 3:35) all the persons of his elect to be kept, preserved, and saved by him; and so they are and shall be, even everyone of them, whom Christ will present to his Father, and say, "Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me"; not one is lost (Hebrews 2:13). Christ is entrusted with a fulness of grace, to supply the wants of his people; it has been his Father’s pleasure, that it should dwell in him for their use; he has deposited it with him, to communicate it to them, as they need it; and he has been faithful to do it, in all ages and generations; he has been to all his churches, and to all his saints, in every period of time, "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon", (Song of Solomon 4:15) saints both of the Old and New Testament, have "all received of his fulness, and grace for grace" (John 1:16). Eternal life and happiness is in his hands, and he has a power to give it to as many as the Father has given him; and he is faithful in the use of that power, and does give it to all his sheep, so that none of them shall ever perish, (1 John 5:11; John 17:2; John 10:28) yea, the glory of all the divine perfections, as concerned in the salvation of men, was entrusted with Christ; and he has been faithful "in things pertaining to God", as well as in making "reconciliation for the sins of the people"; and in doing the one he has taken care of the other. The glory of God is great in the salvation of men, even of his justice and holiness; as well as of his wisdom, power, faithfulness, grace, and mercy (Hebrews 2:17; Psalms 20:5; Psalms 85:10).

2c3. Christ has appeared to be faithful in the exercise of his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King: in the exercise of his prophetical office; for which he was abundantly qualified, by lying in the bosom of his Father, and so privy to his whole mind and will, which he has faithfully declared; all that he heard of the Father, all the words and doctrines he gave him, as man, he made known to his disciples; in doing which, he sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; and therefore must be true and faithful, and no unrighteousness or unfaithfulness in him, (John 1:18; John 7:16-18; John 15:15; John 17:8) and therefore is justly entitled to be called the Amen, and faithful Witness (Revelation 3:14). In the exercise of his priestly office; in which he is faithful to him

that appointed him; and rightly bears the character of a faithful high priest, in that he has offered up himself to make atonement for the sins of his people; and as the Advocate for them, even Jesus Christ the righteous, faithful, and true; and takes perfect care, in all things, of the house of God, over which he is a priest (Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 3:1-2; Hebrews 10:21; Hebrews 9:14; 1 John 2:1). And in the exercise of his kingly office; all whose administrations in it are just and true; righteousness being the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins; and with great propriety is he called "faithful and true, since in righteousness he doth judge and make war" (Revelation 15:3; Revelation 19:11; Isaiah 11:5).

2c4. The faithfulness of Christ is manifest in the fulfilment of his promises, which he made to his disciples; as, that he would not leave them comfortless, but come and see them; as he did, after his resurrection, and comforted them with his presence, and filled them with joy at the sight of him, (John 14:18; John 20:20) that they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and therefore were bid to wait at Jerusalem for it, and where it was bestowed upon them, on the day of Pentecost, in a very large and extraordinary manner, (Acts 1:4; Acts 2:4; Acts 2:33) that he would be with them in the administration of his word and ordinances; and accordingly did go forth and work with them, confirming the word by signs following, (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:20) yea, he has promised his presence with his ministers and churches to the end of the world, and that even "where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them", (Matthew 18:20; Matthew 28:20) and he makes his word good, which the experience of his ministers and people in all ages confirms: he has promised also to come again, and take his disciples and faithful followers to himself, that where he is they may be also; and which was not only verified in his immediate disciples, but in his saints in all ages, whom, when they have served their generation according to the will of God, he comes and takes them to himself, by death; and "to them that look for him, will he appear a second time, without sin, unto salvation" (John 14:2-3; Hebrews 9:28).

2c5. The faithfulness of Christ may be observed in his concern with the covenant of grace, and the promises of it; the covenant was made with him as the Head and Representative of his people, and stands fast with him; all the blessings of it are lodged with him, and faithfully dispensed by him; the promises were made to him, who only actually existed when they were made, and to whom only they could be given; he was the Amen, and faithful Witness of them, of their being made; and they are Yea and Amen in him; by whose blood the blessings and promises of it are ratified and confirmed; and therefore called, "the blood of the everlasting covenant": and it is in and through him that believers come to have an interest in the promises, a right unto them, and to be partakers of them, (Psalms 89:3; Psalms 89:24; Revelation 3:14; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Hebrews 13:20; Ephesians 3:6). And now by the faithfulness of Christ thus manifestly displayed, may be learnt somewhat more of the attribute of faithfulness, as it is in God. Which leads on to consider,

3. Thirdly, The faithfulness of God in the performance of what he has said in the covenant, and the promises of it, with respect to his special people. God is denominated "faithful", from his keeping covenant and mercy with them, (Deuteronomy 7:9) every covenant God has made with man, he has been faithful in: he made a covenant with Adam, as the head and representative of his posterity, promising a continuance of happiness to him and his, provided he remained in his state of innocence; and threatening with death, in case of disobedience. Adam was unfaithful, and broke the covenant; "they, like Adam, have transgressed the covenant" (Hosea 6:7). But God was faithful to it, and deprived him of his happiness, and pronounced the sentence of death on him and his.

God made a covenant with Noah, and all the creatures, promising that he would no more destroy the world by a flood; and he has faithfully kept it, as before observed. He made a covenant with Abraham, that he would make him the father of many nations, and that kings should spring from him, and that he would give to his posterity the land of Canaan: the former part of which was verified in the Ishmaelites, Israelites, Edomites, Midianites, and others, with their kings, which were of him: and the latter part, by putting the people of Israel in possession of Canaan, by Joshua; which they held long by the tenure of their obedience, according to his promise; but when they broke the covenant, he destroyed them from it, as he threatened, (Genesis 17:5-6; Joshua 21:43; Joshua 23:16). He made a covenant at Sinai, with all the people of Israel; and, according to his engagements, continued to them their blessings, natural, civil, and religious; but they were not steadfast in his covenant, and he dispossessed them of them. But the grand and principal covenant, is the covenant of grace; which God has made in Christ with all his elect, and is ordered in all things, and sure; and which he will never break, and they cannot; and which will never be removed, but ever be inviolably kept; and there are promises of various sorts, which God has graciously made to his people, and which are faithfully performed by him.

3a. Some of a temporal nature; for "godliness" and godly men have "the promise of the life that now is", of things belonging to it, as well as "of that which is to come", (1 Timothy 4:8) these their heavenly Father knows they have need of, and therefore provides them for them, and promises them unto them. He has said, "that they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing", (Psalms 34:10) they shall have that which is good, as every creature of God is good, good food and good raiment; though it may be but mean, yet it is good, and better than the best of men deserve; and they want not any, that God, in his infinite wisdom, sees is good for them; for though they and others may think it would be better for them if they had a greater affluence of the things of this life; but God thinks otherwise, and knows it would be to their hurt, as sometimes riches are: he has bid his people "trust in the Lord, and do good", and has promised, they "shall be fed", (Psalms 37:3) not all of them with dainties and delicious food, but with food convenient for them; he has assured them, their "bread shall be given them", and their: "waters shall be sure", (Isaiah 33:16) and this is sufficient to support and confirm his faithfulness: nor is the poverty of some of God’s people any objection to it, since he has nowhere promised them the riches of this world, and has given them no reason to expect them; but he has promised them better riches, durable riches, and righteousness, the riches of grace and glory, and these he gives to them; see a testimony from David’s experience of the faithfulness of God, with respect to temporal things (Psalms 37:25). God has not promised his people security from outward afflictions; but rather has suggested to them that they may look for them; since his people are described as a poor and afflicted people; and it is their common case; many are the afflictions of the righteous; it is what they are appointed to, and what are appointed for them; but then God has promised that they shall work for their good; either for their temporal good, as Jacob’s afflictions worked for his; or for their spiritual good, the exercise and increase of grace and holiness; and always for their eternal good, (2 Corinthians 4:17) and also that he will be with them in them, support them under them, and deliver out of them in due time: all which is faithfully performed by him, (1 Corinthians 10:13).

3b. Others are of a spiritual nature; and the principal of these is, and which is the sum of the covenant, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God", (Jeremiah 32:38) and which appears in their election, redemption, and the effectual calling; which is saying, that he has a special love

and affection for them, and will continue it, as he does: nor are his chastisements of them, his hiding his face from them for a time, his displeasure at them, and being angry with them, any objection to the perpetuity of his love; since these are not contrary to it, but rather the fruits of it, and for their good: it signifies, that they shall have his gracious presence with them, and may expect it, and which they have; nor do their doubts, and fears, and complaints disprove it, (Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 49:14-16) which are generally owing to their ignorance and unbelief; God is with them, and they know it; however, he is never far from them, nor long; he does not depart from them, nor withdraw his gracious presence from them totally and finally: it assures them of his protection, that he will be all around them, guard them, and secure them, preserve and keep them by his power, through faith unto salvation, as he does; for though they may fall into sin, yet they rise again by his grace; and though they fall into temptation, and by it, yet they are delivered out of it; they are kept from a final and total falling away; they are not of them that draw back unto perdition: in a word, this promise is expressive of their enjoyment of God here, and for evermore; and he is their shield, and exceeding great reward; their portion in life, at death, and for ever; their all in all.

There are many particular spiritual promises made to the people of God; and which are made good by him; as, that he will sprinkle clean water upon them, and cleanse them from all their sins; which is to be understood of justifying grace, through the blood of Christ; that he will forgive their iniquities, and remember their sins no more; and he is just in doing it, upon the account of the blood of his Son, and faithful to his own promise, (1 John 1:9) that he will give them new hearts and new spirits, which he does in regeneration; and take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh; as he does, when he removes the hardness of the heart, and gives evangelical repentance unto life; that he will put his laws in them, and write them in their minds; not only give knowledge of them, but both a disposition and grace to observe them; working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure: that he will put his Spirit into them, and give them spiritual strength to keep his statutes, and perform every duty; that he will carry on his good work of grace in them, and perform it, until the day of Christ; of which they may be confident, since he has promised it; that he will give them more grace, a sufficiency of it, and supply all their need out of the fulness in Christ; and that his fear shall be continually in their hearts; and they shall not depart from him, but persevere in faith and holiness to the end. All which promises, and more, are faithfully and truly performed in all his people (see Jeremiah 31:33-34; Jeremiah 32:38-40; Ezekiel 36:25-27).

3c. There are other promises which respect the life to come; the eternal happiness of the saints in another world: the apostle speaks of the promise of this, "as the promise", by way of eminency, as if it was the only promise, or, however, the principal one, in which all others issue and end; "This is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life", (1 John 2:25) and this is an ancient one, made before the world began, and by God, that "cannot lie", (Titus 1:2) who is faithful and true, and will most certainly perform it; wherefore, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him", (James 1:12).

4. Fourthly, The faithfulness of God appears in fulfilling his threatenings, as well as his promises. God threatened Adam, that in the day he eat of the forbidden fruit, he should surely die; and he immediately became mortal, death began at once to work in him; his soul was seized directly with a spiritual or moral death, guilt, and terror of conscience, a sense of divine wrath, and deprivation

of the divine presence, and he became liable to eternal death; nor had he any reason to expect any other, until he heard that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head; and the sentence of death passed on him, and all his posterity in him, as soon as he had sinned, according to the divine threatening (Romans 5:12). God threatened the inhabitants of the old world with a flood to destroy them, for their impiety and wickedness; and though his patience and forbearance were for a long time exercised, yet he was faithful to his word, and brought it upon the world of the ungodly, and destroyed them all. God threatened the people of Israel with captivity, and other judgments, if they walked not in his ways, and broke his statutes; of which see (Leviticus 26:1-46; Deuteronomy 28:1-68) all which grievous threatenings, and sore judgments, have been exactly fulfilled in that people, and remain to this day; who are a standing proof of God’s faithfulness in this respect. And as God has threatened men with the burning of the world, and the works of it, and the wicked in it; and damnation to all unbelieving and impenitent sinners, they may be assured of it, and expect it; for as it is most true, and may be depended upon, that "he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved"; so it is equally as true, and as surely to be depended on, that "he that believeth not, shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Nor is it any objection to the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his threatenings, that Nineveh was spared, when it was threatened, that in forty days it should be overthrown; since there was a condition implied, a secret proviso made, "except they repented"; and which their hope of mercy, and the mercy shown them upon their repentance, fully confirm; and so the veracity and faithfulness of God is sufficiently secured; and, indeed, in many promises and threatenings, respecting temporal things, a condition is either openly expressed, or secretly understood; according to which God in providence proceeds, (Jeremiah 18:7-10).

02. Of the Father's Part in the Covenant

Of The Part Which The Father Takes In The Covenant. The various parts which each contracting Party take in this covenant, are next to be considered. The Father, the first person in the Trinity, takes the first place, and gives the lead in this covenant. "All things are of God", that is, of God the Father; they are of him originally, they begin with him; all things in creation; he has made the world, and created all things by his Son; and so all things in the salvation of men, "who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ"; he set on foot the council of peace, and so the covenant of peace, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself"; that is, God the Father; he planned the reconciliation of men in council, and proposed it in covenant, and settled it with the other two persons; and he is not only the proposer, but the prescriber and enjoiner of things in the covenant; he both proposed the work to be done, and took upon him the authority, by agreement, to prescribe and enjoin it: hence we read of the injunctions and commands laid on Christ with respect to his discharge of his office, as the mediator of this covenant, (John 10:18; John 12:49; John 14:31) it was the Father that called Christ from the womb of eternity to be his servant, and directed and enjoined his work and service, as appears from (Isaiah 49:1-6) and promised a reward to him on condition of his performing the service, and to bestow benefits on the elect in him, and for his sake. And let us,

1. First, Consider the work he proposed to Christ, which is the great and only condition of the covenant, and which he prescribed and enjoined him to do; which was,

1a. To take the care and charge of the chosen ones; these, as he chose them in him, he put them into his hands, not only as his property, but for their safety; and here they are safe, for none can pluck them out of his hands; hence they are called "the sheep of his hand", not only because they are guided by his hand as a flock, but because they are under his care and custody; they were not only given him as his portion and inheritance, but to be kept and saved by him; when they were committed to him, he had this charge given to him by his Father, that "of all" that he had "given" him he "should lose nothing", not anyone of them; they were told into his hands, and the full tale of them was expected to be returned: and which respects the whole of them, as their souls which he has redeemed, and does preserve, so their bodies likewise; for the injunction was that he "should lose nothing", no part of them, not even their dust in their graves, "but should raise it up again at the last day", (John 6:39) as he will. God not only made a reserve of them in Christ for himself, but they were preserved in him, and therefore are called the "preserved of Israel", (Jude 1:1; Isaiah 49:6) and that Christ, in a covenant way, by his own consent, was laid under such an obligation to keep and preserve the elect safe to glory, appears from his own account, both from what he says in his intercessory prayer; "those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost", (John 17:12) and from what he will say at the last day, when they are all brought in; "Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me", (Hebrews 2:13) all kept safe, and presented faultless; the kingdom of priests, the whole number of the chosen vessels of salvation, will be delivered up complete and perfect, agreeable to the charge committed to him, and his own voluntary undertakings.

1b. Whereas these same Persons made his care and charge, would fall in Adam, with the rest of mankind, and that into a state of sin and misery, and under the curse and condemnation of the law, he proposed it to him, and enjoined it as his will, that he should redeem them from all this; and hence agreeing to it, he was sent to do it, and has done it; this work, as proposed and prescribed in the covenant of grace, is expressed by various phrases, in (Isaiah 49:5-6) as by "bringing Jacob again to him"; by Jacob is meant the elect of God, especially among the Jews, the remnant according to the election of grace: and "bringing" them "again", supposes they were gone aside, apostatized from God, and turned their backs on him, and were gone out of the right way, gone astray, and become lost sheep: and the work of Christ, as enjoined him in covenant, and he undertook, was to bring them unto God, and set them before him, to use Judah's words, when he offered to be surety for Benjamin, (Genesis 43:9) to bring them nigh to God; which he has done, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, (Ephesians 2:13; 1 Peter 3:18) and also this work of Christ is expressed by "raising up the tribes of Jacob"; meaning the same persons sunk into a low estate through the fall, into an horrible pit, into the mire and clay, into a pit wherein is no water: out of this low estate Christ was to raise them, as he did, by the blood of the covenant, and made them kings and priests unto God; and likewise by "restoring the preserved of Israel", even the same chosen ones, among the people of Israel; who, by the fall, lost their righteousness, and forfeited their happy life in innocence; these Christ was to recover from their fallen sinful estate, and restore them, as he has done, to a better righteousness, and to a life more abundant than what they lost, to an higher state of grace, glory, and happiness: and if this should be thought by Christ to be too "light" and too "low" a thing for him to be the Saviour of the elect among the Jews; it is farther proposed, that he should be "the light of the Gentiles", and "the salvation" of God "unto the end of the earth", be the Saviour of all God's elect, both among Jews and Gentiles; not only to die for his people among the Jews, but to bring again, raise up, restore, and gather together the children of God, scattered abroad throughout the whole world; and be the propitiation, not for the sins of the chosen among the Jews only, but of those in the whole world of the Gentiles; so that this takes in the whole work of redemption and salvation, the work which Christ's Father gave him to do, and which he undertook, and has finished, (John 17:4) and with respect to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, our Lord says, "Other sheep I have" to take care of, to lay down his life for, besides those among the Jews, "which are not of this fold", of the Jewish church state, but out of it; the Gentiles, them also I must bring, bring them again, raise up, and restore, and set before his Father; bring them into his church, and among his people, into an open state of grace, and to eternal glory; and this he says he must do, because his Father enjoined it, and he agreed to do it.

1c. In order to this, the Father proposed to the Son to assume human nature in the fulness of time, which was necessary to the work of redeeming the chosen people; as this was advised to in council, it was fixed in the covenant; "A body hast thou prepared me", (Hebrews 10:5) not only in the purposes and decrees of God, in the book of which "all the members of it were written, which, in continuance, were fashioned, when, as yet, there was none of them", before they were in actual being, (Psalms 139:16) nor only in the prophesies of the Old Testament, in which it was foretold and promised, that the Messiah should become man, be the child born, and born of a virgin, and that the Man, the Branch, should grow up out of his place; but this was provided in covenant, not an human body only, nor an human soul only, but the whole human nature; which, though it had not a real and actual, yet had a covenant subsistence, as it may be called; that is to say, the Father proposing it, and the Son assenting, as he did, by the above words; there was an

agreement, a compact between them, that he should take into union with himself, a true body, and a reasonable soul; both which were necessary, to suffer the whole curse of the law; a true body, in which he might get his bread by the sweat of his brow, and suffer pains, sorrows, and death; bear the sins of many in it, and be offered up for them; and a reasonable soul, that he might endure the punishment of loss and sense; of loss, in being deprived for a while of the gracious presence of God, as when on the cross; of sense, in feeling the wrath poured into his soul, which made it exceeding sorrowful, as in the garden. And this nature proposed to be assumed, and was assumed, is of the same kind with that which sinned, and to which death was threatened, as it seems proper it should; the same flesh and blood with the children, and in which he was made like unto his brethren, excepting sin; and to assume such a nature was necessary, that Christ might have somewhat to offer, that would be acceptable to God, and satisfactory to his justice; this was part of the will of God enjoined in covenant, and which Christ agreed to do; that whereas ceremonial sacrifices would be disapproved of by him, as insufficient to take away sin, he would assume the body, or human nature, prepared and provided in covenant for him, and offer it up, that sin might be condemned, and the righteousness of the law be fulfilled; for it is "by this will", or the doing of it, that "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all", (Hebrews 10:5-10) and this being the will of the Father, what he proposed and prescribed to be done; hence he is always represented as concerned in this affair: he promised to bring forth his Servant the Branch, the Man the Branch, that should grow out of its place; and he sent his Son, in the fulness of time, made of a woman, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Zechariah 3:8; Zechariah 6:12; Romans 8:3; Galatians 4:4).

1d. Another branch of the work assigned to Christ, in the covenant, by his Father, and to which he agreed, was to obey the law in the room and stead of his people; to which Christ has respect when he says, "thy law is within my heart", or I am heartily willing and ready to obey and fulfil it; and which designs not only the law of mediation, or the command enjoined Christ as Mediator, with respect to the performance of his several offices as such: so with respect to his prophetic office Christ says, "The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak--whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49-50). And with respect to his priestly office, his laying down his life for his people; "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again; this commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:18; John 14:31). And with respect to his Kingly office; "I will declare the decree"; that is, of his Father, the ordinance, statute, law, and rule of governing his people; for this refers not to what follows concerning the generation of Christ, but to what goes before, concerning his Kingly office: but also the moral law, which he agreed to be made under, and was willing to fulfil, and for which he came into the world, and did become the fulfilling end of it, whereby he magnified it, and made it honourable; as it became him to do, as the Surety of his people, and which was necessary to their justification; for "by the obedience of One, many are made righteous" (Romans 5:19).

1e. Another part of the work proposed to him, and enjoined him by his Father, was to suffer the penalty of the law, death; which must be endured, either by the sinner himself, the transgressor of the law, or by his Surety, (Genesis 2:17) wherefore it became the wise, holy, and righteous Being, "for whom, and by whom, are all things—to make the Captain of salvation", his Son, whom he appointed to be the Saviour of men, perfect through sufferings, for the satisfaction of law and

justice; and therefore he enjoined him to bear them, (Hebrews 2:10) hence Christ says, speaking of laying down his life for the sheep, "This commandment have I received of my Father", (John 10:18) and hence his sufferings are called, "the cup" which his Father had given him; not just then put into his hands, for he spake of it long before, as what he was to drink of; but was what was ordered him in the everlasting covenant, (John 18:11; Matthew 20:22) and hence also they are spoken of by all the prophets from the beginning of the world: and this being the Father's will in covenant, hence likewise it is that the Father had so great an hand in them, as to bruise him and put him to grief, to awake the sword of justice against him, and smite him; not to spare him, but deliver him up by his determinate counsel, into the hands of wicked men, and to death itself; and the covenant having somewhat of the nature of a testament, or of a man's last will, there was a necessity of the death of the testator to ratify and confirm it; which was to be done by the blood of Christ, called therefore, the blood of the everlasting covenant (Hebrews 9:15-17; Hebrews 13:20).

1f. When the Father signified in covenant, his dislike of the continuance of legal sacrifices, as insufficient to take away sin; he strongly suggested it was his will that his Son should become a sacrifice for it, and therefore prepared him a body, or human nature, in the covenant, capable of being offered up; and it was by his will expressed therein, that his covenant people are sanctified through the offering up of the body of Christ (Hebrews 10:5-10). This is the great condition of the covenant, and on which all the blessings of it depend: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin", or rather, "When his soul shall make an offering for sin"; that is, when he shall heartily and willingly offer up himself, soul and body, a sacrifice for sin, then the benefits following should be conferred both on Christ, and on his spiritual seed (Isaiah 53:10-12). And,

1g. Farther, it was the will of the Father, in the covenant, that Christ should hereby make atonement for the sins of the chosen ones; this was the work which was assigned him in covenant, and is marked out in prophecy for him to do; namely, "To finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity", (Daniel 9:24) and as he agreed to do it, for this purpose he became man, and by his bloodshed, sufferings, and death, has made it; which lays a foundation of solid joy in his people, (Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 10:14; Romans 5:10-11).

1h. In close connection with the former, his work assigned him in covenant was, to bring in everlasting righteousness, for the justification of the elect. God the Father in covenant, "called him in righteousness", or "to righteousness", to work out a righteousness for his people, commensurate to the demands of law and justice; and this call and proposal he answered and agreed to; hence the church of old could say, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength"; and by virtue of the suretyship righteousness of Christ, and his engagements in covenant, all the Old Testament saints were justified, (Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 45:24-25).

1i. Lastly, The work which the Father proposed to, and prescribed to the Son was, "to feed the flock of slaughter"; to which he replied, "I will feed the flock of slaughter"; even all the elect of God, (Zechariah 11:4; Zechariah 11:7) and this feeding the flock committed to his charge, takes in his whole work as a shepherd; taking care of his sheep, laying down his life for them, gathering the lambs in his arms, carrying them in his bosom, gently leading those with young, protecting them from all harms and enemies, bringing them into his fold here and above, setting them at his right hand, and introducing them into his kingdom and glory. This is the work that was before him; and

his reward was with him, next to be observed (Isaiah 40:10-11).

2. Secondly, On condition of Christ's engaging to do the above work proposed and prescribed to him, the Father promised in the covenant many things; some to him personally, and others to the elect, whom he represented and represented in it.

2a. Some things to himself, respecting his work, assistance in it, &c. a glory on the nature in which he should do it, the honourable offices he should be invested with in it, and the numerous offspring he should have.

2a1. As the work assigned him was to be done in human nature, which needed qualifications for it, strength to do it, help and assistance in it, support under it, preservation from enemies, and encouragement of success: all this was promised him, that as his human nature should be formed by the Holy Ghost without sin, so it should be filled with his gifts and graces; that the Spirit should be put upon him, and rest on him, as a Spirit of wisdom, counsel, might, knowledge, and of the fear of God, whereby he would be qualified to execute his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, (Isaiah 11:1-2; Isaiah 42:1; Isaiah 61:1) and which was bestowed upon him without measure, (Psalms 45:7; John 3:34) and that whereas the human nature, in which this work was to be done, would be attended with weakness, with all the sinless infirmities of human nature, as it was at last crucified through weakness; God promised to strengthen him, and he believed he would be his strength, and, accordingly, he was the Man of his right hand, whom he made strong for himself, (Psalms 89:21; Isaiah 49:5; Psalms 80:17) and that, as he would need help and assistance in that nature, it was promised him, and he expected it, asked for it, and had it, (Psalms 22:1; Psalms 22:19; Isaiah 50:7-8; Isaiah 49:8) and as it would want support, under the mighty load of sin, and sense of wrath, that it might not sink under it, this was promised and granted; so that he failed not, nor was he discouraged or broken, (Isaiah 42:1; Isaiah 42:4) and as it would have many enemies, who would seek to take its life away before its time; God promised that he would keep and preserve him, and hide him in the shadow of his hand, and in his quiver, and so secure him, as he did from Herod, and the wicked Jews, (Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:2; Isaiah 49:6) and since he would be treated with great contempt in that nature, be despised by men, abhorred by the nation of the Jews, and be a servant of rulers; he was told, for his encouragement, that the Lord would choose him, and express delight and pleasure in him as his elect: and though disallowed of men, would be chosen of God, and precious, (Isaiah 42:1; Isaiah 49:7) and accordingly, delight and well pleasedness in him were expressed by his Father, when both obeying and suffering, (Matthew 3:17; John 10:17) yea, success in his work was promised him, that "the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand"; that is, the work of the Lord be succeeded, which it was his will and pleasure to put into his hand. Now all this was promised him in covenant, as an encouragement to engage in this work.

2a2. As he was to do and suffer much in his human nature, so it was promised him, that he should have a very great glory conferred on him in that nature; not only that the glory of his Deity should be manifested and displayed, which was hid, especially from many, during his state of humiliation; for which, when he had done his work, he may be thought to pray, pleading a promise made to him, (John 17:4-5). But there was a glory to be put on his human nature, which was promised in the everlasting covenant, and which he had with his Father, in promise, before the world was; hence the prophesies of the Old Testament, which are founded on covenant engagements, speak,

as of the sufferings of Christ, so of the glory that should follow, and of Christ's entering through sorrows and sufferings, into his kingdom and glory; and Christ believed and expected that he should be "glorious", notwithstanding all his meanness in a state of humiliation, (Isaiah 49:5; Luke 24:26) particularly it was promised him, that though he should die and be laid in the grave, yet that he should not lie so long as to see corruption, but be raised again the third day, as he was, and so had the glory given him, and which he had faith and hope of, (Psalms 16:9-11; 1 Peter 1:21) as also, that he should ascend to heaven, and receive gifts for men, or in man, in human nature; and accordingly he did ascend above all heavens, to fill all things, and gave the gifts to men he received, and that in a very extraordinary manner; whereby it appeared he was glorified, as was promised him, because the Spirit was not given in such a plentiful manner till Jesus was glorified, exalted at the right hand of God, and made and declared Lord and Christ (Psalms 68:18; Ephesians 4:8-10; John 7:39; Acts 2:32; Acts 2:36). Moreover, it was promised him, that in human nature he should sit at the right hand of God; a glory and honour which none of the angels was ever admitted to; but, in consideration of his obedience, sufferings, and death, he was highly exalted, as it was promised he should, and a name given him above every name; being placed on the right hand of God, angels, authorities, and powers being made subject unto him! (Psalms 110:1; Hebrews 1:13; Php 2:7-9; 1 Peter 3:22) and now he is seen crowned with glory and honour, and will come a second time in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels, all according to the covenant agreement. In a word, it was promised him in covenant: on condition of making his soul an offering for sin, among other things, that God would "divide him a portion with the great"; give him as large and ample a portion, yea, a larger one, than any of the great men of the earth: that he would make him his firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth: and that he should "divide the spoil with the strong", or take the prey out of the hands of the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive; which spoil and prey being taken out of the hands of the strong, should be his portion and inheritance; and that because he poured out his soul unto death, was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many (Isaiah 53:12).

2a3. As an encouragement to Christ to engage in the above work proposed to him in covenant, it was promised him, that he should be invested with, and sustain several honourable offices, which he should execute in human nature; as, that he should be the great Prophet of the church; not only "the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God" to the Jews, but be "for a light of the Gentiles"; which is twice promised, where plain traces of this everlasting covenant are to be seen, (Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:6) and he accordingly was expected to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of the people of Israel, (Luke 2:32) and he was so, by the ministry of his apostles, in the Gentile world, and still is, by the preaching of his ministers in it; whereby men are turned from darkness to light, and to show forth the praises of him who has called them out of the one to the other (1 Peter 2:9; Ephesians 2:17; Acts 26:18). It was also promised, and swore to by an oath in covenant, that he should be a Priest; an honour which no man takes to himself, but he that is called to it, as was Aaron; even Christ glorified not himself, to be called an High Priest; but his Father, who invested him with this office, by an oath, to show the immutability of it; and that he should continue in it, and be a priest on his throne (Psalms 110:4; Hebrews 5:4-5; Hebrews 7:21; Zechariah 6:13). Likewise, that he should be King of Zion, of saints, over his church and people, and have a kingdom very large, from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth; of which government, and the increase of it, there should be no end; a dispensatory kingdom, besides that of nature and providence, which he had a right to, as a divine Person; but this is a kingdom

disposed of to him in covenant and by promise; "I appoint unto you a kingdom", says Christ, "as my Father hath appointed me", dieyeto, has disposed of or appointed in covenant to me (Luke 22:29). Once more, God has appointed him in covenant to be the judge of quick and dead; and has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he has ordained; and accordingly, he has committed all judgment to him, that all men should honour him as they honour the Father, (Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; John 5:22-23).

2a4. In consequence of fulfilling the condition of the covenant, engaging to do, and doing the above work proposed in it; it was promised to Christ, that he should "see his seed, and prolong his days", (Isaiah 53:10) that is, that he should have a spiritual offspring, a seed that should serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation; that he should be an everlasting Father to them, and they be his everlasting children; that as the first Adam was the common parent, and federal head of all his posterity, who sinning, conveyed sin and death to them; so the second Adam becomes the Father and federal Head of a spiritual offspring, and conveys grace, righteousness, and life unto them: it was promised him, that this seed of his should be numerous, and continue long; yea, that these children should endure for ever, and his throne be as the days of heaven; and that these should be his portion, and his inheritance; not only the elect among the Jews, but those among the Gentiles also; and therefore he was bid to ask of his Father in covenant, and he would "give" him "the heathen for his inheritance", and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; which accordingly he asked, and has, and is well pleased with his portion, and says, the lines are fallen to him in pleasant places, and he has a goodly heritage, (Isaiah 9:6; Psalms 22:30; Psalms 89:29; Psalms 89:36; Psalms 2:8; Psalms 16:6) yea, it was promised him, that all persons and things should be put into his hands, to subserve his mediatorial interest, and the good of his spiritual seed, his covenant people; even all the wicked of the earth, whom he disposes of as he pleases, and rules with a rod of iron: he is given to be an Head over all things to the church; for its preservation and security; and has power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; and accordingly all things are put into his hand, and all creatures are at his dispose; all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him, so that he can order and appoint whatsoever he pleases for the good of his people (Psalms 2:9; Ephesians 1:22; John 17:2; John 3:35; Matthew 28:18).

2b. There are other things which God the Father promised in covenant, respecting the elect, the persons for whom Christ was a covenantee, and whom he represented in the covenant, and for whose sake he was to do all the work proposed to him, and which he undertook. And,

2b1. It was promised, that upon Christ’s engaging in, and performing the work of redemption, they should be delivered out of that state of misery sin brought them into, even out of the pit wherein is no water, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (Zechariah 9:11) that they should be redeemed from all their iniquities, original and actual, which should be cast behind God’s back, and into the depths of the sea, never to be seen and remembered more to their condemnation, (Psalms 130:8) that they should be ransomed from the hand of Satan, stronger than they, and the prey be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered, (Jeremiah 31:11; Isaiah 49:24-25) that they should be freed from the law, its curse and condemnation, Christ being made a curse for them, and sin condemned in his flesh, (Romans 8:1; Romans 8:3; Romans 8:33; Galatians 3:13) and that they should be secured from hell, wrath, ruin, and everlasting destruction their sins deserved (Job 33:24).

2b2. That upon the faithful discharge of his office, as a Servant, particularly in bearing the sins of his people, they should be openly justified and acquitted; that his righteousness he would bring in, should be made known unto them, and received by faith; and so they should be manifestatively, and in their own consciences, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (Isaiah 53:11; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Ezekiel 36:25).

2b3. That all their iniquities should be forgiven them, for Christ's sake, and their sins and transgressions be remembered no more. This is a special and particular article in the covenant, to which all the prophets bear witness (Jeremiah 31:34; Acts 10:43).

2b4. That they should be openly adopted, and declared the children of God, and be dealt with as such; that God should be their God, their Father, their Portion, and Inheritance; and they should be his people, his children, and heirs of him, and be treated as such by him; as they would be when chastised for their sins, the rod being provided for them in covenant, as well as their inheritance (Jeremiah 32:38; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Psalms 89:30; Psalms 89:34; Hebrews 12:7).

2b5. That they should be regenerated, their hearts spiritually circumcised to love the Lord, and his fear put into them, and be made willing in the day of his power upon them, to be saved by him, and to serve him, (Deuteronomy 30:6; Jeremiah 32:39; Psalms 110:3) that they should be made new creatures, have new hearts and new spirits put within them, in which are new principles of light, life, and love, grace and holiness, joy, peace, and comfort; that the stony heart should he taken out of them, the hardness and impenitence of it removed, and an heart of flesh given them, soft, penitent, and contrite; or, in other words, that true, spiritual, evangelical repentance for sin should be granted to them (Ezekiel 36:26).

2b6. That they should have knowledge of God, as their covenant God and Father; even the least, as well as the greatest, be all taught of God, as his children, and so believe in Christ; for those that hear and learn of the Father, come to Christ; that is, believe in him (Jeremiah 31:34; Isaiah 54:13; John 6:45). So that repentance and faith are not terms and conditions of the covenant, but are free grace gifts granted, and blessings of grace promised in the covenant, and are as sure to the covenant people, as any other blessings whatever, (Acts 11:18; Acts 5:31; Ephesians 2:8).

2b7. It is another promise in this covenant, that the law of God should be put into their inward parts, and written on their hearts; that they should have a spiritual knowledge of it, and a cordial respect unto it, a real delight in it, and serve it with their minds and spirits, and yield a constant, ready, and cheerful obedience to it, (Jeremiah 31:33; Romans 7:22; Romans 7:25) as well as by the epistles of Christ, and have the law of faith, or doctrine of the gospel, take place in their hearts, and dwell richly in them, and they yield a professed subjection to it.

2b8. It is further promised by the Lord, in this covenant, that whereas they are weak and strengthless, and unable to do any thing spiritually good of themselves, that he will put his Spirit within them, who should work in them both to will and to do; and strengthen them with strength in the inward man, and enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them, (Ezekiel 36:27) so that likewise new spiritual and evangelical obedience, both to law and gospel, is no term and condition of the covenant, but a blessing secured in it, which absolutely provides with grace and strength to perform it.

2b9. Another article in this covenant, respecting the chosen and covenant people, is, that they shall persevere in grace, in faith, and holiness, to the end; this is absolutely promised in it, and the faithfulness of God is engaged to perform it; "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (Jeremiah 31:40; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

2b10. Glory, as well as grace, is promised in this covenant; and to whom God gives the one, he gives the other; eternal life was promised before the world began; and the promise of it was made unto Christ in the everlasting covenant, and put into his hands for his people; and it is represented as if it was the only promise in it, being the grand, principal, and comprehensive one; "This is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life", (Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:1; 1 John 2:25) hence our Lord, in an authoritative way, as it were, demands the glorification of ALL the Father has given him, and he undertook for in covenant, (John 17:24).

02. Of the Final State of the Saints in Heaven

Of the Final State of the Saints in Heaven

There is a state of happiness, which the spirits, or souls, of just men enter into immediately after the separation of them from the body; of which we have treated in a preceding chapter. But after the resurrection, which is of the saints unto everlasting life, and therefore is called the resurrection of life; and when the general judgment is over, and the invitation is given, "Come, ye blessed," &c. then "the righteous" shall go "into life eternal," soul and body (Matthew 25:34; Matthew 25:46), which is the state now to be considered. And, first, the state of happiness itself, and then the eternity of it.

1. The state of happiness the saints are possessed of after the resurrection, and general judgment, in soul and body, expressed in the passage above quoted, by "eternal life," and very frequently elsewhere. But it is not animal life, which lies in the conjunction of soul and body, and a continuance of that for ever, which is meant by eternal life; for the wicked will live such a life upon the resurrection; for as there will be a resurrection of the just, so of the unjust; they will live again, and live for evermore; though their living will be no other than the second and eternal death; for they will be destroyed, both body and soul, in hell; not as to the substance of either, but as to the comfort and happiness of both; for it is not barely living, but living well, comfortably and happily, that is properly life; in which sense the word is used (Psalms 22:26), and such is the life the saints will live in heaven, in soul and body, in the enjoyment of God, as their covenant God; and thrice happy are they that are in such a case; and in being with Christ! which is far better than to live in this world: and in having the communion of the Holy Spirit, than which nothing can be more comfortable; and in the society of angels and saints: all which is most eligible and desirable. In treating on this state, I shall take much the same method as in the preceding chapter. I shall,

1a. First, prove that there will be a state of happiness of good men in the world to come; for "godliness has the promise of that life which is to come"; that is, of happiness in it. And this may be made to appear, in some respect,

1a1. First, from the light of nature and reason; for though the kind of happiness is not to be discovered and demonstrated by it; yet some general notion of future happiness may be evinced from it.

1a1a. A general notion of happiness after death, has obtained among the wiser sort of heathens, who have had only the light of nature to guide them; unless some general traditions transmitted to them, especially among those who have given any credit to the immortality of the soul. Hence they speak of the Elysian fields [1], and islands of the blessed, as the seat and habitation of pious persons after death; and which they describe after a carnal and earthly manner; as grassy plains, and flowery meads; and as abounding with all manner of delicious fruits; and as in a most temperate climate, free of all wintry weather and blustering storms, and of scorching heat; and where they are fanned with gentle zephyrs, and delighted with flowing fountains and purling

streams; and are continually regaling themselves with nectar and ambrosia. Though even their images of those things, Tertullian [2] thinks they have borrowed from the sacred writings, and the description of the heavenly state therein: "If, says he, we speak of paradise as a place of divine pleasantness, appointed for the reception of holy spirits—the Elysian fields seize upon and engross their faith." But those things are not only said by their poets [3], but by their wise and grave philosophers; as Plato [4], Plutarch [5], Seneca [6], and others.

1a1b. From a natural desire in mankind after happiness, and which is universal; and yet it is certain it is not attained in this present life, though eagerly sought for, in one way or another. Some seek for it in natural wisdom and knowledge; some in wealth and riches; others in the honors of the world, in fame and popular applause; anti others in the gratification of sensual appetites and lusts; but is never found to satisfaction in either; and as abundantly appears from the first and second chapters of the book of Ecclesiastes. This is only found in God, the chiefest good; and that not to perfection in this life. Now either this desire of happiness is implanted in vain, which is not reasonable to suppose; or there must be a future state, in which this happiness will be enjoyed, at least by some of the individuals of human nature, even by all good men; who, at the resurrection, and not before, will be completely happy to full satisfaction; even when they shall awake in the likeness of God.

1a1c. From the unequal distribution of things in the present state; which makes the providences of God very intricate and perplexed, with difficulties not easy to be solved; and which cannot be solved without supposing a future state: here wicked men have a large portion of good things; and good men have a large share of evil things, afflictions, and distresses; and if their hope of happiness was bounded by this life, they would be of all men most miserable; especially such who are called to endure sharp and severe sufferings: but their hope extends beyond it; as it is reasonable it should; when, as they have suffered in the cause of goodness, truth, and righteousness, that they should be glorified together; and that their present momentary afflictions should work for them, as they do, an eternal weight of glory. But this more abundantly appears,

1a2. Secondly, from divine revelation; by which life and immortality are brought to light; or an immortal life of happiness is set in the clearest light; and which may be strongly concluded,

1a2a. From the promise of God concerning it. "This is the promise," the grand and principal promise; and which includes and secures all the rest; "He," that is, God, "hath promised us," in the covenant of grace, and which lies in his word, "even eternal life" (1 John 2:25), which gives hope and assurance of it, and in which it issues: and this promise was made very early, even "before the world began," and by God that "cannot lie," and therefore to be depended on as sure and certain; and besides, it is in "Christ"; and not the promise only, but the thing itself (Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:1; 1 John 5:11), and in this lies the happiness of the saints (James 1:12).

1a2b. From the predestination of men unto it; there are "vessels of mercy afore prepared" in the mind, and by the will of God, for this future "glory" and happiness; who are chosen "to the obtaining," or to the enjoyment, "of the glory of Christ"; to behold his glory, and appear with him in glory; who are "ordained to eternal life," and therefore believe to the saving of their souls: and which act of the grace, and will of God, can never be frustrated and made void; for "whom he did predestinate—them he also glorified" (Romans 9:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; Acts 13:48; Romans 8:30).

1a2c. From the preparation of this happiness for them; this consists of things unseen and unheard of, and not to be conceived of by carnal minds, which God has "prepared" for them that love him, fear him, and wait for him; and which preparation was made in eternity; for it is a "kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world"; and which will only be given to, and will most certainly be given to, those for whom "it is prepared" of God (1 Corinthians 2:9; Matthew 25:34; Matthew 20:23).

1a2d. From Christ's actual possession of it for his people, in their name; and from the preparation he is making of it for them; he is entered into heaven as the forerunner for them, and has taken possession of it in their name, as their head and representative; and in whom, as so considered, they are already set down in heavenly places, and shall be in person, most certainly, ere long; for he is gone before to "prepare a place" for them, in his Father's house in heaven, where are many mansions, by his intercession for them, which is always prevalent; and therefore he assures them, he will "come again," and "receive them" to himself, "that where he is, they may be also," partakers of his glory and happiness (Hebrews 6:20; Ephesians 2:6; John 14:2-3).

1a2e. From the effectual calling of men to eternal life and happiness: "Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called," says the apostle Paul to Timothy; and to which happiness every man is called, who is called by grace: hence we read of the saints being called of God to "his kingdom and glory"; and of their being called "unto his eternal glory, by Jesus Christ". Now between calling and glorification there is an inseparable connection; "Whom he called—them he also glorified" (1 Timothy 6:12: 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 1 Peter 5:10; Romans 8:30).

1a2f. From the grace of God implanted in the heart, and the earnest of the Spirit there. The grace of God, which is wrought in the heart in regeneration, is a "well of living water, springing up into everlasting life," and issues in it; and the Spirit of God, in his operations on the souls of men, works them up "for that selfsame thing," eternal glory and happiness; and of which his indwelling also in them, is the earnest and pledge; for he is said to be "given" as an "earnest," and to be "the earnest of the inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession"; that is, until all the purchased ones are redeemed from mortality, death, and the grave; and therefore as sure as they have the earnest, they shall enjoy the inheritance, which is eternal life (John 4:14; John 2:1-25; Col. 5:5; Ephesians 2:14).

1a2g. From the present experiences of the saints, from those foretastes they sometimes have of future glory and happiness; like the Israelites, have some clusters of Canaan's grapes, some of the good land by the way, as a specimen and pledge of what they shall enjoy when they come into that better country; they now receive the first fruits of the Spirit, which encourage them to hope for the glorious harvest of the adoption of children: they now, at times, have communion with God in private, and also in public, in his house and ordinances, when they are as the gate and suburbs of heaven to them; and so, by inward felt experience know, from what they find in themselves, that there is something better, and more excellent for them in heaven.

1a2h. From the desires of the saints after future happiness. They choose to be with Christ, as more eligible than to be here; they desire to be clothed upon, with their house from heaven, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, that they may be present with the Lord; and press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ (Php 1:23; Php 3:14; 2 Corinthians 5:2; 2 Corinthians 5:8). And now those desires in the hearts of the saints, are not

formed by the Spirit of God in vain.

1a2i. From the assurance of it some of the saints have had, both of the Old and of the New Testament; the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and others, all died in the faith of the better country they were seeking, and were desirous of; the psalmist Asaph expresses his strong faith of it, that "God would receive him to glory"; and the apostle Paul, in his own name, and in the name of other Christians, says, "we know," we are well assured, that "we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (Hebrews 11:13; Psalms 73:24; 2 Corinthians 5:1).

1a2j. This happiness is begun already in this life; in regeneration men pass from the death of sin, into a life of grace; and a life of grace, is the life of glory begun; he that believes in Christ hath everlasting life; is possessed of it in part, and has the earnest and the beginning of it; eternal life is founded in, and begins with the knowledge of God and Christ (John 5:24; John 6:47; John 17:3).

1a2k. Lastly, There are instances of saints already in heaven, anti some in their bodies, as well as in their souls, as Enoch and Elijah; and, as it is highly probable, the saints that arose at Christ's resurrection, and went with him to heaven; (see Luke 13:28; Luke 16:22) and as sure as they are there, all the rest of the saints will. I go on to consider,

1b. Secondly, the names, phrases, and epithets, used of this happiness; which may serve to convey to us some ideas of the nature of it.

1b1. First, the names by which it is called; both as a place and as a state. As a place,

1b1a. It is called heaven; for there this happiness lies, which is called the reward in heaven, the hope laid np in heaven, the inheritance reserved in heaven, and often the kingdom of heaven; and which is no other than the third heaven, where is the throne of God, whither Christ in human nature is gone, and there received, and is the habitation of the holy angels.

1b1b. It goes by the name of "paradise," in allusion to the garden of Eden, a place of pleasure and delight (2 Corinthians 12:4; Luke 23:43), in the midst of which, Christ, the tree of life, stands, laden with all manner of precious fruit, for the solace and delight of the blessed inhabitants; and where are fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore (Revelation 2:7; Revelation 22:2; Psalms 16:11).

1b1c. It is represented as a place of "light"; it is called the light of life; the inheritance of the saints in light; and needs no natural nor artificial light to illuminate it; where God and the Lamb are the light of it, and the angels of light dwell (John 8:12; Colossians 1:12; Revelation 21:23; Revelation 22:5).

1b1d. It is signified by an "house" to dwell in; an house not made with the hands of men, but is a building of God; in which there are many mansions, room enough for the many sons the great Captain of salvation will bring to glory, who is gone before them, to prepare them for them; even in his Father's house (2 Corinthians 5:1; John 14:2).

1b1e. It is said to be a "city," a city of God's preparing, of which he is the builder and maker, and which has foundations firm and strong, and so is a continuing and lasting one (Hebrews 11:10; Hebrews 11:16; Hebrews 13:14) and of this city the saints are now citizens; "our conversation," to politeuma, "our citizenship is in heaven" (Php 3:20).

1b1f. It is called, "the better country" (Hebrews 11:16): better than this world, or any country m it; better than the good land beyond Jordan, Canaan, the type of it: it is "the land that is very far off," even in the highest heavens; the "land of uprightness," where there is nothing but perfect purity and integrity, and where only upright persons dwell, (Isaiah 33:17; Psalms 143:10). And as a state, it is sometimes called,

1b1f1. An "inheritance" (Acts 20:32), and elsewhere, in allusion to the land of Canaan, distributed by lot for an inheritance to the children of Israel; or in allusion to inheritances among men, which are not acquired and purchased by them; but are bequeathed, or come to them by relations, and are transmitted from father to son; and so the heavenly glory is not obtained by the works of men, or is a purchase of theirs; but is bequeathed to them by their heavenly Father, and comes to them by his will and testament, upon, by, and through the death of the testator, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:15-16).

1b1f2. A "kingdom," often called the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven, of which the saints are heirs; and they are styled kings and princes, being possessed of the kingdom of grace, as they will be of kingdom of glory; to which they are called, and is prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and which it is their Father’s good pleasure to give them (James 2:5; Matthew 25:34; Luke 12:32).

1b1f3. A "crown"; a crown of righteousness and life, a crown of glory, that fades not away, an incorruptible one; which serves to set forth the grandeur of this state (2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; 1 Corinthians 9:25).

1b1f4. It is expressed by "glory" itself (Psalms 84:11; Psalms 73:24) as being exceeding glorious, beyond all conception and expression; it is said to be "a weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17), in allusion to the ponderous crowns of princes; it will lie in beholding the glory of Christ, and in having a glory revealed in the saints, and in having a glory upon them, both in soul and body.

1b1f5. It has the name of peace, into which good men enter at death (Psalms 37:37; Isaiah 57:2), there being nothing in this state to ruffle and disturb, but all tranquil, serene, and calm; no sin within, nor sinful men without: no sorrow and affliction; no pricking brier, nor grieving thorn, throughout the land.

1b1f6. It is signified by a rest, which remains for the people of God, after this toilsome life is over (Hebrews 4:9), in allusion to the land of Canaan, a land of rest to the Israelites, after their weary travels in the wilderness; or to the Sabbath, the day of rest, this state being all day, and all Sabbath; a complete rest of body and soul, from all labors, troubles, and enemies whatever.

1b1f7. It is called "the joy of the Lord," into which Christ’s faithful servants will be invited to enter (Matthew 25:21; Matthew 25:23), a joy that can never be taken away from them, a fullness of joy, a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

1b2. Secondly, there are various phrases also by which this happy state is expressed, and epithets used of it, which show the happiness of it; as by being in "Abraham’s bosom"; and sitting down as at a table and a feast, with him and others, expressive of the blessed communion of the saints (Luke 16:22; Matthew 8:12), but more especially by being with Christ, and sitting with him on his throne (Php 1:23; Revelation 3:21), and by being fed, and led by him, to fountains of living

waters (Revelation 7:17). The various epithets of this state, besides what have been given, are worthy of notice. It is, as yet, an unseen happiness; it consists of things not seen at present; and which faith and hope are only concerned with; and saints have only some glimpse of it, which encourages to wait for it (2 Corinthians 4:18; Hebrews 11:1; Romans 8:24-25). It is future, it is yet to come; a glory that shall be revealed; grace that is to be brought at the revelation of Christ, and does not yet appear what it shall be: it is beyond all "compare"; the wealth and riches, the glories and grandeur of this world, are trifles to it; yea, the sufferings of the saints, their purest services, are not worthy to be compared with it (Romans 8:18), it is an "enduring substance," a never fading inheritance, a crown of glory that fades not away; the glory of this world passeth away; but this glory will never pass away: but of the eternity of it more hereafter. I proceed to show, 1c. Thirdly, the parts of this happiness, or wherein it will consist.

1c1. First, in a freedom from all evils, both of soul and body; from all evils that affect the soul.

1c1a. From the evil of evils, sin, which is exceeding evil in itself, and the cause of all evil: but in this happy state there will he an entire deliverance from it; even,

1c1a1. From all temptations to it, either from within or from without; glorified saints will have nothing within and about themselves, no sinful lust in their hearts to tempt, entice, and draw them away, as now; their souls being the spirits of just men made perfect; nothing in or about their bodies to incline and lead to sin, which are now vile, and have a world of iniquity in them; but then made like the glorious body of Christ: nor will they have any from without to solicit them to sin; not Satan, for he is cast out of heaven, and has not, nor never will have, place there any more; nor wicked men, whose evil communications now are very ensnaring and corrupting; but these will have no standing in the congregation of the righteous.

1c1a2. From the dominion of sin; it has not an entire dominion over the saints now, much less will it have any in heaven; nor will any attempts be made to bring them into captivity to it; nor will they be in any danger of it.

1c1a3. From the commission of it, and so of guilt through it: now none live without it, and daily need to have their garments washed in the blood of the Lamb; fresh guilt arises in their consciences, which must be removed the same way: but the saints will now be impeccable, not capable of sinning, as Adam was in impotence, and the angels before their confirmation; since the former sinned, and so did many of the latter. Yea,

1c1a4. The saints in heaven will be free from the very being of sin; now it has a place, and dwells and operates in them; but then the Canaanite will be no more in the land.

1c1a5. They will be rid of an evil heart of unbelief, and be no more distressed with doubts and fears: now unbelief is a sin that easily besets them; and without are fightings, and within are fears; but then, as there will be no occasion to say to themselves, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" so neither will they hear such a rebuke, "Wherefore didst thou doubt, O thou of little faith!"

1c1b. From the evil one, Satan and his temptations, Adam was not free from him in the garden of Eden; but saints will be in the paradise above: now he goes about like a roaring lion, terrifying and distressing; but then they will be out of the reach of his hideous noise, and where his fiery darts will never penetrate: he will be bound, and cast into the bottomless pit, during the saints reign with

Christ a thousand years; and though when they are ended he will be let loose for a little while, yet he will be taken up again, and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where he will remain for ever, and never more be able to give the least molestation and disturbance.

1c1c. From evil men; whether profane sinners, with whose ungodly conversation they shall be no more vexed; as Lot, David, Isaiah, and other saints have been here: or violent persecutors, who here oppress them, and distress them, in person, in name, in body, and estate; but now will cease from troubling them, not being able to do them the least hurt, nor give them the least uneasiness: or hypocrites in Zion; there will be no more tares among the wheat, nor goats among the sheep, nor foolish virgins among the wise; they that offend, and do iniquity, will be gathered out of the kingdom of Christ. This happiness will consist in a freedom from all bodily evils; or which affect the outward circumstances. No more penury, nor straitness, as to external things; no more want of food, of drink, and of clothing, which is sometimes now the lot of saints; they will hunger and thirst no more! there will be no more racking pains, nor loathsome diseases; no more sickness; no more death: nor will they be any more subject to disappointments from friends or others; nor to losses in the business of life; nor to loss of friends and relations by death; nor to anything that may mar their joy and pleasure.

1c2. Secondly, This happy state will consist in the enjoyment of all that is good.

1c2a. In the enjoyment of God himself, who is the chief good, who is the portion of his people now, and will be their portion for evermore; in enjoying communion with him, Father, Son, and Spirit, in the highest perfection, and without any interruption, and to all eternity; in the beatific vision of him, in beholding him as he is; not his nature and essence, so as to comprehend it; but they shall see him so as to have clearer, fuller, and more distinct apprehensions of his perfections and glory; especially his shining in and through Christ, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

1c2b. In being with Christ, and beholding his glory, the glory of his divine Person, with the eyes of their understanding, being more opened and enlarged; and the glory of his human nature with the eyes of their body; they shall see him in the flesh crowned with glory and honor, who was crowned with thorns, spit upon, buffeted, crucified, pierced, and wounded for them.

1c2c. In having the company and society of angels, and of one another. They will now be come, in the fullest sense, to an innumerable company of angels; and will converse with them, and join them in adoring the divine perfections, and blessing and praising God and the Lamb; they will then sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and other patriarchs, with the prophets, apostles, and all the saints in the kingdom of heaven; they will have communion with each other, though not in the same way and manner as now, in the use of ordinances, of which there will be then no need; yet there will be a social worship, in which they will be jointly concerned; in singing hallelujahs, and in ascriptions of blessing, glory, and praise, to the sacred and eternal Three. They will converse and discourse with each other about divine, spiritual, and heavenly things; in what language it is not easy to say; though "tongues" will "cease," the multiplicity of languages now used, that jargon introduced at Babel or since; though some think everyone will speak in his own language the wonderful things of God; but this is not probable, since then mutual converse would not be general; yet it is reasonable to suppose some one language will be used to employ the tongue; some have thought of the Hebrew language spoke in paradise, and by patriarchs, prophets, &c.

but perhaps it may be a language more pure, more perfect, more elegant, and more refined, than ever was spoken by men on earth. It is also highly probable the saints will know one another personally; which seems necessary to their perfect happiness [7]: though they will know no man after the flesh: all natural relations and civil connections will now cease; and whether it will give any peculiar and superior pleasure, to see a relation or friend in this happy state, more than to see another saint, is a question not now to be resolved; as it will give no uneasiness that any relation or friend is missing there, which would mar their happiness. To all which may be added, the communion of the saints will be with the utmost peace and concord; they will dwell together in unity, in the highest perfection; there will be no jars nor discord among them; no envy and vexation among brethren; love will be arrived to its greatest pitch of vigor and glory, and continue so for ever.

1c2d. This happiness will consist in perfect holiness. Sanctification will now be completed in soul and body: the soul, as before observed, will be entirely free from the very being of sin, as well as from any act of it; and from guilt and pollution, arising from it: and the body, though vile when laid in the grave, will, being raised, be like to the glorious body of Christ: and saints, both in soul and body, will be without fault before the throne, without any spot or stain of sin, or wrinkle or deformity, or any such thing; and so be perfectly fit for communion with God, with angels, and one another.

1c2e. It will consist in the enjoyment of the greatest glory, both in soul and body, beyond all present conception and expression. There will be a glory revealed in the saints, which is beyond all comparison; and a glory put upon them that is inconceivable; a glory upon their souls, which lie in perfect purity in them, in having the righteousness of Christ upon them, and the shining robes of light and bliss: a glory upon their bodies, which will be raised glorious, powerful, spiritual, and incorruptible, and ever continue; as Christ will appear in glory, they will appear in glory with him, and be made like unto him.

1c2f. From all which will arise the greatest joy and felicity; fullness of joy, joy unspeakable and full of glory! the redeemed of the Lord shall now be come to "Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:10).

1d. Fourthly, It may be considered, whether there will be any degrees in the final happiness of the saints; or whether one saint will have a greater share of happiness than another. It appears, there will be degrees in the punishment of the wicked in hell; and some think there will be degrees in the happiness of the saints in heaven; and others not: and there are some things advanced on both sides not to be despised. Those who are for degrees of glory do not think there will be any want of happiness in any, nor any uneasy desires after more; nor any envyings of others; nor do they suppose, with the Papists, that the distribution will be made according to the proper merit of men; but that the reward will be a reward of grace, and not of debt: yet, as it seeks to incline to the popish notion, and to have a look that way, it is not so agreeable; and besides, those passages of scripture which are usually brought to support it, as Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:14 &c. 1 Corinthians 15:40-42 belong to the kingdom state, as we have seen, and not to the ultimate glory. The arguments against degrees in glory seem with me to preponderate. As,

1d1. That all the people of God are loved by him with the same love; they are not loved one sooner than another, for they are all loved with an everlasting love; nor one more than another: there are no degrees in the love of God, as in himself, though the manifestations of it may be more or less; yet the favor he bears to his own peculiar people is the same, and so always continues to the end, and to all eternity.

1d2. They are all chosen together in Christ, as not one before another, their election being together in Christ, before the foundation of the world; so not one more than another: the election of one may be manifested before another, and be more clearly manifested to one than to another; but the act is the same; so is the glory they are chosen to.

1d3. They are equally interested in the same covenant of grace, which is an everlasting one; and the one were as early in it as the others; and are all alike blessed with the same spiritual blessings of it; and have the same grace given them in Christ before the world began, one as another; and have all the same right to the exceeding great and precious promises of it.

1d4. They are all equally redeemed with the same price, which is the precious blood of Christ! (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19), and though they are redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, yet it is by the same blood (Revelation 5:9), as the half shekel for the ransom of the souls of the Israelites was the same for one as another, the rich did not give more, nor the poor less (Exodus 30:12-15), so the ransom price for Christ's people is the same, which is himself (1 Timothy 2:6).

1d5. They are all justified by the same righteousness; it is unto all, and upon all them that believe; there is no difference between greater and lesser believers; though one may have more faith than another, that is, as to exercise; yet no man has more righteousness than another: and in everyone it is the same precious faith as to its nature and object; it is by one and the same righteousness that all the seed of Israel, the spiritual seed of Christ, are justified; Christ's righteousness is a garment that reaches down to the feet, and covers the meanest member of his body as well as the greatest.

1d6. All are equally the sons of God, are predestinated to the same adoption of children; and which they receive through the redemption that is by Christ; and from whom they receive the same power, authority, and privilege to become the children of God, one as another; they are all the children of God by faith in Christ, and are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and being children, they are heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; all alike so, they are all firstborn ones (Hebrews 12:23).

1d7. They are all kings and priests unto God, made so by Christ; their office and dignity are alike; they are alike raised by his grace and favor, from a low estate, to sit among princes, and to inherit the same throne of glory.

1d8. The future glory and happiness of the saints is frequently expressed by words of the singular number; showing, that though it belongs to more, it is the same to all, or that all have an equal right to and share in it; thus it is called, the inheritance of the saints in light; the inheritance reserved in heaven; a kingdom it is their Father's good pleasure to give them; a crown of righteousness laid up for them; and is signified by a penny given to the laborers alike, who came into the vineyard at different parts of the day (Colossians 1:12; 1 Peter 1:4; Luke 12:32; 2 Timothy 4:8; Matthew

20:9-10). It is a question moved by some, whether there will not be an increase of the happiness of the saints in a future state, or some addition made unto it, and improvement of it, by fresh discoveries of the mysteries of grace and of providence, that may be gradually made, which may afford new pleasure and delight. This is not easy to determine; some are inclined to think there will be an increase, as in the angels, who desire to "look" more into the mysteries of grace (1 Peter 1:12), and have a greater knowledge of them, which may be an addition to their happiness. But it is not so certain, that angels by nature are meant in the text referred to; but angels by office, ministers of the gospel: besides, the happiness of the good angels may not be as yet complete until all the elect men are gathered in; as the punishment of the evil angels will not be full until the day of judgment: and if any addition is gradually made to the happiness of the saints in heaven, it must be imperfect until that addition is made, and must continue so till the last is made; which does not seem consistent with the perfection of their state. However, much may be said for the growing happiness of the saints onward in eternity; but the determination of this question must be left till we come into that state, when "we shall know even also as we are known".

2. The eternity of this happiness is the next and the last thing to be considered, and which is essential to it; for let the happiness of men be what it may, yet if it is to have an end, though at a great distance, the thought of that will greatly spoil the pleasure of it; but this happiness will never have an end; as appears by its names.

2a. By its being frequently called "eternal life, everlasting life," a life that will never end: the present life has an end; let a man live ever so long he dies at last; it is said of Methuselah, the oldest man, that he lived so many years, "and he died"; but he that lives and believes in Christ "shall never die"; though he may die corporally, he shall not die spiritually and eternally, and therefore must be everlastingly happy.

2b. It is a "glory," and it is called "eternal" glory, an "eternal weight" of glory, a crown of glory "that fadeth not away": the glory of kings and kingdoms continues not long, but passes away, and so their happiness is temporal and transitory; but that of the saints endures for ever (2 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Peter 5:10).

2c. It is an "house eternal in the heavens"; it consists of many rooms; there are many mansions, dwelling, abiding places for the saints in it; and those habitations are "everlasting habitations" (2 Corinthians 5:1; Luke 16:8), houses on earth may be consumed by fire, or be pulled down by violence, or decay through length of time; or a man may be turned out of house and home; but nothing of this kind can befall the dwelling place of the saints in heaven, and them in that.

2d. It is an "inheritance," and an "eternal" one; an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away (Hebrews 9:15; 1 Peter 5:4). An inheritance on earth, a man may be dispossessed of by force or fraud; but an inheritance in heaven is "reserved" there, and so safe and secure; and is out of the reach of any to disturb the saints in their possession of it.

2e. It is a "city," and a "continuing" one; here the saints have none; but they seek one to come; a city which has foundations firm and sure, and can never be subverted (Hebrews 11:10; Hebrews 13:14), here cities of great antiquity and fame, of great strength and glory, are destroyed, and come to nothing, and their memorial perishes with them; but this is a city that will endure to all eternity.

2f. It is a "kingdom," and an "everlasting" one (2 Peter 1:11) it is the kingdom of Christ, of which there will be no end; in it the saints will reign with him for ever and ever: his spiritual and mediatorial kingdom, when the end cometh, will be delivered up to the Father; the millennium kingdom will be at an end when the thousand years are expired; but the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate state of glory, will never end.

2g. It is a country in which the saints are not sojourners, as here, where they continue but for a while; and so a better country than this; for there they will for ever dwell as in their own native land, being born from above, and partakers of the heavenly calling.

2h. It is expressed by "being with Christ," and which will be "for ever"; and with which words the saints are directed to comfort themselves now, that they shall be "ever with the Lord!" Eternity infinitely adds to him happiness of this state.

2i. The eternal purpose of God, which first gave birth to this state of happiness; the everlasting covenant of grace, in which it is secured; and the promise of it, made before the world began, confirm and ensure the everlasting continuance of it.

2j. Were there any fears of its ever ending, it would not be perfect happiness; but as "perfect love casteth out fear," so the full evidence that is given of the eternity of the saints' happiness, casts out all fear of its ever coming to an end: which, as it cannot be admitted, can never be an alloy unto it.

ENDNOTES:

[1] These have their name from Mle "to rejoice," hence called "laeta arva et laeti loci," in Virgil. Bochart. Canaan, l. 1. c. 34. col. 600.

[2] Tertull. Apolog. c. 47.

[3] Homer. Odyss. 4. v. 563. vid. Strabo Geograph. l. 1. p. 2. & l. 3. p. 103. Pindar Olymp. ode 2. Virgil. Aeneid. l. 5. v. 734. & l. 6. v. 543, 638, &c. 743.

[4] In Gorgia, p. 356, 357. & in Axiocho: p. 1308.

[5] De facie in ore lunae, p. 942.

[6] Consol. ad Polybium, c. 28.

[7] See a Sermon of mine, called, "The glorious State of the Saints in Heaven," p. 34, &c.

02. Of the Final State of the Wicked in Hell

Of the Final State of the Wicked in Hell When the judgment is finished, and the sentence pronounced, the wicked will go into "everlasting punishment," (Matthew 25:46). What that punishment will be, and the duration of it, are the things to be considered. With respect to the punishment itself, I shall,

1. First, prove that there will be a state of punishment of wicked men in the future world. There is a punishment of the wicked in their souls, which takes place at death; as appears from the parable of the rich man, (Luke 16:23 and there is a punishment of them in soul and body, after the resurrection, and the last judgment, (see Revelation 20:12; Revelation 20:15), which latter is the continuation and perfection of the former. And this will appear,

1a1. From the light of nature among the heathens; being owned and spoken of, not only by their poets, but by their philosophers, and those the more wise, grave, and serious among them. The poets, indeed, say many fabulous things of Pluto, the king of hell; of Rhadamanthus, and others as judges there; of Charon the ferry man, and of the infernal rivers; yet under these fables some truth lies disguised; nay, Tertullian [1], charges the heathens with borrowing these things from the sacred writings; "When we speak of God as a Judge, and threaten men with hell fire, we are laughed at; but, says he, the poets and the philosophers erect a tribunal in hell, and speak of a river of fire there: from whence, says he, I beseech you, have they such like things, but from our mysteries?" But not the poets only, but the more serious and wiser sort of the heathens, believed these things. Caesar was reproved by Cato, for deriding punishments after death; as if there were neither joys nor torments beyond it, but that that puts an end to all [2]. Many of the philosophers [3] wrote of things done in "hades," or hell; and Plato [4] denies that death is the last thing; but that the punishments of hell are the last; and says all the same things the poets do; yea, declares them to be rational, and not fables [5]: hence Arnobius [6], an ancient defender of the Christians against the heathens, says, "Dare ye deride us when we speak of hell, and of unquenchable fire, into which we know souls are cast? Does not your Plato say the same, in his book of the immortality of the soul? Does he not make mention of the rivers Acheron, Styx, Cocytus, and Periphlegeton, in which he asserts souls are rolled, plunged, and burnt?" Epicurus thought the punishment of held to be a poetical figment. So Horace, who was an Epicurean, says [7], "Morsultima linea rerum est," death is the last line of things. But Zeno the Stoic believed and taught, that the godly and ungodly will have different habitations; the one delightful, and the other uncomfortable [8]. Indeed, some of the Stoic philosophers [9] derided these things; but then it is thought they only meant the fables of the poets about them, since their founder, as now observed, believed and taught them. Hierocles, a Pythagorean and Platonic philosopher, speaks of en adou kolasthria, "punishments in hell [10]."

1a2. A state of punishment hereafter, appears from the impressions of guilt and wrath on the consciences of men now, for sins committed, being struck with the fear of future judgment, and of punishment that shall follow; and which are observable in heathens themselves, whose consciences accuse, or excuse, one another; hence, as Cicero says [11], "Every man’s sins

distress him; their evil thoughts and consciences terrify them; these, to the ungodly, are their daily and domestic furies, which haunt them day and night." Such may be observed in Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, and other wicked persons; in whom there was nothing but a fearful looking for of fiery indignation, which shall consume them in hell. And these are emblems, earnests, presages, and pledges of wrath to come. Yea, there is sometimes, some things in good men which bear a resemblance to this; and while they are under the sense of them, apprehend themselves as in a condition similar to it; as David, Heman the Ezrahite, and Jonah (Psalms 116:3; Psalms 88:6-7; Psalms 88:15-16; Jonah 2:2).

1a3. This may be argued from the justice of God. If there is a God, he must be believed to be just; and if there is a just God, there must be a future state of punishment; and, indeed, the disbelief of these commonly go together. It is certain there is a God; and it is as certain that God is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; and will render to every man according to his works. Now it is certain, that justice does not take place, or is not so manifestly displayed in this world; it seems, therefore, but just and reasonable, that there should be a change of things in a future state, when the saints will be comforted, and the wicked tormented: it is but a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to wicked men hereafter, who have had their flow of worldly happiness, and abused it. God is a God of vengeance, and he will show it, and it is proper he should.

1a4. This is abundantly evident from divine revelation, from the books both of the Old and the New Testament. David says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell" (Psalms 9:17). And our Lord speaks of some sins which make men in danger of hell fire, and of the whole body being cast into hell for them; and of both body and soul being destroyed in hell (Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 10:28). But these, and such like passages, will be considered hereafter.

1a5. This may be further confirmed, from the examples of persons that already endure this punishment, at least in part; as the fallen angels, who, when they had sinned, were cast down from heaven, where was the first abode of them, to Tartarus, or hell, a place of darkness, where they are delivered into chains of darkness, and held by them; and though they may not be in full torments, yet they are not without them, and are reserved unto judgment, which, when over, they will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, (2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:10). Another instance is, the men of the old world, who, by their sins, brought a flood upon it; and not only their bodies were destroyed by the flood, but the spirits, or souls of these men, who were disobedient in the times of Noah, were laid up "in prison," that is, in the prison of hell, where they were when the apostle Peter wrote his epistle (1 Peter 3:19-20), these are, by some, thought to be meant by "the congregation of the Rephaim," of the giants (in Proverbs 21:16). The men of Sodom and Gomorrah, had not only their bodies and their substance burnt, in the conflagration of their cities; but their souls also are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 1:7). So Korah and his company, not only went down alive into the pit of the earth, that opening and closing upon them, but perished in their souls; since wicked men are said to "perish, in the gainsaying of Korah," for the same sins, and in like manner, though not temporally and corporally; but in soul, and eternally (Jude 1:11). The case of the wicked rich man, who lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment there, though it be a parable, relates to a fact, and ascertains the truth of it, and which yet some take to be an historical fact.

1b. Secondly, I shall next consider the names, words, and phrases, by which the place and state of future punishment are expressed; which will still give a further proof of it, and lead more into the

nature of it.

1b1. First, the names of the place; I call it a place, and not a state only; though some speak of it only as such; but the scriptures make mention of it as a "place of torment" (Luke 16:28), and Judas is said to "go to his own place" (Acts 1:25), to which he was appointed, being the Son of perdition: and a place seems necessary, especially for bodies, as after the resurrection; though where it is, or will be, is hard to say: some make it to be the air; others the body of the sun; some the fixed stars; others the earth, either the center, or the cavities of it, or under it; since the heaven is represented as high, and this as low; and sometimes called hell beneath (Job 11:8; Proverbs 15:14; Isaiah 14:9). But it should not be so much our concern to know where it is, as how to escape it, and that we come not into this place of torment (Luke 16:28).

1b1a. It is called destruction, or Abaddon, which is the name of the king of the bottomless pit, (Revelation 9:11 which signifies a destroyer, and is rendered destruction in Job 26:6, Proverbs 27:20; Proverbs 15:11 where "hell and destruction" are mentioned together, as signifying the same thing, the one being explanative of the other. Indeed the grave, which the word used for hell sometimes signifies, is called the pit of destruction and corruption, because bodies laid in it corrupt and waste away; but here it seems to signify the place of the punishment of the wicked, where body and soul are destroyed with an everlasting destruction; which is not to be understood of an extinction of soul and body, as by the Epicureans and Socinians [12]; for this is contrary both to the immortality of the soul which cannot be killed, and to the resurrection of the body, which, though it rises to damnation and everlasting contempt, yet dies not again; and to what purpose should it be raised, if it becomes immediately extinct? hell, or a state of punishment, follows upon death, and the resurrection, and is connected with them; it follows upon the death of the body; the rich man died, with respect to his body, and in hell he lift up his eyes; that is, he found his soul in torment, and therefore not extinct. And when the body is raised and united to the soul, and has passed the general judgment, and received its sentence, both will go into everlasting punishment; and therefore neither of them extinct. Besides, there would otherwise be no meaning in those words of Christ, "It had been good for that man if he had never been born," (Matthew 26:24 since for a man to be extinct, or to be in a state of nonexistence, and not to be born, are the same; at least, if a man is extinct, it is as if he had never been born; and therefore no comparison can be made between them; nor better nor worse be said of them. But when hell, or the punishment of the wicked in it, is called destruction, it does not mean a destruction of the being of a person, but of all happiness to him; he is deprived of all, both in soul and body; no light of joy; but darkness, horror, and distress; nothing but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish.

1b1b. Another name or word by which it is expressed, is Sheol, which is often rendered the "grave"; as in Genesis 42:38; Genesis 44:31 and should be where it is sometimes translated "hell," as in Psalms 16:10 yet in some places it seems as if it could not be understood of that, but of the state or place of punishment of the wicked; as in Psalms 9:17. "The wicked shall be turned into hell": now to be turned into the earth, or to be laid in the grave, is not peculiar to wicked men; it is the common lot of all, good and bad; it is the house appointed for all living (Job 30:23), but to be enveloped with all darkness, and consumed in a fire, not blown, and an horrible tempest rained on them, is the peculiar portion of wicked men from God (Job 20:26; Job 20:29; Psalms 11:6). Besides, the phrase being "turned" into it, denotes indignation, contempt, and shame; and is the same with the New Testament phrase, so often used, of being "cast into hell" (Matthew 5:29-30;

Matthew 8:12) so when this word is used of the adulterous woman, and her ways, that her steps take hold of hell, and her house is the way to it; and that her guests are in the depths of it (Proverbs 5:5; Proverbs 7:27; Proverbs 9:18) to understand it of the grave, seems not to be strong enough, and to give too low a sense of it; and does not sufficiently express the danger persons are in through her; and into which they are brought: as well as it is not ascribing enough to the way of life, above to the wise, that it secures a person from the grave beneath; and which yet it does not; but rather that it delivers him from the punishment of hell (Proverbs 15:24), in like manner, when it is said of hardened and desperate sinners, that they with hell are at an agreement; they seem to outbrave, deride, and bid defiance to more than death and the grave; even to mock at hell, and its torments they give no credit to. It has its name, "Sheol," from lav because it asks and has, and is never satisfied; and applied, whether to the grave or hell, denotes the insatiableness thereof, (Proverbs 27:20; Proverbs 30:16; Isaiah 5:14; Habakkuk 2:5).

1b1c. Another name for hell is "Tophet"; which was a place in the valley of the son of Hinnom, where the Israelites burnt their sons and their daughters in the fire, sacrificing them to Molech; and that the cries of the infants might not be heard, to affect their parents, drums or tabrets were beat upon during the time; and from hence the place had the name of Tophet, "Toph" signifying a drum, or tabret (see Jeremiah 7:31-32); and this seems to be used of the place and state of the punishment of the wicked; "Tophet is ordained of old," &c. (Isaiah 30:33), which the Targum interprets of hell, prepared from ages past for the sins of men; and which words, Calvin on the text, understands of the miserable condition, and extreme torments and punishments of the wicked; and, indeed, they seem fitly to describe them: "Tophet was ordained of old," as hell is from eternity; and is that condemnation wicked men were of old ordained unto: it was "prepared for the king"; so everlasting fire is prepared for the devil and his angels, for the prince of devils, and all his subjects: it is made "deep and large"; so hell is the bottomless pit large enough to hold the whole posse of devils, and all the wicked, from the beginning to the end of the world. The "pile," the fuel, for the fire, is much "wood," wicked men, comparable to thorns and briers, straw and stubble, withered branches of vines, and dry trees; a fire "kindled," and blown up by "the breath of the Lord," at whose blast, and the breath of his nostrils, men perish and are consumed; a fire, not blown by men, but by the breath of the Almighty; "like a stream of brimstone," such as destroyed the cities of the plain.

1b1d. From Gehinnon, the valley of Hinnom, where Tophet was, is the word used in the New Testament, geena [13] (Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:29-30; Mark 9:43; Mark 9:45; Mark 9:47), for the fire of hell; there, as just observed, children were burnt with fire, and sacrificed to Molech; which horrid custom the Israelites borrowed from their neighbors the Canaanites, or Phoenicians; and who carried it into their several colonies, and particularly to Carthage; where, as Diodorus Siculus relates [14], the inhabitants had a statue of Saturn, the same with Molech, whose hands were put in such a position, that when children were put into them, they rolled down, and fell into a chasm, or ditch, full of fire; a fit emblem of the fire of hell, often called in scripture a "lake of fire".

1b1e. Sometimes this place is called the deep abyss, or bottomless pit: the devils, when they came out of the man, in whom was a legion, besought Christ that he would not order them to go "into the deep," which seems to be their place of full torment, since they deprecated going into it (Luke 8:31), and is the same with the bottomless pit Abaddon is king of, and into which Satan, when bound, will be cast (Revelation 9:1, Revelation 9:11, Revelation 20:3).

1b1f. Another name it has in the New Testament, is Hades, which signifies an invisible state, a state of darkness. Some derive it from the word "Adamah," earth [15], from whence the first Adam; so that to go down to Hades, is no other than to return to the earth, from whence man was; and the word may signify the grave, in Revelation 1:8; Revelation 20:13-14 but it cannot be so understood in Luke 16:23 when the rich man died, was buried, and his body laid in the earth, it is said, "in Hades, in hell he lift up his eyes"; which can never be meant of the grave; it is spoken of as distinct from that; and as elsewhere, it is said to be a place of torment; whereas the grave is a place of ease and rest; between this, and where Abraham and Lazarus were, was a gulf, that divided them from one another; whereas in the grave all lie promiscuously: so the gates of hell, in Matthew 16:18 must mean something else, and not the gates of the grave.

1b1g. Another word by which it is expressed, is "Tartarus"; and this also but in one place, and comprehended in a verb there used (2 Peter 2:4). "God spared not the angels that sinned"; but, tartarwsaV, "cast them down to tartarus," or hell; which word, though only used in this place, yet that, with others, belonging to it, is to be met with frequently in heathen writers, who speak of the Titans, and others, that rebelled against the gods, much in the same language as the apostle does of the angels, as bound and cast down to Tartarus; which they describe as a dark place, and as distant from the earth, as the earth is from heaven [16]: and, indeed, the story of the Titans seems to be hammered out of the scriptural account of the fallen angels; and so Plato [17] speaks of wicked men, guilty of capital crimes, as cast into Tartarus [18], or hell; and also of a place where three ways met, two of which leads the one to the Islands of the blessed, the others to Tartarus. Some derive this word from a Greek word, which signifies "to trouble," it being a place of tribulation and anguish: and others from a Chaldean word, which signifies to "fall," to subside, to go to the bottom [19], as being a low, inferior place; hence called "hell from beneath".

1b2. Secondly, There are words and phrases by which the future punishment of the wicked is expressed; and which may serve to give a further account of the nature of it. And,

1b2a. It is represented as a prison; so the fallen angels are said to be cast into hell, as into a prison, and where they lie in chains, and are reserved to the judgment of the great day. And the spirits that were disobedient in the days of Noah, are expressly said to "be in prison" (2 Peter 1:4; 1 Peter 3:19-20). Wicked men are not only criminals, but debtors; and whereas they have not with which to pay their debts, and no surety to pay them for them, to prison they must go till the uttermost farthing is paid, which never will be (Matthew 5:26). So Plato [20] speaks of Tartarus as a prison of just punishment; for those who have lived unrighteously and ungodly.

1b2b. It is spoken of as a state of darkness, "of blackness of darkness," (Jude 1:13 of the grossest, thickest darkness that can be conceived of; of "outer darkness" (Matthew 8:12), those in it being without, shut out of the kingdom of light, the inheritance of the saints in light; and so like the darkness of the Egyptians, and such as might be felt; when the Israelites had light in all their dwellings: or, like the kingdom of the beast, said to be full of darkness: all which sets forth the very uncomfortable condition of the wicked, being without the light of God’s countenance, and the joys of heaven.

1b2c. It is set forth by "fire" (Matthew 5:21), than which nothing gives more pain, nor is more excruciating; by a "furnace of fire" (Matthew 13:42; Matthew 13:50), like that which Nebuchadnezzar caused to be heated seven times hotter than usual, for Daniel’s three

companions to be cast into, who refused to worship his image, than which nothing can be conceived of more dreadful; and by "a lake of fire," and of "brimstone" also, which enrages the fire, and increases the strength of it (Revelation 20:10; Revelation 20:15; Revelation 21:8), in allusion to the sulphureous lake Asphalrites, where Sodom and Gomorrah stood: all which serve to give an idea of the wrath of God, poured out on the wicked like fire, and the quick sense they will have of it.

1b2d. It is expressed by a "worm that never dies" (Mark 9:44; Mark 9:46; Mark 9:48; Isaiah 66:24), to die such a death as Herod did, to be eaten of worms, to have a man’s flesh gnaw off of his bones by them till he dies, must be very dreadful, (Acts 12:23 but what is this to the continual gnawing of a guilty conscience; that "stimulus perpetuae conscientiae," that sting of a perpetual conscience; or that perpetual sting of conscience Charite threatened Thrasyllus [21] with? This continued consciousness of guilt, and feeling of divine wrath for sin, are but faintly expressed by the heathens, by vultures feeding on the heart of Tytius in hell; or by a serpent eating out his liver, which grew again [22] as fast as eaten.

1b2e. This is what is called the second death (Revelation 21:8), of which good men shall not be hurt, and on whom it shall have no power (Revelation 2:11; Revelation 20:6), but wicked men will ever abide under it, shall not become extinct, neither in soul nor body, though they may wish for it. This is death eternal, so called, not from a defect of life; nor from the quality of living, being always dying, yet never die.

1b2f. A variety of phrases is used, to signify the terribleness of the future punishment of the wicked; as by tearing them in pieces, as a lion tears his prey; by cutting them asunder, in allusion to punishments of this kind, as Agag was hewed to pieces by Samuel; or to sacrifices, cut up when offered as victims; and by drowning men in perdition, which denotes the utter destruction of them; and by weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, through grief, malice, and envy.

1b2g. By the wrath of God, which comes upon the children of disobedience; by wrath to come, men are warned to flee from; and from which Christ only can deliver them; and by indignation and wrath on every soul of man that does evil. And this is what is chiefly intended by the various words and phrases before observed; and in a sense of which the future punishment of the wicked will greatly lie; as will appear by considering,

1c. Thirdly, the species and sorts of that punishment; or the parts of which it consists, and wherein it lies: it is usually distinguished into "poena damni," punishment of loss; and "poena sensus," punishment of sense; nor is the distinction amiss, provided they are considered as together, and meeting in the same subject, as they do in the fallen angels; who sinning, were cast out of heaven, were driven from the presence of God, and so lost their original happiness; and were cast down to hell, and so punished with a sense of divine wrath: and both may be observed together in the sentence pronounced on the wicked at the general judgment; "Depart from me," there is the punishment of loss; ye cursed, "into everlasting fire," there is the punishment of sense; the one is the loss of the divine presence; the other a feeling of the curse of the law, and the wrath of God; and there cannot be the one without the other: some have thought, that only the punishment of loss, but not of sense, will be sustained by devils, and wicked men, before the day of judgment; but though the devils may not be in full torment till then, yet not exempt from any, since they are cast down to hell; and as for wicked men, they are immediately after death, in a state of pain, and

under a sense of it, as the rich man in hell, "being in torment": and others are of opinion, that such as die without actual sin, and are only guilty of original sin, shall only suffer the former, but not the latter. But as the scriptures say little of the case of such, it becomes us to say little also, and leave it to the wise and just Disposer of all things; yet if eternal death is the demerit of original sin, it is not easy to say how there can be one sort of punishment without the other; where there is a loss, there will be a sense of it, or else it is no punishment; and a sense of it will give pain; though as there are degrees of punishment of sin, as will be seen anon, it is reasonable to believe, the punishment of such will be comparatively a milder one, as Augustin expresses it: no doubt there were many such among the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, when those cities were destroyed; and yet the apostle says of them in general, that they were "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7). But to proceed, 1c1. First, there is the punishment of loss, which will consist of a privation of all good things. And,

1c1a. Of God the chiefest good; as the enjoyment of God is man’s chief happiness, so a privation of that enjoyment is his greatest infelicity; the angels, when they sinned, and so Adam, when he sinned, were driven from the presence of God. And though wicked men desire not the presence of God, but say, depart from us, that is, this is the language of their lives and actions; yet when they come to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord"; a great part of that destruction will lie in an eternal separation from it; it will be dreadful to them, as it was an aggravation of the punishment of Cain, and made it intolerable to him, though a wicked man; "From thy face shall I be hid!" so to be everlastingly banished from God, without any hope of his favor, will be dreadful: the words of an ancient writer [23] are, "Many men only fear hell fire; but I say, the loss of that glory (the glory of God and of heaven) is much greater than hell, or the punishment of sense: if it cannot be proved by word, it is not to be wondered at; for we do not know the happiness of good things, till we clearly know the misery of evil things, from the privation of those good things."

1c1b. Of Christ, the light and life of men, the light of grace, and the light of glory, in whom all salvation is; as death is the privation of life in a natural sense, eternal death is a privation of eternal life in Christ; as blindness is a privation of sight, and darkness of light; so the judicial blindness and darkness of the infernal state is a privation of the sight of Christ, and of light, life, and salvation by him; as the happiness of glorified saints, will lie in beholding Christ, and seeing his glory; the miserable state of the wicked will lie in being eternally deprived of such a sight; and therefore this is always in the awful sentence pronounced on them by Christ; "Depart from me, ye cursed"; or "depart from me, ye workers of iniquity" (Matthew 7:23; Matthew 25:41; Luke 13:27).

1c1c. Of the grace, peace, and joy of the Holy Ghost, of which they are destitute now, and will for ever be deprived of it; which will be in perfection in the kingdom of heaven; and instead of that, nothing but distress, anguish, and horror of mind; having no rest, no case, nor peace, day and night (Revelation 14:11).

1c1d. Of the company of angels and saints: they will be tormented in the presence of the angels, without receiving any benefit by them, or relief from them: they will be sensible of the happiness of the saints, which will aggravate their misery; they will not be able to come at them, and share with them in their bliss; nor have the least degree of consolation from them; the rich man saw Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham, but could not obtain one dip of the tip of his finger in water to cool his

tongue. This seems to be the Tantalus of the heathens, or what they mean by Tantalus; a man athirst and hungry, standing in water up to his chin, and pleasant fruits just at his lips, and yet he not able to quench his thirst with the one, nor to satisfy his hunger with the other [24]: yea, they will not have the least pity shown them by God, angels or men; God will mock at their destruction; angels will applaud his righteous judgment; and the holy apostles and prophets, and all the saints, will rejoice over them, as they will over Babylon, and at her destruction, because of the justice of God being glorified by it.

1c1e. Of the kingdom of heaven, from whence they will be excluded, and of the glories and joys of it, of which they will be for ever deprived; they will see the patriarchs and prophets, and all the saints, in the kingdom of God, and they themselves "thrust out"; the door will be "shut" upon them, and no entrance allowed them; they will be obliged to stand "without," where dogs are; and will be "cast into outer darkness," for ever deprived of the light of joy and comfort.

1c2. Secondly, there is the punishment of sense, and which will lie both in body and soul; for both will be destroyed in hell, and be sensible of the fire of it.

1c2a. The body: hence we often read of the whole body, and of the various members of it with it, being cast into hell (Matthew 5:29-30; Mark 9:43; Mark 9:45; Mark 9:47), now though these are proverbial, or parabolical phrases, yet they have a meaning in them, and have respect to corporal punishment, which will be endured in the body, some way or another. The body is subservient to the soul in the commission of sin; its members are yielded as instruments of unrighteousness; that little member the tongue, is a world of iniquity, defiles the whole body, and is productive of many evils; and it is but just therefore, that the body should have its share in the punishment of sin; and for this purpose is the resurrection of the body, that sinful men may receive the just demerit of their sinful actions done in their bodies. It is a question moved, Whether the fire of hell is a material fire? No doubt that it is not the only thing meant by it, nor the chief, which is the fire of divine wrath, in which figurative sense it is often taken; though it seems to be sometimes taken in a proper sense, since it has those things ascribed to it which belong to fire properly so called, as smoke, flame, heat, &c. and, indeed, how the body can be affected with any other, is not easy to say, unless by sympathy with the soul, sustaining the fire of divine wrath; nor is it any objection, that the bodies of the wicked will be raised immortal, as never more to die; whereas they would be liable to be consumed, if cast into material fire. To which it may be answered, they may be preserved, by the power of God, from being consumed by it; as the three men in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace were preserved in the midst of it for their safety, so may wicked men be preserved in the furnace of fire for their punishment. And there are such things in nature which are not consumed by fire; as a sort of flax, and cloth made of it, cleansed by burning it; and a precious stone, set on fire, which is not to be quenched; for which reason both have the name of "asbestos [25]," unquenchable: and there is a sort of fly, called "pyrausta [26]," or the firefly, which lives in the fire. Besides, this fire may not be, as doubtless it is not, the same with our culinary fire; it may be, like that, excruciating, but not consuming; as we see with respect to lightning, or fire from heaven, which sometimes will scorch and burn, and yet not consume and destroy bodies, or reduce them to ashes; as in the case of Nadab and Abihu: but this is not very material to determine; since,

1c2b. The soul will be filled with a sense of wrath, which will be poured forth on the wicked, and burn like fire (Psalms 79:5; Nahum 1:6) this is the fiery indignation which shall consume the

adversaries of God and Christ in hell (Hebrews 10:27) that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, which will come upon every soul of man that does evil, (Romans 2:8-9) that fire which the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, will kindle (Isaiah 30:33) and which the body, by its near conjunction with the soul, will feel the effects of.

1d. Fourthly, the degrees of this punishment; for it seems such there will be, since wicked men will be judged, and so punished, according to their evil works, whether more or fewer, greater or lesser. But then these cannot be understood of the punishment of loss; one cannot lose more nor less than another; all are equally excluded from the presence and communion of God and of Christ, and of the Spirit; and from the company of angels and saints, and from the kingdom of heaven and the glories of it: but can only be said of the punishment of sense; some are lesser sinners and others greater; some are only guilty of original sin, and not of actual transgressions, at least of very few, and so are deserving of a milder punishment only, as before observed; and of actual transgressions some are guilty of more, and of more heinous ones (see John 19:11); and their guilt and punishment are in proportion to them; some are attended with greater aggravations, and so are deserving of a greater punishment; some are done in ignorance, and others against light and knowledge; one knows his master's will and does it not, and so deserves to be beaten with many stripes; and another knows it not, and yet does things worthy of stripes, and therefore to be beaten with few stripes (Luke 12:47). Some have had the advantage of a written law, the law of Moses, as the Jews had, and this explained with the sanctions of it; when others, as the Gentiles, had only the light of nature and the law of it to guide them; and as both will be judged according to their different laws, so will they be punished in a different manner, (Romans 2:12. Some have had the advantage of a preached gospel, and have despised it, and have been disobedient to it, which is an aggravation of their condemnation; so that it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for them (Matthew 11:20-21). The scribes and Pharisees who, against the clearest evidence, and the conviction of their own consciences, denied that Jesus was the Messiah, and blasphemed his miracles, which were proofs of it; and under a pretence of religion devoured widows' houses, justly receive the greater damnation, (Matthew 12:25-32; Matthew 23:14 and those who have treated contumaciously the great doctrines of the gospel, respecting the person and blood of Christ, and the grace of the Spirit of Christ; of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, than those who have only broken the law of Moses? (Hebrews 10:28-29; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Peter 4:17). Some have been favored with greater mercies in providence than others, and have abused them, and despised the goodness of God extended to them, and so have treasured up more wrath against the day of wrath; and having their good things here, will have their evil ones hereafter, with redoubled vengeance (Romans 2:4-5 Luke 16:25).

2. What remains to be considered is, the duration of the punishment of the wicked in hell. It will always continue and never have an end, and is therefore called "everlasting punishment," and "everlasting destruction" (Matthew 25:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:9), and this will admit of proof both from reason and revelation, from the light of nature, and from the sure word of prophecy. The heathens had not only knowledge of the future punishment of the wicked in hell, but of the eternal duration of it. Lucretius, the Epicurean philosopher, though he disbelieved it, bears a full testimony to the truth of it, even while he derides it; he wrote many years before the coming of Christ, so that what he says could not be derived from the writings of the New Testament, but from a more ancient tradition handed down among the Gentiles time immemorial; he says [27], that the fears of

"eternal" punishment after death, and as what would never have an end, were the cause of all the troubles and miseries of human life; under the bondage of which men lay oppressed, until Epicurus, a man of Greece, rose up, and delivered men from those fears and fancies; so that, according to him, till the times of Epicurus, who lived more than two hundred years before Christ, this sentiment had always obtained among the heathens. And from the sacred scriptures the eternity of future punishment is abundantly evident; as,

2a. From the punishment of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, who were made an ensample to those that after should live ungodly; the destruction of those cities was an emblem of eternal punishment: they agree in the efficient cause of them, God; in the instruments, angels; in the matter and manner of the destruction, by fire and brimstone; in circumstances, suddenly, at an unawares; and in the nature of it, irreparable, and in a sense eternal; for those cities were reduced to such a state, as that they will not, nor can be restored again, and so a fit type of the everlasting punishment of sinners in hell; but more than this, the inhabitants of those cities are now "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7), they are not only now suffering the vengeance, but the vengeance is eternal, and expressed by fire that is everlasting.

2b. From the sense and fears of sinners in Zion, expressed in Isaiah 33:14. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" the Targum interprets this of the everlasting burnings of hell; and many Christian interpreters [28], of the wrath of God, and the tortures of a guilty conscience there; which are represented as what will endure for ever, and as intolerable; the desert which those sinners were conscious of, and that the outward form of religion would not deliver from them.

2c. From the resurrection of the dead, and the issue of it, as described in Daniel 12:2. "Some of whom awake to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt": this twofold resurrection is called, the one "the resurrection of life"; the other "the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29), and as the life some are raised to is everlasting life, the damnation that follows the resurrection of the other, must be everlasting damnation; here called, "everlasting contempt"; for such will be had in contempt for ever, by God, the holy angels, and good men: the word "everlasting" must have the same sense, and denote the same duration, with respect to the one as to the other.

2d. From the sentence pronounced on the wicked (Matthew 25:41), to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: if the punishment of the devil and his angels will endure for ever, and have no end, then the punishment of the wicked will also endure for ever, without end, since the same punishment is prepared for the one as for the other; and which is here expressed by "everlasting fire"; and as elsewhere by "unquenchable fire," by "fire that never shall be quenched" (Matthew 3:12; Mark 9:45), by "smoke of fire and torments, that ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Revelation 14:11), and by "blackness of darkness reserved for ever" (Jude 1:13).

2e. From the execution of the sentence (Matthew 25:46). "These shall go away into everlasting punishment"; as the happiness of the saints in heaven is everlasting, and there is no reason to believe it ever will have an end; so the punishment of the wicked in hell will be everlasting, and without end: the same word here rendered "everlasting," is frequently used of the future life and happiness of the saints (John 6:40; John 6:47; John 6:54), yea, it is used of it in this passage; for it follows, "but the righteous into life eternal": now no reason can be given why the word in the one clause, which is the same, should be understood of an eternal duration, and in the other of a

limited one. Besides, the opposition of the two states of the respective persons requires, that it should be understood in the same sense, and as of equal extent.

2f. From the immortality of the soul. The soul of man, of every man, is immortal, and cannot die, or become extinct, as has been abundantly proved; if therefore it is immortal, and lives for ever, it must be for ever either happy or miserable; the souls of the righteous being immortal, shall be for ever happy; and the souls of the wicked, being so likewise, shall be always miserable: he that is unjust and filthy now, will be after death unjust and filthy still, and ever remain so, and therefore always unhappy and miserable (Revelation 22:11).

2g. From the parts of future punishment; the punishment of loss, and the punishment of sense. The loss of all good sustained will be irretrievable; and the sense of pain and torment will be constant, and without intermission; there will be no rest day nor night; the soul being immortal, the worm of conscience "dieth not," but will be always gnawing, stinging, accusing, and upbraiding, and therefore the punishment will always endure.

2h. From an incapacity of ever being relieved, through the use of means, the ministry of the word; or by a being brought to repentance; or by having sin pardoned, and satisfaction made for it; all which will be out of the question: the ministry of the word of peace and reconciliation will be no more; the door of the gospel will be shut; no place will be found for repentance; men will blaspheme God because of their pains, but not repent of their sins; there will be no remission of sin in the world to come; nor satisfaction to be made for sins; sinners cannot satisfy for them themselves by all that they endure; and there will be none to satisfy for them, for there will be no more offering for sin.

2i. From the impossibility of an escape, or a remove out of it. The place of torment is bounded by a great gulf, so that there is no passing from that to a state of happiness; which gulf is no other than the eternal and immutable decree of God, which can never be disannulled, but will remain fixed and unalterable. The heathens themselves represent Hades and Tartarus, by which they mean the same as hell, as so closely locked and shut up, that there is no return from thence [29]; and as strongly fortified with iron towers and gates, with walls and adamantine pillars [30], as impregnable, and never to be broke through.

2j. From the perfections of God: the veracity of God makes eternal punishment for sin necessary. He has threatened sin, the breach of his law, with eternal death; for such is the demerit of it; and his truth and faithfulness are engaged to fulfil the threatening, unless a compensation is made for sin committed. "Let God be true, and every man a liar!" The justice of God also requires it; not to punish sin, would not be doing justice to himself, and to the glory of his Majesty; it would be a denying himself, a concealing his perfections, and suffering his supreme authority over his creatures to be subject to contempt; his justice, and the honor of it, make it necessary that sin should be punished, either in the sinner, or in a surety for him: wherefore no satisfaction being made to justice, nor can there be any made in a future state, the punishment must continue for ever. It is pretended by some, as if it was contrary to the justice of God, that a transient, temporary action, as sin is, should be everlastingly punished. To which it may be replied, that though sin, as an action, is a transient one, yet the evil, the guilt, the demerit of sin continue, unless purged by the blood of Christ, and atoned for by his sacrifice. Besides, sin is continued to be committed in a future state, though not the same sorts of sins, some of them, as murders, adulteries, &c. yet

blasphemy, malice, envy, and the like [31]; and therefore as they continue to be committed, it is but just that the wrath of God should remain upon them: moreover, though sin is a finite action, as an action, for nothing else can be done by a finite creature; yet it is, objectively, infinite, as committed against an infinite Being; and therefore is justly punished with the loss of an infinite good. And as the demerit of sin, as to the punishment of sense, cannot be inflicted "intensively" on a finite creature, that not being able to bear it; it is inflicted "extensively"; or is continued, "ad infinitum," for ever. Nor is this contrary to the mercy and goodness of God; God is just, as well as merciful and good: and these attributes are not to be opposed to one another; justice must be satisfied, as well as grace, mercy, and goodness displayed; and besides, the displays of those, or the actings thereof, are according to the sovereign will and pleasure of God; and when men have despised his goodness in providence, and his grace and mercy held forth in the gospel, and in salvation by Christ; it can be no reproach to his mercy and goodness thus despised, to punish such with everlasting destruction (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Apolog. c. 47.

[2] Sallust, de Bell. Catilin. p. 28, 31.

[3] Heraclides Ponticus, Antisthenes, Democritus & Protagoras, vid. Laert. in eorum Vitis.

[4] De Legibus, l. 9. p. 948. & l. 12. p. 994. & in Phaedone, p. 83, 84. in Axiocho, p. 1308.

[5] In Gorgia, p. 356.

[6] Adv. Gentes, l. 2. p. 67.

[7] Epist. l. 1. ep. 16. v. 79.

[8] Lactant. Institut. l. 7. c. 7.

[9] Senecae. Consolat. ad Marciam, c. 19. Arrian Epictet. l. 3. c. 13.

[10] In Carmin. Pythagor. p. 165.

[11] Orat. 2. pro Roscio.

[12] Vid. Socin. in 1 ep. Johan. 2. 17. Oper. tom. 1. p. 178, & Resp. alter ad Volanum, tom. 9. p. 392.

[13] Of some absurd derivations of this word, vid. Ruscam de inferno, l. 1. c. 7. p. 22.

[14] Biblioth. l. 20. p. 756.

[15] Vid. Sandford. de descensu Christi, l. 1. s. 6. p. 8. & s. 25. p. 44.

[16] Apollodorus de Deor. Orig. l. 1. p. 2. 4. Phurnutus de Nat. Deor. p. 11. 39. riyo esV tartaron heroenta, Homer. Iliad. 8. v. 13. Tartaro tenebricoso Ilygin. fab. 146. vid. fab. 150.

[17] In Phaedone, p. 84.

[18] In Gorgia, p. 357. vid. Virgil. Aeneid. 6. v. 540, &c. Socrates apud Plutarch. de Consol. ad Apoll. p. 121.

[19] “Tartari vox Etymologo a tarassw deducitur----mihi origo Chaldaica, multo magis arridet, a themate, nempe ddrd decidit, quo sensu Tartarus pro eo quod subsidit et fundum petit, accipitur.” Windet. de vita functorum statu, p. 87.

[20] In Gorgia, p. 356. & Socrates apud Plutarch. de Consol. ad Apoll. p. 121.

[21] Apulei Metamorph. l. 8. p. 114.

[22] Apollodorus de Deor. Orig. p. 10. Hygin. fab. 55.

[23] Chrysostom. Homil. 47. ad pop. Antioch.

[24] “Quaerit aquas et poma fugacia captat Tantalus: hoc illi. garrula lingua dedit,” Ovid. Amor. eleg. 1. v. 43. Hygin. fab. 82.

[25] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 19. c. 1. & l. 37. c. 10. Strabo, l. 10. p. 307. Pancirol. rer. memorab. & Salmuth. in ibid. p. 16. vid. Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 552, &c. and vol. 4. par. 2. p. 282.

[26] Plin. l. 11. c. 36. vid. Philosoph. Transact. vol. 7. par. 2. p. 147.

[27] “Aeternas quoniam poenas in morte timendum,” Lucret. de Rerum Natura, l. 1.

[28] “Supplicia hujus vitae temporaria non explent emphasin phrasios, ignis consumentis et focorum aeternorum,” Vitringa in loc.

[29] Pausaniae Eliac. sive l. 5. p. 325. Plato in Phaedone, p. 84.

[30] Homer. Iliad. 8. v. 15. Virgil. Aeneid. 6. v. 548, &c.

[31] It is indeed denied by some that there is any sinning in hell, see Sandford vel Parker de descensu Christi, l. 3. s. 96. p. 174, 175. Maccov. Theolog. Polemic. c. 23. qu. 26. though allowed by him in Distinct. Theolog. c. 22. s. 5. and is asserted by divines in general, as by Ames. Medulla, l. 1. c. 16. s. 10, 11. Heidegger. Corpus Theolog. loc. 28. s. 113, et alii.

02. Of the Goodness of God

Of The Goodness Of God.

Having treated of the love, grace, mercy, and longsuffering of God, it will be proper to take some notice of his "goodness", from whence they all proceed; for that God loves any of his creatures, in the manner he does, bestows favours upon them, shows mercy to them, and bears much with them, is owing to the goodness of his nature. Hence one of his names and titles by which he is described and made known, is, that of Good; "thou, Lord, art good", (Psalms 86:5) and in many other places; when God proclaimed his name before Moses, this was one part of it, "abundant in goodness" (Exodus 34:6). Philo says[1], God is the name of goodness. And our English word God seems to be a contraction of the word "Good"; or, however, is the same with the German "Gott" and "Godt"; which came, as it is thought[2], from the Arabic word "Gada", which so signified; so that the German and English name of the divine Being, in common use, is taken from the attribute of his goodness. The name the heathens give to their supreme deity, is "optimus"[3], the "best"; he being not only good, as they supposed, and better than others, but the best of beings. Our Jehovah, the true God, is superlatively good; good in the highest degree, good beyond all conception and expression. Cotta in Cicero[4], charges Epicurus with taking away from God the property of the best and most excellent nature, by denying the grace and goodness of God; for what, says he, is better, or what is more excellent, than goodness and beneficence? It is a common notion, Sallustius says[5], that God is good; and Simplicius[6] calls him, the Goodness of goodnesses. Concerning the goodness of God, let the following things be observed:

1. Goodness is essential to God; without which he would not be God; he, is by nature good[7]. The evil god of Cerdon and Marcion is not the true God; and this goodness being wanting in heathen deities, whatever pretensions may be made unto it, excludes them from the claim of deity; yea, goodness is itself the nature and essence of God; as he is love itself, wisdom itself, &c. so he is goodness itself, and it is himself, it includes his whole nature and essence. When God promised Moses that he would make "all his goodness" pass before him, it was not a single attribute only which was proclaimed and made known; but the several attributes of mercy, grace, longsuffering, truth, faithfulness, justice, and holiness (Exodus 33:19; Exodus 34:6-7). The goodness of God is not distinct from his essence; for then he must be compounded of that, and his essence; which is contrary to his simplicity: he is good in and of himself, and by his own essence; and not by participation of another; for if he was not good of himself, and by his own essence, but of and by another; then there would be some being both better than him, and prior to him; and so he would not be the eternal God, nor an independent Being, since he must depend on that from whence he receives his goodness; nor would he be the most perfect being, since what communicates goodness to him must be more perfect than he: all which, to say of God, is very unbecoming. It remains, then, that he is essentially good; is so in and of himself, by his own nature and essence.

2. Goodness only belongs to God; he is solely good; "There is none good but one; that is, God"; is the assertion of Christ, (Matthew 19:17) which is to be understood not to the exclusion of the Son,

and Spirit of God, who are, with the Father, the one God; and so equally good: but with respect to creatures, who are not of themselves inderivatively and independently good; this is only true of God. Whatever goodness is in creatures, it is all from him, who made them good originally; or put into them, or bestowed upon them, what goodness they have: what goodness there is in the elect angels, who never sinned; what goodness was in Adam, in a state of innocence; what goodness is in any good man, who partakes of the grace of God, or is or will be in the saints in heaven, is all from God; every good and perfect gift comes from him; nor have creatures anything but what they receive from him; he is the source and fountain of all, and therefore all goodness, originally, ultimately, and solely, is to be referred to God.

3. God is the "summum bonum", he is t' agayon, as Plato calls him, "the Good"[8]; the chiefest good; the sum and substance of all felicity. Unwearied have been the pursuits of men to attain this; but have always failed, when they place it or expect it in anything out of God, and short of him: innumerable have been the sentiments of men about it. Solomon seems to have reduced them to these three, wisdom, riches, and pleasure; and he made an experiment of them, what happiness could be enjoyed in them, as far as a king, a wise man, and a good man, could go; and when he had finished it, pronounced all "vanity and vexation of spirit". God only can make men happy; he is the Father of mercies, the Fountain of all goodness, the Source of all felicity. There may be a show of happiness in such and such outward circumstances of life, some may be in, with respect to the above things; but there is no solidity in them; he is the only "happy man whose God is the Lord", (Psalms 144:12-15) wherefore good men, who are sensible of the vanity of the creature, and all creature enjoyments, pant after him, and are importunately desirous of the enjoyment of him, and cannot be satisfied without him, placing all their happiness in him: while others are saying, "Who will show us any good?" taking up their contentment in worldly good; they say, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us"; which gives the greatest pleasure, joy, and satisfaction, that can be had (Psalms 4:6-7, Psalms 52:1, Psalms 73:25).

4. There is nothing but goodness in God, and nothing but goodness comes from him; there is no iniquity in him, nothing evil in his nature, no unrighteousness in any of his ways and works; he is "light" itself; all purity, holiness, truth, and goodness; "and in him is no darkness at all", of sin, error, and ignorance, (1 John 1:5) nor does anything that is evil come from him; he is not the author of sin, nor does he impel, nor persuade to it, nor tempt with it; but strongly forbids it, under pain of his displeasure, (James 1:13-14) indeed, his decree is concerned about it; for it could not be, he not willing it by his permissive will; but then, though he suffers it to be, he overrules it for good; as in the case of the selling of Joseph, (Genesis 50:20) the evil of punishment of sin, or of affliction, is from God; in this sense "there is no evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it", (Amos 3:6) but then punishment of sin is a good, as it is a vindication of the honour of divine justice, and of the righteous law of God; and the affliction of the people of God is for their good; and all evil things of that kind work for their good, both here and hereafter.

5. God is infinitely good; as his understanding, wisdom, knowledge, and other perfections of his, are infinite; so is his goodness; he is abundant in it; it is so great, that it cannot be said how great it is; finite minds cannot comprehend it; the height, depth, length, and breadth of it, are unmeasurable; it knows no bounds nor limits; it is so perfect that nothing can be added to it: the goodness of a creature extends not to God, nor is it capable of communicating any to him, "who hath first given to him", &c. (Romans 11:35-36).

6. God is immutably and eternally good; the goodness of creatures is but as the morning cloud, and early dew, which soon passes away; of which there has been instances in angels and men: but the goodness of God is invariably the same, and endures continually; and though there has been, and are, such large communications of it to creatures, it is the same as ever, and remains an inexhaustible fountain.

7. The goodness of God is communicative and diffusive; he is good, and he does good; "the whole earth is full of his goodness", (Psalms 119:68; Psalms 33:5) there is not a creature but what partakes of it, more or less, in some manner or another; but then it is communicated according to his sovereign will and pleasure. A heathen writer[9] argues the goodness of God from the existence of the world; since it is by the goodness of God the world is, God must be always good.

8. This attribute of goodness belongs to each divine person, Father, Son, and Spirit; when Christ says, as quoted above, "there is none good but one, that is, God", it is to be understood not of God personally considered, or of one person, to the exclusion of the other; but of God essentially considered: and the design of Christ was, to raise the mind of the young man to whom he spoke, to an higher opinion of himself than what he had; even of him, not as a mere man, whom, as such, he called good; but as the true God, to whom this epithet, in its highest sense, only belongs: and it is predicated of the Father, (2 Chronicles 30:18) of Christ, (John 10:11) and of the Spirit, (Nehemiah 9:20; Psalms 143:10) and they must, indeed, in the same sense, be good, since they partake of one common undivided nature and essence (1 John 5:7). The goodness of God, with respect to each of the objects of it, may be considered as general and special; in like manner as his love and mercy. There is the general goodness of God, which is as extensive as his mercy; "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Psalms 145:9). All creatures are made by God, and as they came from him, they are all very good; there is a goodness put into them, whereby they become good and beneficial to others, and especially to men: there is a goodness in inanimate creatures, in the metals and minerals of the earth; in the luminaries of the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars; they are pleasant, good to look at, their form, magnitude, and splendour: they are profitably good; by their light they themselves are seen, and other objects; by this men see to walk and work, and do the several businesses of life; and through their kind and benign influences shed on the earth, many precious fruits are brought forth, and the advantages of them all men share in; God "makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good", (Matthew 5:45) which is one great instance of his general goodness. In the vegetable creation there is a large display of the goodness of God; some herbs, plants, and trees, being good for medicine, others for food, both for the cattle of the field and for the service of men (Psalms 104:14-15). Among the animals, some are for one use, and some for another, and many are meat for men; and even every creature of God is good, and to be received with thanksgiving, (1 Timothy 4:4) and all creatures, both men and beast, partake of the goodness of God in the preservation of them, (Psalms 36:6; 1 Timothy 4:10) and in the provision of food for them (Psalms 104:27-28; Psalms 145:15-16; Psalms 147:8; Acts 14:16-17; Acts 17:25; Acts 17:28; 1 Timothy 4:8).

There is indeed a difference made by God in the distribution of his general goodness, in the effects of it; which are not imparted to all creatures alike. God gives more of his goodness to men than to brutes; since he gives them reason and understanding; whereby they become more knowing, and to be wiser than the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heavens, (Job 35:11) and angels have a greater share of his goodness than men; who excel as in strength, so in wisdom and knowledge;

hence man is said to be made a little lower than the angels, (Psalms 8:5) and some men have a greater share in the general and providential goodness of God than others; either have larger endowments of mind, are the wise and prudent of the world; or have more comeliness, strength, and health of body; or are possessed of greater wealth and riches (Ecclesiastes 9:11). The special goodness of God, as to the effects of it, elect angels, and elect men, only partake of, which is sovereign and distinguishing; God is good to the elect angels, in choosing them in Christ, preserving them from apostasy, confirming them in the estate they were created in, granting them nearness to himself, and many other peculiar favours; when the angels that sinned are not spared by him, but are reserved to judgment (1 Timothy 5:21; 2 Peter 2:4). Elect men, the spiritual and mystical Israel of God, have a share in his special goodness; "truly God is good to Israel", (Psalms 73:1) and that in a very distinguishing manner, as he is not to reprobates; "the election hath obtained" all the special blessings of goodness, grace here, and glory hereafter; light, life, and happiness; while "the rest" are "blinded", (Romans 11:7) they are made to differ from others thereby in time, and to all eternity; and yet among them there are different displays of divine goodness in the present state; some have greater spiritual gifts for usefulness than others; some have larger measures of grace; though they have all the same grace, yet not to the same degree; they have all alike precious faith, but in some it is weaker, in others stronger; and some have more spiritual light in the Gospel, and more spiritual peace and joy, and larger discoveries of the love of God, and have more communion with him. All which must be referred to his sovereign good will and pleasure.

Many are the acts and instances of divine goodness to the people of God in common. It has been observed, that the attribute of "goodness", and the epithet of "good", belong to each of the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; and they have each of them manifested their goodness in acts of it.

Jehovah the Father, has displayed his goodness to his special people, in his good designs towards them, and thoughts of them; in setting them apart for himself, his own glory, and their good; in laying up all good things for them in Christ, and in the covenant of his grace; in making promises of good things to them, both for this life, and that which is to come; and in bestowing good gifts on them, the gift of himself, the gift of his Son, and the gift of his Spirit; and all the blessings of goodness, as of adoption, justification, pardon of sin, &c. and all the graces of the Spirit, as the gift of faith, of repentance, of a good hope of eternal life, and also the gift of eternal life itself. Jehovah the Son, has manifested his goodness to the same persons; in becoming a Surety, and undertaking for their good; in partaking of their nature, in which good will to men was expressed; and in working out the great and good work of their redemption and salvation; he is the good Shepherd, and has shown himself to be so, by laying down his life for the sheep, and by providing a good fold, and good pasture for them: he is, and has been, in all ages, the Fountain of goodness and grace to all his people, for the supply of all their wants; and he ever lives to speak a good word, and intercede for good things for them. Jehovah the Spirit, is good unto them, as a Teacher, Sanctifier, and Comforter of them, as a Spirit of adoption, grace, and supplication; as the author of the good work of grace in them; as the guide of them through this world; and as the earnest and pledge of their future glory, and a sealer of them up unto the day of redemption.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Leg. Alleg. l. 2. p. 74.

[2] Vid. Hinckelman. Praefat. ad Alkoran.

[3] "Optimus maximus quidem ante optimus, id est, beneficentissimus quam maximus", Cicero de Natura Deorum, l. 2.

[4] Ibid. l. 1. prope finem.

[5] De Diis, c. 1.

[6] In Epictetum.

[7] agayov gar hn fusei, Hierocles in Carmin. Pythag. p. 21.

[8] De Republica, l. 6. p. 687.

[9] Sallust de Diis, c. 7.

02. Of the Gospel

Of the Gospel

There was Gospel in the former dispensation, though called the legal dispensation; it was preached to Adam, to Abraham, and by Isaiah, and other prophets, as has been observed. Yet there is a clearer revelation and ministration of it under the present dispensation; as the law was by the ministration of Moses; "Grace and truth," the word of grace and truth, the gospel, "came by Jesus Christ," in a clearer and fuller manner than it had been made known before (John 1:17). Concerning which the following things may be noted.

1. First, The name and signification of it. The Greek word euaggelion, used for it throughout the New Testament, signifies, a good message, good news, glad tidings; such the gospel is; a message of good news from God, from heaven, the far country, to sinners here on earth: such was the gospel Christ was anointed to preach, and did preach, even good tidings (Luke 4:18 compared with Isaiah 61:1), and which his ministers bring, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains (Isaiah 52:7; Acts 13:32-33). The Hebrew word used for the gospel, and the preaching of it, signifies good tidings also; and it is observed by some, to have the signification of "flesh" in it, which has led them to think of the incarnation of Christ; which is, undoubtedly, good news to the children of men; and a considerable branch of the gospel of Christ; what has given Isaiah the character of an evangelic prophet is, because he so clearly spoke of the incarnation of Christ, as well as of his sufferings and death, as if then present in his time: "To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given" (Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 7:14). And when the angel proclaimed the birth of Christ to the shepherds, he is said, "to bring good tidings of great joy to all people" (Luke 2:10-11). And this is one principal part of the gospel, the great mystery of godliness; "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). Our English word "gospel," is of Saxon derivation; in which language "spel" signifies speech; and so gospel is either "good speech," which carries in it the same idea with the Greek and Hebrew words; or God’s speech, which he has spoken by his Son, by his prophets, and by his ministers; and is the voice of God the Son, the voice of Christ speaking in his ministers, and the voice of the Holy Ghost also.

Now this word is variously used; sometimes it is put for the history of Christ’s birth, life, and actions; such are the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Mark begins his history thus; "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). And Luke calls his Gospel; "The former treatise" he had made, "of all that Jesus began, both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). And hence these four writers are commonly called evangelists; though this title is sometimes given to others, as distinct from apostles (Ephesians 4:11), and even to ordinary ministers of the word, when they do the work of an evangelist, or preach the gospel faithfully, and make full proof of their ministry (2 Timothy 4:5). Sometimes the gospel is to be taken in a large sense, as including the word and ordinances (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). And sometimes strictly, for the doctrine of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; hence gospel ministers, who bring good tidings of good, are said to publish peace, and to publish salvation

(Isaiah 52:7), the sum of which is expressed by the apostle, when he says, "This is a faithful saying," &c. (1 Timothy 1:15). Hence,

1a. The gospel is called, the gospel of salvation, the word of salvation, and salvation itself (Ephesians 1:13; Acts 13:26; Acts 28:28), because it gives an account of Christ, the author of salvation; of his appointment to it; of his mission, and coming into the world, to effect it; and of his actual performance of it; of his being the able, willing, and only Saviour; and of the salvation itself, as great and glorious, perfect and complete, spiritual and everlasting; and because it describes also the persons that share in it, sinners, sensible sinners, and who believe in Christ; and who, according to the declaration of it, shall certainly be saved (Mark 16:16; Acts 16:30-31), and because it is, not only the means of revealing, but of applying salvation; for it is to them that believe "the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16).

1b. It is called, "The gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24), because the various doctrines of it are doctrines of grace, or which exhibit blessings as flowing from the grace of God; as election, redemption, pardon, justification, adoption, and eternal life; and particularly, that salvation, from first to last, is all of grace, and not of works (Ephesians 2:8).

1c. It is called, "The gospel of peace," the word of reconciliation, the word preaching peace by Christ (Ephesians 6:15; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Acts 10:36), because it relates the steps taken in, council and covenant; to form the scheme of man’s peace with God; to lay the foundation of it; and to bring it about; hence called the council of peace, and the covenant of peace (Zechariah 6:13; Isaiah 54:10). And also relates the actual making of it; by whom, and by what means; by Christ, who is our peace; by the chastisement of our peace being laid on him; by the shedding of his blood on the cross; and by his suffering of death (Ephesians 2:14; Isaiah 53:5; Colossians 1:20; Romans 5:10).

1d. It is called, "The gospel of the kingdom" (Matthew 4:23), because it treats both of the kingdom of grace here, showing wherein it lies; and of the kingdom of glory hereafter, pointing out the proper meetness for it, regeneration by the Spirit of God; and the right and title to it, the righteousness of the Son of God; and that itself, as the Father’s free gift to his people, flowing from his good will and pleasure (John 3:5; Matthew 5:20; Luke 12:32).

2. Secondly, The author and origin of the gospel.—

2a. It is not of man, a device and invention of men; a system of things schemed and formed by the art and wit of men; says the apostle, "I neither received it of men, nor was I taught it;" that is, by men, as human arts and sciences are (Galatians 1:11-12). It is not discoverable by the light of nature and reason; the law, and the things of it, may be known thereby, as what is morally good and evil, as were by the Gentiles (Romans 2:14-15), but not the things of the gospel; they are what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of; as for instance, that fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, believed and confessed by Peter, was declared by our Lord to be what "flesh and blood had not revealed" to him, but his "Father in heaven" (Matthew 16:16-17). Hence the gospel is frequently called, a mystery; the wisdom of God in a mystery; the hidden wisdom; and the doctrines of it, the mysteries of the kingdom; which are only known by those to whom it is given by the Spirit and grace of God to know them (Matthew 13:11), and when they are externally revealed, and men

have got some little notion and idea of them, they are disapproved of by them; for natural men receive not with approbation, and a good liking, the things of the Spirit of God, the doctrines of the gospel, which he searches and reveals; for they are foolishness, insipid things to them; for which they have no taste; as the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and salvation alone by him (1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 1:23).

2b. The gospel is from heaven; it is good news from a far country, which far country is heaven: the gospel is, with the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven; and Christ that spoke it, is He that speaketh from heaven: the question put concerning the baptism of John; "Whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" may be put concerning the gospel, and answered as that; that it is from heaven, and not of men (1 Peter 1:12; Hebrews 12:25; Matthew 21:25). It comes from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; from God the Father, and is therefore called the gospel of God; that is, the Father, concerning his Son Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1; Romans 1:3), which he ordained before the world was; and in time committed into the hands of men to preach, whom he made, and makes, able ministers of it, and which he blesses and succeeds. It comes also from Christ, the Son of God; and is called, the gospel of his Son, the gospel of Christ, the word of Christ, and the testimony of our Lord (Romans 1:9; Romans 1:16; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:8), of which Christ is the subject, sum, and substance, as well as the author; even his person, offices, and grace; and of which he was the preacher when here on earth; for which he was qualified by the Spirit without measure, and spake and preached it as never man did; and by whom it was revealed and brought to light in the clearest manner; hence the apostle says, he received it "by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:12). It may be said likewise, to come from the Holy Spirit of God, the inciter of the scriptures, wherein it lies; who searches the deep things of it, and reveals them to men; who leads the ministers of it into all the truths thereof; and makes their ministrations of it powerful and successful; and whereby he and his grace, comparable to the golden oil, are conveyed and received into the hearts of men. The instruments of declaring, publishing, and proclaiming the gospel, and its truths, to the children of men, are the prophets of the Old Testament, who made a report of it, though believed but by few; the angels, who descended at the birth of Christ, and brought the good news of it; John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who pointed him out as the Son of God, and as the Lamb of God that took away the sin of the world; the apostles of Christ, who had a commission from him to preach the gospel to every creature; and all ordinary ministers of the word, whose business it is to publish good tidings of good things.

3. Thirdly, The effects of the gospel when attended with the power and Spirit of God.

3a. The regeneration of men, who are said to be born again by the word of God, and to be begotten again with the word of truth (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18), hence ministers of the gospel are represented as spiritual fathers (1 Corinthians 4:15).

3b. As in regeneration souls are quickened by the Spirit and grace of God, this is ascribed to the gospel as an instrument, hence it is called the Spirit which giveth life, and said to be the savior of life unto life (2 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 3:6).

3c. The gospel is frequently spoken of as a light, a great light, a glorious light; and so is in the hands of the Spirit a means of enlightening the dark minds of men into the mysteries of grace, and the method of salvation; "the entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psalms 119:130). The Spirit of God gives the gospel an entrance into the heart, being

opened by him to attend unto it; and when it has an entrance, it gives light into a man's self, his state and condition, and into the way of life by Christ; it is a glass in which the glory of Christ, and of the riches of his grace, may be seen.

3d. By it faith in Christ comes, and is ingenerated in the heart by the Spirit of God attending it; hence among other reasons, it is called "the word of faith;" and ministers, by preaching it, are instruments of confirming and increasing faith, and of perfecting what is lacking in it (Romans 10:8; Romans 10:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:10).

3e. When faith is wrought in the soul, the righteousness of Christ is revealed unto it in the gospel; and not at first believing only but at after times; for it is revealed therein "from faith to faith," from one degree of it to another, giving thereby clearer views of it, and of interest in it (Romans 1:17), hence it is called the word of righteousness, and the ministration of righteousness (Hebrews 5:13; 2 Corinthians 3:9).

3f. It affords spiritual food, and is the means of feeding and nourishing souls unto everlasting life; it contains words of faith and good doctrine, even the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus; it has in it milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and when it is found by faith, it is eaten by it with pleasure, and fills with spiritual joy (1 Timothy 4:6; 1 Timothy 6:3; Hebrews 5:13-14; Jeremiah 15:16), which—

3g. Is another effect of it in gracious souls, it yields much spiritual peace, joy, and comfort; the doctrines of it are calculated for such a purpose; it is good news and glad tidings of good things; as of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ, which, when applied, cannot fail of producing spiritual joy in sensible sinners; when Philip preached Christ and his gospel in Samaria, there was great joy in that city (Acts 8:5; Acts 8:8), all this must be understood of the gospel, not as producing these effects of itself, but as it comes, not in word only, but with the power and in the demonstration of the Spirit; when it is sent forth out of Zion as the rod of God's strength, and it becomes the power of God unto salvation (1 Thessalonians 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; Psalms 110:2; Romans 1:16).

4. Fourthly, The properties of the gospel.

4a. It is but one, there is not another, as the apostle says (Galatians 1:6-7), the same gospel which was in the beginning, and will be to the end of the world, the same under. the Old Testament as under the New; the subject of it, Christ and salvation by him; the doctrines of it, of justification, remission of sins, &c. the same, only now more clearly revealed; then it was in types and figures, now more plainly set forth, and more clearly and fully expressed; the same was preached by Christ and his apostles, and by all faithful ministers since, and will be to the end of time; for it is true of the gospel what is said of Christ, it is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8).

4b. It is called, from the objects of it, the gospel of the circumcision, and the gospel of the uncircumcision (Galatians 2:7), not that the gospel of the one is different from that of the other; it is the same gospel, only dispensed to different persons, the circumcised Jews and the uncircumcised Gentiles; it was first ordered to be preached to the Jews, and to them only, in Christ's lifetime; after his death and resurrection he enlarged the commission of his disciples, and sent them forth to preach the gospel to every creature, both Jews and Gentiles; yet the special revelation and application of it are made only to some; to some it is the savor of life unto life, to

others the savour of death unto death; there are some to whom God would make it known; it was his determinate pleasure to make known the riches of the glory of the mystery of it; to others it is hid, even to the wise and prudent, while it is revealed unto babes; of which no other reason can be given, but the sovereign will and pleasure of God (2 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 4:3; Colossians 1:27; Matthew 11:25-26).

4c. It is a glorious gospel: so it is called (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Timothy 1:11 it has a glory in it exceeding that of the law, and the dispensation of it (2 Corinthians 3:11), for the clearness, fullness, and suitableness of its doctrines to the state and condition of men; and in which the glory of the person of Christ as the Son of God, and of his officers as mediator, and of the blessings of grace that come by him, is held forth in great splendor and brightness.

4d. It is an everlasting gospel, which is the epithet given it (Revelation 14:6), it was ordained in the council and covenant of God before the world was, of which it is a transcript, and so was from everlasting (1 Corinthians 2:7), and "the word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached" (1 Peter 1:25), and which will continue until all the elect of God are gathered in, maugre all the craft and cunning, force and power of earth and hell.

5. Fifthly, I shall close this chapter with a brief answer to some queries relating to faith, repentance, and good works; as, to what they belong, whether to law or gospel.

5a. Whether faith is a duty of the moral law, or is to be referred to the gospel? to which it may be answered, that as the law is not of faith, so faith is not of the law. There is a faith indeed which the law requires and obliges to, namely, faith and trust in God, as the God of nature and providence; for as both the law of nature, and the law of Moses, show there is a God, and who is to be worshipped; they both require a belief of him, and trust and confidence in him; which is one part of the worship of him enjoined therein: moreover the law obliges men to give credit to any revelation of the mind and will of God he has made, or should think fit to make unto them at any time; but as for special faith in Christ as a Saviour, or believing in him to the saving of the soul; this the law knows nothing of, nor does it make it known; this kind of faith neither comes by the ministration of it, nor does it direct to Christ the object of it, nor give any encouragement to believe in him on the above account; but it is a blessing of the covenant of grace, which flows from electing love, is a gift of God’s free grace, the operation of the Spirit of God, comes by the hearing of faith, or the word of faith, as a means, that is, the gospel; for which reason, among others, the gospel is so called; and it is that which points out Christ, the object of faith; and directs and encourages sensible sinners under a divine influence to exercise it on him; its language is, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

5b. Whether repentance is a doctrine of the law or of the gospel? the answer to which is, that such who sin ought to repent of sin; this God has commanded, the law of nature teaches; and so far as this is to be considered as a duty incumbent on men, it belongs to the law, as all duty does; but then the law makes no account of repentance for sin; nor does it admit of it as a satisfaction for it; nor gives any encouragement to expect that God will receive repenting sinners into his grace and favor upon it; this is what the gospel does, and not the law; the law says not, repent and live, but do and live. Moreover, there is what may be called a legal repentance and contrition; for by the law is the knowledge of sin, without which there can be no repentance; and it works a sense of wrath in the sinners conscience, and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation from an

incensed God; but if it stop here, it will prove no other than a worldly sorrow, which worketh death. The Spirit of God may make use of this, and go on and produce spiritual repentance, such a repentance as is unto life, even life eternal; and unto salvation, which needeth not to be repented of: but such a repentance is not the work of the law; for life and salvation come not by any work of the law; but true repentance, which has salvation annexed to it, is, as faith, a blessing of the covenant of grace; a grant from God, a gift of Christ as a Saviour, and with it remission of sins; a grace produced in the soul by the Spirit of Christ, by means of the gospel, which only encourages to the exercise of it; (see Acts 5:31; Acts 11:18; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Galatians 3:2). And so is a doctrine of the gospel, and not of the law, as appears from the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who exhorted and encouraged to repentance from gospel motives; and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:4). But what has the law to do either with baptism or the remission of sins? His ministry was evangelical, and ran in the same strain with the apostles, as appears from their answer to a question put to them; "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" A serious question, put upon thought and reflection by persons upon the bottom of a covenant of works, as the Jews rally were; and especially under a sense of guilt, as those were, desirous to know what must be done by them, that they "might be saved;" as it may be supplied from the jailor's words, when in the same case; or whereby they might make atonement for, and obtain the pardon of so great a sin, of which they were guilty: to which a proper answer is returned, putting them off of legal works for such purposes, and directing them to evangelical ones; "repent and be baptized, everyone of you, for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:37-38). And this is also clear from the story of Christ himself; who came, not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; which was not a legal, but evangelical repentance. He began his ministry thus; "repent, and believe the gospel" (see Matthew 9:13; Mark 1:15). With which agrees the ministry of the apostles in general; who, by the direction of Christ, preached repentance and remission of sins in his name; which most certainly was the gospel; the one, as well as the other, a doctrine of the gospel (Luke 24:47). And the apostle Paul, who was a most evangelical preacher, divides his whole ministry into these two parts; "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21).

5c. Whether good works belong to the gospel, or to the law? or rather, whether there are any works that belong to the gospel distinct from the law? to which it may be replied, That the gospel, taken in a large sense, as has been observed in the beginning of this chapter, includes both the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel; and the one, as well as the other, are taught, and directed to be observed; yea, all good works, which the law requires, are moved and urged unto in the ministry of the gospel, upon gospel principles and motives: the gospel of the grace of God, which brings the good tidings of salvation, instructs and urges men to do good works, and to avoid sin (Titus 2:11-12; Titus 3:8). But the gospel, strictly taken, is a pure declaration of grace, a mere promise of salvation by Christ. All duty and good works belong to the law; promise and grace belong to the gospel; the works of the law, and the grace of the gospel, are always opposed to each other (Romans 3:20; Romans 3:24; Romans 3:28; Ephesians 2:8). And if there were any works distinct from the law, and not required by it, which, if not performed, would be sin; then the apostle's definition of sin, as a transgression of the law, would not be a full and proper one (1 John 3:4), since then there would be sins which were not transgressions of the law; wherefore, as all evil works are transgressions of the law, all good works are required and enjoined by it.

02. Of the Grace of God

Of The Grace Of God This attribute may be considered, both as it is in God himself, and as displayed in acts towards his creatures; as in himself, it is himself; it is his nature and essence; he is "Grace" itself, most amiable and lovely; hence so often called "gracious" in Scripture: it is a character expressive of the amiableness and loveliness of his nature: and thus he was before he had, and would have been for ever the same if he never had displayed his grace towards any of his creatures. And this appears from the loveliness of Christ, the image of the Father, the express image of his person; who, to them that believe, is exceeding precious, and altogether lovely; when they behold his glory, as the only begotten of the Father; the fulness of grace in him, as Mediator; the purity, perfection, and beauty of his human nature, as in union with his divine person, in which he was in high favour with God and men. Now if Christ, under these several considerations, is so graceful and amiable, he must needs be infinitely so, whose image he is, and who has all virtues, all excellencies, all perfections in him; he is said to be "glorious in holiness" (Exodus 15:11). And if he is so glorious and graceful, viewed in one perfection of his, what must he be when all put together, and he is viewed in them all, his goodness, wisdom, power, justice, truth, &c.? and therefore is to be loved above all, and with all the heart, soul, and strength; and hence it is that good men, as Moses, David, and others, desired to see the "face" of God, so far as could be admitted, and they were capable of, (Exodus 33:14-15; Psalms 27:7-8; Psalms 105:4) and what a lovely sight had Moses of him in the clift of the rock, when he caused his goodness to pass, and proclaimed his name, a God gracious before him, (Exodus 33:19; Exodus 34:6) and to see the lovely face of God, so far as creatures are capable of, is the happiness of angels, will be the happiness of saints to all eternity (Matthew 18:10; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 22:4). The grace of God may be considered as displayed in acts of goodness towards his creatures, especially men; and is no other than his free favour and good will to men; it is no other than love unmerited and undeserved, exercising and communicating itself to them in a free and generous manner; which they are altogether unworthy of. There are many things called grace, and the grace of God, because they flow from his grace, and are the effects of it; as the gospel, (2 Corinthians 6:1; Galatians 5:4; Titus 2:11) gifts for preaching the gospel, (Romans 12:6; Ephesians 3:7-8) the blessings of grace, as justification, adoption, &c. (Psalms 84:11; 2 Timothy 1:9) in each of the graces of the Spirit in regeneration, as faith, hope, love, &c. (2 Corinthians 9:8; Galatians 2:9) but then these are to be distinguished from grace in God; as the Giver and the gift, the Fountain and the streams, the Cause and the effect. The grace of God arises from the goodness of his nature, and not from anything in the creature; and is exercised according to his sovereign will and pleasure; "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious" (Exodus 33:19). It is "independent" of all merit and worth in creatures, and of all works done by them, and is always opposed to them in scripture, (Romans 11:6; 2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 2:8-9) it is quite entirely "free", as Austin[1] said long ago, grace is not grace, unless it is altogether free. As an attribute, it wholly and only "resides" in God; and is only in men, as to the sense and perception of it, and the effects of it upon them and in them, (Romans 5:5; Romans 8:37) and it is only exhibited and displayed through Christ, in and through whom men are elected, adopted, redeemed, justified,

pardoned, regenerated, and sanctified (Ephesians 1:4-7; Romans 3:24; Titus 3:5-6). And though there are various gifts and blessings, and effects of it, it is but one in God: there is but one Fountain, from whence they all flow. With respect to creatures, the objects of it, some distinctions are made concerning it, as of natural and "supernatural" grace. Natural grace seems to sound oddly, and unless guarded against, may tend to confound nature and grace together; but rightly applied and understood, may be admitted. What Adam enjoyed, in a state of integrity, above the rest of creatures, was all owing to the unmerited kindness and goodness of God, and so may be called grace; as the image of God, in which he was created; his holiness and righteousness; knowledge and understanding; the communion he had with God, and his dominion over the creatures; and yet it was all natural: so many things which his posterity in their fallen state enjoy, being altogether owing to the free favour and undeserved goodness of God, may be called grace: to have a being, and life, and the preservation of it, and the mercies of life, as food and raiment, which men are altogether unworthy of, are gifts and favours; and so may bear the name of grace, though only natural blessings. "Supernatural" grace includes all the blessings of grace bestowed upon any of the sons of fallen Adam; and all the graces of the Spirit wrought in them; and which will easily be allowed to be supernatural. But that Adam had any such, in a state of innocence, for my own part, I cannot see; though some are of this opinion. Again, grace is, by some, distinguished into "common" or "general", and "special" or "particular". "Common" or "general" grace, if it may be so called, is what all men have; as the light of nature and reason, which every man that comes into the world is enlightened with; the temporal blessings of life, the bounties of providence, called the riches of God’s goodness, or grace, (Romans 2:4) which all partake of, more or less; and the continuance and preservation of life; for "God is the Saviour of all men" (1 Timothy 4:10). "Special" or "particular" grace, is that which is peculiar to some persons only; such as electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace, (Romans 8:30) and this special grace is, by some, distinguished into "imputed" and "inherent" grace: "imputed" grace is the holiness, obedience, and righteousness of Christ imputed to justification: "inherent" grace is what is wrought in the heart, by the Spirit of God, in regeneration. But these distinctions, with others, only concern the effects of the grace of God; that itself is but one in God; and is sure, firm, and immutable, as his nature is; and is the efficient cause, source, and spring, of all good things enjoyed by men; and should be acknowledged, as it was by the apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am", (1 Corinthians 15:10) whether as a man, or as a minister, or as a Christian; and this is the final cause, or ultimate end of all, that God does towards, upon, or in his elect, through Christ; all is "to the glory of his grace", (Ephesians 1:6) and is what appears, shines forth, and is illustrious in every part and branch of their salvation; and therefore they are said to be "saved by grace", (Ephesians 2:5; Ephesians 2:8) as will be evident by an enumeration of them.

1. The grace of God appears in the election of men to everlasting life; and is therefore called the election of grace; and is denied to be of works, (Romans 11:5-6) and, indeed, this act of the grace of God, passed in his eternal mind, before any works were done, good or evil, and without any consideration of them, (Romans 9:11) nor can any works truly good be done, until men become the workmanship of God in regeneration; and then they are the fruits and effects of divine preordination, (Ephesians 2:10) nor were men chosen in Christ because they were holy, but that they might be holy (Ephesians 1:4). And sanctification, both internal and external, is a means fixed in the decree of election; and is as absolute, unconditional, and certain, as the end, salvation, (2 Thessalonians 2:13) and all the true holiness that is, has been, or will be in the world, flows from

electing grace; had it not been for this, the world had been as Sodom and Gomorrah (Romans 9:29). Election is also irrespective of faith; that is likewise a means fixed in the decree, and most certainly follows upon it, and is therefore called the faith of God's elect (2 Thessalonians 2:13; Acts 13:17; Titus 1:1). It remains, therefore, that election must be ascribed to the free favour, good will, and pleasure of God, to his unmerited grace and goodness, the true spring and cause of it; and to show forth which is the design of it (Romans 9:18; Romans 9:23; Ephesians 1:4-6).

2. The grace of God is displayed in the covenant he has made with his elect in Christ; this, with great propriety, is commonly called by us, "the covenant of grace"; though the phrase is not in so many words to be met with in scripture; it is founded in the unmerited grace and mercy of God; and is made to establish and secure the glory of it (Psalms 89:2-3). It was free grace that moved God to make one, to which he was not otherwise obliged: it was free grace that called, and that moved Christ to engage with his Father in it, and which "gave" him to be the covenant of the people, (Psalms 40:6-7; Isaiah 42:6) it was free grace that stored it with all spiritual blessings; by which it appears to be ordered in all things for the glory of God, and the good of his covenant people; and these are grants of grace, made in it to them in Christ, (2 Timothy 1:9) and it was free grace that filled it with exceeding great and precious promises; promises of grace and glory, made before the world began; and which made them sure by an oath to the heirs of them; and who become heirs of them, not through any merit of theirs, but through the undeserved favour of God towards them.

3. The grace of God is very manifest in the adoption of the chosen ones; the cause of which is, the good pleasure of the will of God; and the end of it, the glory of his grace (Ephesians 1:5-6). God, the adopter, stood not in any need of sons; he had a Son, an only begotten Son, a beloved Son, the dear Son of his love, who always pleased him, his Son and Heir; the adopted are altogether unworthy of such a favour, being "by nature children of wrath, as others"; and these men, and not angels, who are only servants in the family, to wait upon the children, the heirs of salvation, and minister unto them: and not all the race of men, only some, and these no better in themselves than others; and therefore their adoption cannot be ascribed to anything else but the free and distinguishing grace of God; and into which relation they were taken before time, in the everlasting covenant; and Christ was sent to open the way, that they might receive this blessing of grace, and which they do by faith, the gift of God; for faith does not make them, only manifests them to be the sons of God; which relation is the ground of their having the Spirit, faith, and every other grace (Galatians 4:4-6).

4. The grace of God shines very illustrious in redemption by Jesus Christ; free grace set infinite wisdom to work, to find out a proper person to be the redeemer and saviour; and it found out Christ to be the ransom, and provided him to be the sacrifice, (Job 33:24) his incarnation was owing to God's good will to men, (Luke 2:14) and his mission to his unmerited love, (1 John 4:10) and it was by the grace of God he tasted death for men, (Hebrews 2:9) and this for sinners, the chief of sinners, ungodly men, enemies in their minds by wicked works. In short, all that are redeemed and saved, whether Old or New Testament saints, are saved by the grace of God and Christ (Acts 15:11).

5. The grace of God is very conspicuous in the justification of men before God, and acceptance with him; which, in the strongest terms, is said to be of grace, to be by "his grace", the grace of God, and "freely" by his grace, and that through the redemption that is in Christ (Titus 3:7; Romans

3:24). Free grace, by infinite wisdom, found out the way whereby sinful men might be just with God; which otherwise never could have been; namely, by not imputing their trespasses to them, but to Christ, the Surety free grace provided, whereby "God is just, and yet the justifier of him that believes in Jesus", (2 Corinthians 5:19; Romans 3:25-26) free grace appears in appointing Christ to work out, and bring in everlasting righteousness; and in sending him in the likeness of sinful flesh to do it, (Daniel 9:24; Romans 8:3-4) and it was free grace moved Christ to come to do this will of God, and "become the end of the law for righteousness"; and it was free grace in God the Father to accept of this righteousness, in the room and stead of sinners, and to impute it, without works, unto them, as their justifying righteousness; and in appointing faith to be the recipient of it, that so it might clearly appear to be of grace; as the persons who are justified by it, being in themselves ungodly, more clearly shows it, (Romans 4:5-6; Romans 4:16). Justification is always denied to be of works; and the righteousness by which men are justified, is represented as a gift, a free gift, a gift by grace, as faith that receives it also is (Romans 3:20; Romans 3:28; Romans 5:15-17; Ephesians 2:8).

6. Pardon of sin is according to the riches, fulness, and freeness of the grace of God, (Ephesians 1:7) the promise of it in the covenant is free, absolute, and unconditional, (Hebrews 8:12) the proclamation of it in the gospel, bore witness to by all the prophets, is the same, (Exodus 34:6; Acts 10:43; Acts 13:38) the blood of Christ was shed freely for it; and though it cost him dear, it is all of free grace to sinners, without money and without price. Christ is exalted as a prince to "give" it; and God, for Christ’s sake, frankly forgives all trespasses, (Acts 5:31; Luke 7:41-42; Colossians 2:13) and it is vouchsafed to the worst and chief of sinners, (1 Timothy 1:13) and to great backsliders, ungrateful persons, guilty of sins of omission and commission, (Hosea 14:4; Isaiah 43:22-25).

7. The grace of God is abundantly evident in regeneration, calling, and sanctification; God regenerates men by his grace, and of his own good will and pleasure, (James 1:18) and he calls them by his grace, and according to it, (Galatians 1:15; 2 Timothy 1:9) and which always becomes effectual. There are some things which bear the name of grace, which fall short of true sanctifying grace, at least what men call so, as "restraining grace"; whereby some of God’s people, before conversion, and some others, are kept from the commission of gross sins others fall into; and external "gifts" of grace, as a rational knowledge of the gospel, historical faith, and even gifts for the public ministry; which persons may have, and yet be unknown by Christ, and be castaways. And also what some call "sufficient grace", though wrongly; rather it should be called, insufficient; for that can never be sufficient which is ineffectual; as the means of grace often are. There are other distinctions of grace, which are not very material, yet, if rightly explained and understood, may be allowed, as grace "preparing, anticipating, operating", and "co-operating", and "subsequent". "Preparing" grace must be understood not of preparations, and previous dispositions in men, and of them, to the grace of God; but what is of God himself, who prepares the heart, and makes it, by his grace, good ground, fit to receive the seed of the word cast into it, where it becomes the ingrafted word (Proverbs 16:1; Matthew 13:23). "Anticipating" grace is that in which God goes beforehand with men, and enlightens their minds, teaches and instructs them in the knowledge of themselves, and of Christ, and guides, directs, and draws them to him, (John 6:44-45) "Operating" grace is that by which God works in men, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure (Php 2:13). "Co-operating" grace is that by which men act, being acted or wrought upon,

and by which they run, being drawn (Song of Solomon 1:4). And "subsequent" grace is that by which the work of grace is carried on, and performed until the day of Christ (Php 1:6). Though there seems to be no great need of these distinctions; the most proper epithet of the grace of God, as displayed in regeneration, calling, and conversion, is, that it is "efficacious"; it never fails of its effects: and it is always "persevering" grace, and is never lost or comes to nothing; but issues in everlasting salvation; and all is owing to unmerited goodness. Every grace implanted in regeneration, flows from the free favour and good will of God. Faith is a gift, a free grace gift, a distinguishing gift; not given to all men, only to whom the Lord pleases (Ephesians 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 3:2). Repentance is a grant of God's grace, a gift of Christ, and a blessing of the covenant (Acts 5:31; Acts 11:18; Ezekiel 36:26). Hope is a good hope through grace; what men, in a state of nature, are without; and which God, of his free grace, gives (2 Thessalonians 2:16). The same may be said of every other grace, love, humility, patience, &c.

8. Lastly, Eternal life is the free gift of God, through Christ, a free grace gift through him (Romans 6:23). The introduction of all the Lord's people into the enjoyment of it, will be attended with shouts and acclamations, crying "grace, grace, unto it!" (Zechariah 4:7) and which will be the employment of saints to all eternity; and so the great and ultimate end of God in their salvation, will be answered, namely, "the glory of his grace" (Ephesians 1:6).

ENDNOTES:

[1] "Non enim Dei gratia, gratia erit ullo modo, nisi gratuita fuerit omnimodo", Aug. contra Pelag. de Peccat. Original. l. 2. p. 338.

02. Of the Hatred of God

Of The Hatred Of God.

There are some[1] that deny that hatred belongs to God; or that he hates anything; and urge a passage in the Apocrypha, ``Thou lovest all beings, and hatest none of these that thou hast made; '' (Wis 11:24) which is true of the creatures of God, as such; for as they are made by him they are all very good; and are loved, delighted in, and not hated by him. Nor is hatred to be considered as a passion in him, as it is in men; who is a pure, active Spirit, and is solely agent, and not a patient; is not capable of suffering anything: much less as it is a criminal passion, by which men, in their worst estate, are described, "hateful", and "hating one another", (Titus 3:3) since he is a perfectly holy Being, and without iniquity. Yet the scriptures do, in many places, attribute to him hatred both of persons and things, (Psalms 5:5; Zechariah 8:17) and most truly and rightly; and this may be concluded from love being in God, as has been shown; though this is made use of as an argument against it, because opposite to it; but where there is love of any person or thing, there will be an hatred of that which is contrary to the object loved: thus good men, as they love those that are good, like themselves, and good things, so they hate that which is evil; they love God, the chiefest good; and they hate sin, the chiefest evil, as diametrically opposite to him, (Psalms 97:10; Amos 5:15). So the righteous Lord, as he loves righteousness and righteous men, his people; as they are clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and found in the ways of righteousness, so he hates unrighteousness, and unrighteous men; for to the Son of God he saith, "thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows", (Psalms 45:7) besides, it is a virtue, yea grace, in good men, to hate sin that dwells in them, and is committed by them, as the apostle did, (Romans 7:15) for without the grace of God it is not hated; and also to hate them that hate the Lord, as David did, and for the truth of which he appeals to God, "Do not I hate them, O Lord that hate thee? I hate them with perfect hatred" (Psalms 139:21-22). Now if it is a virtue, or owing to the grace of God in them, that they do hate sin and sinners, then this must come from God, from whom all grace, and every good gift comes; and consequently must be in him, in a higher degree, even in the most perfect manner; to all which may be added, that hatred, when ascribed to God, sometimes signifies no other than his will to punish sin and sinners, and his execution of it, (Psalms 5:5-6) and so is an act of justice, of punitive justice; "And is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?" No; he is righteous in that, as he is in all his works (Romans 3:5). For the further illustration of this point, I shall consider both what that is; and who they are God is said to hate.

1. What that is he hates, that is sin; and this is consistent with his not hating any of his creatures; for sin is no creature of his; he is not the author of sin; all the creatures he made were very good; but sin was not among them; every creature of God is good, and not to be refused, rejected, and hated by men; as none are by God, as such; but sin is not any of them. Sin must be hateful to God, since it is so contrary to his nature, to his will, and to his righteous law. All sin is an abomination to him; but there are some sins that are particularly observed as hated by him, as idolatry, (Deuteronomy 16:22; Jeremiah 44:3-5) perjury, (Zechariah 8:17) all insincere and

hypocritical acts of worship, (Isaiah 1:14-15; Amos 5:21) sins against the two tables of the law; as murder, which stands among the six things which God hates, (Proverbs 6:16-18) fornication, adultery, community of wives; the deeds of the Nicolaitans he is said to hate, (Revelation 2:6; Revelation 2:15) theft, robbery, rapine, and violence of every sort; all kind of injury to the persons and properties of men, (Psalms 11:5; Isaiah 61:8) and every evil thing a man may imagine against his neighbour (Zechariah 8:17). And all this is true of each of the divine persons. God the Father has shown his hatred of sin by the judgments he has executed in casting down from heaven to hell the angels that sinned, driving Adam and Eve out of paradise, bringing a flood upon the world of the ungodly, raining fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah; with other instances in following ages, and later ones; and by the chastisements of his own people, when they sin and transgress his law; but in nothing more than by the condemnation of sin in the flesh of Christ, when he suffered in the room and stead of his people, as their Surety and Saviour; and so by the punishment of wicked men to all eternity. The Son of God has given sufficient proof of his loving righteousness, and hating iniquity, of whom these things are expressly said, (Psalms 45:7; Hebrews 1:8-9) and are true of him as a divine person, and as Mediator, and as man; and this he has done by inveighing against the sins of the Jews in his time; by his severe usage of the buyers and sellers in the temple; and by his exhortations and threatenings to men to sin no more, lest worse things came unto them: and the Holy Ghost is not only grieved by the sinful actions and behaviour of men; but may be vexed by them, so as to turn to be their enemy, and fight against them (Isaiah 63:10). Which leads me to consider,

2. Who they are that God hates; and they are sinners, "workers of iniquity", (Psalms 5:5) not men, as men, but as sinful men; and not all that sin, or have sin in them; for then all would be hated, for all have sinned in Adam, and by; actual transgressions; and none, even the best of men, are without it, (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8) but "workers" of it, traders in it, whose whole lives are one continued series of sinning; to those it will be said, I "never knew you"; I never loved you, I always hated you; "depart from me, ye that work iniquity", (Matthew 7:23), make a trade of it; make it the business of their lives, continually and constantly commit it, (John 8:34; 1 John 3:8-9) and God is impartial, he hates "all the workers of iniquity; and brings down his indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man that does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile" (Romans 2:8-9). The scriptures speak of an hatred of some persons antecedent to sin, and without the consideration of it; which, though it may be attended with some difficulty to account for; yet may be understood in a good sense, and consistent with the perfections of God, and with what has been said of his hatred of sin and sinners; for thus it is said of Jacob and Esau, personally considered; "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated", (Malachi 1:2) and which was before the one had done any good, or the other done any evil; as the apostle expressly says, (Romans 9:11-13). "The children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil; that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand; not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her", to Rebekah, the mother of them, while they were in her womb, "the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated". And what is said of these, is true of all the objects of election and non-election. And now let it be observed, that this hatred is to be understood, not of any positive hatred in the heart of God towards them, but of a negative and comparative hatred of them; that whereas while some are chosen of God, and preferred by him, and are appointed to obtain grace and glory, and to be brought to great dignity and honour; others are passed by, neglected, postponed, and set less by; which is called an hatred of them; that is, a

comparative one, in comparison of the love shown, and the preference given to others; in this sense the word is used in (Luke 14:26). "If any man hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple": the meaning of which cannot be, that a man must have positive hatred of such near relations, and of his own life; but that he should be negligent of these in comparison of Christ; postpone them to him, set less by them, have a less affection for them than him, and so prefer him unto them; in like sense are we to understand the above expression concerning Esau, and all reprobates: and that this may appear yet clear, it should be observed, that in this business there are two acts of the divine will; the one is a will not to bestow benefits of special goodness; not to give grace, nor to raise to honour and glory: and this God may do antecedent to, and without any consideration of sin; but act according to his sovereign will and pleasure, since he is under no obligation to confer benefits, but may bestow them on whom he pleases; as he himself says, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" (Matthew 20:15). The other act of the divine will is, to inflict evil; and that is always for sin, and in consideration of it; for though sin is not the cause of the act of the will, it is the cause of the thing willed, which is not willed without the consideration of it; they are the wicked God has made, or appointed to the day of evil, and no other; ungodly men, whom he has foreordained to that condemnation, vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction by sin; on whom it is the will of God to show his wrath, and make his power known (Proverbs 16:4; Jude 1:4; Romans 9:22). In the one act, hatred, or a denial of grace, is without the consideration of sin; in the other, hatred, or a will to punish, is with it; punishment being only willed for it: but then God never hates his elect in any sense; they are always loved by him; to which hatred is opposite: he may be angry with them, and chastise them for their sins; yea, he may, as he says, and as they apprehend, in a little wrath hide his "face" from them; but he never hates them; though he hates their sins, and shows his resentment at them, he still loves them freely; renews, and raises them up by repentance, when fallen into sin, and manifests and applies his pardoning grace to them, and never bears any hatred to their persons.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Aquinas contr. Gentiles, l. 1. c. 96. Vid. Francisc. Silvester. in ibid.

02. Of the Holiness of God

Of The Holiness Of God.

Having considered those attributes of God which bear a likeness to affections in men; I proceed to consider those which in them may be called virtues; as holiness, justice, or righteousness, truth, or faithfulness; and shall begin with the holiness of God. And,

1. First, show that it is in God, and belongs to him, and what it is. The scriptures most abundantly ascribe it to him; he is very frequently called "holy", and "the Holy One"; this title he takes to himself, (Isaiah 40:25; Hosea 11:9) and is often given him by others, angels and men; and, indeed, without holiness he would not be that perfect being he is; unholiness is the imperfection of every rational being in whom it is; it is what has made angels and men both impure and imperfect; and since no men, even the best, are without sin; therefore none are in themselves perfect. But as for God, his ways and works are perfect, and so is his nature; being just and true, and without iniquity (Deuteronomy 32:4). Holiness is the purity and rectitude of his nature; whose nature is so pure, as to be without spot or stain, or anything like it: he is light and purity itself, and in him is no darkness or impurity at all; as "he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity", so he is of a purer heart and mind than to have one sinful thought in it: his thoughts are not as ours; he is the pattern of purity and holiness, and to be copied after: men should be holy, as and because he is holy; it is one of the imitable perfections of God, in which he is to be followed; though it cannot be attained to, as it is in him, (Leviticus 11:44-45; Leviticus 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15-16).

Holiness is an essential attribute of God; it is his nature and essence; it is himself; he is holiness itself; "he swears by himself, because he can swear by no greater"; and he will not swear by any less, and yet he swears by his holiness, (Hebrews 6:13; Psalms 89:35; Amos 4:2; Amos 6:8) which places put and compared together show that the holiness of God is himself; and it has been thought to be not so much a particular and distinct attribute of itself, as the lustre, glory, and harmony of all the rest; and is what is called "the beauty of the Lord", (Psalms 27:4) as it is the beauty of the good angels, and of regenerate men; and, indeed, what is wisdom or knowledge, without holiness, but craft and cunning? or what is power, without it, but tyranny, oppression, and cruelty? but God is "glorious in holiness", (Exodus 15:11) this dives a lustre to all his perfections, and is the glory of them; and therefore none of them are or can be exercised in a wrong manner, or to any bad purpose. And as it is his nature and essence, it is infinite and unbounded; it cannot be greater than it is, and can neither be increased nor diminished; when, therefore, men are exhorted to "sanctify" the Lord, and are directed to pray that his "name" may be "hallowed", or sanctified, (Isaiah 8:13; Matthew 6:9) the meaning is not as if he was to be, or could be made more holy than he is; but that his holiness be declared, manifested, and celebrated more and more; it is so perfect that nothing can be added to it. And as it is his nature and essence, it is immutable and invariable; the holiness of a creature is changeable, as the holiness of angels and men; which has appeared by the apostasy of the one, and the fall of the other; and the holiness of saints, though its principle is the same, the acts and exercises are variable. But God is always the same holy

Being, without any variableness, or shadow of turning. He is originally holy, he is so in and of himself, and of no other; there is none prior and superior to him, from whom he could derive or receive any holiness; as his Being is of himself, so is his holiness, which is himself: the holiness of angels and men is not of themselves, but of God; he is the fountain of holiness to all rational creatures that partake of it; it is peculiar to him, yea, only in him; Hannah says, in her song, "There is none holy as the Lord", (1 Samuel 2:2). In another song yet to be sung, the song of Moses and of the Lamb, it is said, "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy" (Revelation 15:4). The holiness of creatures is but a shadow of holiness, in comparison of the holiness of God; the holy angels are chargeable with folly in his sight, and they cover their faces with their wings, while they celebrate the perfection of God's holiness; as conscious to themselves, that theirs will not bear to be compared with his (Job 4:17-18; Isaiah 6:2-3). God only is essentially, originally, underivatively, perfectly, and immutably holy. This must be understood not of one person in the Deity, to the exclusion of the rest; as not of the Spirit, though he is peculiarly called the "Holy Ghost", and the Holy Spirit, yet not to the exclusion of the Father and Son; so not of the Father, to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; for as they are the one God, who is a Spirit, they partake of the same common and undivided nature, and all the perfections of it, and of this with the rest. Hence we read of the holy Elohim, or divine Persons, in the plural number; and of the Holy Ones, the Holy Father, the Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit, (Joshua 24:19; Proverbs 30:5; Daniel 4:17). And no doubt respect is had to the holiness of the three divine persons, by the seraphim, when they said, "holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts!" (Isaiah 6:3) and by the four beasts, or living creatures, continually employed in the same divine service, celebrating the perfections of God in much the same language, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty!" (Revelation 4:8). As there is no doubt made of the Deity of the Father, there can be none of his holiness: our Lord addresses him under the relation of "Father", and under the epithet of "Holy Father", (John 17:11) and all that has been said of the holiness of God belongs to him; of which there can be no question made: and it is as true of the Son as of the Father; for as the Father is the holy Father, he must be the holy Son, since he is of the same nature, and is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person"; and as the Father is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, so is the Son; as the Father loves righteousness and hates iniquity, this is expressly said of the Son, (Hebrews 1:8-9) he is eminently called "the Holy One of God", (Psalms 16:10) and "the Holy One of Israel", more than thirty times in the prophecy of Isaiah; and particularly is so called along with the titles of Redeemer and Husband, which are peculiar to the second Person, the Son of God, the Redeemer of his people, and the Husband of his church, (Isaiah 47:4; Isaiah 54:5) yea, he is called the "most holy", who was anointed with the Holy Ghost above his fellows, and "having the Spirit without measure", (Daniel 9:24) the title of holy he takes to himself when addressing the church, which is an emblem of the purest state of the church militant on earth, the church of Philadelphia; "These things saith he that is holy" (Revelation 3:7). Nay, the devil himself gives it to him; "I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God" (Luke 4:34). Besides, Christ is not only holy in his human nature, even perfectly so, and sanctified and set apart to his office as Mediator, by his Father; for which office holiness is a necessary requisite and qualification; but he is the Fountain of holiness to his church and people; they are sanctified in him and by him; he is made sanctification to them, and all the holiness, or holy graces that are in them, are all from him, (John 1:14; John 1:16) which could not be, if he was not holy, and even holiness itself. And as for the blessed Spirit, the third Person in the Deity, the epithet of "holy" is commonly

given to him, as before observed; and very truly, since he is of the same nature with the Father and the Son; and so he is holy by nature and essence, and as appears by his graces, operations, and influences; and by his being grieved, speaking after the manner of men, with the sins and impurities of men; the reason of which is, because they are so contrary to his pure and holy nature, that he cannot bear them, but expresses his dislike and displeasure at them (Ephesians 4:29-30). And all this will be still more clear and manifest, by considering,

2. Secondly, The instances whereto and whereby the holiness of God is displayed, which are his works, and actions, and proceedings towards his creatures; God is holy in all his works; or his holiness is manifest in them, and by them (Psalms 145:17).

2a. The holiness of God the Father; which is visible,

2a1. In the works of creation; for as he made all things by his Son, not as an instrument, but as co-efficient with him, so when he overlooked them, he pronounced them very good; which he would not have done, had there been anything impure or unholy in them. Angels, not only those that stood, but those that fell, were originally holy, as made by him: the elect angels continue in the holiness in which they were created; and the angels that sinned are not in the estate in which they were at their creation; they kept not their first estate, which was an estate of purity and holiness; and abode not in the truth, in the uprightness and integrity in which they were formed (Jude 1:6; John 8:44). And as for man, he was made after the image, and in the likeness of God, which greatly consisted in holiness; a pure, holy, and upright creature he was; and had a law given him, holy, just, and good, as the rule of his obedience, and which was inscribed on his heart; some remains of which are to be found in his fallen posterity, and even in the Gentiles.

2a2. The holiness of God appears in his works of providence; which, though many of them are dark and intricate, not easily penetrated into, and to be accounted for; yet there is nothing criminal and sinful in them: the principal thing objected to the holiness of God in his providences, is his suffering sin to be in the world; but then, though it is by his voluntary permission, or permissive will, yet he is neither the author nor abettor of it; he neither commands it, nor approves of it, nor persuades to it, nor tempts nor forces to it; but all the verse, forbids it, disapproves of it, dissuades from it, threatens to punish for it, yea, even chastises his own people for it; and, besides, overrules it for great good, and for his own glory; as the fall of Adam, the sin of Joseph’s brethren, the Jews crucifixion of Christ; which have been instanced in, and observed under a former attribute: wherefore the dispensations of God, in his providence, are not to be charged with unholiness on this account.

2a3. The holiness of Jehovah the Father is to be observed in those acts of grace which are peculiar to him; as in choosing some in Christ his Son to everlasting life, before the world began. Now though not the holiness of the creature, nor even the foresight of it, is the cause of this act; yet holiness, or the sanctification of the Spirit, is fixed as a means in it; and it is the will of God, that those whom he chooses and appoints to salvation should partake of it, or come to salvation through it; nay, he has not only chosen them "through" it, as a means, but he has chosen them to it, as a subordinate end; he has chosen them to be holy in part, in this life, and perfectly in the life to come; and holiness of heart and life, is the evidence of interest in it, and nothing more powerfully excites and engages to it. The covenant which he has made with his Son Jesus Christ, on the behalf of the chosen ones, provides abundantly for their holiness, both internal and

external; see (Ezekiel 36:25-27) and the promises of it serve greatly to promote it, and to influence the saints to be "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). And in this covenant is laid up a rod of correction, in love, to chastize with it the sins of God's people (Psalms 89:29-34). Justification is an act of God's grace towards them; it is God, even God the Father, that justifies, through the imputation of his Son's righteousness to them; by which the holy law of God is so far from being made void, that it is established, magnified, and made honourable: nor are justified persons exempted from obedience to it, but are more strongly bound and constrained to serve it; and though God justifies the ungodly, yet not without a righteousness provided for them, and imputed to them: nor does he justify, vindicate, or approve of their ungodliness, nor connive at it; but turns it from them, and them from that: and faith, which receives the blessing of justification from the Lord, by which men perceive their interest in it, and enjoy the comfort of it, is an operative grace, works by love to God, to Christ, and his people; and is attended with good works, the fruits of righteousness: the like may be observed with respect to other acts of the Father's grace; as adoption, pardon, &c.

2b. Secondly, The holiness of the Son of God is to be seen in all his works; in the works of creation and providence, in common with his divine Father; and in all his works of grace; in giving himself to sanctify his church, and make it a glorious one, without spot or wrinkle, through his blood and righteousness; in redeeming his people from all iniquity, to purify them to himself a peculiar people; in bearing their sins, and making satisfaction for them, that they might live unto righteousness, and that the body of sin might be destroyed, (Ephesians 5:25; Ephesians 5:27; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 6:6) and so in the execution of all his offices; as a Prophet, he has appeared to be an Holy One; the faith delivered by him to the saints, is a most holy faith, wholesome words, doctrines according to godliness: as a Priest, he is holy and harmless, separate from sinners, and has offered up himself without spot to God; and though he makes intercession for transgressors, it is upon the foot of his sacrifice and righteousness: as a King, all his administrations are in purity and righteousness; and his laws, commands, and ordinances, are Holy Ones; and when he comes as judge of the world, he will appear without sin, and "judge the world in righteousness".

2c. Thirdly, The holiness of the blessed Spirit, is visible in the formation of the human nature of Christ; in separating that mass out of which it was framed in the virgin; in sanctifying it, and preserving it from the taint and contagion of original sin; in filling the human nature, when formed, with his holy gifts and graces, and that without measure; and through him it was offered up without spot; and he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the Spirit of holiness, through the resurrection from the dead. Moreover, his holiness is manifest in the sanctification of the chosen of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb, which is therefore called, "the sanctification of the Spirit", (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2) in convincing them of sin, of the evil nature and just demerit of it; in converting them from it; in calling them with an holy calling, and to holiness; in implanting principles of grace and holiness in them; in purifying their hearts by faith, through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus; in leading them in the way of holiness, in which men, though fools, shall not err; and in carrying on, and perfecting the work of sanctification in them, "without which none shall see the Lord".

02. Of the Holy Scriptures

Of the Holy Scriptures As what I shall say hereafter concerning God, his essence, perfections, persons, works, and worship, and everything relative to him, will be taken out of the sacred scriptures, and proved by them; it will be necessary, before I proceed any further, to secure the ground I go upon; and establish the divine authority of them; and show that they are a perfect, plain, and sure rule to go by; and are the standard of faith and practice; and to be read constantly, studied diligently, and consulted with on all occasions. By the Scriptures, I understand the books of the Old and of the New Testament. The books of the Old Testament, are the five books of Moses; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, sometimes called the Pentateuch; the historical books, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the two books of Samuel, the two of Kings, the two of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther; the poetical books, Job, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon’s Song; the prophetic books, the larger Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, with the Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel; the lesser Prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The books of the New Testament the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles; the fourteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul; one of James; two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude, and the Revelation. These books are commonly called Canonical Scripture, because they have been always received by the church into the canon, or rule of faith. The books of the Old Testament, by the Jewish church; with which entirely agree Josephus’s account of them, and the catalogue of them brought from the East by Melito; and the books of both Testaments agree with the account which Origen gives of them in his time, and which have always been acknowledged by the Christian church; and which testimony of both churches, respecting them, deserves our regard, and tends to corroborate their divine authority. Now these are the books which the apostle calls, "all Scripture", or the whole of Scripture, said by him to be "given by inspiration of God": which include not only the books of the Old Testament, which had been long in being in his time; but the books of the New Testament, which were all of them then written, excepting the book of the Revelation; since these words of his stand in an epistle supposed to be the last that was written by him; and however what is said by him is true of what might be written afterwards, for the uses he mentions, as well as before. From these must be excluded, as un-canonical, the books that bear the name of Apocrypha; which are sometimes bound up with the Bible, to the great scandal and disgrace of it; for though there may be some things in them worthy to be read, as human writings; there is such a mixture of falsehood and impiety, that they cannot by any means be allowed to be placed upon an equality with the sacred scriptures. Likewise all such spurious books falsely ascribed to the apostles, or to some of the first Christians; as, The Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus; The Constitutions of the Apostles; Hermes’s Pastor, &c. which carry in them manifest marks of imposture. To which may be added, all human and unwritten traditions, pleaded for by the papists; and all dreams and visions, and pretended revelations and prophecies, delivered out in later ages, by enthusiastic persons. Blessed be God, we have a more sure word of prophecy to attend unto; concerning which, I shall,

1. Observe the divine authority of the Scriptures, or show, that they are from God, or inspired by him; they lay in a claim to a divine original; and the claim is just, as will be seen. They are called the law, or doctrine of the Lord; the testimony of the Lord; the statutes of the Lord; the commandment of the Lord; the fear of the Lord; and the judgments of the Lord; by the Psalmist David, (Psalms 19:7-9). And the prophets frequently introduce their prophecies and discourses, by saying, "the word of the Lord came" to them; and with a, "thus saith the Lord", (Isaiah 1:10; Jeremiah 2:1-2). And our Lord expressly calls the scripture the word of God, (John 10:35) as it is also called, (Hebrews 4:12). And which God "at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake by the prophets"; and by his Son, and his apostles, in later times, (Hebrews 1:1-2). And is represented as the oracles of God, and may be safely consulted and depended on; and according to which men are to speak, (Romans 3:2, 1 Peter 1:11). But before I proceed any further, in the proof of the divinity of the sacred Scriptures, I shall premise the following things.

1a. First, That when we say that the Scriptures are the word of God, or that this word is of God; we do not mean that it was spoken with an articulate voice by him; or written immediately by the finger of God: the law of the Decalogue, or the Ten Commands, indeed, were articulately spoken by him, and the writing of them was the writing of God, (Exodus 20:1, Exodus 31:18, Exodus 32:15) in which he might set an example to his servants, in later times, to write what might be suggested to them by him; that it might remain to be read: it is enough, that they were bid to write what he delivered to them, as Moses and others were ordered to do, (Deuteronomy 31:19; Jeremiah 30:2; Habakkuk 2:2; Revelation 1:11, Revelation 1:19) and what was ordered by the Lord to be written, it is the same as if it was written by himself; and especially since the penmen wrote as they were directed, dictated and inspired by him, and "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"; for they did not speak and write of their own head, and out of their own brains, nor according to their will, and when and what they pleased; but according to the will of God, and what he suggested to them, and when he inspired them, (2 Peter 1:21).

1b. Secondly, Not all that is contained in the scriptures is of God. Some are the words of others; yea, some are the speeches of Satan, and very bad ones too; as when he suggested that Job was not a sincere worshipper of God; and requested he might have leave to do an injury both to his property and to his person, (Job 1:9-11; Job 2:4-6). So when he tempted our Lord, and moved him to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, and destroy himself; and not succeeding in that, urged him to fall down and worship him, (Matthew 4:5, Matthew 4:9). But now the penmen of these books, in which these speeches are, were moved and directed by the Lord to commit them to writing; so that though they themselves are not the word of God; yet that they are written, and are on record, is of God; and which was directed to, and done, to show the malice, pride, blasphemy, and impiety, of that wicked spirit. There are also speeches of bad men, as of Cain, Pharaoh, and others, ordered to be written, to discover the more the corruption of human nature: and even of good men, as of Moses, David, Jonah, and particularly the friends of Job, and their long discourses, in which they said not that which was right of God, as Job did; and he himself did not say in every speech of his what was right of God; though he said more, and what was more correct, than they did; and yet these speeches are on record, by divine order, to prove matters of fact, to show the weaknesses and frailties of the best of men. Some of the writers of thee scriptures, as Moses, and the historical ones, being eye and ear witnesses of many things they wrote, could have written them of their own knowledge, and out of their own memories; and others

they might take out of diaries, annals, and journals, of their own and former times; yet in all they wrote, they were under the impulse and direction of God; what to leave, and what to take and insert into their writings, and transmit to posterity. So that all they wrote may be truly said to be by divine authority. In the writings and discourses of the apostle Paul, are several quotations out of heathen authors; one out of Aratus, when he was discoursing before the wise men at Athens; "as certain, says he, of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring", (Acts 17:28). Another out of Menander; "Evil communications corrupt good manners", (1 Corinthians 15:33). And another out of Epimenides, a poet of Crete, a testimony of his against the Cretians, who said they were, "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies"; which were produced "ad hominum", for greater conviction; and which he was directed to quote and write in his epistles and discourses, for that reason. So that though the words are not of God, yet that they were quoted and written, was of God.

1c. Thirdly, Let it be observed, that not the matter of the Scriptures only, but the very words in which they are written are of God. Some who are not for organic inspiration, as they call it, think that the sacred writers were only furnished of God with matter, and had general ideas of things given them, and were left to clothe them with their own words, and to use their own style; which they suppose accounts for the difference of style to be observed in them: but if this was the case, as it sometimes is with men, that they have clear and satisfactory ideas of things in their own minds, and yet are at a loss for proper words to express and convey the sense of them to others; so it might be with the sacred writers, if words were not suggested to them, as well as matter; and then we should be left at an uncertainty about the real sense of the Holy Spirit, if not led into a wrong one; it seems, therefore, most agreeable, that words also, as well as matter, were given by divine inspiration: and as for difference of style, as it was easy with God to direct to the use of proper words, so he could accommodate himself to the style such persons were wont to use, and which was natural to them, and agreeable to their genius and circumstances; and this may be confirmed from the testimonies of the writers themselves: says David, one of the writers of the Old Testament, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue", (2 Samuel 23:2). And the apostle Paul speaks of himself, and other inspired apostles of the New Testament, he says, "Which things we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth", (1 Corinthians 2:13) and it is "the writing", or the word of God as written, that is, "by inspiration of God", (2 Timothy 3:16). But then,

1d. Fourthly, This is to be understood of the Scriptures, as in the original languages in which they were written, and not of translations; unless it could be thought, that the translators of the Bible into each of the languages of the nations into which it has been translated, were under the divine inspiration also in translating, and were directed of God to the use of words they have rendered the original by; but this is not reasonable to suppose. The books of the Old Testament were written chiefly in the Hebrew language, unless some few passages in Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, and Esther, in the Chaldee language; and the New Testament in Greek: in which languages they can only be reckoned canonical and authentic; for this is like the charters and diplomas of princes; the wills or testaments of men; or any deeds made by them; only the original exemplar is authentic; and not translations, and transcriptions, and copies of them, though ever so perfect: and to the Bible, in its original languages, is every translation to be brought, and by it to be examined, tried and judged, and to be corrected and amended: and if this was not the case, we should have no certain and

infallible rule to go by; for it must be either all the translations together, or some one of them; not all of them, because they agree not in all things: not one; for then the contest would be between one nation and another which it should be, whether English, Dutch, French, &c. and could one be agreed upon, it could not be read and understood by all: so the papists, they plead for their Vulgate Latin version; which has been decreed authentic by the council of Trent; though it abounds with innumerable errors and mistakes; nay, so far do they carry this affair, that they even assert that the Scriptures, in their originals, ought to submit to, and be corrected by their version; which is absurd and ridiculous. Let not now any be uneasy in their minds about translations on this account, because they are not upon an equality with the original text, and especially about our own; for as it has been the will of God, and appears absolutely necessary that so it should be, that the Bible should be translated into different languages, that all may read it, and some particularly may receive benefit by it; he has taken care, in his providence, to raise up men capable of such a performance, in various nations, and particularly in ours; for whenever a set of men have been engaged in this work, as were in our nation, men well skilled in the languages, and partakers of the grace of God; of sound principles, and of integrity and faithfulness, having the fear of God before their eyes; they have never failed of producing a translation worthy of acceptation; and in which, though they have mistook some words and phrases, and erred in some lesser and lighter matters; yet not so as to affect any momentous article of faith or practice; and therefore such translations as ours may be regarded as the rule of faith. And if any scruple should remain on the minds of any on this account, it will be sufficient to remove it, when it is observed, that the Scriptures, in our English translation, have been blessed of God, either by reading them in it, or by explaining them according to it, for the conversion, comfort, and edification of thousands and thousands. And the same may be said of all others, so far as they agree with the original, that they are the rule of faith and practice, and alike useful.

Here I cannot but observe the amazing ignorance and stupidity of some persons, who take it into their heads to decry learning and learned men; for what would they have done for a Bible, had it not been for them as instruments? and if they had it, so as to have been capable of reading it, God must have wrought a miracle for them; and continued that miracle in every nation, in every age, and to every individual; I mean the gift of tongues, in a supernatural way, as was bestowed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; which there is no reason in the world ever to have expected. Bless God, therefore, and be thankful that God has, in his providence, raised up such men to translate the Bible into the mother tongue of every nation, and particularly into ours; and that he still continues to raise up such who are able to defend the translation made, against erroneous persons, and enemies of the truth; and to correct and amend it in lesser matters, in which it may have failed, and clear and illustrate it by their learned notes upon it. Having premised these things, I now proceed to prove the claim of the Scriptures to a divine authority, which may be evinced from the following things.

1. First, From the subject matter of them.

1a. In general there is nothing in them unworthy of God; nothing contrary to his truth and faithfulness, to his purity and holiness, to his wisdom and goodness, or to any of the perfections of his nature; there is no falsehood nor contradiction in them; they may with great propriety be called, as they are, "The Scriptures of truth", and the "Word of truth", (Daniel 10:21; Ephesians 1:13). There is nothing impious or impure, absurd or ridiculous in them; as in the Al-koran of Mahomet;

which is stuffed with impurities and impieties, as well as with things foolish and absurd: or as in the Pagan treatises of their gods; which abound with tales of their murders, adulteries, and thefts; and the impure rites and ceremonies, and inhuman sacrifices used in the worship of them. But,

1b. The things contained in the Scriptures are pure and holy; the Holy Spirit dictated them, holy men spoke and wrote them, and they are justly called "holy Scriptures", (Romans 1:2) and plainly show they came from the holy God. The doctrines of them are holy; they are doctrines according to godliness, and tend to promote it; they teach and influence men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly: they are indeed, by some ignorant persons, charged with licentiousness; but the charge, as it is false, it is easily removed, by observing the nature of the doctrines, and the effects of them; the precepts the Scriptures enjoin, and the worship they require, are strictly holy; the legal part of them is "holy, just, and good", (Romans 7:12). It is holy in its own nature, and requires nothing but what is for the good of men, what is but a reasonable service to God, and what is just between man and man; it forbids whatever is evil, strikes at all sorts of sins, and sets them in a just light, exposes and condemns them. And hence it is that there is in natural men, whose carnal minds are enmity to God, such a backwardness, yea, an aversion to reading the Scriptures; because the doctrines and precepts of them are so pure and holy; they choose to read an idle romance, an impure novel, or any profane writings and histories, rather than the Bible; and from whence may be drawn no inconsiderable argument in favour of their being of God. The style of the Scriptures is pure and holy, chaste and clean, free from all levity and obscenity, and from everything that might be offensive to the ear of the chaste and pious. And there are remarkable instances in the marginal readings of some passages in the Hebrew text, to prevent this; and care should be taken in all translations, to make use of language neat and clean; and keep up, as much as may be, to the original purity of the Scriptures.

1c. There are some things recorded in the Scriptures, which could never have been known but by revelation from God himself; as particularly, with respect to the creation of the world, and the original of mankind; that the world was made out of nothing; when made, how, and in what form and order, and how long it was in making; who were the first parents of mankind, when, how, and of what made; hence, without this revelation, men have run into strange, absurd, and extravagant notions about these things. Yea, the Scriptures inform us what was done in eternity, which none but God himself could reveal, and make known to men; as the choice of men in Christ to everlasting salvation, which was from the beginning; not of their being, nor of their conversion, nor of time; but before time, or they or the earth were, even "before the foundation of the world", (Ephesians 1:4). And also the council held between the divine Persons, concerning the salvation of man; for as there was a consultation held about making him, so about saving him; which may he called the "council of peace", (Zechariah 6:13). When "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself", and the scheme of peace and reconciliation, and plan of salvation, were formed and agreed upon: so the covenant of grace made with Christ from eternity, on the behalf of the chosen ones; whose "goings forth in it were of old, from everlasting"; covenanting with his Father for them, and agreeing to be their Surety and Saviour; to become incarnate, and obey and suffer for them, and so work out the salvation of them; representing their persons and taking the charge and care of them, and of all blessings of grace given them, and of all promises made to them, in him, before the world began; in which covenant he was set up as Mediator, "from everlasting, or ever the earth

was", (Proverbs 8:22-23; Micah 5:2; 2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:3-4). All which could never have been known unless God himself had revealed them.

1d. There are some things recorded in the Scriptures as to the future, which God only could foreknow would be, and foretell with certainty that they should be; and which have accordingly come to pass, and proves the revelation to be of God. Some of them relate to particular persons, and contingent events; as Josiah, who was prophesied of by name, as to be born to the house of David, three or four hundred years before his birth, and what he should do; "offer up the idolatrous priests on Jeroboam's altar, and burn mens' bones on it"; all which exactly came to pass, see (1 Kings 13:2) compared with (2 Kings 23:17, 2 Kings 23:20). Cyrus, king of Persia, also was prophesied of by name, more than two hundred years before his birth, and what he should do; what conquests he should make, what immense riches he should possess; and that he should let the captive Jews go free, without price or reward, and give orders for the rebuilding their temple; all which was punctually fulfilled, (Isaiah 44:28, Isaiah 45:1-3, Isaiah 45:13; see Ezra 1:1-4). Others relate to kingdoms and states, and what should befall them; as the Egyptians, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Assyrians, Babylonians, and others; of whose destruction Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied, and who now are no more, have not so much as a name on earth: and particularly many things are foretold concerning the Jews; as their descent into Egypt, abode and bondage there, and coming from thence with great riches; which was made known to their great ancestor Abraham, before they were, (Genesis 15:14; see Exodus 12:35, Exodus 12:40-41) their captivity in Babylon, and return from thence after seventy years, (Jeremiah 29:10-11; see Daniel 9:2) and all their miseries and afflictions in their last destruction, and present state, are prophetically described in Deuteronomy 28:1-68 and their exact case, for about nineteen hundred years, is expressed in a few words; as well as their future conversion is prophesied of (Hosea 3:4-5). But especially the prophecies concerning Christ, are worthy of notice; his incarnation and birth of a virgin; the place where he should be born; of what nation, tribe, and family; his sufferings and death, his burial, resurrection, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God: all which are plainly pointed out in prophecy; and which, with many other things relating to him, have had their exact accomplishment in him. To which might be added, predictions of the calling of the Gentiles, by many of the prophets; and the abolition of paganism in the Roman empire; the rise, power, and ruin of antichrist; which are particularly spoken of in the book of the Revelation; great part of which prophetic book has been already fulfilled.

1e. There are some things in the Scriptures, which, though not contrary to reason, yet are above the capacity of men ever to have made a discovery of; as the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; whose distinct mode of subsisting is mysterious to us; the eternal, generation of the Son of God, which is ineffable by us; his incarnation and birth of a virgin, under the power of the Holy Ghost, which is wonderful and amazing; the union of the human nature to his divine person; which is, "without controversy, the great mystery of godliness": the regeneration of men by the Spirit of God, and the manner of his operation on the souls of men; which, on hearing of, made a master of Israel say, "How can these things be?" and the resurrection of the same body at the last day, reckoned by the Gentiles incredible; and which things, though revealed, are not to be accounted for upon the principles of nature and reason.

1f. The things contained in the Scriptures, whether doctrines or facts, are harmonious; the doctrines, though delivered at sundry times, and in divers manners, are all of a piece; no yea and

nay, no discord and disagreement among them; the two Testaments "are like two young roes that are twins"; to which some think they are compared in Song of Solomon 4:5, Song of Solomon 7:3 and to the Cherubim over the mercy seat, which were of one beaten piece, were exactly alike, and looked to one another, and both to the mercy seat; a type of Christ, who is the foundation of the apostles and prophets, in which they unite, and both agree to lay; the apostle Paul said none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say should be. And as to historical facts, what seeming contradictions may be observed in any of them, are easily reconciled, with a little care, diligence, and study; and some of these arise from the carelessness of transcribers putting one word or letter for another; and even these instances are but few, and not very material; and which never affect any article of faith or practice: such care has divine providence taken of these peculiar and important writings, which with the harmony of them show them to be of God.

2. Secondly, The style and manner in which the Scriptures are written, is a further evidence of their divine original; the majesty in which they appear, the authoritative manner in which they are delivered; not asking, but demanding, attention and assent unto them; and which commands reverence and acceptance of them; the figures used to engage hereunto are inimitable by creatures; and such as would be daring and presumptuous for any but God to use, with whom is terrible majesty; such as, "Hear, O heavens", and "I will speak", (Deuteronomy 32:1; Isaiah 1:2) the sublimity of the style is such as exceeds all other writings: Longinus, an heathen orator, who wrote "upon the Sublime", admired some passages in the writings of Moses, particularly (Genesis 1:3). That early composition, the book of Job, abounds with such strong and lofty expressions as are not to be found in human writings, especially the speeches Jehovah himself delivered out of the whirlwind, (Job 38:1-41, Job 39:1-30, Job 40:1-24, Job 41:1-34) the book of Psalms is full of bright figures and inimitable language, particularly see (Psalms 18:7-15, Psalms 29:3-10, Psalms 113:3-8, Psalms 139:7-12). The prophecies of Isaiah are fraught with a rich treasure of divine elocution, which surpasses all that is to be met with in the writings of men; and it is remarkable, that in some of the inspired writers, who have been bred up in a rustic manner, are found some of the most grand images, and lively picturesque, and highest flights of language, as in Amos the herdman, (Amos 4:13, Amos 9:2, Amos 9:6).

3. Thirdly, Another argument for the divine authority of the Scriptures may be taken from the penmen and writers of them.

3a. Many of these were men of no education, in a low station of life, and were taken from the flock, or from the herd, or from their nets, or other mean employments; and what they wrote, both as to matter and manner, were above and beyond their ordinary capacities, and therefore must be of God; what they wrote could not be of themselves; but they "spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost".

3b. They lived in different times and places, and were of different interests and capacities, and in different conditions and circumstances; and yet they were all of the same sentiment, they speak and write the same things, deliver out the same truths and doctrines, and enjoin the same moral duties of religion, and the same positive precepts, according to the different dispensations under which they were; and this shows that they were dictated, and influenced in all, by the same Spirit of God.

3c. They were holy and good men, partakers of the grace of God; and therefore could never give into an imposture, nor deliver out a known lie, nor obtrude a falsehood upon the world.

3d. They appear to be plain, honest, and faithful men; they conceal not their own failings and infirmities; so Moses published his own weaknesses and mistakes, and spared not the blemishes of his family; not of his more remote ancestor Levi, in the case of the Shechemites; nor of his immediate parents, their illegal marriage; nor of his favourite people the Israelites, their rebellion and obstinacy, and idolatry: and the same may be observed of other inspired writers.

3e. They were disinterested men; they sought not popular applause, nor worldly wealth, nor to aggrandize themselves and their families. Moses, when it was offered to him, by the Lord, to make of him a great nation, and cut off the people of Israel for their sins, refused it more than once; preferring the public good of that people to his own advantage; and though he was king in Jeshurun, he was not careful to have any of his posterity to succeed him in his office; and though the priesthood was conferred on Aaron his brother, and his sons, yet no other provision was made for his own family, than to attend the lower services of the tabernacle in common with the rest of his tribe: and of this disposition were the apostles of Christ, who left all, and followed him; and sought not the wealth of men, nor honour from them; but, on the contrary, exposed themselves to reproach, poverty, vexation, and trouble; yea, to persecution, and death itself; which they would never have done, had they not been fully satisfied of their mission of God, and of their message from him; and therefore could not be deterred from speaking and writing in his name, by the terrors and menaces of men, and by all the afflictions, bonds, and persecution, and death in every shape, which awaited them. In short, the writers of the Scriptures seem to be men that neither could be imposed upon themselves, nor sought to impose on others; nor would it have been easy, had they been bad men, to have succeeded, had they attempted it.

4. Fourthly, Another argument may be drawn from the many wonderful effects the sacred writings, attended with a divine power and influence, have had upon the hearts and lives of men. Many have been converted from error, superstition, and idolatry, and from a vicious course of life, to embrace and profess the truth, and to live a holy life and conversation, upon reading the Scriptures, or hearing them explained; and even some of great natural parts and learning, who could not easily be prevailed upon to relinquish former tenets and practices, had they not had full and clear conviction of them. This "Word of God has been quick and powerful, sharper than a twoedged sword"; it has pierced and penetrated into the recesses of the heart, and laid open the secrets of it; it has been the means of enlightening the mind, quickening the soul, regenerating and sanctifying the heart, and of producing faith, and every other, grace in it, and of strengthening, comforting, and reviving the spirits of the people of God when in distress, by afflictions, or Satan’s temptations; so that every good man has a testimony within himself of its divine authority; see (1 John 5:9-10).

5. Fifthly, The testimony bore to the Scriptures by miracles, abundantly confirm the genuineness of them, and that they are of God; such as were done by Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament, and by the apostles of the New; even such as are above, and contrary to the laws of nature, and are beyond the power of a creature to perform, and which only Omnipotence itself could work: now these God would never do to establish the character of impostors, or to confirm a lie; which yet he has done to witness the truth of divine revelation; see (Mark 16:20; Hebrews

2:3-4).

6. Sixthly, The hatred and opposition of men, and the enmity of devils, to them, afford no inconsiderable argument in favour of the divinity of them; for were they of men, they would not have such a disgust at them, and disapprobation of them, and make such opposition to them: by this are to be known the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error; what is of the world, and merely human, is approved by the men of the world; but what is of God is rejected, (1 John 4:5-6) and if these writings were of Satan, and the work of forgery, imposture, and deceit, that wicked spirit would never have shown such despite unto them, nor have taken such pains to tempt men, and prevail upon them not to read them; and to persuade others to use their utmost efforts to corrupt or destroy them, and root them out of the world.

7. Seventhly, The awful judgments of God on such who have despised them, and have endeavoured to destroy them, are no mean evidence that they are of God; who hereby has shown his resentment of such conduct and behaviour; which might be illustrated by the instances of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who cut to pieces the copies of the book of the law wherever he found them, and burnt them, and put to death all with whom they were, "Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol altar, which was upon the altar of God. At which time according to the commandment they put to death certain women, that had caused their children to be circumcised." (1Ma 1:1-64) this man died of a violent disorder in his bowels, his body was covered with worms, his flesh flaked off, and was attended with an intolerable stench, "But the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an incurable and invisible plague: or as soon as he had spoken these words, a pain of the bowels that was remediless came upon him, and sore torments of the inner parts;" (2Ma 9:5) "So that the worms rose up out of the body of this wicked man, and whiles he lived in sorrow and pain, his flesh fell away, and the filthiness of his smell was noisome to all his army." (2Ma 9:9) and of Dioclesian, the Roman emperor, who by an edict ordered all the sacred books to be burnt, that, if possible, he might root Christianity out of the world; and once fancied that he had done it; but when he found he had not accomplished his design, through madness and despair, in the height of his imperial glory, abdicated the empire, and retired to a private life, and at last poisoned himself: the one showed a despite to the books of the Old Testament, the other more especially to the books of the New Testament; and both were highly resented by the divine Being, who hereby showed himself the author of both. Many more instances might be produced, but these may suffice.

8. Eighthly, The antiquity and continuance of these writings may be improved into an argument in favour of them: Tertullian says, "That which is most ancient is most true." Men from the beginning had knowledge of God, and of the way of salvation, and in what manner God was to be worshipped; which could not be without a revelation; though for some time it was not delivered in writing. The antediluvian patriarchs had it, and so the postdiluvian ones, to the times of Moses; whose writings are the first, and are more ancient than any profane writings, by many hundreds of years; the most early of that sort extant, are the poems of Homer and Hesiod, who flourished about the times of Isaiah; and the divine writings have been preserved notwithstanding the malice of men and devils, some of them some thousands of years, when other writings are lost and perished. To which may be added, that the Scriptures receive no small evidence of the authority of them, from the testimonies of many heathen writers agreeing with them, with respect to the chronology, geography, and history of them; as concerning the creation of the world, Noah’s flood,

the tower of Babel, the confusion of languages, the peopling the earth by the sons of Noah, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah; with many other things respecting the people of Israel, their origin, laws, &c. [1] I go on to consider,

2. The "Perfection" of the Scriptures. When we assert the perfection of them, we do not mean that they contain a perfect account of all that God has done from the beginning of time, in the dispensations of his providence in the world, and in the distributions of his grace to the sons of men; though they relate much of the state and condition of the church of God in all ages, and as it will be to the end of time. Nor that they contain all the discourses, exhortations, admonitions, cautions, and counsels of the prophets, delivered to the people of Israel, in each of the ages of time: nor all the sermons of the apostles, which they preached to the Jews, and among the Gentiles: nor are all that were said and done by our Lord Jesus Christ recorded in them; there were many signs done by him which are not written, which if they should be written, as the evangelist observes, "even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written", (John 20:30, John 21:25). But then they relate all things necessary to salvation, everything that ought to be believed and done; and are a complete, perfect standard of faith and practice: which may be proved,

2a. First, From the Author of them, who is God; they are the word of God, and are "given by inspiration of God;" as is asserted in them, and has been clearly shown. Now since God is the author of them, who is a perfect Being, in whom is "no darkness at all"; not of ignorance, error, and imperfection; they coming from him, must be free from everything of that kind; "he is a rock", and "his work is perfect"; as his works of creation, providence, and redemption; so this work of the Scriptures.

2b. Secondly, From the name they go by, a "Testament": we commonly divide the Scriptures into the Books of the Old Testament, and the Books of the New Testament; and that there was a First and a Second Testament, an Old and a New one, is plainly intimated, (Hebrews 9:15). Now a man’s testament, or will, contains the whole of his will and pleasure, concerning the disposition of his estate to whomsoever he pleases, or it is not properly his will and testament; a man’s testament, "if it be confirmed", as the apostle observes, "no man disannulleth or addeth thereto", (Galatians 3:15). Such the Scriptures are; they contain the whole will of God, about the disposition of the blessings of grace, and of the heavenly inheritance, to those who are appointed by him heirs; and being ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ, are so sure and firm as not to be disannulled, and so perfect that nothing can be added thereunto.

2c. Thirdly, From the epithet of "perfect" being expressly given unto them; "the law of the Lord is perfect", (Psalms 19:7) which is to be understood, not of the Decalogue, or Ten Commands, but of the doctrine of the Lord, as the phrase signifies; even what was delivered in the sacred writings extant in the times of David; and if it was perfect then as to the substance of it, then much more must it appear so by the accession of the prophets, and the books of the New Testament since, in which there are plainer and clearer discoveries of the mind and will of God.

2d. Fourthly, From the essential parts of them, the Law and Gospel; to which two heads the substance of them may be reduced: the Law is a perfect rule of duty; it contains what is the "good, acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). What he would have done, or not done; the whole duty of man, both towards God and man; all is comprehended in these two commands,

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-40). The Gospel is the "perfect law", or doctrine "of liberty", the apostle James speaks of, (James 1:25) which proclaims the glorious liberty of the children of God by Christ; and it is perfect, it treats of perfect things; of perfect justification by Christ; of full pardon of sin through his blood, and complete salvation in him; and contains a perfect plan of truth; every truth, "as it is in Jesus"; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: it is the whole, or all the counsel of God, concerning the spiritual and eternal salvation of men (Acts 20:27).

2e. Fifthly, From the integral parts of them; the Scriptures, containing all the books that were written by divine inspiration. The books of the Old Testament were complete and perfect in the times of Christ; not one was wanting, nor any mutilated and corrupted. The Jews, he says, "have Moses and the prophets"; and he himself, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself" (Luke 16:31, Luke 24:27). So that they had not only the five books of Moses, but "all" the prophets, and "all" the scriptures of the Old Testament: nay, he affirms, that "till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled", (Matthew 5:18). The Jews had the oracles of God committed to their care, (Romans 3:2) and they have been faithful keepers of them, even some of them to superstition and scrupulous nicety, numbering not only the books and sections, but also the verses, and even the words and letters: and there never was nor now is, any reason to be given why they had corrupted, or would corrupt, any part of the Old Testament; on the coming of Christ it was not their interest to do it; and even before that it was translated into the Greek tongue, by which they would have been detected; and after the coming of Christ they could not do it if they would, copies of it being in the hands of Christians; who were able to correct what they should corrupt, had they done it: and whatever attempts may have been made by any under the Christian name, to corrupt some copies of either Testament, they may be, and have been detected; or whatever mistakes may be made, through the carelessness of transcribers of copies, they are to be corrected by other copies, which God, in his providence, has preserved; and, as it seems, for such purposes: so that we have a perfect canon, or rule of faith and practice. It is objected to the perfection of the books of the Old Testament, that the books of Nathan, Gad, and Iddo, the prophets mentioned therein, are lost; but then it should be proved that these were inspired writings, and, indeed, that they are lost; they may be the same, as some think, with the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. And it is also objected to those of the New Testament, that there was an epistle from Laodicea, (Colossians 4:16) and another to the Corinthians, distinct from those we have (1 Corinthians 5:9) neither of them now extant: as to the first, that is not an epistle "to" Laodicea, but "from" it; and may refer to one of the epistles, we have, written by the apostle Paul, when at that place: and as to that to the Corinthians, it does not appear to be another and distinct, but the same he was then writing: but admitting, for argument sake, though it is not to be granted, that some book, or part of the inspired writings is lost; let it be proved, if it can, that any essential article of faith is lost with it; or that there is any such article of faith wanting in the books we have: if this cannot be proved, then, notwithstanding the pretended defect, we have still a perfect rule of faith; which is what is contended for.

2f. Sixthly, This may be further evinced from the charge that is given, "not to add unto, nor diminish from, any part of the sacred writings, law or gospel": this is strictly enjoined the Israelites to observe, with respect to the law, and the commandments of it, given them by Moses

(Deuteronomy 4:2, Deuteronomy 12:32). And with respect to the Gospel, the apostle Paul says, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you—and ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8-9). And the wise man, or Agur, says of the Scriptures in his time, "Every word of God is pure—add thou not unto his words". And the apostle and evangelist John, closes the canon of the Scripture with these remarkable words, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life", &c. (Revelation 22:18-19). Now if there is nothing superfluous in the Scriptures, to be taken from them; and nothing defective in them, which requires any addition to them; then they must be perfect.

2g. Seventhly, This may be argued from the sufficiency of them to answer the ends and purposes for which they are written; as, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness", (2 Timothy 3:16) they are sufficiently profitable and useful "for doctrine"; there is no spiritual truth, nor evangelical doctrine, but what they contain; they are called "the Scriptures of truth"; not only because they come from the God of truth, and whatsoever is in them is truth; but they contain "all truth"; which the Spirit of God, the dictator of them, guides into, and that by means of them; (see Daniel 10:21; John 16:13) every doctrine is to be confirmed and established by them: our Lord proved the things concerning himself, his person, office, sufferings, and death, by them, (Luke 24:25-27) the apostle Paul "reasoned out of the Scriptures", in confirmation and defence of the doctrines he taught; "opening and alleging", that is, from the Scriptures, "that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus is Christ", whom he preached; and, indeed, he said "none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say" should be, and which he was able to prove from thence (Acts 17:2-3, Acts 26:22-23). Every doctrine proposed by men, to the assent of others, is not immediately to be credited; but to be tried and proved, and judged of by the holy Scriptures, which are to be searched, as they were by the Bereans, to see whether those things be so or not; and being found agreeable to them, they are to be believed, and held fast; for "to the law and to the testimony; if men speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). See 1 John 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Acts 17:11 and these are serviceable "for reproof", for the detection, confutation, and conviction of error: thus Christ confuted the error of the Sadducees by the Scriptures (Matthew 22:29-30) and the apostles, with these, warred a good warfare; these were their spiritual weapons, the word of God is the sword of the Spirit, they used in fighting the good fight of faith, against false teachers; by sound doctrine, fetched from thence, they were able to convince and stop the mouths of gainsayers: there never was an error, or heresy, broached in the world yet, but what has been confuted by the Scriptures; and it is not possible that anyone can arise in opposition to "the faith once delivered", but what may receive its refutation from them. They are also of use "for correction" of every sin, internal or external; of heart, lip, and life, secret or open; sins of omission or commission; all are forbidden, reproved, and condemned by the law of God; which says, "Thou shalt not covet", nor do this, and that, and the other iniquity (Romans 7:7, Romans 13:9). And the Gospel agrees with the law herein; and what is contrary to the law, is to sound doctrine; the Gospel of the grace of God, teaches to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts" (1 Timothy 1:9-11; Titus 2:11-12). There is not a sin that can be named, but what the Scriptures inveigh against, forbid, and correct. And another end answered by them is, that they are "for instruction in righteousness", in every moral duty of religion, and in every positive precept of God, according to

the different dispensations; they instruct in everything of a moral or positive nature, and direct to observe all that is commanded of God and Christ; and now writings by which all such ends are answered, must needs be perfect and complete. The Scriptures are sufficient to "make a man of God perfect, and thoroughly furnish him unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:17). Not a private good man only, but one in a public character and office; a prophet, a preacher, and minister of the word; in which sense the phrase is used both in the Old and New Testament (1 Samuel 9:6-7; 1 Timothy 6:11). An acquaintance with these fits him for the work of the ministry, and furnishes him with sound doctrine, to deliver out to the edification of others; by means of these he becomes "a scribe well instructed in the kingdom of God; and to be able to bring out of his treasure things new and old": and if they are able to make such a man perfect, they must be perfect themselves.

Another use of the Scriptures, and an end to be, and which is, answered by them, is not only the learning and instruction of private men, as well as those of a public character; but to make them patient under afflictions, and comfort them in them, and give hope of deliverance out of them, as well as of eternal salvation hereafter; for the apostle says, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope" (Romans 15:4). Nor is there any afflictive circumstance a good man can come into, but there is a promise in the word of God suitable to him in it; and which may be a means of enlivening, cheering, and comforting him, (Psalms 119:49-50) yea, the Scriptures are written to promote and increase the spiritual joy of God’s people, and that that joy might be full, and therefore must be full and perfect themselves (1 John 1:3-4).

2h. Eightly, The Scriptures are able to make a man "wise unto salvation" (2 Timothy 3:15). One part of them being the gospel of salvation; which points out to men the way of salvation; gives an account of Christ, the author of it, and of the salvation itself wrought out by him; and describes the persons that have an interest in it, and shall enjoy it; and who, through the grace of God, are made wise enough to see their need of it, seek after it, and embrace it; for it is not barely by reading the word they become so wise; but through the Spirit of wisdom and revelation opening their eyes to see what is contained in it, and applying it to them; whereby the gospel becomes "the power of God unto salvation" to them. In short the Scriptures contain all things in them necessary to be believed, unto salvation; and, indeed, they are written for this end, that men "might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, they might have life through his name" (John 20:31) and hereby, under a divine influence and blessing, they come to have the knowledge of God and Christ, and of God in Christ; which is the beginning, earnest, and pledge of eternal life (John 17:3). I proceed,

3. To prove the "perspicuity" of the Scriptures; for since they are a rule of faith and practice, they should be clear and plain, as they are: not that they are all equally clear and plain; some parts of them, and some things in them, are dark and obscure; but then by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, or those more dark passages with those that are clearer, they may be plainly understood. Moreover, the light of the Scriptures has been a growing one; it was but dim under the dispensation of the law of Moses; it became more clear through the writings of the prophets; but most clear under the gospel dispensation; where, "as in a glass, we behold, with open face, the glory of the Lord"; and of divine things: though in the gospel dispensation, and in such clear writings and epistles as those of the apostle Paul, who used "great plainness of speech", there are some things "hard to be understood", see 2 Corinthians 3:12-18; 2 Peter 3:16. And this is so

ordered on purpose to remove all contempt and loathing of the Scriptures, and to humble the arrogance and pride of men, to engage reverence of them, and to excite attention to them, and to put men on searching them with close study, application, and prayer. Nor is every doctrine of the Scriptures expressed in so many words; as the doctrine of the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; the eternal generation of the Son of God, his incarnation and satisfaction, &c. but then the things themselves signified by them are clear and plain; and there are terms and phrases answerable to them; or they are to be deduced from thence by just and necessary consequences. Nor are the Scriptures clear and plain to everyone that reads them; they are a sealed book, which neither learned nor unlearned men can understand and interpret without the Spirit of God, the dictator of them; the natural man, by the mere light of nature, and dint of reason, though he may understand the grammatical sense of words; yet he does not understand the meaning of them, at least in a spiritual way, with application to himself; and so far as he has any notion of them, he has a disgust and contempt of them, for the most part; yet they are so fully expressed and clearly revealed, that if the gospel is hid to any, it is to those that perish, who are left to the native darkness of their minds, and to be "blinded by the god of this world", that the glorious light of the gospel might not shine into them, see Isaiah 29:11-12; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. But then the Scriptures are plain to them that have a spiritual understanding; who are spiritual men, and judge all things; "to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom". What are more clear and plain than the precepts of the law, commanding one thing to be done, and forbidding the doing of another? in what plain language are they expressed, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me, &c.", "Thou shalt not kill, &c.?" And how clearly is asserted the great and fundamental doctrine of the gospel, "That salvation is alone by Jesus Christ, through the free grace of God; and not of the works of men?" and so everything necessary of belief unto salvation. In short, as Gregory says [2], they are like a full and deep river, in which the lamb may walk, and the elephant swim, in different places. The perspicuity of the Scriptures may be argued,

3a. From the author of them, God, as has been proved, who is "the Father of lights"; and therefore what comes from him must be light and clear, in whom is "no darkness at all".

3b. From the several parts of them, and what they are compared unto. The law, or legal part of them, is represented by things which are light, and give it; "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light" (Proverbs 6:23). The commandments of the law, as before observed, are clearly expressed; and are a plain direction to men what to do, or shun; the same David says of the word of the Lord in general, and more explicitly, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105). directing how to walk and act. The evangelical part of the Scriptures, or the gospel, is compared to a "glass", in which may be clearly beheld, "the glory of the Lord"; of his person, offices, grace, and righteousness; and everyone of the glorious truths and doctrines of it (2 Corinthians 3:18). Hence the ministers of the word are called the light of the world; because by opening and explaining the Scriptures, they are instruments of enlightening men into the will of God, and the mysteries of his grace (Matthew 5:14).

3c. From other testimonies of Scripture, particularly from Deuteronomy 30:11-14. "For this commandment, which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee; neither is it far off—it is not in heaven—neither is it beyond the sea—but the word is very nigh unto thee; in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it". And if it is not hidden, nor at a distance and inaccessible, then it must be open, and the knowledge of it to be come at; and this is to be understood, not only of the

law of Moses, but more especially of the gospel, the word of faith, preached by the apostles, as the apostle Paul interprets it (Romans 10:6-8). And the whole of Scripture is the "sure word of prophecy; whereunto men do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place": and so the means of dispelling the darkness of ignorance, error, and unbelief; and of giving light all around, both with respect to doctrine and duty, see 2 Peter 1:19.

3d. From exhortations to all sorts of people to read them, and who are commended for so doing. Not only the kings of Israel were to read the law of the Lord, but all that people in general; and there was a certain time of the year for them to assemble together to hear it read, men, women, children, and strangers; but if it was not plain and clear, and easy to be understood, it would have been to no purpose for them to attend it (Deuteronomy 17:19; Deuteronomy 31:11-13). Our Lord advises to "search the Scriptures"; which supposes them legible and intelligible, (John 5:39) and the Bereans are commended as more noble than those of Thessalonica; because they searched the Scriptures daily, and compared what they heard with them; that they might know whether they were right or not (Acts 17:11; see Revelation 1:3).

3e. From all sorts of persons being capable of reading them, and hearing them read, so as to understand them. Thus in the times of Nehemiah and Ezra, persons of every sex and age, who were at years of maturity, and had the exercise of their rational faculties, had the law read unto them, (Nehemiah 8:3) Timothy, from a child, knew the holy Scriptures, (2 Timothy 3:15) believers, and regenerate persons of every rank and degree, have knowledge of them, whether fathers, young men, or little children, (1 John 2:12-14). Nor is the public preaching of the word, and the necessity of it, to be objected to all this; since that is, as for conversion, so for greater edification and comfort, and for establishment in the truth, even though it is known; and besides, serves to lead into a larger knowledge of it, and is the ordinary means of guiding into it, and of arriving to a more perfect acquaintance with it, (1 Corinthians 14:3; 2 Peter 1:12; Acts 8:30-31; Ephesians 4:11-13). So that it may be concluded, upon the whole, that the Scriptures are easily understood. A sure, certain, and infallible rule to go by, with respect to things both to be believed and done: a rule they are (Galatians 6:16). And since they are of divine authority, and are perfect and plain, they are a sure rule, and to be depended on; "The testimony of the Lord is sure", (Psalms 19:7) and a "more sure word of prophecy" than all others whatever, (2 Peter 1:19) these are the witness of God, and therefore greater than man’s; and to be believed before any human testimony, (1 John 5:9) yea, must be reckoned infallible, since they are the Scriptures of truth, and not only contain what is truth, and nothing but truth in them: but have a true, even a divine testimony bore unto them, and come from the God of truth, who cannot lie (Daniel 10:21; Titus 1:2). They are the judge of all religious controversies, to which all are to be brought, and by them determined; according to these, spiritual men, who have their senses exercised, to discern between good and evil, try and judge all things. The Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture, or the Spirit of God therein; nor are the church or its pastors, nor councils and popes, the infallible interpreters thereof; there is a private interpretation of Scripture, which every Christian may make, according to his ability and light; and there is a public one, by the preacher of the word but both are subject to, and to be determined by the Scripture itself, which is the only certain and infallible rule of faith and practice. And,

4. There seems to be a real "necessity" of such a rule in the present state of things; and, indeed, a divine revelation was necessary to Adam, in a state of innocence; how, otherwise, should he have

known anything of the manner of his creation; of the state and condition in which he was created, after the image and in the likeness of God; the extent of his power and authority over the creation; by what means his animal life was to be supported; in what manner God was to be served and worshipped by him, especially the parts of positive and instituted worship, both as to matter, time, and place; and particularly the will of God, as to abstinence from eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? And if our first parents stood in need of a divine revelation, as a rule and guide to them in their state of integrity; then much more we in our present state of ignorance and depravity. And after the fall, it was owing to divine revelation, that man had any knowledge of the way of his salvation, by the woman's seed; and of the appointment, nature, import, use, and end of sacrifices; and though this revelation was for a time unwritten, and was handed down by tradition to the patriarchs before the flood, and for some time after, while the lives of men were of a long continuance, and it required but few hands to transmit it from one to another; but when mens' lives were shortened, and it was the pleasure of God to make further and clearer discoveries of his mind and will, and to frame new laws and rules of worship, in different dispensations; it seemed proper and necessary to commit them to writing, both that they might remain, and that they might be referred to in case of any doubt or difficulty about them; and particularly that the ends before mentioned might be answered by them, which it was intended should be; namely, the learning and instruction of men in matters of faith and practice, their peace, comfort, and edification, (Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17) and the rather, since nothing else was, and nothing less than the Scriptures are, a sufficient rule and guide in matters of religion; even not the light of nature and reason, so much talked of, and so highly exalted; and since it has been set up as such against divine revelation, it may be proper to show the insufficiency of it. Now the light of nature or reason, is not to be taken in an abstract sense, or considered only in theory, what it has been, may be, or should be, but not subsisting in men or books; as such it can be no rule or guide at all to have recourse unto; and besides, reason in such sense is not opposed to revelation; there is nothing in revelation contrary to reason, though there are things above it, and of which it is not a competent judge, and therefore can be no guide in such matters; but it must be considered as it is in fact, and as it subsists, either in single individuals, or in whole bodies of men, and these unacquainted with, and unassisted by divine revelation; and then its sufficiency, or rather insufficiency, will soon appear. If it is considered as in individuals, it may easily be observed it is not alike in all, but differs, according to the circumstances of men, climate, constitution, education, &c. some have a greater share of it than others; and what is agreeable to the reason of one man, is not so to another; and therefore unless it was alike and equal in all, it can be no sure rule or guide to go by: let one of the most exalted genius, be chosen, one of the wisest and sagest philosophers of the Gentiles, that has studied nature most, and arrived to the highest degree of reason and good sense; for instance, let Socrates be the man, who is sometimes magnified as "divine", and in whom the light of nature and reason may be thought to be sublimated and raised to its highest degree, in the Gentile world, without the help of revelation; and yet, as it was in him, it must be a very deficient rule of faith and practice; for though he asserted the unity of the divine Being, and is said to die a martyr for it; yet he was not clear of the heathenish notions of inferior deities, and of worship to be given them; for one of the last things spoken by him was, to desire his friends to fulfil a vow of his, to offer a cock to Esculapius, the god of health; and he is most grievously slandered, if he was not guilty of the love of boys in an unnatural way; and besides, he himself bewails the weakness and darkness of human nature, and confessed the want of a guide. If the light of nature and reason be

considered in large bodies of men, in whole nations, it will appear not to be the same in all. Some under the guidance of it have worshipped one sort of deities, and some others; have gone into different modes of worship, and devised different rites and ceremonies, and followed different customs and usages, and even differed in things of a moral nature; and as their forefathers, guided by this light, introduced and established the said things; they, with all their observations, reflections, and reasonings on them, or increase of light, supposing they had any, were never able, by the light of nature and reason in them, to prevail over, and demolish such idolatry, and such profane and wicked practices that obtained among them; and the insufficiency thereof, as a rule and guide in religion, will further appear by considering the following particulars.

4a. That there is a God may be known by the light of nature; but "who" and "what" he is, men, destitute of a divine revelation, have been at a loss about. Multitudes have gone into polytheism, and have embraced for gods almost everything in and under the heavens; not only the sun, moon, and stars, and mortal men, they have deified; but various sorts of beasts, fishes, fowl, creeping things, and even forms of such that never existed: and some that have received the notion of a supreme Being, yet have also acknowledged a numerous train of inferior deities, and have worshipped the creature besides the Creator; whose folly is represented in a true and full light by the apostle, (Romans 1:19-25) and though the unity of the divine Being, is the voice of reason as well as of revelation; yet by the former, without the latter, we could have had no certain notion, if any at all, of three divine persons subsisting in the unity of the divine essence; and especially of each of the parts they have taken in the economy of man’s salvation; for as for what Plato and others have been supposed to say concerning a Trinity, it is very lame and imperfect, and what was borrowed from eastern tradition.

4b. Though the light of nature may teach men that God, their Creator and Benefactor, is to be worshipped by them; and may direct them to some parts of worship, as to pray unto him for what they want, and praise him for what they have received; yet a perfect plan of worship, acceptable to God, could never have been formed according to that; and especially that part of it could not have been known which depends upon the arbitrary will of God, and consists of positive precepts and institutions; hence the Gentiles, left to that, and without a divine revelation, have introduced modes of worship the most absurd and ridiculous, as well as cruel and bloody, even human sacrifices, and the slaughter of their own children, as well as the most shocking scenes of debauchery and uncleanness.

4c. By the light of nature men may know that they are not in the same condition and circumstances they originally were; for when they consider things, they cannot imagine that they were made by a holy Being subject to such irregular passions and unruly lusts which now prevail in them; but in what state they were made, and how they fell from that estate, and came into the present depraved one, they know not; and still less how to get out of it, and to be cured of their irregularities: but divine revelation informs us how man was made upright, and like unto God: and by what means he fell from his uprightness into the sinful state he is in; and how he may be recovered from it, and brought out of it by the regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Spirit of God, and not otherwise.

4d. Though, as the apostle says, the Gentiles without the law, "do by nature the things contained in the law; and are a law to themselves, which show the work of the law written on their hearts;

their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another", (Romans 2:14-15) and so have some notion of the difference between moral good and evil; yet this is not so clear and extensive, but that some of the greatest moralists among them gave into the most notorious vices, and allowed of them, and recommended them; Chrysippus[3] allowed of incest; Plato[4] commended community of wives; Socrates a plurality of wives, and which he enforced by his own example[5]; Cicero[6] pleaded for fornication; the Stoics, a grave set of moralists, for the use of obscene words[7], and recommended suicide as becoming a wise man[8], and as his duty to commit in some cases. So dim was this light of nature in things of a moral kind!

4e. Though in many cases reason taught them that certain vices were disagreeable to God, and resented by him, and he was displeased with them, and would punish for them; and they were very desirous of appeasing him; but then how to reconcile him to them, and recommend themselves to his favour, they were quite ignorant; and therefore took the most shocking and detestable methods for it, as human sacrifices, and particularly burning their innocent infants. But revelation shows us the more excellent way.

4f. Men may, by the light of nature, have some notion of sin as an offence to God, and of their need of forgiveness from him; and from a general notion of his mercy, and of some instances of kindness to them, may entertain some faint hope of the pardon of it; but then they cannot be certain of it from thence, or that even God will pardon sin at all, the sins of any man; and still less how this can be done consistent with his holiness and justice: but through divine revelation we come at a clear and certain knowledge of this doctrine, and of its consistence with the divine perfections.

4g. The light of nature leaves men entirely without the knowledge of the way of salvation by the Son of God. And even without revelation, angels of themselves would not be able to know the way of saving sinful men, or how sinful men can be justified before God; wherefore, in order to know this; they "desire to look into it", (1 Peter 1:12). Some have thought that Socrates had some notion of it; who is made to say[9], "It is necessary to wait till some one teaches how to behave towards God and men:" but then this respects only a man’s outward conduct, and not his salvation: nor does the philosopher seem to have any clear notion of the instructor, and of the means he should use to instruct, and still less of the certainty of his coming; and besides, the relator of this, Plato, might receive this as a tradition in the East, where it is well known he travelled for knowledge. But the divine revelation gives an account of this glorious person, not merely as an instructor of men in the way of their duty, but as a Saviour of them from their sins; and in what way he has wrought out salvation, by his sacrifice, blood, and righteousness.

4h. The light of nature is far from giving any clear and certain account of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and a future state of happiness and misery: as for the immortality of the soul, the heathens rather wished it to be true than were fully satisfied of it; they that were for it made use of but mean arguments to prove it; and they themselves believed it only "fide dimidiata", as Minutius Felix[10] expresses it, with a divided faith; they did, as it were, but half believe it; and as for the resurrection of the body, that was denied, as Tertullian says[11], by every sect of the philosophers: and in what a low manner do they represent the happiness of the future state; by walking in pleasant fields, by sitting under fragrant arbours or bowers, and cooling

shades, and by shelter from inclement weather; by viewing flowing fountains and purling and babbling streams; by carnal mirth, feasting, music, and dancing: and the misery of it, by being bound neck and heels together, or in chains, or fastened to rocks, and whipped by furies, with a scourge of serpents, or doomed to some laborious service. But not the least hint is given of the presence of God with the one, nor of his absence from the other; nor of any sensation of his love or wrath. Let us therefore bless God that we have a better rule and guide to go by; "a more sure word of prophecy to take heed unto": let us have constant recourse unto it, as the standard of faith and practice; and try every doctrine and practice by it, and believe and act as that directs us, and fetch everything from it that may be for our good, and the glory of God.

ENDNOTES:

[1] See Gale’s Court of the Gentiles.

[2] Praefat. in Job.

[3] Laertius in Vita ejus.

[4] Vid. Grotium in Eph. 5, 6.

[5] Laertius in Vila ejus.

[6] Orat. 34. pro Coelio.

[7] Vid. Ciceron. Ep. l. 9. ep. 22.

[8] Vid. Lips. Manuduct. Stoic. Philosoph. Dissert. 22. p. 365.

[9] Plato in Alcibiad. 2. p. 459.

[10] Octav. p. 37.

[11] De Praescript. Haeret. c. 7. p. 232.

02. Of the Immortality of the Soul

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Though the body dies, and when it dies, the soul dies not; it survives the body, and not only lives after it, but lives for ever, it never dies: though the body without the soul is dead, yet the soul without the body is not dead; when the body returns to the earth and dust, from whence it sprung, the soul returns to God, the immediate author and giver of it: the body may be killed by men, but not the soul; no man has any power over that, none but God that made it: the soul is immortal, it is not capable of death, that is, in a natural and proper sense; it is capable of dying, in a figurative sense, a moral or spiritual death; which is brought on by sin; but this lies not in a deprivation of the powers and faculties of it; but of its moral rectitude, righteousness, and holiness; and it is capable of an eternal death, which is the destruction of it in hell; that is, not a destruction of its substance, but of its peace, joy, and happiness for ever. When it is said, the soul is immortal, it must be understood, that it is so in its nature; and is not liable to death, either from any thing within itself or without it: but not that it has such an immortality as God himself has, "who only hath immortality;" he has it of himself: angels, and the souls of men, have their immortality of him, who has made them immaterial and immortal spirits; his immortality is without beginning, and any prior cause of it; theirs has a beginning from God, the first cause of them: his is independent; theirs depends on him, in whom they live, and move, and have their being. That the soul of man is immortal may be proved, 1. First, from the consideration of the soul itself, its original, nature, powers, and faculties.

1a. First, from the original of it; it is not of men; it is not "ex traduce," or by generation from parents, as has been proved elsewhere; "What is born of the flesh, is flesh;" and is not only carnal and sinful, but frail and mortal; "All flesh is grass," withering, decaying, and corruptible, as that is: but the spirit, or soul, is of God; it is the very breath of God; and has a similarity to him, particularly in immortality; "God breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul," immortal and never dying (Genesis 2:7). Elihu says (Job 33:4), "The breath of the Almighty hath given me life," a life that will never end: as the first man was made, so are his posterity; his body was formed out of the dust; and then a living, immortal soul was breathed into it: so the body of every man is first formed, and then the soul is created in it; hence God is described, as he that "formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1), and as God is the former of the souls of men, so he is the supporter of them; he "upholds their souls in lift;" as they have their being and their life from him, it is maintained by him; the souls of men are not dependent on their bodies, and therefore die not when they do: as they are independent of them in their operations, can think, reason, discourse, will, and nill without them; so they are in their being, and can exist and subsist without them. The most malicious and cruel persecutors can only kill the body; and after that "they have no more that they can do;" they cannot kill the soul (Luke 12:4), they cannot pursue that any further; that returns to God that gave it; he could, indeed, annihilate it, if he would; but that he does not do, neither the souls of good men, who, after death, are under the altar, calling for vengeance on their persecutors; nor the souls of bad men, who are in perpetual torment; their worm of conscience never dies, but is always torturing them; and the fire of divine wrath in them is never quenched, of

which they are always sensible, and therefore must be immortal, and never die; or else that "fire," and its "burnings," would not be "everlasting," as they are said to be.

1b. Secondly, the immortality of the soul may be proved from the nature of the soul; which is,

1b1. Spiritual, of the same nature with angels, who are made "spirits," spiritual substances, and so die not; and such are the souls of men (Hebrews 12:9; Hebrews 12:23). Now as the souls of men are of the same nature with angels, and they die not, it maybe concluded that the souls of men are immortal, and die not (Psalms 104:4; Luke 20:36; 1 Corinthians 2:11).

1b2. The soul of man is simple, unmixed, and uncompounded [1]; it is not composed of flesh, and blood, and bones, arteries, veins, &c. as the body; a spirit has none of these; not flesh, which may be torn to pieces; nor blood, which may be let out and shed, and life expire; nor bones, which may be broken, and be the occasion of death; nor arteries and veins, which may be cut through, and life cease: nor is it, as the body, made up of the basic elements, and capable of being resolved into the same again.

1b3. It is immaterial, it is not composed of matter and form; nor is it a material form, educed out of the power of matter, as the souls of brutes, which die, go downward, and return to the earth; matter is destitute of motion, and cannot move itself; whereas the soul of man, being moved, can move itself; as it appears by its thoughts, reasonings, and discourses; this was Plato’s argument [2] for the immortality of the soul [3], that it can move the body at pleasure, or influence to any action, as to walk, sit, &c. Matter is incapable of thought, reasoning, and discoursing, willing and nilling, as the soul is. Matter is divisible, discernible, may be cut to pieces: not so the soul; it is out of the reach of every slaughtering weapon; the sharp arrow cannot penetrate into it, nor the glittering spear pierce it, nor the two edged sword divide it; none of these, nor any other of the same nature can touch it.

1b4. The soul has no contrary qualities, which, when one is predominant, threatens with destruction; it is neither hot nor cold; neither moist nor dry; neither hard nor tender: it has no heat in it, which may, as in the body, be increased to such a degree, as in burning fevers, to dry it up like a potsherd, and consume it: nor such moisture, which may rise, abound, and overflow it, as in a dropsy, and drown the fabric: nor has it any such tender part which will not bear a blow, but be fatal to it: nor so hard as not to bend, and become pliable to proper uses, and endanger the machine.

1b5. The soul of man is made after the image, and in the likeness of God, which chiefly consists in that; it bears a resemblance to the divine nature, being the breath of God; it has a likeness to him, and particularly in its immortality; and this is given by Alemaeon [4] as an argument of it; and so Plato [5], the soul is most like to that which is divine, immortal, intelligible, uniform, indissoluble, and always the same.

1c. Thirdly, the immortality of the soul may be proved from the powers and faculties of it, its understanding and will.

1c1. Its understanding. "There is a spirit," or soul, "in man," as Elihu says (Job 32:8), "And the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding;" an intellectual power and faculty of understanding things, which distinguishes men from the brutes that perish, the horse, the mule,

&c. which have no understanding; it is by this God teaches men more than the beasts of the earth, and makes them wiser than the fowls of heaven (Psalms 32:9; Job 35:11).

1c1a. The understanding of man can take in, and has knowledge of things spiritual, and incorporeal, immaterial, incorruptible, and eternal; which it would not be capable of, if it was not of the same nature itself; the images of these things would not be impressed on it, nor would it be susceptible of them: it can reflect on its own thoughts and reasonings, and knows the things within itself, which none but God and that know; it has knowledge of angels, their nature, offices, and services; it has knowledge of God himself [6], of his nature, perfections, ways, and works: nor is it any objection to it, that it has knowledge of corporeal things, and therefore must be corporeal too, since these are things below it, and therefore within its reach; whereas spiritual, incorporeal, and immaterial substances, would be above it, and not within its compass, unless it was a spiritual, immortal, and immaterial substance also; thus God and angels know corporeal and material things, though they are incorporeal and immaterial.

1c1b. The soul of man has knowledge of eternity itself; though it may be observed, there is great difference in its apprehension of an eternity past, and of that which is to come: when it considers the former, it is soon at a loss, and at a full stop, is obliged to return, and cannot go on; it is like a bird that attempts to soar aloft, and take flights it is not used nor equal to, it flutters and hangs its wing, and is forced to descend. But when the soul fixes its thoughts on an eternity to come, how readily does it apprehend how that shall proceed without end? with what pleasure does it roll over millions of ages in it? The reason of this difference is, because the soul itself is not from eternity, but has a beginning; whereas it will endure to eternity, and have no end; there is, Cicero says [7], though he knows not how it is, inherent in the minds of men, a sort of an "augurium," soothsaying, divination, or foresight of future ages; and which chiefly and most easily appears in the greatest minds, and in the most exalted geniuses. There is in men a natural notion of futurity, a desire after it, and an expectation of it; which are things not in vain implanted in it; and would not appear if the soul was not immortal; it has knowledge of things past, present, and future; which proves its immortality [8].

1c1c. The knowledge which the mind and understanding of man has of things in the present state, is very imperfect, through the brevity of life; and therefore it may be reasonably concluded, that there is a future state, in which the soul will exist, and its knowledge of things be more perfect: it has been a constant and continual complaint of the sons of learning and science, "ars longa, vita brevis;" art is long, and life is short; man has not time enough to cultivate the knowledge he is capable of. It has been said [9], that it would require a man’s whole lifetime, and that not sufficient, to get a thorough knowledge of that single mineral, "antimony": let a man employ all his time and studies in anyone branch of literature, any particular art or science, or language, yet would his knowledge be imperfect, and room would be left for those that come after him to improve upon him: arts and sciences have been cultivating many thousands of years, and in some ages great improvements have been made, and especially in later ones; and yet there is room for further improvements still: the knowledge of the best things, which good men have, as of God, of Christ, and of the mysteries of grace, is now very imperfect; those that know most, know but "in part," and "see through a glass darkly": but there is a state in which their souls will exist, when they shall see God face to face, see him as he is, and know as they are known; when their minds will be employed on more noble and interesting subjects than now, and have perfect knowledge of them.

1c1d. The knowledge the mind of man has of things now, is not in proportion to the powers that he is possessed of. How many are there that die in infancy, and as soon as they are born, whose reasoning powers are never called forth into act and exercise and how many die in childhood and youth, before these powers ripen, and are brought to any maturity? and how many are there that even live a long life, and yet, either through want of education, or through their situation, circumstances, and employment in life, have not their faculties exercised in proportion to the capacities their are endowed with? Now can it be thought that these powers are bestowed upon them in vain? There must be then an after state, in which the soul exists, when its powers will be employed in greater things, and to nobler ends and uses.

1c1e. Let a man know ever so much in this present life, he is desirous of knowing more; let his acquisitions of knowledge be ever so large, after a life of studious search and enquiry, he is not satisfied, he still wants to know more; and what he has arrived unto, is only to know this, that he knows but little: now this desire of knowledge is not implanted in man, by the author of nature, in vain; wherefore the soul must remain after death, when it will arrive to a more perfect knowledge of things; this was the argument Socrates used, to prove to his scholars the immortality of the soul. But with respect to truly good men, the argument receives further strength; they that know most of God, of Christ, and of divine things; they desire to know more, they follow on to know, they make use of all means to increase their spiritual knowledge, and after all, find it imperfect; and therefore are unsatisfied, and long after a future state, when all darkness and imperfection will be removed, and they shall see all things clearly. Now these gracious and earnest desires are not implanted in vain by the God of all grace, as they would be, if the soul was not immortal.

1c2. The will of man is another faculty of the soul, the object and actings of which show it to be immortal.

1c2a. The will has for its object universal good. It naturally desires complete happiness, which some place in one thing and some in another, but it is not perfectly enjoyed by any; some place it in riches, but find themselves mistaken in them, nor do they give the satisfaction expected from them; some in the gratification of carnal pleasures, but these soon pall and perish with the using, and new ones are sought after; some in enjoying posts of honour, and in the applause of men; but these depend, the one on the pleasure of princes, by whom they are set in high places, and which become slippery ones; the other on popular breath, which is as variable as the wind; some place it in wisdom, knowledge, learning, and science; which, as they are not only imperfect, but attract the envy of others, and, as Solomon says, are "vexation of spirit," and cause grief and sorrow (Ecclesiastes 1:17-18), now there must be a future state, in which true happiness will be attained, at least by some, or else the actings of the will about it will be in vain.

1c2b. God is the "summum bonum," the chief good, the will of man rightly pitches upon, nor can it be satisfied with anything less; good men choose him as their portion; and which is the foundation of their faith, hope, love, peace, and joy; but then he is not perfectly enjoyed as such in this life: their faith and expectations are, that he will be their portion for ever; nor will they be fully satisfied until they enjoy him as such in another world; wherefore in order to this, the soul must remain after death and be immortal.

1c2c. The will has its desires, and which desires, even the best, are not satisfied in this life; whatever it has, it is desirous of more, it is never satisfied; its desires of knowledge, as we have

seen, are not gratified to the full; nor its desires after happiness in general, nor even after God himself, the chief good, of whom the truly good man says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee" (Psalms 73:25), which desires, unless there is a future state in which the soul exists after death and is immortal, are not fully satisfied, and so far in vain.

1c2d. The actions of the will are free, not forced by any creature; no creature has any power over it, to force it nor destroy it; its acts are independent of the body, it can operate without it in willing, nilling, choosing, and refusing; and it can subsist and live without, and when that is dead.

1c2e. The will is not weakened, nor indeed any of the powers and faculties of the soul, impaired by sickness and approaching death; though the "outward man perish the inward man is renewed day by day;" how clear is the understanding! how active and vigorous the will when on the verge of eternity! as appears by its willingness or unwillingness to die, to be freed from present pains and agonies, either by a restoration to health, or by a removal by death; particularly by a good man's choosing rather to depart and be with Christ, and even by his longing to be gone, saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly;" yea, when the body is become speechless and near expiring, the faculties of the soul are in exercise; a man understands clearly what his friends about him say, and can by a sign, by the lifting up of his hand, signify his faith, hope, joy, and comfort; all which show that the soul sickens not with the body, nor becomes languid as the body does, nor dies with it, though it may be cramped by it.

2. Secondly, The immortality of the soul may be proved from the light of nature and reason.

2a. From the consent of all nations. Cicero says [10], that as we know by nature that there is a God, so we judge, by the consent of all nations, that souls remain after death, and are immortal; and in everything, he says [11], the consent of all nations is to be reckoned the law of nature: so Seneca [12] calls it a public persuasion, or belief; and observes, that the consent of men, either fearing hell, or worshipping God, is of no small moment to persuade unto it. This was, no doubt, the original belief of men, discoverable by the light of nature; but as that became more dim, and men more degenerate, they lost sight of truths, and of this among the rest. Thales the Milesinn, who lived about six hundred years before Christ, is said [13] to be the first who taught it; though others say [14] Pherecydes was the first who asserted it, who was contemporary with him: some ascribe the first knowledge of it to the Chaldaeans and Indian magi [15], and others to the Egyptians [16]; who, it may be, received it from Abraham; and from them Plato had it. However, it has been embraced by the wisest among the heathens; by the best of their philosophers, as Pythagoras [17], Socrates, Plato, Seneca, Cicero [18], and others; and by the best of their poets, as Homer, Phocylides, Virgil, Ovid, &c. and though denied by some, these were such that were of the worst sect of them; and though by some among the Jews, as by the Sadducees, yet these were but few, and the most irreligious sect among them. Indeed, this doctrine has been received, not only among the more religious sects of the heathens; as the Brachmans [19] among the Indians, and the Druids [20] with us, and among the more civilized nations; but among the more savage and ignorant, even the wild Greenlanders [21]; as appears by the accounts lately published concerning them.

2b. This may be concluded from an extinction of man, soul and body, being abhorrent to man, as it is said to be the people last mentioned: the death of the body, though nature is reluctant to it; yet in

many instances there has been a voluntary and cheerful submission to it; many good men have not loved their lives unto death, to serve their country; others have not counted their lives dear to themselves, but have freely parted with them for the sake of religion and truth; and others have chose rather to depart this life and to be with Christ; death to them has been more eligible than life; but a total extinction, to have no being at all, nature starts at! which must be the case if the soul dies with the body.

2c. It may be argued from the natural desire in men to be religious, in some way or another; this is so natural to men, that some have chose rather to define man a religious than a rational all nations have had their gods they worshipped; professed some religion or another, and have kept up some kind of worship; even the most blind and ignorant, barbarous and savage: but why are they concerned to worship God, and be solicitous about religion, if there is no future state, and the soul remains not after death, but that it perishes with the body? There is nothing can be a greater damp to religion and morality than the disbelief of the immortality of the soul; for then one may encourage another in all vicious practices; and say, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die," and it will be all over with us! nothing more discourages virtue and encourages vice. Yet,

2d. There is a consciousness of sinning in men; guilt arises in their consciences on account of sin: even in the very heathens there is "a conscience bearing witness" to their actions, good or bad; and "their thoughts, the meanwhile, accusing, or else excusing one another," on account of them; from whence arise fears of the displeasure and wrath of incensed Deity and of divine judgment; all which show that there is a future state, in which souls remain immortal, and are accountable to God for their actions. And which still more appears,

2e. Not only from the stings of conscience, but from the horrors and terrors, dread, trembling, and panic fears, wicked men are sometimes seized with, as Felix was on hearing of judgment to come: and if these fears, as some say, were the effect of education, which could not be the case of Felix and many others, it is strange that these fears should be so general and extensive as they are; and more strange, that none have been able to shake them off entirely; and stranger still, that those who have run the greatest lengths in infidelity and atheism should not be able to free themselves from them. These things not only show that there is a divine Being, to whom men are accountable for their actions; but that there is a future state after death, in which men exist, when they shall be either in happiness or in misery.

2f. The belief of this may be further argued, from the providence of God concerned in the distribution and disposal of things in this life, which is oftentimes very unequal; wicked men prosper, and enjoy a large portion of ease and plenty; and good men are greatly afflicted with a variety of troubles, which has been sometimes a sore temptation to good men and difficult to them to account for; as it was to Asaph and Jeremiah (Psalms 73:2-3; Psalms 73:12-14; Jeremiah 12:1-2), which difficulty can only be solved by the supposition of a future state, the immortality of the soul, and its existing after death; when such who have been wicked, and in their lifetime received good things, and good men evil things, the latter will have their comforts, and the former their torments; otherwise good men, if they were to have hope in this life only, they would be of all men the most miserable (Luke 16:25; 1 Corinthians 15:19). Wherefore,

2g. The immortality of the soul may be concluded from the justice of God; who is the Judge of all the earth, who will do right; for righteous is the Lord, though his judgments are not so manifest in

this life: it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble his people, and to fulfil the promises he makes to his saints; at present, the justice, faithfulness, and veracity of God, are not so clearly seen in bestowing favors and blessings on good men, according to his promises; and in punishing wicked men, according to his threatenings: it seems therefore reasonable to believe that the souls of men are immortal, and that their bodies shall rise from the dead; and that there shall be a future state, in which good men will be happy and wicked men miserable.

2h. It seems not agreeable to the wisdom of God to create man in his image and likeness, and give him dominion over the whole brutal creation, and constitute him lord over all; make the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, for his sake and use, and yet he and they should have the same exit; the one die and perish, and be totally extinct as the other: this does not comport with the wisdom of God. But,

2i. Between the spirits of men and those of brutes there is a difference; the one at death go "upwards" to God that made them, and gave them to men, and live for ever, either in a state of bliss or woe; and the other go "downward to the earth," and die, and live no more (Ecclesiastes 3:21).

2j. If the soul is not immortal, but dies with the body, the brutes, in many things, have the advantage of men; and their state and condition in this life is, in many respects, superior to theirs; they are not so weak and helpless at first coming into the world as men are, and who are so for a long time; nor subject to so many diseases as they are; in some the senses are quicker than in men, and they have more pleasure in the exercise of them; as in their sight, hearing, taste, and smell; some animals excel men in one or other of these: the brutes have no fearful apprehensions of danger beforehand; and when in any, their only concern is for the present to get clear of it; and when it is over they are in no dread of its return: they know nothing of death, are in no expectation of it, nor fear about it; but men know that they must die, and expect it; and through fear of it are subject to bondage, and attended with great anxieties, and therefore if the soul dies with the body, their present condition is worse than that of brutes.

3. Thirdly, the immortality of the soul may be proved from the sacred Scriptures; both from plain and express passages of scripture; as from Ecclesiastes 12:7 where, when the body returns to the dust, the soul, or "spirit," is said to "return to God that gave it". And likewise from Matthew 10:28. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," which is incapable of being put to death; otherwise, such is the malice of the persecutors of good men, that they would not spare it any more than the body; but having killed the body, "after that," as Luke says, "have no more that they can do," the soul being out of their reach (Luke 12:4). This is to he proved from scripture doctrines and from scripture instances.

3a. First, from scripture doctrines; as from the doctrine of God’s love to his people, which is everlasting (Jeremiah 31:3). But this would not be true of it if the souls of God’s beloved died; then there would be no objects of this love, and so not everlasting; hence it would follow, that death can, and does, "separate" from the love of God, contrary to the apostle’s firm persuasion (Romans 8:38-39). And from the doctrine of eternal election; which is of the persons of God’s people, both with respect to soul and body; and by it they are "ordained to eternal life" (Acts 13:48). But if the soul dies with the body, and is not immortal, how will God’s elect possess eternal life and eternal glory they are chosen to? and consequently if they do not, the purpose of God, according to

election, does not stand sure. Also from the covenant of grace, which is said to be an "everlasting covenant" (2 Samuel 23:5). But it is well known, that as in all covenants there are confederates, and if one of the parties covenanting dies, the covenant is at an end; and if God's elect, with whom the covenant of grace is made, should become extinct, soul and body, the covenant would not be an everlasting one. The argument used by Christ, to prove the resurrection of the dead, from covenant interest (Matthew 22:31-32; Luke 20:38), equally proves, or rather more clearly, the immortality of the soul; and Menasseh Ben Israel [22], makes use of the same scripture to prove it, and argues from it much in the same manner Christ does. And particularly the immortality of the soul may be concluded from the grand promise of eternal life, in the covenant made before the world began (Titus 1:2; 1 John 2:25). But how can this promise be fulfilled, if the souls of those to whom it is made are not immortal? It may be argued from the doctrine of adoption, another blessing in the covenant; by virtue of which saints are heirs of an eternal inheritance; but how can the relation of sons subsist, which adoption gives, and the inheritance adopted to be enjoyed, if the soul dies with the body? And the same may be evinced from the doctrine of regeneration; in virtue of which men are begotten again to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance; which yet can never be possessed if the soul is not immortal. The same may be concluded from the doctrine of sanctification, every branch of which has eternal life connected with it; as knowledge of God in Christ, faith in Christ, and hope of eternal glory; but if the soul is not immortal, in which these graces are, they will not only fail themselves, but the glory and happiness annexed unto them will not be attained. Likewise it may be argued from the doctrine of Christ respecting his work, the blessings of grace by him, and the services and benefits further to be expected from him; as the redemption of the soul by the blood of Christ, which must be shed in vain: nor can it be called eternal redemption if the soul is not immortal; nor will the saints union to Christ be an indissoluble one; nor they enjoy that life which justification by his righteousness entitles to; nor his intercession and preparations for them in heaven be of any service to them: the second coming of Christ, with all his saints, and the resurrection of their bodies at his coming, show that their souls live in a separate state before the resurrection, or they could not be said to come with him; and that they will be alive at the resurrection, or to what purpose will their bodies be raised? The doctrine of the judgment, whether particular or general, is a proof of the soul's immortality; for if that dies with the body, there is nothing remains after death on which judgment can pass. Moreover, the doctrine of future rewards and punishments confirms this truth; for if the soul is not immortal a good man cannot be rewarded in a way of grace, or enjoy happiness in consequence of his piety, since there will be no subject of it remaining; nor a wicked man be punished for his sins, for the same reason; yea, it will lie in the power of a wicked man both to prevent the happiness of the one and the punishment of the other; since it is in his power to take away his own animal life, and so put himself out of the power of God to inflict punishment upon him, if his soul survives not; and so likewise to take away the life of a good man, and deprive him of any further and future happiness; all which does not comport with the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God; and therefore it may be concluded the soul survives that it may be the subject of reward or punishment [23]. It is an observation of Hierocles [24], that a wicked man would not have the soul to be immortal that he may not endure punishment, and therefore prevents the Judge decreeing it by inflicting death on himself; and so Plato [25] observes, that if death is the dissolution of the whole (soul and body) it would be gain to the wicked to die, since they would be free from all evil, soul and body.

3b. Secondly, The immortality of the soul may be proved from scripture instances; as from the cases of Enoch and Elijah, who were translated, soul and body, that they should not see death; as not in their bodies, so not in their souls, which must be immortal, and so the souls of others; for of what different nature can their souls be supposed to be? and from the instances of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who died, and yet after death were living, even in the times of Christ, as he argues in a place before referred to; and this was the case of all the Old Testament saints, who died in the faith of the heavenly city and country, and now possess it; and also from the spirits in prison, in the times of the apostle Peter, who were disobedient to the warnings of Noah; and from the resurrection of some particular persons; who, after death, were raised and lived again, their souls, which died not, being returned to them (1 Kings 17:21-22), and from the souls under the altar, whose bodies were killed, but their souls were not, but were expostulating with God about taking vengeance on their persecutors (Revelation 6:9-10), and from the instances of persons committing their spirits, or souls to God at death; which shows that they believed their souls would survive their bodies, and therefore, they committed them to the care of God (Psalms 31:5; Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59; 1 Peter 4:19). Lastly, all such scriptures which speak of the joys of heaven, and of the torments of hell, as to be enjoyed or endured by men after death, prove the immortality of the soul; as that good men, when they die, are received into everlasting habitations, and the souls of wicked men go into everlasting punishment, and therefore must remain immortal, or they could not be subjects either of joy or misery; and this the parable of the rich man and beggar plainly declares; for though a parable, yet as every parable has its scope, which ought to be attended to, so has this; which is to represent the different state and condition of the souls of good men and wicked men after death, when the one are happy and the other miserable, and therefore the souls of both must be immortal.

There are some objections made to the immortality of the soul; taken, 3b1. First, from reason. As,

3b1a. That what has a beginning has an end. But this is not always true; angels have a beginning but not an end, they die not; and since the souls of men are spiritual, immaterial substances, as they are, it may be concluded, as before observed, that they die not also.

3b1b. The powers of the soul are said to decay as the body decays; but this is only true of the powers of the sensitive soul, or part of man; not of the rational soul; not of the faculties of the understanding and will; for these, as we have seen, are clear, active, and vigorous, in the article of death.

3b1c. When a man dies, nothing is seen to go out of him but his breath, which vanishes away: but it is no wonder the soul should not be seen at its departure, since being a spirit, incorporeal and immaterial, it is invisible; and as for the breath that goes out of a man, that cannot be the soul, which cannot be imagined to be the subject of thought, understanding, and will.

3b1d. Some will have it, that this is only a contrivance of men in power, a piece of state policy to keep men in awe and to their duty. But those men who contrived it were either bad men or good men: bad men would be unconcerned about ways and means to serve the cause of religion and virtue they have an aversion to; and good men would never make use of a known lie, and of hypocrisy, to serve such purposes. Besides, if this was the case, how came it to be such a general belief in which all nations agree, and is so manifest by the light of nature?

There are other objections, which are taken from scripture. As,

3b1d1. From such scriptures which threaten the soul with death in case of sin; so the first man was threatened with death of soul and body should he eat of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 2:17) and it is expressly said, "the soul that sins, that shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). To which may be replied: that there are various sorts of death; there is a spiritual or moral death, which took place in Adam as soon as he sinned; and is in all his posterity by nature; in which sense they are dead in their souls while alive in their bodies; it is a being "dead in trespasses and sins;" and lies, not in the substance of the soul, but in the qualities of it; in the loss of the image of God, as consisting of righteousness and holiness. And there is an eternal death, the destruction of both body and soul in hell; but this lies not in the destruction of the being of either, but in the misery of both: and there is a natural death, such as of the body, which the soul is not capable of; and if it was, it would put an end to the second death, called an eternal one; for then it would not exist, so as to be sent into everlasting fire, and to endure the vengeance of it, or undergo eternal punishment.

3b1d2. From what is said of man (Psalms 78:39), that he is but "flesh, a wind that passeth away and cometh not again": but this is said of man with respect to his body, which is "flesh," frail and mortal; and of the breath of his body, which is in his nostrils; a wind, a vapor, which appears for a little time, and then vanishes away; all expressive of the brevity of the bodily life of man.

3b1d3. From Psalms 146:4. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to the earth": which signifies the same as before, and relates to the body, which returns to the earth, from whence it came: but it follows, in which the strength of the objection lies, in that very day, in which the breath of his body ceases, and the body returns to the dust, that is, dies, his thoughts perish; and now, since the soul is, by some, defined a thinking substance, and the thoughts of it perish at death, then that must cease to be. But the meaning is, not that at the death of the body the soul ceases to think; but that all its former thoughts, schemes, projects, and purposes, concerning either civil or religious things, are then at an end, and cannot be carried into execution; as Job says, having death in view, as just at hand, "My days are past; my purposes are broken off; even the thoughts of my heart!" so that he could not perform what he had thought of, devised, and determined on (Job 17:11).

3b1d4. From the likeness of the spirits of brutes and of men (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20). But then Solomon either in these words, represents an atheist; or, if he speaks his own sense, he must be understood of the sensitive part of man, which he has in common with other animals; and it is plain he speaks of that part of man which is of the dust and returns to it again, that is, the body, and of the breath of that; and in the next verse clearly observes the difference between the spirits of brutes and the rational souls of men, the one going upward to God, and the other downward to the earth at death.

3b1d5. The immortality, of the soul is objected to, from such passages which speak of man’s going at death from whence he shall not return; and as if it was not known where he was (Job 10:21; Job 14:10). But these are to be understood of his returning to his house, and former manner of living, and employment of life(Job 7:10). And when it is asked, "Where is he" when he dies? it is easily answered, His body is returned to the dust, and is laid in the grave; and his soul is gone to God, and is either in bliss or woe.

3b1d6. From those places which speak of the dead as "not;" Rachel was weeping for her children, because they "were not" (Jeremiah 31:15). But this cannot be meant of nonexistence, either of soul or body; for the body, though reduced to dust, yet is, and is something; and the soul that is either in heaven or in hell.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vid. Aristot. de Anima, l. 1. c. 5. & l. 2. c. 1. Cicero. Tuscul. Quaest. l. 1. “Non aliquid mixtum, non concretum ex elementis. Sed purum, aeternum, quodque omne est tabe solutum,” &c. Aonius Palearius de Immortal. Anim. l. 2. l. 89. Ed. Amster. 1690.

[2] Vid. Phaedro, p. 1221.

[3] “Animum autem hominis per se semper moveri, quia sit ad cogitandum mobilis,” &c. Lactant. Divin. Institut. Epitome, c. 10.

[4] Apud Aristot. de Anima, l. 1. c. 2. vid. Laert. l. 8. in vita ejus.

[5] In Phaedone, p. 60, 61.

[6] This is used as an argument of the soul’s immortality by Sallustius, de Diis, c. 8. and so by Lactantius, Divin. Institut. Epitome, c. 10. “illud autem maximum argumentum immortalitatis, quod Deum solus homo agnoscit.”

[7] Tuscul. Quaest. 1. 1.

[8] “Ut qui praeterita teneat, praesentia comprehendat, futura prospiciat, multarumque rerum et artium scientiam complectatur, immortalem esse,” Lactantius ut supra. “An potest esse mortalis qui immortalem desiderat?” Ibid.

[9] Basilius Valentinus apud Boyle’s Nat. Hist. p. 13.

[10] Tuscul Quaest. l. 1.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ep. 117.

[13] Laert. in vita Thaletis, Suidas in voce qalhV.

[14] Cicero. Tusc. Quaest. l. 1.

[15] Pausanias in Messenicis, p. 277.

[16] Herodot. Euterpe sive, 1. 2. c. 123.

[17] Who says that to fronimon, that which is capable of prudence, is immortal, Laert. in vita ejus. Vid. Plutarch. de Placitis Philosoph. l. 4. c. 7. Some indeed, as the Stoic philosophers, spake of it but doubtfully and confusedly; and as Minutius Felix, in Octav. p. 37. says, “corruptaa et dimidiata fide;” they rather conjectured they remained after death, but could not say how long; some thought they went into other bodies.

[18] Cicero in Tusculanis, “quamvis dubitanter, tamen sensit summum homini bonum non nisi post mortem contingere,” Lactant. Institut. l. 7. c. 10.

[19] Strabo Geograph. l. 15. p. 490.

[20] Ibid. l. 4. p. 136. Caesar. l. 6. s. 13.

[21] Crantz’s History of Greenland, vol. 1. b. 3. c. 5. p. 201.

[22] De Resurrectione Mort. l. 1. c. 10. s. 6.

[23] This Dr. Watts calls a moral argument for the immortality of the soul; see his Miscellaneous Thoughts, in vol. iv. No. 75. p. 594.

[24] In Carmin. Pythagor. p. 165.

[25] In Phaedone. p. 80. Ed. Ficin.

02. Of the Immutability of God

Of The Attributes of God In General, and of his Immutability In Particular. The attributes of God are variously distinguished by divines; some distinguish them into negative and positive, or affirmative: the negative are such as remove from him whatever is imperfect in creatures; such are infinity, immutability, immortality, &c. which deny him to be finite, mutable, and mortal; and, indeed, it is easier to say what God is not, than what he is: the positive, or affirmative, are such as assert some perfection in God, which is in and of himself; and which in the creatures, in any measure, is from him, as wisdom, goodness, justice, holiness, &c. but the distinction is discarded by others; because in all negative attributes some positive excellency is found. Some distribute them into a "twofold order", first and second: attributes, or essential properties of the "first order", declare the essence of God as in himself, such as his simplicity and perfection, infinity and immutability; and attributes, or essential properties of the "second order", which though primarily and properly, and naturally, and infinitely, and in a more excellent manner are in God, than in creatures; yet secondarily, and in an analogical sense, are in them, there being some similitude of them in them, of which there is none of the former order in them; these are said to be life and immortality, blessedness and glory. Again, some are said to be "absolute", and others "relative": absolute ones are such as eternally agree with the essence of God, without respect to his creatures, and are expressed by his names, Jehovah, Jah, &c. relative ones are such as agree with him in time, with some certain respect to his creatures, and are expressed by his being their Creator, Governor, Preserver, Redeemer, &c. some are called "proper", as those before mentioned; and others "figurative", signified by the parts of the human body, and the affections of the mind, as observed in the preceding chapter: but the more commonly received distinction of the attributes of God, is, into the "communicable" and "incommunicable" ones; the incommunicable attributes of God, are such as there is no appearance or shadow of them in creatures; as independence, immutability, immensity, and eternity: communicable ones, are such as are common to God, with men; or, however, of which there is some resemblance in men, as goodness, holiness, justice, and wisdom; yet of these it may be said, that they are incommunicable, as they are in God, in whom they are infinite, and cannot, as such, be communicated to finite creatures: none but God is essentially, originally, underivatively, perfectly, and infinitely good, holy, just, and wise. But as God is defined a "Spirit" in scripture, as has been observed, I shall endeavour to sort the perfections and attributes of God in agreement with that: and with respect to his nature, as an uncreated Spirit, may be referred, besides his spirituality, and simplicity, already considered, his immutability, and infinity, which includes his immensity, or omnipresence, and eternity: and with respect to it as active, and operative, the life of God, and his omnipotence: and with respect to the faculties, as a rational spirit, particularly the understanding, to which may belong, his omniscience, and manifold wisdom; and the will, under which may be considered the acts of that, and the sovereignty of it; and the affections, to which may be reduced, the love, grace, mercy, hatred, anger, patience, and long suffering of God: and lastly, under the notions of qualities and virtues, may be considered, his goodness, holiness, justice, truth, and faithfulness; and, as the complement of the whole, his perfection or all-sufficiency, glory, and blessedness: and in this order I shall consider them. And

begin with, The Immutability of God; which arises from, and is closely connected with his spirituality and simplicity, or is what agrees with him, and is necessary to him as a spiritual, simple and uncompounded Being[1].

Immutability is an attribute which God claims, and challenges as peculiar to himself; "I am the Lord, I change not" (Malachi 3:6). Mutability belongs to creatures, immutability to God only; creatures change, but he does not: the heavens and the earth, which he has made, are not always the same; but "he is the same for ever": the visible heavens are often changing; they are sometimes serene and clear, at other times covered with clouds and darkness, and filled with meteors, snow, rain, hail, &c. the face of the earth appears different at the various seasons of the year, and is particularly renewed every spring: it has undergone one great change by a flood, and will undergo another by fire; when that, and "the works that are therein, shall be burnt up; and the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved; and the elements shall melt with fervent heat"; and "new heavens", and "a new earth", shall succeed (2 Peter 3:10; 2 Peter 3:12-13), to which changeableness in them, the unchangeableness of God is opposed: "All of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end" (Psalms 102:25-27). The sun in the firmament, that great luminary, and fountain of light and heat, in allusion to which, God is called "the Father of lights", has its parallaxes, or various appearances, at morning, noon, and evening; it has its risings and settings; and never rises and sets at the same point in the heavens one day in the year, but always varies a little; it is sometimes under clouds, and in an eclipse; but "with" God "is no variableness", parallagh, or a parallax; the sun, at certain seasons of the year, passes from one tropic, and enters into another, as well as casts shades on the earth; but with God there is "no shadow of turning", trophv, of a trope, or tropic; there is no mutation nor turning in him, nor shadow of any (James 1:17; Job 23:13), the inhabitants of heaven and earth are changeable, even the most excellent of them, angels and men: angels in their original nature and state, were subject to change, as the apostasy of many of them have shown; who have changed both state and place; they "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation", being obliged to the latter, because of the former; for sinning against God, they were hurled out of heaven, and "cast down to hell, and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (Jude 1:6; 2 Peter 2:4), the angels which stood when the rest fell, are now indeed become impeccable, and are firmly settled in their state of integrity; but then this is owing not to their own nature, but to the electing grace of God, in Christ, and to the confirming grace of Christ, their head, who is the "head of all principality and power" (1 Timothy 5:21; Colossians 2:10). Man, at his best estate, his estate of innocence, and integrity, was "altogether vanity": for though not sinful, yet being mutable, and left to the mutability of his will, which was his vanity, when tempted fell into sin; and though made upright, lost the rectitude of his nature; though made after the image of God, soon came short of that glory; and though he had dominion over the creatures, being in honour, he abode not long, but became like those he had the power over; and though placed in the most delightful and fruitful spot in all the globe, yet, rebelling against his Maker and Benefactor, was driven out from thence by him; and is now a creature subject to innumerable changes in life; diseases of various sorts seize his body, and change his beauty and his strength, and death at last turns him to corruption and dust; he is like the changeable grass of the field; flourishes a while, is then cut down, and withers away; but God and his "word endure for ever" the same (1 Peter 1:24-25), good men are very mutable, both in their inward and outward estate: in spiritual affairs; in the frames of their minds, in the affections of

their souls, in the exercise of grace, in their devotion and obedience to God, and worship of him: in temporal affairs; what an instance of mutability was Job, in his estate, in his family, and in his health and friends? well might he say, "changes and war are against me" (Job 10:17), and at length came to his great and last change, death; as all men must, even the best of men: indeed, in the future state, good men will be no more subject to change; their spirits will be made perfect, and sin no more, nor sorrow any more; and their bodies, when raised, will remain immortal, incorruptible, spiritual, powerful, and glorious; but this will be owing, not to themselves, but to the unchangeable grace and power of God: God only is in and of himself immutable; and he is unchangeable in his nature, perfections, and purposes, and in his love and affections to his people, and in his covenant, and the blessings and promises of it; and even in his threatenings.

1. In his nature and essence, being "simple", and devoid of all composition, as has been proved: the more simple and free from mixture and composition anything is, the less subject to change. gold and silver, being the purest and freest of all metals from composition, are not so alterable as others: spirits, being uncompounded, and not consisting of parts, are not so changeable as bodies; and God, being an infinite and uncreated Spirit, and free from composition in every sense, is entirely and perfectly immutable: and since he is "eternal", there can be no change of time with him; time doth not belong to him, only to a creature, which is the measure of its duration; and began when a creature began to be, and not before; but God is before all creatures; they being made by him, and so before time; he was the same before the day was as now, and now as he was before; "even the same today, yesterday, and for ever": though he is "the ancient of days", he does not become older and older; he is no older now than he was millions of ages ago, nor will be millions of ages to come; his eternity is an everlasting and unchangeable "now"; "He is the same, and his years shall have no end" (Psalms 102:27; Hebrews 13:8), and seeing he is "infinite, immense, and omnipresent"; there can be no change of place with him, for he "fills heaven and earth" with his presence; he is everywhere, and cannot change or move from place to place; when therefore he is said to "come down" on earth, or to "depart" from men, it is not to be understood of local motion, or change of place; but of some uncommon exertion of his power, and demonstration of his presence, or of the withdrawment of some benefit from them: but this will be considered more largely under the attribute of omnipresence, in its proper place. God is the "most perfect" Being, and therefore can admit of no change in his nature, neither of increase nor decrease, of addition nor diminution; if he changes, it must be either for the better or the worse; if for the better, then he was imperfect before, and so not God: if for the worse, then he becomes imperfect; and the same follows: a like reasoning is used by Plato[2], and by another ancient philosopher[3], who asserts that God is good, impassable and unchangeable; for whatsoever is changed, says he, is either for the better or the worse; if for the worse, it becomes bad; and if for the better, it was bad at first. Or if he changes from an infinitely perfect state, to another equally so, then there must be more infinites than one, which is a contradiction. Again, if any change is made in him, it must be either from somewhat within him, or from somewhat without him; if from within, he must consist of parts; there must be "another" and "another" in him; he must consist of act and power; there must be not only something active in him, to work upon him, but a passive power to be, wrought upon; which is contrary to his simplicity, already established; for, as a Jew[4] well argues, what necessarily exists of itself, has no other cause by which it can be changed; nor that which changes, and that which is changed, cannot be together; for so there would be in it two, one which changes, and another which is changed, and so would be compound; which is inconsistent with

the simplicity of God: if from somewhat without him, then there must be a superior to him, able to move and change him; but he is the most high God; there is none in heaven nor in earth above him; he is "God over all, blessed for ever". Nor is the immutability of the divine nature to be disproved from the creation of the world, and all things in it; as when it is suggested, God, from a non-agent, became an agent, and acquired a new relation, that of a Creator, from whence mutability is argued: but it should be observed, that God had from all eternity the same creative power, and would have had, if he had never created any thing; and when he put it forth in time, it was according to his unchangeable will in eternity, and produced no change in him; the change was in the creatures made, not in him the Maker; and though a relation results from hence, and which is real in creatures, is only nominal in the Creator, and makes no change in his nature. Nor is the unchangeableness of the divine nature to be disproved by the incarnation of Christ; for though he, a divine Person, possessed of the divine nature, was "made flesh", or became man; the divine nature in him was not changed into the human nature, nor the human nature into the divine, nor a third nature made out of them both; was this the case, the divine nature would have been changeable; but so it was not; for as it has been commonly said, "Christ remained what he was, and assumed what he was not"; and what he assumed added nothing to his divine person; he was only "manifest in the flesh"; he neither received any perfection, nor imperfection, from the human nature; though that received dignity and honour by its union to him, and was adorned with the gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure, and is now advanced at the right hand of God. Nor was any change made in the divine nature by the sufferings of Christ; the divine nature is incable of suffering, and is one reason why Christ assumed the human nature, that he might be capable of suffering and dying in the room and stead of his people; and though the Lord of life and glory was crucified, and God purchased the church with his own blood, and the blood of Christ is called the blood of the Son of God; yet he was crucified in the human nature only, and his blood was shed in that, to which the divine person gave virtue and efficacy, through its union to it; but received no change by all this.

2. God is unchangeable in his perfections or attributes; which, though they are the same with himself, his nature and essence, as has been observed; yet, considering them separately, they are helps to our better understanding of it, and serve particularly to illustrate the unchangeableness of it: thus, for instance, he is the same in his power as ever; though that has been displayed in various instances, in creation, providence, &c. it is not exhausted, nor in the least diminished; his hand is not shortened, his strength is everlasting, his power eternal, invariably the same: his "knowledge" is the same; his "understanding is infinite", it can be neither increased nor lessened; the knowledge of angels and men increases gradually; but not so the knowledge of God, he knows no more now than he did from all eternity, he knew as much then as he does now; for he knows and sees all things together, and at once, in his vast eternal mind, and not one thing after another, as they appear in time; things past, present, and to come, are all beheld by him in one view; that is, which are so with respect to creatures, for with him there is no such consideration: his "goodness", grace, and mercy, are immutable; though there has been such a profusion of his goodness to his creatures, and so many good and perfect gifts have been bestowed on them, it is still the same in him, without any abatement; he is abundant in it, and it endures continually the same: and so is his grace, which has been exceedingly abundant; he is as gracious and merciful as ever; "his mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, to them that fear him"; and his faithfulness he never suffers to fail; even though men believe not, he abides faithful; and the unbelief of men

cannot make the faith or faithfulness of God without effect. And as he is "glorious" in "holiness", that perfection never receives any tarnish, can never be sullied, but is always illustriously the same; there is no unrighteousness in God, he cannot change from holiness to unholiness, from righteousness to unrighteousness; he is the just one, that neither can nor will do iniquity; and so he is unchangeably good, and unchangeably happy, and immutable in every perfection.

3. God is unchangeable in his purposes and decrees, there is a purpose for everything, and a time for that purpose; God has determined all that ever was, is, or shall be; all things come to pass according to the counsel of his will, and all his decrees are unchangeable; they are like the laws of the Medes and Persians, and more unalterable than they were; they are the mountains of brass Zechariah saw in a vision, from whence proceed the providences of God, and the executioners of them (Zechariah 6:1), called "mountains" because of their immoveableness, and mountains of "brass" to denote their greater firmness and stability: immutability is expressly spoken of the counsel of God (Hebrews 6:17), the purposes of God are always carried into execution, they are never frustrated; it is not in the power of men and devils to disannul them; whatever devices and counter workings to them may be framed and formed, they are of no avail; "the counsel of the Lord stands for ever" (Psalms 33:11; Proverbs 19:21; Proverbs 21:30; Isaiah 14:24; Isaiah 14:27; Isaiah 46:10), the purposes of God are "within" himself (Ephesians 1:9), and what is in himself, is himself, and he can as soon cease to be as to alter his mind, or change his counsels; and they are "eternal" (Ephesians 3:11) no new thoughts arise in his mind, no new resolutions are formed in his breast, no new decrees are made by him; his counsels are "of old"; and his purposes are called "counsels", because designs wisely formed by men, are with consultation, and upon mature deliberation: and such are the decrees of God, they are made with the highest wisdom by him, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, and so are unchangeable: and besides, being "all-knowing", he sees and declares the end from the beginning, and nothing unforeseen ever can appear to hinder the execution of his intentions and determinations; which is sometimes the case with men: and he is "able" to perform whatever he resolves upon; there is no lack of wisdom, nor of power in him, as often is in men; and he is "faithful" to himself, his purposes and decrees; his "counsels of old are faithfulness and truth"; or are truly and faithfully performed. Nor is the immutability of the decrees of God to be disproved by his providences, which are many and various, unsearchable and past finding out, and which may seem to differ from, and clash with one another; for all the changes in providence, whether with respect to the world in general, or with respect to individuals, are according to his unchangeable will. Job was a remarkable instance of changes in providence, and yet he was fully persuaded of the unchangeable will of God in them, and which he strongly expresses; "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doth; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him" (Job 23:13-14). Nor is it to be disproved by the different declarations of the will of God, what he would have observed and done, in the different dispensations of law and gospel. God, by Moses, ordered the children of Israel, to observe certain laws, rites, and ceremonies, until the time of reformation, and then there was a disannulling of them; the heavens and earth were shaken, that is, the whole Mosaic economy and dispensation, whereby these were removed and laid aside as useless, and other ordinances were fixed, to remain till Christ’s second coming; but then the delivery of the one, and the time of their continuance, and the abolition of them, and the settling of the other gospel ordinances to remain to the end of the world, were all according to the unchangeable will of God. Nor is prayer any objection to the immutability of the divine will, which is

not to be altered by it; for when the mind of God is not towards a people to do them good, it cannot be turned to them by the most fervent and importunate prayers of those who have the greatest interest in him (Jeremiah 15:1), and when he bestows blessings on a praying people, it is not for the sake of their prayers, as if he was inclined and turned by them: but for his own sake, and of his own sovereign will and pleasure. Should it be said, to what purpose then is prayer? it is answered, this is the way and means God has appointed, for the communication of the blessings of his goodness to his people; for though he has purposed, provided, and promised them, yet he will be sought unto, to give them to them, and it is their duty and privilege to ask them of him; and when they are blessed with a spirit of prayer, it forebodes well, and looks as if God intended to bestow the good things asked; and which should be asked always with submission to the will of God, saying, "not my will, but thine be done".

4. God is unchangeable in his love and affections to his people; "his love to them is from everlasting to everlasting", without any variation in his own heart, however different the manifestations of it may be to them; he ever rests in his love, and never alters, nothing can separate from it, he is love itself, and it is as unchangeable as himself, "the same today, yesterday, and for ever": the fall made no difference in it, though the special objects of it fell with Adam, in his transgression, into the depths of sin and misery; this hindered not, but God continued his love, and manifested it in sending his Son to be the propitiation for their sins, and commended it, and gave a full proof and demonstration of it, in the delivery of Christ to death for them, even while they were yet sinners: nor does the sinful state and condition they were brought into, and continue in from their birth to their conversion, make any alteration in his love; but notwithstanding that, for the great love with which he loves them, he "quickens them when dead in trespasses and sins"; he looks upon them in all the impurity of their natural state, and says to them, "live"; and this time, as it is a time of life, it is a time of open love (see Ephesians 2:4-5; Ezekiel 16:6-8; Titus 3:3-5). Nor do the hidings of God’s face from them after conversion, prove any change in his love to them; for though he hides his face from them, and forsakes them for a moment, in a little seeming wrath, to show his resentment at their sins, to bring them to a sense of them, to humble them before him, and to cause them to seek his face and favour; yet with great mercies he gathers them again to himself, in the most tender manner, and with lovingkindness, has mercy on them; and, for the strengthening of their faith in his love, swears he will not be wroth with them; and declares his lovingkindness to be more immoveable than hills and mountains (Isaiah 54:7-10). Afflictions are no evidence of a change of affections to them; though he may thoroughly chastise them, and, as they may think, severely, yet he deals with them but as children; and, like Ephraim, they are his dear sons and daughters, and pleasant children, in whom he takes the utmost complacency and delight; chastenings are rather proofs of sonship, than arguments against it. God’s rebukes of them are rebukes in love, and not in wrath and hot displeasure; though he visits their transgressions with a rod and stripes, he does not utterly, nor at all, take away his lovingkindness in Christ from them (Jeremiah 31:18; Jeremiah 31:20; Hebrews 12:6-8; Revelation 3:19; Psalms 89:32-33). Nor is the unchangeableness of the love of God to his people to be disproved by his being said to be angry with them, and then to turn away his anger from them (Isaiah 12:1), for anger is not opposite to love. Jacob was angry with his beloved Rachel, and a father may be angry with his beloved child, and love him not the less. Wrath and hatred are opposed to love, which are never in the heart of God towards his beloved ones: besides, this is said after the manner of men, and according to our apprehension of things; the Lord doing somewhat similar to men when they

are angry, who frown and turn away; and when God frowns in his providence, and deserts his people for a while, they judge he is angry, when it only shows his discipline at their sins, but not at their persons; and then, when he smiles upon them again, and manifests his pardoning grace and mercy, they conclude he has turned himself from the fierceness of his anger (Psalms 85:2-3).

5. God is unchangeable in his covenant of grace. This was made with Christ from everlasting, and stands fast with him; it is as immoveable as a rock, and can never be broken; the blessings of it are "sure mercies", flow from the sovereign grace and mercy of God, and are sure and firm, being according to his unchangeable will, and are what he never repents of, nor revokes; and being once bestowed, are irreversible, and never taken away; such as are blessed with them are always blessed, and it is not in the power of men and devils to reverse them (Romans 11:29; Romans 8:30), the promises of the covenant, which are gone out of his mouth and lips are unalterable; what has been said of purposes may be said of promises, that they were made before the world were, by God, that cannot lie, who is all-wise, all-knowing, and all-powerful, and faithful to perform them; and besides, "all the promises are yea and amen in Christ". Nay, even God is unchangeable in his threatenings, he watches to bring the evil he has threatened, as well as the good he has promised; and he assuredly performs the one as the other (Daniel 9:14; Isaiah 1:20; Jeremiah 23:20). Nor is the unchangeableness of God in his word, whether in a way of promise or threatening, to be disproved by repentance being ascribed to him, which is to be taken in a limited sense, for in some sense it is absolutely denied of him (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29). When it is spoken of him, it is to be understood improperly and figuratively, after the manner of men, he doing like what men do, when they repent, that is, undo what they have done; as a potter, when he does not like a vessel he has made, breaks it to pieces: so when it repented God that he had made man on earth, and Saul king (Genesis 6:6; 1 Samuel 15:11), he destroyed man from off the earth, whom he had created; and took away the kingdom from Saul and his family, and gave it to another: in doing which he did not change his mind, but his operations and providences, and that according to his unchangeable will. Nor is the immutability of God, in his promises and threatenings, to be disproved, by observing, that the promised good, and threatened evil, are not always done. For it should be considered, that what is promised or threatened, is either absolutely and unconditionally, or with a condition: now that anything promised or threatened, absolutely and unconditionally, is not performed, must be denied; but if with a condition, and that condition not performed, the change will appear to be not in God, but in men: and in all such cases where God does not what he said he would do, a condition is either expressed or implied (see Jeremiah 18:8-10). Thus God promised that he would dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem, in the temple, and there should be his "rest for ever" (Psalms 132:13-14), and the people of Israel should dwell in their land, and eat the good of it; but then it was provided they were obedient to God, and abode in his service and worship, and kept his laws and ordinances (Isaiah 1:19), but they failing herein, he departed from them, and suffered them to be carried captive: in all which there was a change of his dispensations, but no change of his will. He threatened the Ninevites with the destruction of their city within forty days, that is, unless they repented: they did repent, and were saved from ruin, God repenting of what he had threatened; which, though a change of his outward conduct towards them, he threatened them with, was no change of his will; for both their repentance, and their deliverance, were according to his unchangeable will (John 3:4; John 3:10). Nor is the case of Hezekiah any objection to the immutability of God; the outward declaration ordered to be made to him, was, that he should "die and not live"; as he must have done quickly, according to the nature

of second causes, his disease being mortal; but the secret will of God was, that he should live "fifteen years" longer, as he did; which implies neither contradiction nor change: the outward declaration was made to humble Hezekiah, to set him a praying, and to make use of means; whereby the unchangeable will of God was accomplished.

ENDNOTES:

[1] to yeion ametablhton anagkaion einai, Aristot. de Coelo, l. 1. c. 9. pav yeov ametablhtov, Sallust. de Diis, c. 1. 2.

[2] De Republica, l. 2. p. 606.

[3] Sallustius de Diis et Mundo, c. l.

[4] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 5.

02. Of the Imputation of Adam's Sin

Of the Imputation of Adam’s Sin to All his Posterity

Having considered the disobedience of our first parents, and the sad effects of it to themselves, I shall next consider the concern their posterity have in it, and how much they are affected by it. There are two things follow on it with respect to them; the imputation of the guilt of it to them, and the corruption of nature derived to them from it.

I shall begin with the first, as being previous to the other, and the foundation of it, and which is expressed in very strong terms (Romans 5:19). "For as by one man’s disobedience man were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous". The apostle is upon the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ; and whereas it might be a difficulty in the minds of some, how any could be justified by the righteousness of another; and he had to do greatly with Jews as well as Gentiles; the former of which might better understand the doctrine of the imputation of Adam’s sin to his posterity; or how all men are made sinners by his sin, than the doctrine of justification by Christ’s righteousness; he observes, it is as easy to conceive how men may be made righteous by the obedience of another, namely, through the imputation of that obedience to them, as it is to conceive how all men are made sinners by the disobedience of one man, even through the imputation of that disobedience to them. To set this doctrine in the best light I can, I shall, 1) Observe the act of disobedience, by which men are made sinners.

2) Who they are that are made sinners by it.

3) In what sense they are "made" so through it.

1. First, The act of disobedience; whose it is, and what.

1a. Whose it is: it is sometimes expressed by "one that sinned"; and more than once called, the "offence of one" (Romans 5:15-16; Romans 5:18), and yet more clearly; "By one man sin entered"; and is called, "one man’s offence", and "one man’s disobedience" (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:17; Romans 5:19), for it is not the sin of one of the apostate spirits, by which men are made sinners; but the sin of one of their own species, one of the same nature, even the common parent of all mankind, and who is expressed by name (Romans 5:14), where this offence and disobedience is called "the transgression of Adam"; and so in (1 Corinthians 15:22). "In Adam all die", being all in him, and having sinned in him, death comes upon them for it; but then this is to be understood of Adam not to the exclusion of Eve, who was also in the transgression, and first in it, and was the mother of all living. They both have the same name, the same appellative name, "man"; the same proper name, Adam (Genesis 5:1-2), were of the same nature; nay, Eve was formed out of a rib of Adam; was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; a part of himself; and by their marriage relation became one flesh (Genesis 2:21-24), they had the same law given them, which forbid the eating of the fruit of a certain tree; the same covenant was made with them, and they were both guilty of the same act of disobedience; and had a sentence of punishment pronounced on them both; and which did not rest on their own persons only, but is common to all their posterity, and still

continues; which shows that their posterity had a concern in their act of disobedience, in the guilt of it, since they share in their punishment, as all the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve do; as in the toil and labour of the one, and his return to the dust; so in the pains of childbearing in the other, and subjection to the man.

1b. What this disobedience was; which appears from what has been already said, it was disobedience to the law and will of God, in eating the fruit which he had forbid; so disbelieving the word of God, and giving credit to the serpent. Now it was this one act of disobedience, by which Adam's posterity were made sinners; and therefore is sometimes called the one sin, and the one offence; so in Romans 5:16 some copies read enoV amarthmatoV, "by one sin"; and so in Romans 5:17 en tw eni paraptwmati, "by one offence"; and so Romans 5:18 may be translated as it is in the margin of our Bibles; it was a single sin, and the first sin committed in our world; I say in our world, because sin was committed before in the world above, in heaven, by the apostate spirits, the angels that sinned; but with their sin men have no concern; or they are not made sinners by it; but by that sin which first entered into our world, by the one man, Adam; and this the only one of his sins, and that which was first committed by him, and not any after sins of his; it is what, and it is the only one that was committed by him, while he stood the federal head of his posterity: that he was a covenant head to us has been proved already; and that he was such when this was committed by him is plain, because his posterity were then considered in him, as a federal head, and sinned in him, which brought death upon them all (Romans 5:12). But no sooner had Adam committed this first sin, by which the covenant with him was broke, but he ceased to be a covenant head; the law given him, as a covenant of works, was no more so; the promise of life by it ceased; the sanction of it, death, took place; and he was no more in a capacity of yielding sinless obedience; and so could not procure life for himself and his; wherefore he no longer standing as a federal head to his posterity, they had no more concern with his later sins, than with his repentance and good works, both of which, no doubt, were performed by him; yet by his repentance they are not reckoned repenting sinners; nor are his good works accounted to them.

2. Secondly, Who they are that are made sinners by the disobedience of Adam. They are said to be many; not only Adam and Eve, who were transgressors, and so became guilty and polluted sinners, through their disobedience, as they most certainly did; as appears from their consciousness of nakedness; from the shame and confusion of face that covered them; from the fear and dreadful apprehensions of the wrath and vengeance of God; and from their fleeing from his presence, and hiding themselves; but even all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation, were made sinners hereby; for though they are only said to be "many", these many signify "all"; the reason of the use of this word, is to answer to the next clause, to the "many" that are "made righteous by the obedience of one Man"; and yet the "many" there, signify all that are in Christ, as their covenant head; even all his spiritual seed and offspring, given to him and chosen in him: and so all the natural seed and offspring of Adam, to whom he stood as a federal head, are all made sinners by his disobedience; which is thus strongly expressed, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that or in whom all have sinned" (Romans 5:12. And again, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation (Romans 5:18). I say, all descending from him by ordinary generation, are made sinners by his sin, and none else. Had God made more worlds than one, as he could if he would, and worlds of men too; yet as these would not have descended from Adam, they would

have had no concern in his sin: had God raised up children to Abraham out of stones, which he could have done; yet such so raised up, in such a miraculous manner, and not descending from Adam, could not be affected with his sin; and for a like reason the human nature of Christ must be excepted from any concern in it, and from any effect of it, guilt, or pollution; for though he was a partaker of the same human nature, of the same flesh and blood with other men, and made in all things like unto them, yet not by ordinary generation; he was made of a woman, but not begotten by man; God, his Father, prepared a body for him in covenant; and in the fulness of time his human nature was formed by the Holy Spirit, in a wonderful manner; it was an extraordinary production; it was a new thing, which God created in the earth, and so an holy thing; was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, without spot and blemish, and any consciousness of sin; and thus as it was clear of the taint and corruption of nature from Adam's sin, so it was exempt from the guilt of it; (see Luke 1:34-35). And besides that, Christ not descending from Adam by ordinary generation, could not be a federal head to him on that account [1]; so neither because of the dignity of his person; the human nature being personally united to the Son of God, could never be under a creature as its federal head, or be represented by one. Moreover, Christ was the head of another and better covenant than Adam's, and was previous to it, even before Adam and his covenant were in being. Christ was an head to Adam, as he was chosen in him, given to him in covenant to be redeemed and saved by him; but Adam was no head to him; "The Head of Christ is God", and he only (1 Corinthians 11:3).

3. Thirdly, In what sense all Adam's posterity are made sinners by his disobedience.

3a. Not by imitation, as say the Pelagians; men may become more sinful by imitation, but they do not first become sinful by it: men may, by example, be drawn in to commit sin more frequently, and to commit greater ones; and therefore the company of wicked men is to be shunned, since "Evil communications corrupt good manners"; especially persons of power and authority, their examples have great weight and influence; as civil magistrates, ministers, parents, and masters. So Jeroboam caused Israel to sin, was the occasion of it, and drew them into it by his authority and example. But this cannot be the case here; for,

3a1. Death, the effect of Adam's sin, and the punishment inflicted for it, takes place on such who never "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression" (Romans 5:14), namely, infants dying in their infancy; who, though not without the corruption of nature in them, yet without any actual sin committed by them, like to that of Adam's transgression; dying so soon, they have neither capacity nor opportunity of committing any sin similar to his; that is, any actual transgression; and therefore said, in that respect, to be innocent (Jeremiah 19:4), not free from the taint, but from the act of sin. Now since death, which is the punishment of sin, takes place on them, that supposes guilt, or otherwise punishment could not in justice be inflicted on them; and as they are not made sinners by Adam's sin, through imitation of it, they must become guilty, or be made sinners in some other way.

3a2. Death, the effect of Adam's sin, and the punishment of it, takes place on such who never heard of it, and consequently cannot be made sinners by it, through imitation of it; for death passes upon all men, all nations of the world, and all individuals in it, through the sin of one man, Adam; even on such who never heard of the law which forbid the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; nor, indeed, ever heard of the law of Moses, and the sins forbidden by that; are

acquainted only with the law and light of nature; the law written in their hearts, according to which their minds, consciences, and thoughts, accuse or excuse one another; and yet they that are without law, perish without law, being sinners; and therefore as they cannot be made sinners by Adam's sin, through imitation of it, they must be made so another way; (see Romans 2:12-15).

3a3. This sense makes a man no more a sinner by Adam's disobedience than he is by the disobedience of his immediate parents, or any other whose ill examples he follows. Adam seems to be too remote an ancestor to imitate; more likely immediate parents; and yet this is not always the case; children do not always follow the examples of parents, bad or good. Some may have evil parents, and, like the Jews, fill up the measure of their fathers' sins, and do as they did, and appear to be a generation of vipers: and others have good parents, who give them a religious education, and set them good examples, and yet they take very bad courses; and so not by imitation, at least of their parents. And indeed, sin in general does not come by imitation; but it is from a corrupt nature; and there are many sins which are never seen committed, yet are committed by those who never saw them; as murder, acts of uncleanness, &c. Did Cain sin by imitation when he murdered his brother? Did Lot's daughters sin by imitation when they contrived to commit incest with their father, and did? It is possible that all these defects in nature may meet in one man, as to be born blind, deaf, and dumb; and so not capable of seeing and hearing, and knowing what sins are committed, and yet be as vicious as any of the sons of Adam.

3b. Nor is the sense of the phrase, "made sinners by one man's disobedience, " what the more modern Pelagians and Arminians give into; that by a metonymy of the effect, sin being put for the punishment of it, men become sufferers, or are obnoxious to death, and suffer death on the account of Adam's disobedience; but this is to depart from the common and constant sense of this word, "sinners". Nor can any instance be given of the apostle's use of the word in this sense, either in the context or elsewhere; it always signifying a sinful, guilty, and defiled creature; one that is guilty of a crime, and obnoxious to death for it; it is contrary to the apostle's scope and design in the context, which was to show how death came into the world, namely, by sin; and to the distinction he all along makes between sin and death; the one he represents as the cause, the other as the effect; whereas this sense confounds cause and effect, sin and death, together; and makes the apostle guilty of such bad reasoning as can never be charged upon him, and which a man of such large reasoning powers, abstracted from his being an inspired writer, could never be capable of; for then the sense of these words (Romans 2:12). "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned", must be, death passed upon all men, because it has passed upon all men; or all men are obnoxious to death, and suffer it, because they are obnoxious to it, and suffer it. Besides, it is granting us too much for themselves; it makes their cause indefensible, and even destroys it, and cuts the throat of it; for if men are obnoxious to death, even though but a corporal death, which is what they mean, and suffer such a death on the account of Adam's sin, they must have a concern in it, and be, in some way or other, guilty of it; or such a punishment, in justice, could not be inflicted on them. What greater punishment is there among men, for the most enormous crime, than death? And why should men suffer death for Adam's sin, of which they are in no sense guilty? Let this be reconciled, if it can be, to the justice of God.

3c. Nor is the sense of the phrase, "made sinners by one man's disobedience," that Adam's posterity derive a corrupt nature from him, through his sin; this is indeed a truth, but not the truth of this passage; it is true that all men are made of one man's blood, and that blood tainted with sin;

and so a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; what is born of the flesh is flesh, carnal and corrupt; every man is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, as David was; but then there is a difference between being "made" sinners, and "becoming" sinful, the one respects the guilt, the other the pollution of nature; the one is previous to the other, and the foundation of it; men receive a corrupt nature from their immediate parents; but they are not made sinners by any act or acts of their disobedience. Wherefore,

3d. It remains that the posterity of Adam are only "made" sinners through the imputation of his disobedience to them. And this imputation is not to be considered in a moral sense, as the action of a man committed by himself, whether good or bad, is condemned and reckoned unto him as his own, whether in a way of praise or dispraise; as the zealous good work of Phinehas in slaying two persons in the very act of sin, was "counted unto him for righteousness"; that is, was judged, reckoned, and esteemed a righteous, worthy, and commendable action; but in a "forensic", judicial, and legal sense; as when one man’s debts are in a legal way placed to the account of another, as if they were his, though not personally contracted by him. An instance of this we have in the apostle Paul, who said to Philemon, concerning Onesimus; "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee anything", ellogei, "let it be imputed to me", or placed to and put on my account. And thus the posterity of Adam are made sinners by Adam’s disobedience, that being imputed to them, and put to their account, as if it had been committed by them personally, though it was not. And this sense is to be confirmed and illustrated, —

3d1. From the signification of the word here used, hatestaqhsan, "constituted" in a judicial way, ordered and appointed in the dispensation of things, that so it should be; just as Christ was made sin, or a sinner by imputation, by the constitution of God, laying upon him, reckoning, placing to his account the sins of all his people, and dealing with him as though he was the guilty person, and as if he had committed the sins, though he had not; and not imputing trespasses to them, though they were the actual transgressors; (see Isaiah 53:6; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

3d2. From its being the disobedience of another, by which men are made sinners; and therefore they can in no other way be made sinners by it, than by the imputation of it to them; just as the righteousness of Christ being not our own, but his, another’s; we cannot be made righteous by it, but by the imputation of it to us.

3d3. From the punishment inflicted on persons for it. The punishment threatened to Adam in case of disobedience to the law and will of God, was death (Genesis 2:17), which includes death, corporal, moral, and eternal; a corporal death has been taken notice of already, and which is allowed to be suffered on account of the sin of Adam; and if so there must be guilt; and that guilt must be made over to the sufferer; and which can be done in no other way than by the imputation of it. A moral death is no other than the loss of the image of God in man, which consisted in righteousness and holiness; and particularly it is a loss of original righteousness: in the room of which succeeded unrighteousness and unholiness; and is both a sin, and a punishment for sin: it is a sin as it has malignity in it, and a punishment for sin; and so it was threatened to Adam, and came upon him as such; and so to all his posterity, by the ordination and appointment of God; for which there can be no other foundation but the imputation of Adam’s disobedience to them; nor can anything else vindicate the righteousness of God; for if the law of nature was sufficient, why should this original taint infect men, rather than the sins of immediate parents? Now if this comes

upon men as a punishment, it supposes preceding sin; and what can that be but Adam's disobedience, the guilt of which must be made over to Adam's posterity, or it could not in justice take place; and that could no other way be made over to them but by imputation. And if eternal death is taken in to the punishment, as it must be; for the wages of sin is death, even death eternal; and this can never be inflicted on guiltless persons; if men are thus punished for Adam's sin, the guilt of that sin must be imputed to them: in Romans 5:18 it is said, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation"; that is, the righteous sentence of God passed upon the whole posterity of Adam, to the condemnation of them for his offence; be that condemnation to a corporal, or to a moral, or to an eternal death, to any or all of them, it supposes them guilty of that offence, and that the guilt of that offence is made over to them, and reckoned as theirs; which can only be done by imputation; or they cannot be righteously condemned and punished for it in either sense.

3d4. That this is the sense of the clause, "made sinners by the disobedience of one", appears from the opposite clause; "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous": now the many ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ died, and whom he justified, are made righteous, or are justified only through the imputation of his righteousness to them; and he is made sin by the imputation of their sins to him (2 Corinthians 5:21). In like manner are Adam's posterity, or all men, made sinners through the imputation of his disobedience to them. And this is the sense of this clause, notwithstanding what may be objected to it.

It is no objection, that Adam's disobedience or sin is not now in act; as soon as it was committed as an act, it ceased; and therefore not to be imputed. The same may be objected to the obedience of Christ; or rather a course of obedience, a series of actions, which when performed, ceased to be in act; but then the righteousness arising from them continues; and is in Christ, The Lord our Righteousness; and is unto all and upon all that believe. And so Adam's sin, though it ceased to be in act, the guilt of it continues, and is imputed to all his posterity. In like manner the sins of the saints, before the coming of Christ, ceased to be in act as soon as committed; and yet Christ died for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament, and the sins of all the people of God were laid upon him by imputation. Nor is it any objection to this truth, that Adam's posterity were not in being when his disobedience was committed, and so could have no concern in it: but though they had not an actual being, yet they had a virtual and representative one; they were in him both seminally and federally; and "sinned in him" too (Romans 5:12), as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, and paid tithes to Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:9-10). I say, both seminally and federally; and it is their being in him seminally that is the foundation of their being in him federally, and makes it reasonable that so they should be; and this may be greatly illustrated and confirmed by modern philosophy, according to which all kinds of plants of the same sort to be produced in all following ages, were actually formed in the first seed that was created; and that all the "stamina" and "semina", not only of plants but of animals, and so of men, were originally formed by the almighty Parent, within the first of each respective kind, and to be the seed of all future generation [2]: thus all mankind being formed in the first man, in this manner, it easily accounts for it, how they came to have a share in the guilt of his sin, and that to be imputed to them; as also to have the corruption and pollution of it derived to them. Nor does this act of imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, make God the author of sin; since this act makes men sinners not inherently, but imputatively; it puts no sin in them, though it reckons sin to them; and though this imputation is

God’s act, it makes him no more the author of sin, than the imputation of Christ’s obedience, makes God the author of that obedience; as not God, but Christ, is the author of the obedience imputed; so not God, but Adam, is the author of that disobedience imputed to his posterity: nor is this doctrine chargeable with cruelty and injustice; it has never been reckoned either, that children should suffer for the sins of their parents; or rather, that parents should be punished in their children; God describes himself as a God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him; and yet it is impossible that he should be guilty either of a cruel or unjust action: when Achan sinned, his sons and his daughters, and all that he had, were ordered to be brought forth, and they were all burnt with him. The Amalekites, for the injury they did to Israel, when they first came out of Egypt, Saul had orders, some hundreds of years after, to go and smite them, and utterly destroy all they had, men and women, infants and sucklings, and all their cattle: the blood of all the righteous persons that had been shed from the beginning of the world to the times of Christ, was then avenged on the wicked Jews. And such a procedure in subjecting children to penalties for the sins of their parents, is justified by the laws, customs, and usages of all nations, who make treason punishable in the posterity of men. A nobleman, when he commits treason against his sovereign, he is not only stripped of his titles, honour, and estates himself, but his children are also, and reduced to poverty and misery, until the attainder is taken off. And if treason against an earthly king is punishable in this manner, then much more treason against the King of kings, and Lord of lords, as Adam’s sin was. The text in Ezekiel 18:2-4 is not to the purpose; that the proverb, "The father’s have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge", should be no more used in Israel, but the soul that sins should die; since this speaks not a word of Adam, and his sin, nor of his posterity suffering for it; nor even of such men that commit the same sins their fathers have; but of good men and just men, that do not follow their fathers evil ways, and so shall not be punished for any sins of theirs, and is restrained to a certain case and time. The case of the man born blind, is also quite impertinent; since that also respects not Adam’s sin, but the sin of the man and his parents, and a particular disaster, blindness. The disciples put this question to Christ upon it; "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Christ’s answer is, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents": not but that they had both sinned, but their sin was not the cause and reason of his blindness; but the sovereign will and pleasure of God, "That the works of God should be made manifest in him"; that there might be an opportunity for Christ to give proof of his Deity and Messiahship, by performing such a cure as was never heard of before (John 9:2-3). To close this point; let it be observed, that the ground of the imputation of Adam’s sin to his posterity, is not his being the natural head, and common parent of them; for so are immediate parents to their respective offspring; but their particular sins are not imputed to them; Adam, being the common parent of mankind, may be considered as the ground of the derivation of a corrupt nature to them; and yet the justice of that will not clearly appear without their being considered as made sinners by the imputation of Adam’s sin to them: but the ground of this imputation is the federal headship of Adam, or his standing as a covenant head to all his posterity; so that what he did as such, is reckoned as if done by them; which is not the case of immediate parents; and therefore their sins are not imputed: that Adam stood in the relation of a federal head to his posterity, has been proved in a former chapter, and vindicated from exceptions to it.

ENDNOTES:

[1] See more of this in Vol. II. of this Work, Book II. Chap. 1. See 4 Topic on “Incarnation” 950

[2] See the Philosophical Transactions abridged, vol. ii. p. 912. Nieuwentyt’s Religious Philosopher, vol. ii. contempl. 23. s. 13. p. 711. ed. 5. Wolaston’s Religion of Nature, s. 5. p. 160, 164. ed. 8.

02. Of the Incarnation of Christ

Of the Incarnation of Christ

Having treated, in the preceding Book, of the exhibition of the covenant of grace, both under the Old and New Testament dispensations, and of the law and gospel, as held forth in both; and of the latter only in a general way; I shall now proceed to consider, the particular, special, and important doctrines of the gospel, which express the grace of Christ, and the blessings of grace by him; and shall begin with the incarnation of the Son of God. This is a very considerable part of the glad tidings of the gospel, and which give it that name: when the angels related to the shepherds the birth of Christ, he said unto them; "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy", &c. (Luke 2:10-11). The whole gospel is a mystery; the various doctrines of it are the mysteries of the kingdom; the knowledge of which is given to some, and not to others; it is the mystery of godliness, and, without controversy, great; and this stands the first and principal article of it; "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). This is the basis of the Christian religion; a fundamental article of it; and without the belief of it no man can be a Christian; "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God;" born of God, and belongs to him, and is on the side of God and truth; "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God" (1 John 4:2-3). The incarnation of Christ is a most extraordinary and amazing affair; it is wonderful indeed, that the eternal Son of God should become man; that he should be born of a pure virgin, without any concern of man in it; that this should be brought about by the power of the Holy Ghost, in a way unseen, imperceptible and unknown, signified by his overshadowing; and all this in order to effect the most wonderful work that ever was done in the world, the redemption and salvation of men: it is a most mysterious thing, incomprehensible by men, and not to be accounted for upon the principles of natural reason; and is only to be believed and embraced upon the credit of divine revelation, to which it solely belongs. The heathens had some faint notions of it; at least say some things similar to it. The Brachmanes among the Indians, asserted, that Wistnavius, the second person of the trine-une god with them, had nine times assumed a body, and sometimes an human one; and would once more do the same again; and that he was once born of a virgin [1]. Confucius, the famous Chinese philosopher, who lived almost five hundred years before Christ, it is said [2], foresaw that the Word would be made flesh; and foretold the year in which it would be; and which was the very year in which Christ was born: but this seems to savour too much of the tale of a Christian in later times. However, several of the deities and heroes of the heathens, Greeks and Romans, are represented as having no father [3]. Now whatever notion the heathens had of an incarnate God, or of a divine Person born of a virgin, in whatsoever manner expressed; this was not owing to any discoveries made by the light of nature, but what was traditionally handed down to them, and was the broken remains of a revelation their ancestors were acquainted with. Otherwise the incarnation of the Son of God, is a doctrine of pure revelation; in treating of which I shall consider,

1. First, The subject of the incarnation, or the divine Person that became incarnate. The evangelist John says it was the Word, the essential Word of God; "The word was made flesh, and dwelt

among us" (John 1:14). And therefore not the Father; for he is distinguished from the "Word", in the order of the Trinity (1 John 5:7). And, he is said to be the "Word with God;" that is, with God the Father; and therefore must be distinct from him (Revelation 19:13; Acts 20:32; John 1:1). Besides, the Father never so much as appeared in an human form; and much less took real flesh; nay, never was seen in any shape by the Jews (John 5:37). And though their ancestor heard a voice, and a terrible one at Sinai, they saw no similitude (Deuteronomy 4:12). And wherever we read of any visible appearance of a divine Person in the Old Testament, it is always to be understood, not of the first, but of the second Person. And it may be further observed, that the Father prepared a body, an human nature in his purpose, council and covenant, for another, and not for himself, even for his Son, as he acknowledges; "A body hast thou prepared me;" (Hebrews 10:5). To which may be added, that that divine Person who came in the flesh, or became incarnate, is always distinguished from the Father, as being sent by him; "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3). And again; "God sent forth his Son made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4), that is, God the Father, in both passages; as appears from the relation of the Person to him, sent in the flesh, his Son. Once more, if the Father had been incarnate, he must have suffered and died; for that is the end of the incarnation, that the Person incarnate, might obey, suffer, and die, in the room of sinners; so Christ suffered in the flesh, and was put to death in the flesh. There were a set of men in ancient times, who embraced the Sabellian folly, and were called Patripassians, because they held that the Father suffered; and, indeed, if there is but one Person in the Deity, and Father, Son, and Spirit are only so many names and manifestations of that one Person; then it must be equally true of the Father as of the Son, that he became incarnate, obeyed, suffered, and died. But this notion continued not long, but was soon rejected, as it must be by all that read their Bible with any care. Nor is it the Holy Spirit that became incarnate, for the same reasons that the Father cannot be thought to be so: and besides, he had a peculiar hand, and a special agency, in the formation of the human nature, and in its conception and birth: when the Virgin hesitated about what was told her by the angel, she was assured by him, that the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest should overshadow her; and accordingly the birth of Christ was on this wise, when Joseph and Mary were espoused, before they came together, "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost;" and Joseph was told, in order to encourage him to take her to wife, that what was "conceived in her, was of the Holy Ghost;" and therefore he himself was not incarnate; (see Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:18; Matthew 1:20). It remains, that it is the second Person, the Son of God, who is meant by "the Word that was made flesh", or became incarnate; and, indeed, it is explained of him in the same passage; for it follows; "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," And it is easy to observe, that the same divine Person that bears the name of the Word, in the order of the Trinity, in one place, has that of the Son in another; by which it appears they are the same; (compare 1 John 5:7 with Matthew 28:19). When this mystery of the incarnation is expressed by the phrase, "God manifest in the flesh;" not God the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but God the Son is meant, as it is explained (1 John 3:8), for "this purpose the Son of God was manifested;" that is, in the flesh; and as before observed, it was the Son of God that was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in the fulness of time was sent forth, made of a woman (Romans 8:3; Galatians 4:4). He, therefore, is the subject of the incarnation, or the divine Person that became incarnate.

Now the Logos, the Word and Son of God, who is made flesh or become incarnate, is not to be understood of the human soul of Christ; for this Word was "in the beginning with God;" that is, was

with him from all eternity; (see Proverbs 8:22-30), whereas the human soul of Christ is one of the souls that God has made; a creature, a creature of time, as all creatures are; time is an inseparable adjunct and concomitant of a creature; a creature before time, is a contradiction: besides, this Word "was" God, a divine Person, distinct from the Father, though with him, the one God; which cannot be said of the human soul. Likewise, to it is ascribed the creation of all things; "All things were made by him;" not as an instrument, but as the efficient cause; "And without him was not anything made that was made;" and since the human soul is what is made, being a creature; if that is the Word and Son of God, it must be the maker of itself, seeing nothing that is made is made without it; which is too great an absurdity to be admitted. So the creation of all things is elsewhere ascribed to the Son of God, who therefore cannot be a creature; (see Hebrews 1:1-2; Hebrews 1:10; Colossians 1:16-17). To which may be added, that the human soul of Christ is a part of the human nature assumed by him; it is included in the word "flesh", the Word, or Son of God, is said to be made, as will be shown presently; it is a part of that nature of the seed of Abraham, in distinction from the nature of angels, which the Word, or Son of God, a divine Person, took upon him, and into union with him, and therefore cannot be the assumer; the assumer and the assumed cannot be the same, but must be distinct from each other; (see Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:16). Nor by the Logos, or Word, made flesh, are we to understand the divine nature, essentially considered, or the essence of God, as common to the three divine Persons, Father, Son and Spirit; for then it would be equally true of the Father and the Spirit, that they are made flesh, or become incarnate, as of the Son; as it must needs be, if the divine nature, so considered, was incarnated; or the human nature was united to it as such: such phrases are therefore unsound, unsafe, and dangerous; as that the man Christ stands in the divine nature; and that the human nature is united to Deity: this is not the truth of things; the human nature is not united to Deity absolutely considered: but as that in a distinct mode of subsisting, is in the second Person, the Son of God; it was the Son of God, by whom God made the world, and by him speaks to men, in these last days, who is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person; the Creator of angels, and the object of their worship and adoration; and who upholds all things by the word of his power, who partook of the same flesh and blood with the children, and has taken upon him, and assumed to him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; he who was in the form of God, of the same nature with him, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, is he that took upon him the form of a servant, the nature of man in a servile state, was made in the likeness of man, and found in fashion as a man, or really became man. I proceed,

2. Secondly, To observe, in what sense the Word, or Son of God, was "made flesh", became a partaker "of flesh and blood, came in the flesh", and was "manifest in the flesh": all which phrases are made use of to express his incarnation (John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 4:2-3; 1 Timothy 3:16), and signify, that he who is truly God really became man, or assumed the whole human nature, as will be seen presently, into union with his divine person. Socinus is so bold as to say [4], that if any passages of scripture could be found, in which it is expressly said that God was made man, or put on and assumed human flesh, the words must be taken otherwise than as they sound, this being repugnant to the majesty of God. The contrary to this will soon appear; and though this is not to be found in scripture just syllabically, the sense clearly is, as in the scriptures referred to. But there is no dealing with such a man who will talk at this rate; and who elsewhere [5] says, on another account, that the greatest force must be used with the words of the apostle Paul, rather than such a sense be admitted, which yet is obvious. It will be proper to inquire, both what is

meant by flesh, and what by being made flesh.

2a. First, What is meant by flesh, in the phrases and passages referred to. And by it is meant, not a part of the human body, as that may be distinguished from other parts, as the bones, &c. nor the whole human body, as that may be distinguished from the soul or spirit of a man; as in Matthew 26:41 but a whole individual of human nature, consisting of soul and body; as when it is said, "There shall no flesh be justified in his sight": and again, "That no flesh should glory in his presence" (Romans 3:20; 1 Corinthians 1:29) with many other passages; (see Genesis 6:12; Luke 3:6), for such acts as being justified and glorying, can never be said of the flesh or body, abstractly considered; but of the whole man, or of individuals of human nature, consisting of soul and body; and in this sense are we to understand it, when it is used of the incarnation of the Son of God, who took upon him the whole nature of man, assumed a true body and a reasonable soul, being in all things made like unto his brethren; so his flesh signifies his human nature, as distinct from the Spirit, his divine nature (Romans 1:3-4, 1 Peter 3:18).

2a1. He took a true body, not a mere phantom, spectre, or apparition, the appearance of a body, and not a real one; as some fancied, and that very early, even in the times of the apostle John, and afterward; and who imagined, that what Christ was, and did, and suffered, were only seeming, and in appearance, and not in reality; and hence they were called "Docetae": and this they argued from his being sent in the "likeness" of sinful flesh; and being found in fashion as a man; and from the appearances of Christ before his coming; of which same kind they supposed his appearance was when he came. As for the text in Romans 8:3 "likeness" there, is not to be connected with the word "flesh", but with the word "sinful;" he was sent in real flesh, but that flesh looked as if it was sinful: it might seem so to some, because he took flesh of a sinful woman, was attended with griefs and sorrows, the effects of sin; had the sins of his people imputed to him, and which he bore in his own body on the tree; all which made his flesh appear as if it was sinful, though it was not; and hindered not its being real flesh. As to Php 2:7-8 the as there is not a note of similitude, but of certainty; as in Matthew 14:5 and signifies, that Christ was really a man, as John was accounted a real prophet, and not merely like one; and which is evident by his being obedient unto death, as follows: and as for the appearances of Christ in an human form, before his coming in the flesh, the Scriptures speak of; admitting they were only appearances, and not real, it does not follow, that therefore his coming in the flesh, in the fulness of time, was of the same kind; but rather the contrary follows; and since these were preludes of his incarnation, that must be real; though some of these previous appearances were not merely appearances, but realities: real bodies were formed and animated, and made use of for a time, and then laid aside; as seems to be the case of the three men that appeared to Abraham, two of which were angels, and the other the Lord, Jehovah, the Son of God; who were clothed with bodies, capable of walking and travelling, of talking and conversing, of eating and drinking in; so the man that wrestled with Jacob, who was no other than the Angel of the covenant, the promised Messiah; the body he appeared in was not a mere phantom, spectre, and apparition, but palpable flesh, that was felt and handled, and grasped, and held fast, by Jacob; and which he would not let go till he had received the blessing. However, it is certain that Christ partook of the same flesh and blood as his children and people do; and therefore, if theirs is real, his must be so. Likewise, his body is called the body of his flesh, his fleshly body (Colossians 1:22), to distinguish it from the token of his body in the supper; and from his mystical and spiritual body, the church: all his actions, and what is said of him from his

birth to his death, and in and after it, show it was a true body that he assumed; he was born and brought into the world as other men are; and when born, his body grew and increased in stature, as other human bodies do: the Son of man came eating and drinking; he traveled through Judea and Galilee; he slept in the ship with his disciples; he was seen, and heard, and handled by them; he was buffered, scourged, bruised, wounded, and crucified by men; his body, when dead, was asked of the governor by Joseph, was taken down from the cross by him, and laid in his tomb; and the same identical body, with the prints of the nails and spear in it, was raised from the dead, and seen and handled by his disciples; to whom it was demonstrated, that he had flesh and bones, a spirit has not: yea, the very infirmities that attended him, though sinless, were proofs of his body being a true and real one; such as his fatigue and weariness in travelling (John 4:6), his tears at the grave of Lazarus, and over Jerusalem; and his sweat in the garden (John 11:35; Luke 19:41; Luke 22:44). In short, it was through weakness of the flesh that he was crucified; which was not in appearance, but in reality. The body he assumed was mortal, as it was proper it should be, since the end of his assumption of it was to suffer death in it; but being raised from the dead, it is become immortal, and will never die more, but will remain, as the pledge and pattern of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, which will be fashioned like to his glorious body; and which will be the object of the corporal vision of the saints after their resurrection, with joy and pleasure, to all eternity.

2a2. Christ assumed a reasonable soul, with his true body, which make up the nature he took upon him, and are included in the flesh he was made, as has been seen; and is the flesh and blood he partook of; which is sometimes understood of an individual of human nature, as flesh is; (see Matthew 16:17; Galatians 1:16) The Arians deny that Christ has an human soul; they say, that the Logos, or the divine nature in him, such a one as it is, supplied the place of an human soul. This nature, they say, is not the same, but like to the nature of God; that it was created by him; which they ground on Proverbs 8:22 and read, "He created me;" and they make this the first and principal creature God made, and by which he created others; that it is a superangelic spirit, and is in the room of an human soul to Christ. But Christ asserts, that he had a soul; and which, he says, was exceeding sorrowful; and which was an immaterial and immortal spirit; and which, when his body died, and was separated from it, he commended into the hands of his divine Father (Matthew 26:38; Luke 23:46). Had he not an human soul, he would not be a perfect man; and could not be called, as he is, the man Christ Jesus: the integral parts of man, and which constitute one, are soul and body; and without which he cannot be called a man; these distinguish him from other creatures: on the one hand he is distinguished from angels, immaterial and immortal spirits, with which his soul has a cognition, by having a body, or by being an embodied spirit; whereas they are incorporeal: so, on the other hand, he is distinguished from mere animals, who have bodies as well as he, by his having a rational and immortal soul: and if Christ was without one, he could not be in all things like unto us; being deficient in that which is the most excellent and most noble part of man. But that he is possessed of an human soul, is evident from his having an human understanding, will, and affections; he had an human understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, in which he is said to grow, and which in some things were deficient and imperfect (Luke 2:52; Mark 13:32). He had an human will, distinct from the divine will, though not opposite, but in subjection to it (John 6:38; Luke 22:42). And he had human affections, as love (Mark 10:21; John 13:23). And joy (Luke 10:21). Yea, even those infirmities, though sinless passions, prove the truth of his human soul; as sorrow, grief, anger, amazement, and consternation (Matthew 26:38; Mark

3:5; Mark 14:33). Besides, if he had not had an human soul, he could not have been tempted in all points like as we are (Hebrews 4:15), since the temptations of Satan chiefly respect the soul, the mind, and the thoughts of it, and affect and distress that: nor could he have bore the wrath of God, nor have had a sensation of that; which it is certain he had, when the weight of the sins of his people lay on him, and pressed him sore; (see Psalms 89:38; Matthew 26:38). Nor could he have been a perfect sacrifice for their sins; which required his soul as well as his body (Isaiah 53:10; Hebrews 10:10), nor have been the Saviour of their souls; as he is both of body and soul, giving life for life, body for body, soul for soul (1 Peter 1:9).

2b. Secondly, In what sense the Word, or Son of God, was "made" flesh, and so became incarnate; the Word could not be made at all, that is, created, since he is the Maker and Creator of all things; and therefore he himself could not be made or created: nor was he, nor could be, made, converted, and changed into flesh; the divine nature in Christ could not be changed into human nature; for he is the Lord, that changes not; he is the same in the "yesterday" of eternity, in the day of time, and "for ever" to all eternity. By the incarnation nothing is added to, nor altered in the divine nature and personality of Christ. The human nature adds nothing to either of them; they remain the same they ever were; Christ was as much a divine Person before his incarnation as he is since; the union of the human nature to the divine nature, is to it as subsisting in the Person of the Son of God; so it is always to be understood, whenever we speak of the union of the human nature to the divine nature; for it is not united to the divine nature, simply considered; or as that is common to the three Persons; for then each would be incarnate; but as it has a peculiar subsistence in the Person of the Son of God: and so the human nature has its subsistence in his Person, and has a glory and excellency given it; but that gives nothing at all to the nature and person of the divine Word and Son of God. But, as other scriptures explain it, God the Word, or Son, was made and became "manifest in the flesh;" the Son that was in the bosom of the Father, the Word of life, that was with him from all eternity, was manifested in the flesh in time, to the sons of men; and that in order to take away sin, and destroy the works of the devil (1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 1:1-2; 1 John 3:5; 1 John 3:8). And the incarnation of the Word or Son of God, is expressed and explained by his partaking of flesh and blood; and by a taking on him the nature of man; or by an assumption of the human nature into union with his divine Person; so that both natures, divine and human, are united in one Person; and there is but one Lord, and one Mediator between God and man. The Nestorians so divided and separated these natures, as to make them distinct and separate Persons; which they are not, but one. And the Eutychians, running rate the other extreme, mixed and confounded the natures together; interpreting the phrase, "the Word was made flesh", of the divine nature being changed into the human nature; and the human nature into the divine nature; and so blended together as to make a third; just as two sort of liquors, mixed together, make a third different from both. But this is to make Christ neither truly God, nor truly man; the one nature being confounded with and swallowed up in the other. But this union of natures is such, that though they are closely united, and not divided, yet they retain their distinct properties and operations; as the divine nature to be uncreated, infinite, omnipresent, impassible, &c. the human nature to be created, finite, in some certain place, passible, &c. at least the latter, before the resurrection of Christ. But of this union, and the nature of it, more hereafter.

2c. Thirdly, The causes of the incarnation, efficient and moving, or to whom and what it is to be ascribed; and the final cause, for the sake of whom, and what.

2c1. The efficient cause of it, God, Father, Son, and Spirit; all the three Persons have a concern in it, it being a work "ad extra," The Father prepared a body for the Son in his purpose, and proposed it to him in council and covenant to assume it; and he sent him forth in the fulness of time, made of a woman, in the likeness of sinful flesh (Hebrews 10:5; Galatians 4:4; Romans 8:3). The Son having agreed to it, being sent, came in the flesh, by the assumption of it; he took upon him the nature of the children, and partook of the same flesh and blood with them; he took upon him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man (Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:16; Php 2:7-8). The Holy Ghost had a very great concern in this affair; for that which was conceived in the Virgin was of "the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:20), not of his substance, nature, and essence; for then he would have been the Father of it, which he is never said to be; Christ, as man, was "without Father", and so a proper antitype of Melchizedec (Hebrews 7:3). Besides, the body of Christ would have been not human, but spiritual: but it was of him as the efficient cause of it; it was through his overshadowing power and influence that it was conceived and formed (Luke 1:35). Now, though all the three Persons in the Deity had an hand in the wondrous incarnation, yet only one of them became incarnate; only the Son assumed the human nature, and took it into union with his divine Person; it is the Word only that was made flesh. Some have illustrated this, by three virgins concerned in working a garment; when only one of them puts it on and wears it.

2c2. The moving cause of the incarnation of Christ, is the love of the Father, and of the Son, to mankind. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to become man, obey, suffer, and die for sinners; herein is love, and this love manifested, that God sent his Son in human nature to be the propitiation for the sins of his people, and save them from death (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-10). And such was the love and condescending grace of the Son, that though he was in the form of God, of the same nature with him, and equal to him; yet he took upon him the form and nature of man in a servile condition, humbled himself, and died in it. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is well known; who, though rich in his divine Person, became poor in human nature, to make his people rich (Php 2:6-8; 2 Corinthians 8:9).

2c3. The final cause, or for whose sake, and for what the Son of God became incarnate. It was for the sake of the elect of God; "To us", or "for us", for our sakes, "a Child is born; a Son is given": it was "unto all people;" or rather, "unto all the people;" for the sake of the whole people of God among Jews and Gentiles, that Christ was born a Saviour, or to be a Saviour of them; for which reason, as soon as he was born, his name was called Jesus, because he was to save his people from their sins; for which end he was born and came into the world. But of this more hereafter; (see Isaiah 9:6; Luke 2:10-11; Matthew 1:21).

2d. Fourthly, The parts of the incarnation are next to be considered, conception and nativity.

2d1. First, Conception; this is a most wonderful, abstruse, and mysterious affair; and which to speak of is very difficult.

2d1a. This conception was by a virgin; it was a virgin that conceived the human body of Christ, as was foretold it should; which was very wonderful, and therefore introduced with a note of admiration; "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son!" This was a "new thing;" unheard of and astonishing; which God "created in the earth", in the lower parts of the earth, in the virgin's womb; "A woman compassed", or conceived, "a man", without the knowledge of man (Isaiah 7:14; Jeremiah 31:22). This was not natural, but supernatural; though Mela [6] the geographer, speaks

of some women in a certain island who conceived without copulation with men; but that is all romance; Plutarch [7] asserts, such a thing was never known. This conception was made "in" the virgin, and not without her; for so says the text; "That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost;" this I observe to meet with, and confute the heretical illapse, as it is sometimes called; it was a notion of some of the ancient heretics, the Valentinians [8], and of late, the Mennonites [9], that the human nature of Christ was formed in heaven, and came down from thence into the virgin, and passed through her as water through a pipe, as their expression was; so that, according to them, he was not conceived in her, nor took flesh of her: to countenance this, it is observed, that the "second man" is said to be "the Lord from heaven" (1 Corinthians 15:47. But the words are not to be understood of the descent of the human nature of Christ from heaven; but of his divine Person from thence; not by change of place, but by assumption of the human nature into union with him; by virtue of which union the man Christ has the name of the "Lord from heaven;" and not because of the original and descent of the human nature from thence; and in this sense, and in this sense only, are we to understand the words of Christ, when he says, "I came down from heaven" (John 6:38), namely, that he descended in and by the human nature; not by bringing it down from thence, but by taking it into union with his divine Person.

2d1b. This conception was through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, overshadowing the virgin. His operations in this affair may be considered in this manner, and after this order; He first took a part and portion of the virgin, of her semen, or blood, and conveyed it to a proper place; and purified and sanctified it, or separated it, not from any moral impurity, which it was not capable of, being an unformed mass; but from a natural indisposition in it, which, had it not been removed, might hereafter have occasioned sin; to prevent which this was done; and then he impregnated it with a fructifying virtue, and formed the members of the human body, in order, at once, and in a fitness (being properly organized) to receive the human soul; for to consider its immediate formation in such a state, is much more agreeable to the formation of the first man, more becoming the workmanship of the Holy Ghost, and more suitable to the dignity of the Son of God to assume it into union with himself, than to suppose it an unformed and unshapen embryo. Yet this is to be understood, not as if it was in such a state as not to admit of a future increase, both before and after birth; nor to contradict its continuance in the womb of the virgin the usual time of every man. Now though this affair has been spoken of as in various processes, yet must be understood as all instantaneously done by the almighty power of the Holy Spirit: in the same instant the human body was thus conceived, formed, and organized, the human soul of Christ was created and united to it, by him who "forms the spirit of man within him;" and in that very instant the body was conceived and formed, and the soul united to it, did the Son of God assume the whole human nature at once, and take it into union with his divine Person, and gave it a subsistence in it; so that the human nature of Christ never had a subsistence of itself; but from the moment of its conception, formation, and creation, it subsisted in the Person of the Son of God: and hence the human nature of Christ is not a person; a person is that which subsists of itself: but that the human nature of Christ never did; therefore,

2d1c. It was a nature, and not a person, that Christ assumed so early as at its conception; it is called "the holy Thing", and not a person; "The seed of Abraham", or the nature of the seed of Abraham; the "form" and "fashion" of a man, that is, the nature of man; as "the form of God", in the same passage, signifies the nature of God; (see Luke 1:35; Hebrews 2:16; Php 2:6-8). The

Nestorians asserted the human nature of Christ to be a person; and so made two persons in Christ, one human and one divine; and of course four persons in the Deity, contrary to 1 John 5:7 but there is but one Person of the Son, one Son of God, one Lord of all, one Mediator between God and man: if the two natures in Christ were two distinct separate persons, the works and actions done in each nature could not be said of the same Person; the righteousness wrought out by Christ in the human nature, could not be called the righteousness of God: nor the blood shed in the human nature the blood of the Son of God; nor God be said to purchase the church with his blood; nor the Lord of life and glory to be crucified; nor the Son of man to be in heaven, when he was here on earth: all which phrases can only be accounted for, upon the footing of the personal union of the human nature to the Son of God, and his having but one Person; of which these various things are predicated. Besides, if the human nature of Christ was a person of itself, what it did and suffered could have been of no avail, nor of any benefit to any other but itself; the salvation wrought out in it, and by it, would not have been the common salvation, or common to elect men; but peculiar to that individual human person; and the righteousness he is the author of, he would only have had the benefit of it, being justified by it, and accepted with God in it; whereas, it being wrought out in the human nature, as in personal union with the Son of God, this gives it an enlarged virtue, and spread; and so it comes to be "unto all, and upon all them that believe," I treat of the union of the two natures, divine and human, in the person of the Son of God, under the article of conception, and before the birth of Christ, as it certainly was; hence when Mary paid a visit to her cousin Elizabeth, before the birth of Christ, and just upon the conception of him, she was saluted by her thus; "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?" (Luke 1:43). Wherefore, before I proceed to consider the second part of the incarnation, the nativity of Christ, I shall further observe some things concerning the union, which took place at the conception; and of the effects of it.

1. Of the union itself; concerning which let it be observed,

1a. That though Christ, by assuming the human nature, united it to his divine Person; yet there is a difference between assumption and union assumption is only of one nature; union is of both: Christ only assumed the human nature to his divine Person; but both natures, human and divine, are united in his Person: that he has two distinct natures is evident; in that, according to the flesh, or human nature, he is the Son of David; and according to the Spirit of holiness, or the divine nature, he is the Son of God: he was of the father’s, according to the flesh, or human nature; but, according to the divine nature, God over all, blessed for ever: he was put to death in the flesh, in the human nature; but quickened in or by the Spirit, the divine nature (Romans 1:3-4; Romans 9:5; 1 Peter 1:18), yet but one Person.

1b. This union is hypostatical, or personal; but not an union of persons: the union of Father, Son, and Spirit in the Deity, is an union of three Persons in one God; but this is not an union of two persons; but of two natures in one person.

1c. This an union of natures; but not a communication of one nature to another; not of the divine nature, and the essential properties of it, to the human nature; for though "the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily" in Christ (Colossians 2:9), that is, substantially and really, not in shadow and type; yet the perfections of the Godhead are not communicated to the manhood, as to make that uncreated, infinite, immense, and to be everywhere, &c. the properties of each nature remain

distinct, notwithstanding this union.

1d. This union lies in a communication of, or rather in making the personality of the Word, common to the human nature; or giving it a subsistence in the Person of the Word or Son of God; hence because of this union and community of person, it has the same name with the Word; and is called, "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). And hence it appears, that the human nature of Christ is no loser, but a gainer, and is not inferior, but superior to other individuals of human nature, by its not being a person, subsisting of itself; because it has a better subsistence in the Person of the Son of God, than it could have had of itself; or than any creature has, angel or man.

1e. This union is indissoluble: though death dissolved the union between the body and soul of Christ, it did not, and could not, dissolve the union between the human nature and person of Christ; wherefore, in consequence of this union, he raised up the temple of his body, when destroyed, the third day, and thereby declared himself to be the Son of God with power (John 2:19; Romans 1:4).

2. The effects of this union, both with respect to the human nature, and to the Person of Christ. With respect to the human nature;

2a. Preeminence to all other individuals of human nature; it is chosen and preferred to the grace of union with the Son of God, above them all; it has a better subsistence than they have, and has obtained a more excellent name than they, and even than the angels; and is possessed of glory, blessings, and privileges above all creatures; as will appear from what will be further observed. All which is not of any merit in it, but of the free grace of God.

2b. Perfect holiness and impeccability: it is called, "the holy Thing;" it is eminently and perfectly so; without original sin, or any actual transgression; it is not conscious of any sin, never committed any, nor is it possible it should.

2c. A communication of habitual grace to it in the greatest degree; it is, in this respect, fairer and more beautiful than any of the sons of men; grace being poured into it in great plenty; it is anointed with the oil of gladness above its fellows; that is, with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; it has the Spirit given unto it, but not by measure; the Spirit of God rests upon it, in his several gifts and graces, in a most glorious and perfect manner (Psalms 45:2; Psalms 45:7; John 3:34; Isaiah 11:2). And should it be asked, if the same graces were in it, and exercised by it, as love, faith, and hope, in the saints? it may be answered, they were, and were exercised by it in its state of humiliation, as its circumstances required: Christ trusted and hoped in God, when upon his mother's breasts (Psalms 22:9-10). When in suffering circumstances, he exercised faith on him, that he would justify, help, and deliver him (Isaiah 50:7-9). When the time of his death drew nigh, he expressed his love to God by a readiness to submit to his will, and obey his command (John 14:31). And when his body lay in the grave, he rested in hope of the resurrection of it (Psalms 16:10).

2d. A very high and glorious exaltation of it, after his death and resurrection from the dead: it was highly exalted by being united to the Person of the Son of God; and though it came into a state of humiliation in it, yet being raised from the dead, is highly exalted, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and above every name that is named in this world or in that to come; it is set down at the right hand of God, where angels are never bid to come; and where angels, authorities, and powers, are made subject to it (Ephesians 1:20-21; Php 2:9-10; Hebrews

1:13; 1 Peter 3:22).

3. With respect to the Person of Christ, the effects of this union are,

3a. A communication of idioms, or properties, as the ancients express it; that is, of the properties of each nature; which are, in common, predicated of the Person of Christ, by virtue of the union of natures in it; for though each nature retains its peculiar properties, and does not communicate them to each other; yet they may be predicated of the Person of Christ: yea, he may be denominated in one nature, from a property which belongs to another; thus in his divine nature he is God, the Son of God, the Lord of glory; and yet in this nature is described by a property which belongs to the human nature, which is to be passible, and suffer; hence we read of God purchasing the church with his blood; and of the blood of the Son of God cleansing from all sin; and of the Lord of glory being crucified (Acts 20:28; 1 John 1:7; 1 Corinthians 2:8). And on the other hand, in his human nature he is called the Son of man; and yet as such, is described by a property which belongs to the divine nature, which is to be omnipresent, to be everywhere. So it is said; "No man hath ascended to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven" (John 3:13), who was in heaven at the same time he was here on earth; which was true of his Person, though denominated from his human nature; and thus what cannot be said of Christ in the abstract, is true of him in the concrete, by virtue of this union; it cannot be said, that the Deity of Christ suffered; or that the humanity of Christ is everywhere: but it may be said, that God, the Son of God suffered; and that the Son of man was in heaven when on earth, or everywhere. It cannot be said, that the Deity is humanity; nor the humanity Deity, nor equal to God: but it may be said, that God the Word is man, and the man Christ is God, Jehovah’s Fellow; because these names respect the Person of Christ, which includes both natures.

3b. A communion of office, and of power and authority to exercise it in both natures: thus by Virtue of this union Christ bears the office of a Mediator, and exercises it in both natures; there is "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), but he is not Mediator only in his human nature, and only exercises it in that; he took upon him, and was invested with this office before his assumption of human nature; and could and did exercise some parts of it without it, as has been shown in its proper place; but there were others that required his human nature; and when, and not before it was requisite, he assumed it; and in it, as united to his divine Person, he is God-man, is Prophet, Priest, and King, Judge, Lawgiver, and Saviour; and has power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him; and upon his resurrection, had all power in heaven and earth given him, to appoint ordinances, and commission men to administer them; and had authority also to execute judgment, both in the world and in the church; because he is the Son of man (Matthew 28:18; John 17:2; John 5:27).

3c. A communion of operations in both natures, to the perfecting of the same work; which, therefore, may be called "theandric", or the work of the God-man; there being a concurrence of both natures in the performance of it; which, when done, is ascribed to his Person: thus, for instance, the sacrifice of himself, as the propitiation for the sins of men; as God-man and Mediator, he is the Priest that offers; his human nature, consisting of soul and body, is the Sacrifice; and his divine nature is the altar which sanctifies it, and gives it its atoning virtue, his blood was shed in the human nature, to cleanse from sin; but it is owing to its union with the Son of God that such an effect is produced by it. The redemption of men is by the ransom price of the life and blood of

Christ; but it is the divine nature, to which the human is united, in the Person of the Son of God, that makes it a sufficient one. The mission of the Spirit, by Christ, is owing both to his intercession in the human nature, and to his power and authority in the divine nature, according to the economy of things settled between the divine Persons.

3d. The adoration of the Person of Christ, having both natures united in him, is another effect of this union. The human nature of Christ is not the formal object of worship; it is a creature, and not to be worshipped as such; nor is worship given for the sake of it, or as singly considered; but then the divine Person of Christ having that nature in union with him, is the object of worship; the flesh of Christ is not worshipped, but the incarnate God is; a whole Christ is worshipped, but not the whole of Christ. "When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world", which was at the time of the incarnation, "he saith, let all the angels of God worship him" (Hebrews 1:6). And upon his resurrection from the dead, God has "given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus should bow;" that is, in a way of religious (Php 2:9-10), and though Christ, as man, is not the object of such adoration; yet what he has done in the human nature, is a motive and argument why blessing and honour should be given to his Person, having both natures united in him; "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power", &c. (Revelation 5:12-13).

2d2. Secondly, The birth, or nativity of Christ, the other part of the incarnation, is next to be considered.

2d2a. Of whom born; of a virgin, of the house of David, and of the tribe of Judah.

2d2a1. Of a virgin: this was hinted at in the first promise of "the seed of the woman;" and is fully expressed by Isaiah; "A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son;" to fulfil which prophecy, before Joseph and Mary cohabited as man and wife, and so, while she was a virgin, "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:18-23). And it was brought about in this manner, that the human nature of Christ might be clear of original sin, which it otherwise must have been infected with, had it been conceived and born in the ordinary and natural way of generation; for "whatsoever is born of the flesh, is flesh", carnal and corrupt; but being produced in this extraordinary and supernatural way, but the power of the Holy Ghost, that which was born of the virgin is "the holy Thing;" free from all spot and blemish of sin. This is most surprisingly accounted for, by the more modern philosophy respecting generation, that every man is born of an animalcule; which agrees with the sacred philosophy [10] in Job 25:6 and that all the animalcula from which millions of men spring in all ages, were originally formed by the great Creator in the first man; which, as it accounts for the guilt and pollution of all men in him; so for the purity of Christ’s human nature, since that was not born of an animalcule, as other men are; nor was it of man, nor of the seed of man [11]; but was according to the first promise, the pure seed of the woman; nor was it ever in Adam, in the first man; no, not in "animalculo", as the rest of the individuals of human nature, according to this hypothesis, and so was not represented by him; nor did he stand related to it, as a covenant head; nor did it descend from him by ordinary generation; but was conceived in the virgin through the power of the Holy Ghost; and did not exist in any respect before; no, not in "animalculo;" which lies strongly against the preexistence of Christ’s human nature in any sense whatever; and so, being free from sin, was fit to be a sacrifice for sin, since it could be offered up to God without spot, by the eternal Spirit. Moreover, so it was, that as the ruin of men came by means of a virgin; for the fall of Adam was before he knew his wife; so the

Saviour of men from that ruin, came into the world by a virgin: and so it was ordered by the wisdom of God, that Christ should appear to have but one Father, having none as man, and so be but one Person; whereas, had he had two fathers, there must have been two persons.

2d2a2. Christ was born of a virgin of the house of David; as in Luke 1:27 for the phrase of the house of David, is equally true of the virgin, as of Joseph, and may be connected with her. God promised to David, that the Messiah should be of his seed; and accordingly, of his seed he raised up unto Israel, a Saviour Jesus, who is therefore called the Son of David; and is both "the root and offspring of David;" the root of David, as God, and David's Lord; and the offspring of David, as man, descending from him (Acts 13:23; Revelation 22:16).

2d2a3. He was born of a virgin of the tribe of Judah; as she must be, since she was of the house of David, which was of that tribe; and it is manifest, as the apostle says, that our Lord sprung out of the tribe of Judah, as it was foretold he should (Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14).

2d2b. The birth of Christ, or his coming into the world, was after the manner of other men; his generation and conception were extraordinary; but his birth was in the usual manner; he came into the world after he had lain the common time in his mother's womb; for it is said, "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered;" she went her full time with him, and brought forth him, her firstborn Son, as other women do; and no doubt with pains and sorrow, as every daughter of Eve does: and presented, him to the Lord when the days of her purification were ended, according to the law, as it is written, "Every male that openeth the womb, shall be called holy to the Lord" (Luke 2:6; Luke 2:22-23). So that in these respects Christ was made in all things like unto his brethren.

2d2c. The place of his birth was Bethlehem, according to the prophecy in Micah 5:2 here it was expected he would be born; and this was so well known to the Jews, that when Herod inquired of the chief priests and Scribes where Christ should be born; they, without any hesitation, immediately reply, in "Bethlehem of Judea", and quote the above prophecy in proof of it (Matthew 2:4-6), yea, this was known by the common people (John 7:42), and so it was wonderfully brought about in providence; that though Joseph and Mary lived in Galilee, yet through a decree of Caesar Augustus to tax the whole empire, they were both obliged to come to the city of Bethlehem, the city of David, to be taxed, being of the lineage and house of David; and while they were on that business there, the virgin was delivered of her Son (Luke 2:1-7). Bethlehem signifies the house of bread; a fit place for the Messiah to be born in, who is the bread that came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.

2d2d. The time of his birth was as it was fixed in prophecy; before the sceptre, or civil government, departed from Judah: Herod was king in Judea when he was born; before the second temple was destroyed; for he often went into it, and taught in it: and it was at the time pointed at in Daniel's weeks; (see Genesis 49:10; Malachi 3:1; Haggai 2:6-7; Haggai 2:9; Daniel 9:24), &c. The exact year of the world in which he was born, is not agreed on by chronologers; but it was about, or a little before or after the four thousandth year of the world; nor can the season of the year, the month and day in which he was born, be ascertained. However, the vulgar account seems not probable; the circumstance of the shepherds watching their flocks by night, agrees not with the winter season. It is more likely it was in autumn, sometime in the month of September, at the feast of tabernacles, which was typical of Christ's incarnation; and there seems to be some reference to

it in John 1:14. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt", or "tabernacled" among us; the temple of Solomon, a type of Christ's human nature, was dedicated at the feast of tabernacles: and as Christ, the passover, was sacrificed at the very time of the passover; and the Holy Ghost was given on the very day of Pentecost, typified by the firstfruits offered on that day; so it is most reasonable to suppose, that Christ was born at the very feast of tabernacles, a type of his incarnation; and which feast is put for the whole ministry of the word and ordinances, to be observed in gospel times (Zechariah 14:16). However, it was in the fulness of time, or when the time was fully up he was to come, that God sent him, and he came; and in due time, in the fittest and most proper time, infinite Wisdom saw meet he should come: God could have sent him sooner; but he did not think fit to do it; but he sent him at the most seasonable time; when the wickedness of men was at its height, both in Judea and in the Gentile world; and there appeared a necessity of a Saviour of men from it; and when the insufficiency of the light of nature, of the power of man's free will, which had been sufficiently tried among the philosophers; and of the law of Moses, and of the works and sacrifices of it, to take away sin, and save men from it, had been clearly evinced. To conclude, it was in time, and not before time, that Christ became man. To talk of the human nature of Christ, either in whole or in part, as from eternity, is contrary both to scripture and reason; nor can that man, or human nature, be of any avail or benefit to us; but he that is the Seed of the woman, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David, and the Son of Mary.

2e. Fifthly, The ends of Christ's incarnation are many; there is a cluster of them in the song of the angels at his birth; "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:14).

2e1. One end of Christ's incarnation was, to show forth the glory of God in it; the glory of his grace, kindness, and goodness to men, in the mission of his Son in this way; the glory of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promise of it; the glory of his power in the miraculous production of Christ's human nature; and the glory of his wisdom in bringing it into the world in such a manner as to be free from sin, and so fit for the purpose for which it was designed: and all this that God might be glorified in these his perfections; as he was by the angels, by Mary, by the father of John the Baptist, and by Simeon, at, or about, the time of Christ's birth; and as he has been by saints in all ages since.

2e2. Another end of Christ's incarnation was, to make peace with God for men on earth; to make reconciliation for sin, was the work appointed him in covenant; and to do this, was the reason of his being made in all things like unto his brethren; and this end is answered; he has reconciled sinners to God by his death, and made peace for them by the blood of his cross.

2e3. Another end of Christ's incarnation was, not only to show the good will of God to men, but that they might receive the fruits of his good will and favour towards them; even all the blessings of grace, those spiritual blessings provided in covenant, and laid up in Christ; and which came by him our High Priest, and through his blood, called therefore, the blood of the everlasting covenant.

2e4. Particularly, Christ became man that he might be our God, our near kinsman, and might appear to have a right to redeem us; and he was, in the fulness of time, made of a woman, to redeem men from the law, its curse and condemnation; and that they might receive the adoption of children, and every other blessing included in or connected with redemption; as peace, pardon, and justification; for he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, that by the sacrifice of himself for sin, he might condemn it in the flesh; and that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us,

as represented by him, and so be completely justified in him; (see Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 8:3-4).

2e5. Christ became man, that he might be a Mediator between God and men; and the better to perform each of the parts of his office as such, he took upon him the nature of man; that he might have something to offer as a Priest to be a Sacrifice for sin, and that he might make satisfaction for it in that nature that sinned; and that he might be a prophet like unto Moses, raised up, as he was, among his brethren; and having the Spirit of the Lord God upon him, might preach glad tidings to the meek; and that he might appear to be a King taken from among his brethren, as the kings of Israel were; and to be the Ruler, Noble, and Governor that proceeded from the midst of them, as was predicted he should (Jeremiah 30:21), and so sit and reign upon the throne of his father David.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Huet. Quaest. Alnetan. l. 2. c. 13. p. 234. & c. 15. p. 241. See Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. v. part 2. p. 168.

[2] Martin. Sinic. Hist. l. 4. p. 131, 132. Vid. Huet. ut supra, p. 235.

[3] Hesiod. Theogon. v. 927. Apollodor. de Deor. Orig. l. 1. p. 8. Vid. Huet. ut supra, c. 15, p. 237, 238.

[4] Opera, tom. 1. Deut. Christi Natura Disput. p. 784.

[5] Ibid. Ephesians 2:1-22. ad Balcerovicium, p. 425.

[6] Deut. Situ Orbis, l. 3. c. 9.

[7] Conjugial Praecept. p. 145.

[8] Irenaeus Adv. Haeres. l. 1. c. 1. p. 29.

[9] Socini Disput. Adv. Mennonitas in Oper. tom. 2. p. 461.

[10] “Omnia nimirum animalia, etiam perfecta similiter ex vermiculo gigni”, Harveus de Generat. Animal, Exercit. 18. p. 144.

[11] The animalcula are only “in semine masculo;” see the Philosophical Transactions abridged, vol. 2. p. 912, 913.

02. Of the Infinity/Omnipresence/Eternity of God

Of The Infinity Of God, His Omnipresence And Eternity. The next attribute of God to be considered is, his "Infinity"; when we say that God is "infinite", the meaning is, that he is unbounded and unlimited, unmeasurable or immense, unsearchable and not to be comprehended. This attribute chiefly respects and includes the "omnipresence" and "eternity" of God; these are the two branches of it; he is not bounded by space, and therefore is everywhere; and he is not bounded by time, so he is eternal[1]: and that he is in this sense infinite appears from his spirituality and simplicity, before established; he is not a body, consisting of parts; was he, he would be finite; for body, or matter, is a creature of time, and not eternal; and is limited to a certain place, and so not everywhere; but God is a Spirit: though this barely is not sufficient to prove him infinite; because there are finite spirits, as angels, and the souls of men; these are created spirits, and have a beginning, though they will have no end; which is owing not to themselves, but to the power of God, that supports them in their being; who could, if he would, annihilate them; and they are definitively in some place, and so, on all accounts, finite: but God is an uncreated Spirit; was before all time, so not bounded by it; and was before space or place were, and existed without it; and so not to be limited to it, and by it. He is the "first Being", and from whom all others have their being; "Before him there was no God formed, neither shall there be after him; yea, he is the first and the last" (Isaiah 43:10; Isaiah 44:6) and therefore there is none before him nor above him, to limit and restrain him: he is an "independent" Being; all creatures depend on him, but he depends on none; all things are "of" him, "through" him, and "to" him, as the first cause and last end of them[2]: all creatures live, and move, and have their being in him; but not he in them: men, angels, good and bad, are checked and limited by him; but not he by them. He is "immutable"; this attribute has been already established; but if he changes place, or is moved from place to place, or is sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another, he would be mutable: and if he rose from non-existence into existence, or there is any end of his days, he would not be unchangeable; but he is the "same", and his "years shall have no end": immutability infers both omnipresence and eternity, the two branches of Infinity. We commonly say that sin is infinite, and the truest reason that can be given for it is, because God is the object of it; for as an act, it is finite, being the act of a finite creature; but with respect to the object against whom it is committed, it is infinite, and requires an infinite satisfaction; which none but an infinite person can give, and which Christ is in his divine nature, and so gave to his sufferings and death, in his human nature united to him, an infinite value and virtue, whereby justice had from them an infinite satisfaction.

God is infinite in all his attributes; and which are indeed, himself, his nature; as has been observed, and are separately considered by us, as a relief to our mind, and helps to our better understanding it; and, perhaps, by observing some of these distinctly, we may have a clearer idea of the infinity of God. His "understanding" is infinite, as is expressly said (Psalms 147:5), it reaches to, and comprehends all things that are, though ever so numerous; to the innumerable company of angels in the highest heavens; to the innumerable stars in the lower ones; to the innumerable inhabitants of the earth, men, and beasts, and fowl; and to the innumerable creatures that swim in

the sea; yea, not only to all that are in being, but to all things possible to be made, which God could have made if he would; these he sees and knows in his eternal mind, so that there is "no searching of his understanding" (Isaiah 40:28), there is no end of it, and therefore infinite. The same may be said of his knowledge and wisdom, there is a bayov, a "depth", the apostle ascribes, to both; and which is not to be sounded by mortals (Romans 11:33), he is "a God of knowledge" or "knowledges", of all things that are knowable (1 Samuel 2:3), he is the only and the all-wise God; and in comparison of him the wisdom of the wisest of creatures, the angels, is but folly (Job 4:18). The power of God is infinite; with him nothing is impossible; his power has never been exerted to the uttermost; he that has made one world, could have made millions; there is no end of his power, and his making of that, proves his "eternal power", that is, his infinite power; for nothing but infinite power could ever have made a world out of nothing (Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:3). His "goodness" is infinite, he is abundant in it, the earth is full of it, all creatures partake of it, and it endures continually; though there has been such a vast profusion of it from the beginning of the world, in all ages, it still abounds: there is no end of it, it is infinite, it is boundless; nor can there be any addition to it; it is infinitely perfect, "my goodness extends not to thee" (Psalms 16:2). God is infinite in his "purity, holiness, and justice": there is none holy as he is; or pure and righteous, with him; in comparison of him, the most holy creatures are impure, and cover themselves before him (Job 4:17-18; Isaiah 6:2-3), in short, he is infinitely perfect, and infinitely blessed and happy. We rightly give him titles and epithets of "immense" and "incomprehensible", which belong to his infinity. He is "immense", that is, unmeasurable; he measures all things, but is measured by none; who can take his dimensions? they are "as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know?" If the heavens above cannot be measured, and the foundations of the earth beneath cannot be searched out, how should he be measured or searched out to perfection that made all these? (Job 11:7-9; Jeremiah 31:37). As there is an height, a depth, a length and breadth in the love of God, immeasurable (Ephesians 3:18), so there is in every attribute of God, and consequently in his nature; his immensity is his magnitude, and of his "greatness" it is said, that it is "unsearchable" (Psalms 145:3), and therefore, upon the whole, must be "incomprehensible"; not only cannot be comprehended and circumscribed by space, or in place, "for the heaven of heavens cannot contain" him; but he is not to be comprehended by finite minds, that cannot conceive of him as he is; his omniscience is "too wonderful" for them, and "the thunder of his power who can understand?" Somewhat of him may be apprehended, but his nature and essence can never be comprehended, no not in a state of perfection; sooner may all the waters of the ocean be put into a nutshell, than that the infinite Being of God should be comprehended by angels or men, who are finite creatures; infinity is an attribute peculiar to God, and, as has been observed, its two chief branches are "omnipresence" and "eternity"; which will be next considered.

1. The "Omnipresence" of God, or his ubiquity, which, as it is included in his infinity, is a branch of it, and strictly connected with it, it must, be strongly concluded from it; for if God is infinite, that is, unbounded with respect to space and place, then he must be everywhere; and this is to be proved from his power, which is everywhere: as appears, not only in the creation of all things, as the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the earth, and the ends of them, and all that is in them; but in his providence, supporting and sustaining them; for not only the creatures have their being in him, and from him, and therefore he must be near them; but "he upholds all things by his power", they consist in him, he provides for them, and preserves them all; and which is the argument the apostle uses to prove that he is not far from them (Acts 17:27-28). The omnipresence of God may

be argued from the distributions of his goodness to all; to angels and glorified saints, who partake of his special favours; to all men on earth, to whom he does not leave himself without a witness of his kindness to them, giving them food and raiment, and all things richly to enjoy; he is present among them, and opens his hand and plentifully and liberally communicates to them: as well as from his universal government of the world by his wisdom; for his kingdom rules over all, the kingdom of nature and providence is his, and "he is the Governor among the nations". And as he is everywhere by his power and providence, so he is by his knowledge; all things are naked and open to him, being all before him, and he present with them; though he is in the highest heaven, he can see and judge through the dark clouds, and behold all the inhabitants of the world, and their actions: and since these attributes of power, wisdom, and knowledge, are no other than his nature, or than himself, he must be everywhere by his essence; and which is most clear from the omnipresence of the divine nature in Christ, who, as a divine person, was in heaven, when he, as man, was here on earth (John 1:18; John 3:13), and, indeed, unless he was omnipresent, he could not be in whatsoever place two or three are gathered together in his name, or be in the midst of the candlesticks, the churches, or with his ministers, to the end of the world (Matthew 18:20), for though this is to be understood of his gracious presence, yet unless he was omnipresent, this could not be vouchsafed to all the saints, and all the churches, in all ages, at different places, at the same time; as when they are worshipping in different parts of the world; as in Europe, so in America. Now if God, personally considered, or in anyone of the divine Persons, is omnipresent, then God, essentially considered, must be so. The presence of God may be observed in a different manner; there is his glorious presence in heaven, where he, in a most eminent manner, displays the glory of his majesty to angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; and there is his powerful and providential presence with all his creatures, giving them being, and supporting them in it; and there is his gracious presence with good men, regenerating, sanctifying, comforting, and refreshing them; dwelling in them, carrying on his work of grace in them, to fit them for himself in glory; and all suppose his omnipresence: the heathens acknowledge this attribute; Anaxagoras calls him an infinite mind; and Pythagoras[3] defines him, a mind that is diffused throughout all the parts of the world, and goes through all nature; and Sallustius[4] observes, that he is not contained or comprehended in place. So the Jews say[5] the Shecinah, or divine Majesty, is everywhere; and they call God Mwqm, "place", by an antiphrasis, as Buxtorf[6] observes, because he is not local, who is not contained in any place, but gives place to all; and so the Jews themselves say[7], that he is the place of the world, but not the world his place, for he is without the world, and fills all worlds; and they further say[8], he is so called because in every place where the righteous are, he is with them; or as Aben Ezra[9], expresses it, because every place is full of his glory; agreeable to which Philo, the Jew[10], says, autov eautw topov he is place, full and sufficient to himself. This attribute is most clearly expressed in several passages of Scripture, as particularly in Psalms 139:7-10 where the Psalmist asks, "Whither shalt I go from thy Spirit?" which, if it is to be understood of the third Person, the Spirit of the Father, and of the Son; if there is no going from him, then not from them, since the same nature is in the one as in the other; if there is no going from God, personally considered, or as in any of the divine Persons, then not from him, as essentially considered: or by his Spirit may be meant himself, for "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24). He adds, "Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" not his gracious presence, for a good man would never seek to flee from that, nothing being more desirable to him; nor is there anything he more earnestly deprecates than to be cast away from it (Psalms 4:6-7; Psalms 51:11), but his essential

presence, which is everywhere; it is in the Hebrew text "from thy face"; and face signifies the essence and nature of God, which is invisible and incomprehensible (Exodus 33:20), then the Psalmist goes on to enumerate all places that could be thought of to flee to, and yet God was there; "If I ascend to heaven, thou art there": could he by any means climb up to heaven, there God is in all the glory of his Majesty; there is his palace, his habitation, and his throne. "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there": whether the place where the wicked are turned, and the apostate angels cast; there God is sustaining them in their being, pouring in his wrath into their consciences, and continuing the punishment inflicted on them: or whether the grave is meant, which is sometimes the sense of the word used, and is a bed to saints (Job 17:13), there God is watching over their dust, preserving it from being lost, in order to raise it up at the last day. "If I take the wings of the morning", and fly as fast as the morning light, which soon reaches the furthest parts of the earth; or as the rays of the sun, which dart from east to west, at its rising, instantly; "and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea"; in the most remote islands of it, or in the uttermost parts of the western shore; "even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me": there should he experience the providential goodness and special favour of God to him; who leads, guides, and upholds his people at the ends of the earth, where some of them sometimes are, and where they have his presence (Isaiah 45:22; Isaiah 24:16), see a like enumeration of places in Amos 9:2-3[11]. Another passage of scripture, proving the Omnipresence of God, is in Isaiah 66:1. "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool". So immense is he that he sits upon the one, and treads on the other: "Where is the house that ye build unto me?" or where can a house be built for him? what place can be found for him he is not possessed of, and does not dwell in already? Stephen, the proto-martyr, produces this to prove, "that the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; that is, cannot be included in them, and limited to them, since he is everywhere, in heaven and in earth (Acts 7:47-50). But nowhere is the Omnipresence of God more expressly declared than in Jeremiah 23:23-24. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not afar off?" yea, he is both; he not only observes persons and things in heaven, which may be thought at hand, and near him; but persons and things on earth, and those at the greatest distance; he is as near to, and as present with the one as the other; and he sees and knows all that is done by them, as if he was at their elbow; and therefore adds, "Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord?" As some might foolishly imagine, supposing him to be limited and confined to heaven above, and was not present to see what was done below; especially in the dark and distant places of the earth: "Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" not only with inhabitants, and with all things, the effects of his power and goodness; but with his nature and essence, which exceeds all bounds of place and space. Hence the Jews call God by the name of "Makom", place; because he fills all places, and is contained in none; is not local and is infinite. Nor is this to be disproved by other passages of Scripture, which may seem, at first sight, to discountenance or contradict it; not such as speak of mens' departing and fleeing from his presence, as Cain and Jonah are said to do (Genesis 4:16; John 1:3), for Cain only went either from the place where he and the Lord had been conversing; or from the public place of worship, at the east of the garden of Eden, where were the symbol of the divine presence, an altar, where he and his brother had sacrificed. Jonah's fleeing, was withdrawing himself from the service of God, and declining to go on his errand; foolishly imagining, that, by going beyond sea, he should avoid being urged to his duty; but he soon found his mistake, and that God was everywhere, and could meet with him by sea and by land. Likewise, not such

that represent God as descending from heaven; as at the building of Babel, at the cry of the sin of Sodom, and on mount Sinai (Genesis 11:5; Genesis 11:7; Genesis 18:21; Exodus 19:18; Exodus 19:20), for these only denote some more than ordinary manifestations of his presence, or exertion of his power; as at Babel, by confounding the language; at Sodom, by destroying that, and the other cities; at Sinai, by giving the law out of the midst of fire, attended with thunder and lightning. Nor such as speak of the Lord not being with wicked men; particularly what Moses said to the disobedient Israelites, "The Lord is not among you; and he will not be with you" (Numbers 14:42-43) which he might very truly say, since the ark of the covenant, the symbol of the divine presence, remained in the camps and went not with them (Numbers 14:44), nor had they any reason to believe that God would be so with them, as to prosper and succeed them, when they acted contrary to his express command: nor is God ever in such sense with wicked men, as with good men; namely, by his gracious presence: but this hinders not, but that he is with them by his omnipresence and power, supporting them in their being. Nor such passages which relate the departure of God from men; as from Samson and Saul (Judges 16:20; 1 Samuel 28:15), since this only respects the withdrawment of uncommon bodily strength from the one; and wisdom and prudence, courage and greatness of soul from the other; leaving him to the fears, distractions, and confusions of his mind; without any hope of success in war: nor such portions of Scripture which express the desertions and distance of God from his people, and their desires that he would return to them, and not cast them away from his presence (Psalms 10:1; Psalms 80:14; Psalms 51:11), since these only respect his gracious presence, the deprivation of that, and the return of it; the manifestations of his love and favour, and the withdrawment and renewal of them. And whereas it is urged against the omnipresence of God, that he is said to be in heaven, and that to be his habitation, and that men pray unto him as their Father in heaven (Psalms 115:3; Isaiah 63:15; Matthew 5:9). In what peculiar sense God may be said to be in heaven, has been observed already; nor is he ever said to be in heaven "only", but in many places to be on earth also, and elsewhere (see Deuteronomy 4:39; Isaiah 66:1); though he is not contained in any place, as not on the earth, so neither can the heaven of heavens contain him (1 Kings 8:27), he was before there was any space or place; his nature, and so this attribute of omnipresence, were the same then as now: and should it be asked, Where did he dwell then? I answer, In himself, in his own immensity and eternity (see Isaiah 57:15). The objection from the pollution of the divine Being, through sordid and filthy places, in which he must be if omnipresent, scarce deserves any regard; since bodies only touch them and are capable of being defiled by them; not spirits, even created ones, as angels, and the souls of men; as the angel in the filthy den of lions where Daniel was, was not; nor the souls of men that are in filthy bodies; much less God a pure, infinite, and uncreated Spirit, who can no more be affected by such means, than the sun is, by its rays striking on a dunghill.

2. The "Eternity" of God belongs to his infinity; for as he is not bounded by space, so neither by time, and therefore eternal. He is often called "the everlasting God", and the "King eternal" (Genesis 21:33; Deuteronomy 33:27; Isaiah 40:28; Jeremiah 10:10; Romans 16:26; 1 Timothy 1:17), yea, eternity itself (1 Samuel 15:29), and is said to inhabit it (Isaiah 57:15). These words, "eternal, everlasting", and "for ever", are sometimes used in an improper sense, as of things which are of a long duration, but limited, and have both a beginning and an end; as the everlasting possession of the land of Canaan, granted in the everlasting covenant of circumcision, and yet both are now at an end (Genesis 17:7-8) the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses are said to be ordinances and statutes for ever; and yet they were designed to continue but for a time, and

have been long since abolished (Numbers 10:8; Numbers 15:15; Numbers 18:8; Numbers 18:11; Numbers 18:19; Numbers 18:23), the temple built by Solomon is said to be a settled place for God to abide in for ever; yea, he himself says, that he would put his name in it for ever; and it should be his rest for ever; and yet it has been demolished long ago (1 Kings 8:13, 1 Kings 9:3; Psalms 132:14), the thrones of David and Solomon are said to be established for ever, and yet, if taken in a literal sense, they are no more: indeed, if understood spiritually, as David's Son and Antitype, his throne will be for ever and ever (2 Samuel 7:12; 2 Samuel 7:16), the earth is said to abide, and not be removed for ever (Psalms 104:5; Ecclesiastes 1:4), yet both that and the heavens shall perish, though not as to substance, yet as to quality, form, figure, and present use. Sometimes this phrase "for ever", only respects the year of jubilee (Exodus 21:6), and, at most, but during life (1 Samuel 1:28).

Some creatures and things are said to be everlasting, and even eternal, which have a beginning, though they have no end; and this is what the schools call "aeviternity", as distinct from eternity: thus angels, and the souls of men, being creatures of God, have a beginning; though, being immaterial and immortal, shall never die. The happiness of the saints is called eternal glory, "eternal weight of glory; eternal life; an eternal inheritance; an house eternal in the heavens" (1 Peter 5:10; Titus 1:2; 2 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Hebrews 9:15). And the misery of the wicked is signified by suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, by everlasting fire, and everlasting punishment, (Jude 1:7; Matthew 25:41; Matthew 25:46), yet these have a beginning, though they will have no end; and so are improperly called eternal.

Eternity, properly so called, is that which is without beginning and end[12], and is without succession, or does not proceed in a succession of moments one after another; and is opposed to time, which has a beginning, goes on in a succession, and has an end: it is the measure of a creature's duration, and began when creatures began to be, and not before, and is proper to them, and not eternity, which only belongs to God. Thales being asked what God was, answered thus, what has neither beginning nor end[13], which is eternity. A Jewish writer[14] defines it, "in which there is no former nor latter; nor order, nor succession of times; it being without motion". And which Boetius[15] expresses in a few words, ``Eternity is the interminable or unbounded and perfect possession of life whole together.'' And is thus described, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalms 90:2).

Eternity, in this sense, is peculiar to God; as he only hath immortality, so he only has eternity; which must be understood not of the Father, or first person only, but of the Son and Spirit also; who are, with the Father, the one God; and possess the same undivided nature; of which Eternity is an attribute. So the Son, though as to his human nature, was born in the fulness of time; yet, as to his divine nature, "his goings forth were from of old, from everlasting": and as Mediator, in his office capacity, he was "set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was" (Micah 5:2; Proverbs 8:23-24). The Spirit of God was concerned in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and so must be before them; and which is the only idea we have of eternity, that it is before time and creatures were (Genesis 1:1-2; Job 26:13; Psalms 33:6), and, according to some, the Spirit is called, "the eternal Spirit" (Hebrews 9:14). Eternity is true of God, essentially considered, and in the sense explained, is to be proved, and that he is without beginning, without end, and without succession.

2a. First, That he is without beginning, or from everlasting: this is put by way of interrogation (Habakkuk 1:12), not as a matter of doubt, but of certainty, and is strongly affirmed (Psalms 93:2), and may be proved,

2a1. From his nature and being; as from his "necessary self-existence": the existence of God is not arbitrary, but necessary: if arbitrary, it must be from his own will, or from the will of another; not from his own will, which would suppose him in being already; and then he must be before he existed, and must be, and not be, at the same instant; which are such contradictions as cannot be endured: not from the will of another, for then that other would be both prior and superior to him, and so be God, and not he: it remains, therefore, that he necessarily existed; and if so, then he must be eternal; since there was none before him; nor can any reason be given why he should necessarily exist at such an instant, and not before. His eternity may be argued from a state of "non-existence" he must have been in, if not eternal; and if so, then there was an instant in which he was not; and if there was an instant in which he was not, then there was an instant in which there was no God; and if so, there may be one again in which he may cease to be; for that which once was not, may again not be; and this will bring us into the depth of atheism; unless it could be supposed, which is quite irrational, that there was a God before him, and that there will be one after him; but this is strongly denied by himself; "Before me there was no God formed; neither shall there be after me" (Isaiah 43:10). The eternity of God may be inferred from his immutability, which has been already established: these two go together, and prove each other (Psalms 102:27), they are both to be observed in the great name of God, Jehovah, which signifies, he is, and was, and is to come, and takes in all time; but he is bounded by none, and is eternally the same; for if he is not eternal, he must have passed from non-existence into being; and what can be a greater change, than to come out of nothing into being? Moreover, God is the most "perfect Being"; which he would not be, if not eternal; for not to be, or to have a beginning, is an imperfection; and it is an humbling consideration to man, a creature of time, that he is but "of yesterday" (Job 8:9). And if God was not eternal, let his beginning be when it may, in comparison of an eternity past, it would be but as yesterday; which can never be admitted of. Add to this, that God is the "first Cause" of all things, and therefore must be eternal: all wise and thoughtful men acknowledge a first Cause; and in their reasoning rise from one cause to another, until they arrive to a first Cause, and there stop, and which they truly call God; for otherwise there would be no subordination of causes: if there was not a first Cause, there would not be a second, nor a third, &c. but all would be first, and all eternal; and if God is the first Cause, then he is without a cause, and therefore must be eternal; hence he is so often called "the first and the last"; a phrase expressive of his eternity (Isaiah 41:4; Isaiah 44:6; Isaiah 48:12). He is the "Creator" of all things, the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are; and therefore must be before all things, as every artificer is before his work made by him; and if before all creatures, then before time, which begins with them, and therefore from eternity, since we can conceive of nothing before time but eternity.

2a2. The Eternity of God may be proved from his "attributes", several of which are said to be eternal, or from everlasting: the "power" of God is expressly called his "eternal power"; and is proved to be so by the works of creation, to which it must be prior (Romans 1:20). The knowledge God has of all things is from eternity; though the things known are in time, his knowledge of them is before time; "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world", ap’ aiwnov, from eternity (Acts 15:18). The "mercy" of God is eternal, it is said to be "from everlasting to

everlasting" (Psalms 103:17). And so the "love" of God, which is no other than himself, for "God is love" (1 John 4:16), his love to his Son, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person", was from everlasting; before the earth, the hills, and mountains were formed, then was he by him, "as one brought up with him", his darling and delight (Proverbs 8:30), our Lord himself says, his Father loved him before the foundation of the world (John 17:24), and as early did he love his elect in him; for he loved them as he loved him (John 17:23), even with an everlasting love, a love which is both from everlasting and to everlasting (Jeremiah 31:3).

2a3. That God is Eternal, may be argued from his purposes, counsels, and decrees; which are said to be "of old", that is, from everlasting (Isaiah 25:1), this is true of them in general; for no new purposes and resolutions rise up, or are framed by him in his mind; for then there would be something in him which was not before; which would imply mutability. Besides, they are expressly said to be "eternal" (Ephesians 3:11), and if they are eternal, then God, in whom they are, and by whom they are formed, must be eternal also. In particular, the purpose of God, according to election, or his choice of men to everlasting life, is eternal; not only was before men had done any good or evil (Romans 9:11), but they were chosen by him "from the beginning" (2 Thessalonians 2:13), not from the beginning of the gospel coming to them, nor of their faith and conversion by it; but from the beginning of time, and before time, even "before the foundation of the world", as is in so many words expressed (Ephesians 1:4), wherefore God, that chose them to salvation, must be eternal. Christ is eminently called the elect of God, being as Man and Mediator, chosen out from among the people (Isaiah 42:1; Psalms 89:19), and the appointment of him, to be the Redeemer and Saviour of men, or the preordination of him to be the Lamb slain for the redemption of his people, was before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20), and therefore God, that foreordained him thereunto, must be as early.

2a4. The Eternity of God may be concluded from the covenant of grace, styled an "everlasting covenant" (2 Samuel 23:5), not only because it will endure immoveable and unalterable for ever, but because it was from everlasting; for though it is sometimes called a new covenant, yet not because newly made, or only newly manifested; but because it is always new, and never waxes old. Christ, the Mediator of it, and with whom it was made, was set up from everlasting as such; and his goings forth in it, representing his people, and acting for them, were from of old, from everlasting (Proverbs 8:22-23; Micah 5:2), and he had a glory with God in it before the world began (John 17:5), there were blessings of goodness laid up in it, and with which Christ, the Mediator of it, was anticipated; yea, the people of God were blessed with these spiritual blessings in Christ, as "they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and had grace given them in him before the world began" (Ephesians 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:9). Promises also were made as early to Christ, and to them in him, into whose hands they were put, and in whom they are, yea and amen; particularly, eternal life was promised by God, that cannot lie, before the world was (Titus 1:2). Now if there was a covenant made by God from everlasting, and Christ was set up by him so early, as the Mediator of it; and there were blessings of grace, and promises of grace, made by him before time was, then he must be from everlasting.

2a5. It may be proved from the works of God in time: all creatures are the works of his hands; all beings have their being from him; and time beginning with them, he that made them must be before all time, and therefore eternal: this is the argument used to prove the eternity of Christ, the Word, that he was in the beginning, that is, from eternity with God; "because all things were made

by him, and that he is the firstborn of every creature, and before all things, because all things are created by him, and by him do all things consist" (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17), and the same proves the eternity of God; for all things are from him, and so have a beginning; but he from whom they are, is from none, has no cause of his being, and therefore must be eternal. So creation is made a proof of his eternal power and Godhead (Romans 1:20), creation proves his eternity, and his eternity proves his deity. Hence Thales said[16], "The most ancient of Beings is God."

2b. Secondly, That God is to everlasting, and without end, may be proved from his "spirituality" and "simplicity", already established; what is mixed and compounded, and consists of parts, may be resolved into them again, and so be dissolved, as bodies may; but spirits, such as angels and the souls of men, being immaterial, are immortal, and continue for ever; and God being a Spirit, an infinite and uncreated one, simple, and uncompounded of parts, must much more be so; and therefore is called, "The incorruptible God" (Romans 1:23). It may be argued from his "independency", he is self-existent; the first Cause, and without any cause; he is the only Potentate, "God over all, blessed for ever", and dependant on none; there is none above him, nor superior to him, that can put an end, to his being; nor can it be thought, he being in such a state of infinite happiness, would ever put an end to it himself. His eternity is to be proved from his "immutability"; for those, as before observed, infer one another. God is immutable, and therefore without end; for what can be a greater change than for a being not to be? Hence God is opposed to creatures, to mortal men, whose flesh is as grass, the most changeable and perishing of anything, and even to the heaven and the earth, they being such; but he is unchangeably the same; and so there is no end of his years (1 Peter 1:24-25; Psalms 102:26-27). This may be inferred from his "dominion" and government; he is, and sits King for ever; he is an everlasting King, his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation, and will never end (Jeremiah 10:10; Psalms 10:16; Psalms 29:10; Daniel 4:3), and therefore he himself must be to everlasting. Moreover, he is not only called the living God (Jeremiah 10:10), but is often said to "live for ever and ever" (Revelation 4:9-10; Revelation 10:6). Hence his purposes and decrees are never frustrated, because he ever lives to bring them into execution: men take up resolutions, and form schemes, which, by reason of death, are never executed; their purposes are broken, and their thoughts perish; but "the counsel of the Lord stands for ever; and the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (Psalms 33:11), and therefore he himself must endure for ever: his promises are all fulfilled; not only because he is able and faithful to perform, but because he continues for ever to make them good; and therefore is said to "keep truth for ever" (Psalms 146:6). His covenant is firm and sure; more immoveable than rocks and mountains; it stands fast, with Christ, for ever, and God commands it for ever; because he ever lives to keep it. His love is to everlasting, as well as from it; he rests in it; nothing can separate from it; and "with everlasting kindness he gathers his people, and has mercy on them"; and therefore must be for ever: his grace, mercy, and goodness, continually endure, and therefore he himself must; and "he will be the portion of his people for ever"; their everlasting ALL in ALL; and they shall reign and dwell with him for evermore. All which proves him to be without end.

2c. Thirdly, The Eternity of God, or his being from everlasting to everlasting, is without succession, or any distinctions of time succeeding one another, as moments, minutes, hours, days, months, and years: the reasons are, because he existed before such were in being; "Before the day was, I am he" (Isaiah 43:13), before there was a day, before the first day of the creation, before there

were any days, consisting of so many hours, and these of so many minutes; and if his eternity past, may it be so called, was without successive duration, or without succeeding moments, and other distinctions of time, why not his duration through time, and to all eternity, in the same manner? Should it be said, that days and years are ascribed to God; it is true, they are; but it is in accommodation and condescension to our weak minds, which are not capable of conceiving of duration but as successive: and besides, those days and years ascribed to God are expressly said not to be as ours (Job 10:5). He is, indeed, called, "The Ancient of Days" (Daniel 7:13), not ancient "in" days, or "through" them, as aged persons are said to be in years, and well stricken in them; not so God: the meaning is, that he is more ancient than days; he was before all days, and his duration is not to be measured by them. And it may be observed, that the differences and distinctions of time are together ascribed to God, and not as succeeding one another; he is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever"; these are all at once, and together with him; he is he "which is, and was, and is to come" (Hebrews 13:8; Revelation 1:4), these meet together in his name, Jehovah[17]; and so in his nature; he co-exists, with all the points of time, in time; but is unmoved and unaffected with any, as a rock in the rolling waves of the sea, or a tower in a torrent of gliding water; or as the rod or pin of a sundial, which has all the hours of the day surrounding it, and the sun, by it casts a shade upon them, points at and distinguishes them, but the stile stands firm and unmoved, and not affected thereby: hence it is that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years; and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8). But if his duration was successive, or proceeded by succeeding moments, days, and years; one day would be but one day with him, and not a thousand; and a thousand days would answer to a thousand days, and not be as one only. Besides, if his duration was measured by a succession of moments, &c. then he would not be "immense, immutable", and "perfect", as he is: not "immense", or unmeasurable, if to be measured by minutes, hours, days, months, and years; whereas, as he is not to be measured by space, so not by time: nor "immutable"; since he would be one minute what he was not before, even older, which cannot be said of God; for as a Jewish writer[18] well observes, it cannot be said of him, that he is older now than he was in the days of David, or when the world was created; for he is always, both before the world was made, and after it will cease to be; times make no change in him. Nor "perfect"; for if his duration was successive, there would be every moment something past and gone, lost and irrecoverable; and something to come not yet arrived to and obtained; and in other respects he must be imperfect: the "knowledge" of God proves him without successive duration. God knows all things, past, present, and to come, that is, which are so to us; not that they are so to him; these he knows at once, and all together, not one thing after another, as they successively come into being; all things are open and manifest to him at once and together, not only what are past and present, but he calls things that are not yet, as though they were; he sees and knows all in one view, in his all-comprehending mind: and as his knowledge is not successive, so not his duration. Moreover, in successive duration, there is an order of former and latter; there must be a beginning from whence every flux of time, every distinction proceeds; every moment and minute has a beginning, from whence it is reckoned, so every hour, day, month, and year: but as it is said of Christ, with respect to his divine nature, so it is true of God, essentially considered, that he has "neither beginning of days, nor end of life" (Hebrews 7:3). In short, God is Eternity itself, and inhabits eternity; so he did before time, and without succession; so he does throughout time; and so he will to all eternity. The very heathens[19] themselves had a notion of their supreme God, as eternal: and this is the definition Thales gave of God; for being asked, What is God? answered,

What has neither beginning nor end; and therefore calls him, the most Ancient[20]. Sallustius[21] denied that the nature of God was made, because it always was.

ENDNOTES:

[1] to ton apanta apeiron yronon kai thn apeirian periecon telov aiwn estin, Aristot. de Coelo. l. 1. c. 9.

[2] apeiron ara to en, ei mhte archn mhte teleuthn ecei, Plato in Parmenide, p. 1117. "nihil cum habeat extremum, infinitum sit necesse est", Cicero de Divinat. l. 2. c. 50.

[3] Ambo apud Lactant. de fals. relig. l. 1. c. 5.

[4] De Diis, c. 2. "Jovis omnia plena", Virgil. Bucolic. eclog. 3.

[5] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 25. 1.

[6] In rad. Mwq.

[7] Vid. Baal Aruch in voce Mwqm.

[8] Pirke Eliezer, c. 35.

[9] Praefat. ad Comment. in lib. Esther.

[10] Leg. Allegor. l. 1. p. 48.

[11] "Quo fugis Encelade, quascumque accesseris oras--sub Jove semper eris"-----Virgil.

[12] ta d’aidia, agenhta kai afyarta, Aristot. Ethic. l. 6. c. 3.

[13] ti to yeion, to mhte archn econ, mhte teleuthn, Thales in Laert. l. 1. Vita Thalet.

[14] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 18.

[15] Consolat. Philosoph. l. 5. p. 137.

[16] presbutaton twn ontwn, yeov, agenhton gar, apud Laert. ut supra.

[17] Plato observes, that to a temporal being we say of it, "it is, and was, and will be; "but to the eternal Being, "th sto estin monon, to him only it is, "in Timaeo, p. 1051.

[18] Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, fol. 66. l.

[19] "O pater, O hominum, ivumque aeterna potestas", Virgil. Aeneid, l. 10. v. 17. "Alii Dii aliquando Dii non fuerunt, sed Jupiter ab aeterno fuit Deus", Pompon. Sabin. in ibid. dihkwn ex aiwnov atermonov eiv eteron aiwna, Aristot. de Mundo, c. 7.

[20] Laert. Vita Thalet. l. 1. p. 23, 24. Plutarch, Sept. Sap. Conviv. vol. 2. p. 153.

[21] De Diis, c. 2.

02. Of the Intercession of Christ

Of the Intercession of Christ

Secondly, another branch of Christ's priestly office is his intercession; and this may be considered much in the same method as the former, by showing,

1. That Christ was to be an Intercessor, or was to make intercession for his people: when Christ was called to the office of a priest, and invested with it, which was done in the council and covenant of grace; he was put upon making request on their behalf; he is bid to ask them of his Father, as his portion and inheritance, to be possessed and enjoyed by him; which is promised him on making such a request as he did, and they were given him (Psalms 2:8; John 17:6), and he not only asked them, but life for them, spiritual and eternal life, with all the blessings and comforts of life; which, upon asking, were given; God gave him the desires of his heart, and did not withhold the request of his lips: all blessings were bestowed upon his chosen in him; and grace, which is comprehensive of all blessings, was given them in him before the world began (Psalms 21:2; Psalms 21:4; Ephesians 1:3; 2 Timothy 1:9), and this asking, or requesting, is a species of Christ's intercession, and an early instance of it, and of his success in it; and a specimen of what was to be done by him hereafter. The intercession of Christ was spoken of in prophecy in the books of the Old Testament; Elihu, in Job 33:23 not only speaks of him in his prophetic office, as an interpreter of his Father's mind and will; but as an advocate, pleading on the behalf of the man to whom he shows and applies his righteousness; that he be delivered from the evil of destruction, from wrath and ruin; since he had found a ransom, a ransom price, and redemption by it; as in Hebrews 9:1-28; Hebrews 12:1-29 and therefore insists, in point of right and justice, that he be secure from condemnation and death: again, in Psalms 16:4 which is a Psalm concerning Christ, whose dead body would not be left in the grave so long as to see corruption; but be raised and shown the path of life (Psalms 16:10-11), now two sorts of persons are spoken of in it; one who are called saints, excellent ones, in whom was all Christ's delight (Psalms 16:3), and another sort, that "hastened after another god", another savior, and not Christ; concerning whom he says, "I will not take up their names into my lips"; that is, he would not pray or make intercession for them; and has the same sense as the words in John 17:9. "I pray for them; I pray not for the world": and saying that he would not take the names of some into his lips, supposes that he would take the names of others; that is, pray and intercede for them: but what most clearly foretells the intercession of Christ, and is a prophecy of it, is a passage in Isaiah 53:12 "and made intercession for the transgressors"; that is, would make intercession for them, according to the prophetic style used in that chapter; and which was particularly fulfilled, when Christ upon the cross prayed for his enemies (Luke 23:34). The types of Christ's intercession are many. As Abel's sacrifice was a type of Christ's, so his speaking after his death was a type of Christ's speaking since his death: it is said of Abel, that he, "being dead, yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4), so Christ, though dead, is alive, and lives for ever, and makes intercession, and speaks for his people; as Abel's blood had a voice in it, so has the blood of Christ; but with this difference, the blood of Abel cried against his brother; Christ's blood cries for his brethren, on their behalf: Abel's blood cried for vengeance on the

murderer; Christ's blood calls for, and speaks peace and pardon to guilty men (Hebrews 12:24). Melchizedek, as he was a type of Christ, in his kingly and priestly offices, so in that part of the latter which respects intercession; he prayed for Abraham, that he might be blessed both with temporal and spiritual blessings, with blessings both in heaven and on earth (Genesis 14:19), so Christ prays and intercedes for his people, that they may have all the blessings of goodness here and hereafter bestowed upon them. Abraham likewise was a type of Christ in his intercession, when he so warmly interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah, at least for the righteous in those cities; in which he so far succeeded, that righteous Lot and his, were delivered from destruction in them. Aaron being a good spokesman, one that could speak well, was a type of Christ, who has the tongue of the learned, and can speak well on the behalf of his distressed ones; and who can plead their cause thoroughly, effectually, and infallibly: so was Moses, when the children of Israel had sinned in making the golden calf, and were threatened with destruction, he interposed in their behalf, and pleaded they might be spared; or otherwise, that he might be blotted out of the book of life, or die: and such is the love of Christ to the spiritual Israel of God, that he has died for them; and pleads his death that they might live. Particularly the entrance of the high priest once a year, with the blood of beasts, with a censer of burning coals, and an handful of incense, was an eminent type of Christ's entrance into heaven, and his intercession there; who went in thither, not with the blood of beasts, but with his own blood; and so to a better purpose: the burning coals were emblems of his painful sufferings; and the incense put upon them represented his powerful mediation and intercession, founded upon his sufferings and death, and satisfaction for sin made thereby. Likewise the high priest going into the most holy place, with the names of the children of Israel on his breastplate, and bearing their judgment before the Lord, and taking away the sin of their holy things, typified Christ as the representative of his people in heaven; appearing in the presence of God for them, presenting his sacrifice for the taking away of their sins, even those of their most solemn services; (see Leviticus 16:2; Leviticus 16:12-14; Exodus 28:29-30).

2. Christ is an intercessor; he has executed, he is executing, and will continue to execute this office; and the inquiries to be made concerning it are: where, when, and in what manner, he has made, or does make intercession? for what he intercedes, and for whom; and the excellency and usefulness of his intercession?

2a. First, Where, when, and in what manner his intercession has been and is performed? And it may be considered as,

2a1. Before his incarnation: that he then interceded, and was a Mediator between God and man, is evident from that access to God which was then had: upon the sin and fall of our first parents they were driven from the presence of God, and no access could be had unto him, nor communion with him, on the foot of works; none, but through Christ, the Mediator, who is the only Mediator between God and men; there never was, nor never will be any other; through him both Jews and Gentiles, Old and New testament saints, have access to God; those under the former dispensation put up their prayers to God through Christ, and for his sake; and through his mediation and intercession they were heard and accepted. So Daniel prayed to be "heard for the Lord's sake"; that is for Christ's sake (Daniel 9:17). Christ was then "the Angel of God's presence"; who was not only in the presence of God, but appeared there for his people, and by whom they were introduced and admitted into the presence of God, had audience of him, and acceptance with him (Isaiah 63:9). We have an instance of Christ's intercession for the people of the Jews, when in distress,

who is represented as an angel among the myrtle trees in the bottom; signifying the low estate the Jews were in; and as interceding and pleading with God for them; "and the Lord answered the angel that talked with me, with good and comfortable words": his intercession was acceptable, prevalent, and succeeded (Zechariah 1:11-13). But a more clear and full instance of Christ's intercession for his people in distress, through sin, is in Zechariah 3:1-4 where Joshua, a fallen saint, is represented as greatly defiled with sin; and Satan standing at his right hand, to accuse and charge him, and get judgment to pass against him; when Christ, the angel of the covenant, appears on his behalf, rebukes Satan, and pleads electing and calling grace in favour of the criminal; and, on the foot of his own sacrifice to be offered, satisfaction to be made, orders his filthy garments to be taken away, and him to be clothed with change of raiment, his own righteousness, and dismissed.

2a2. Christ acted as an intercessor in his state of humiliation. We often read of his praying to God, and sometimes a whole night together, and of his offering up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, especially in the garden and on the cross; which might be chiefly on his own account, though not without regard to his people: at other times we find him praying for particular persons; as at the grave of Lazarus, where he wept and groaned in Spirit, and inwardly put up supplications, which were heard; for he thanks his Father for hearing him; and declared he always heard him (John 11:41-42). And he prayed for Peter particularly, when tempted, that his "faith" might "not fail", and was heard; for though he fell by the temptation, he was at once recovered (Luke 22:32). He prayed for all his disciples, in John 17:1-26 which is a specimen of his intercession in heaven for all his elect: yea, he prayed for his enemies, and such of his elect who were then in a state of enmity; and who, in consequence of his intercession, were converted and comforted; though they had been concerned in taking away his life (Luke 23:34; Acts 2:36-41). Such virtue is there in his blood, and in his intercession founded upon it!

2a3. Christ is now interceding in heaven for his people; he is gone to heaven, entered there, and is set down at the right hand of God; where he ever lives to make intercession (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25), for so his intercession is sometimes represented, as after his death and resurrection from the dead, and session at God's right hand; and which is performed, perhaps not vocally, as on earth; for as he could request and intercede before he assumed an human nature, even in the council and covenant of peace, without a voice, so he can now in heaven; though it is not improbable but that he may make use of his human voice at his pleasure; though it cannot with certainty be affirmed, yet it is not to be denied: however, it is certain that he does not intercede in like manner as when on earth, with prostration of body, cries, and tears; which would be quite inconsistent with his state of exaltation and glory, being set down at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour; nor as supplicating an angry Judge, and entreating him to be pacified, and show favour; for peace is made by the blood of Christ's cross; and God is pacified towards his people for all that they have done: nor as litigating a point in a court of judicature; for though Christ has names and titles taken from such like procedures, as counselor, pleader, and advocate; yet not as engaged in a cause dependant and precarious: but the intercession of Christ is carried on in heaven, by appearing in the presence of God there for his people; it is enough that he shows himself, as having done, as their Surety, all that law and justice could require; by presenting his blood, his sacrifice, and righteousness: Christ is gone with his blood into the holiest of all, and sprinkled it on the throne of mercy, before God; and where he is in the midst of the

throne, as a Lamb that had been slain; his sacrifice being always in view of his divine Father, and his righteousness always in sight; with which God is well pleased, because by it his law is magnified and made honorable, and his justice satisfied: all which, of themselves, speak on the behalf of his people. Moreover, Christ intercedes, not as asking a favour, but as an advocate in open court, who pleads, demands, and requires, according to law, in point of right and justice, such and such blessings to be bestowed upon, and applied unto such persons he has shed his blood for; he speaks, not in a charitative, but in an authoritative way, declaring it as his will, on the ground of what he has done and suffered, that so it should be; a specimen of this we have in the finishing blessing of all, glorification (John 17:24). Christ performs this his office also by offering up the prayers and praises of his people; which become acceptable to God through the sweet incense of his mediation and intercession (Revelation 8:3-4; Hebrews 13:15; 1 Peter 2:5). Once more, Christ executes this office by seeing to it, that all the blessings of grace promised in covenant, and ratified by his blood, are applied by his Spirit to the covenant ones; and so he sits as a Priest on his throne, and sees the travail of his soul with satisfaction; when, as those he engaged for are reconcile by his death, so they are saved by his interceding life; are effectually called by grace, and put into the possession of what was stipulated and procured for them.

2b. Secondly, The next thing to be considered is, what Christ makes intercession for more particularly? For the "conversion" of his unconverted ones: "Neither pray I for those alone", says he, meaning his disciples that were called; "but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). And for the comfort of those that are convinced of sin, distressed with a sense of it, and need comfort; in consequence of his intercession, he sends the Comforter to them, to take of his things, and show them to them, and shed abroad his love in them, and so fill them with joy and peace in believing; insomuch that they have peace in him while they have tribulation in the world. And particularly for discoveries and applications of pardoning grace and mercy; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father"; not that he pleads for sinning, nor that any may be connived at in it; but that he may have a manifestation and application of the pardon of it, in consequence of his blood shed for it. And as Christ has a fellow feeling with his people under temptations, and helps them that are tempted; this is one way of doing it, interceding for "strength" for them to bear up under temptations, to be carried through them, and delivered out of them; and so that they might have "persevering grace" to hold on, and out, unto the end; he prays not that they be taken out of the world, but that they may be kept from the evil of it (John 17:11; John 17:15). Lastly, he intercedes for their "glorification"; one principal branch of which will lie in beholding his glory (John 17:24). This was the joy set before him, and which he kept in view in all his sufferings; and for the sake of which he endured them so cheerfully; and it is that which is uppermost in his heart, in his intercession for them; nor will he cease pleading till he has all his people in heaven with him.

2c. Thirdly, The persons Christ makes intercession for are not the world, the men of it, and all that are in it; for Christ himself says, "I pray not for the world"; but for those that were chosen and given him out of the world; and who, in due time, are effectually called out of it by his grace: the objects of Christ’s intercession are the same with those of election, redemption, and effectual calling; to whom Christ is a propitiation, for them he is an advocate (John 17:9; 1 John 2:1-2). The high priest bore upon his heart, in the breastplate of judgment, only the names of the children of Israel; and they are only the spiritual Israel of God whom Christ bears upon his heart, whom he represents

and intercedes for in the holiest of all; and not for those only who actually believe, but for those who shall hereafter; even who are, for the present, enemies to him, and averse to his rule over them; as his prayers in the garden, and on the cross, show (John 17:20; Luke 23:34). It is for all the elect Christ intercedes, that have been, are, or shall be, scattered up and down in each of the parts of the world, and in all ages and periods of time, that they be partakers of his grace here, and be glorified with him hereafter; hence says the apostle, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?" since not only God justifies them, Christ died for them, is risen again, and is at the right hand of God; but makes intercession for them, and answers to, and removes all charges brought against them (Romans 8:33-34), and for those even though and while they are sinners and transgressors; for so it is said of him in prophecy; "and hath made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12), and as he died for such, yea, the chief of sinners, and calls them by his grace, and receives them into fellowship with himself, it is no wonder that he should pray and intercede for them.

2d. Fourthly, The excellent properties and use of Christ’s intercession. Christ is an only intercessor; "there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), though the Spirit of God makes intercession for the saints, it is within them, not without them, at the right hand of God; and it is with groans unutterable; not so Christ in heaven, saints in heaven are no intercessors for saints on earth; they are ignorant of their persons and cases, and therefore cannot intercede for them; nor angels, as say the papists, who distinguish between mediators of redemption and mediators of intercession; the latter they say angels are, and Christ the former: but the Scripture knows no such distinction; he that is the Redeemer is the only Intercessor; he that is the Propitiation is the sole Advocate; and he is every way fit for it: being the Son of God, he has interest in his Father’s heart; being the mighty God, he is mighty to plead, thoroughly to plead the cause of his people; and having offered up himself as man, to be a sacrifice for them, he has a sufficient plea to make on their behalf; and having the tongue of the learned, can speak well for them; and being Jesus Christ the righteous, the holy and harmless High Priest, is a proper person to be the "advocate" for those that sin; as such he is with the Father, at hand, and to be called unto; is ready to defend [1] the cause of his people, and deliver them from their adversary: and he is a "prevalent" advocate and intercessor; he is always heard; he was when on earth, and now in heaven; his mediation is always acceptable, and ever succeeds (John 11:41-42). And he performs this his office "freely", willingly, and cheerfully; he never rejects any case put into his hands, nor refuses to present the petitions of his people to his divine Father; but is always ready to offer up the prayers of all saints with the much incense of his mediation (Revelation 8:3-4). And his intercession is "perpetual"; though he was dead he is alive, and lives for evermore; and "he ever lives to make intercession for them" that come unto God by him (Hebrews 7:25). Many are the benefits and blessings of grace derived to saints from Christ’s intercession for them; such as access to God through him, acceptance with God in him, both of persons and services, communications of grace from him, the application of every blessing of the covenant to them; for though the impetration of them is by the death of Christ, the application of them is owing to his life (Romans 5:10).

ENDNOTES:

[1] “Advocatus appellatur, etiamsi nihil dicat, neque agat, sed qui tantum paratus sit defendere”, Vallae Elegantiar. l. 4. c. 12.

02. Of the Internal Acts and Works of God

Of The Internal Acts And Works Of God; And Of His Decrees In General.

Having considered the nature, perfections, and persons in God, I shall now proceed to treat of his acts and operations; which are such as are worthy of a Being possessed of those perfections which have been described; and so must be worthy of our notice. God is "actus purus et simplicissimus"; he is all act; if one may so say; having nothing passive in him; and therefore must be active and operative; "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work", (John 5:17) in which words there is a term fixed, unto which God had worked, the then present time Christ spoke them; but none from whence he began to work: he had not only worked in providence till then, since the creation, and not only at the creation, but from all eternity; his active and eternal mind had always been at work; the thoughts of his heart were always employed in devising, forming, and settling things that should be done in time; and as the three divine Persons were taking infinite delight and pleasure in each other, so in the foreviews of what would be done by each of them in time, for the setting forth and manifestation of their glory. The acts and works of God may be distinguished into internal and external. The "external" acts and works of God, are such as are done in time, visible to us, or known by us; as creation, providence, redemption, &c. His "internal" acts and works, which will be first considered, and are what were done in eternity, are commonly distinguished into personal and essential. Personal acts are such as are peculiar to each person, and distinguish the one from the other; and which have been taken notice of already, in treating of the doctrine of the Trinity. "Essential" acts are such as are common to them all; for as they have the same nature and essence, they have the same understanding, will, and affections; and the same acts appropriate to these belong unto them, both with respect to themselves and the creatures they meant to make; that is to say, they mutually know one another, love each other, and will each other’s happiness and glory; and have the same knowledge of, will concerning, and affection for creatures to be brought into being by them; and among these internal acts of the mind of God, are his purposes and decrees; and these are "purposed in himself", (Ephesians 1:9) for what is true of one of his purposes, is true of all; and that there are such in God is certain; and which respect, not only the affairs of grace, but those of providence; even the whole earth, and all things in it, (Romans 9:11; Ephesians 1:11; Ephesians 3:11; Isaiah 14:24; Isaiah 14:27) and which go by various names in scripture; sometimes they are called, "the thoughts of his heart"; these are the deep things of God, which lie in the inmost recesses of his mind; are only known by himself, and searched by his Spirit; as the thoughts of a man can only be known by the spirit of man within him (Psalms 33:11; Jeremiah 29:11; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11). Sometimes they are called the "counsels" of God, said to be "of old", ancient ones, even from eternity; and to be "faithfulness and truth"; faithfully and truly performed in time, (Isaiah 25:1) and their being so called does not suppose any degree of ignorance, or want of knowledge in God, or as if he was at a loss what to resolve upon; and therefore consulted with himself, or others, what was fittest to be determined on; but because such resolutions, that are taken after mature deliberation and consultation, are generally formed in the wisest manner; and commonly most successful in the execution of them; therefore the purposes of

God, being made with the highest wisdom, from thence they have the name of "counsels". They are sometimes called "decrees", and so we commonly call them; being the determinations of the mind of God; what he has fixed, settled, and resolved upon, (Daniel 4:17; Zephaniah 2:2) and so the "determinate counsel" of God, (Acts 2:23) sometimes they are expressed by "preordination" and predestination; so Christ is said to be "foreordained" before the foundation of the world, (1 Peter 1:20) and men are said to be "predestinated" to the adoption of children, and to an inheritance, (Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:11) that is, afore appointed thereunto in the decrees of God; and often they are signified by his "will" and "pleasure"; by the "counsel of his will"; and by his "counsel" and "pleasure", (Romans 9:19; Ephesians 1:11; Isaiah 46:10) they containing and expressing his mind and will; what it is his pleasure should be. Now concerning these may be observed,

1. First, The proof to be given of them, that there are decrees and purposes in God; not merely ideas of things future, but settled determinations concerning them; which may be evinced from the nature and perfections of God. God is a Spirit, uncreated, infinite, operative, and active: he is a pure act, as before observed; and must have been for ever active in himself; his eternal mind must always have been employed, and continually at work; as the mind of man is never without its thoughts, and the understanding has its acts, and the will its volitions; so God never was without the thoughts of his heart, the acts of his understanding, and the volitions of his will. The "Sovereignty" of God over all, and his "independency", clearly show, that whatever is done in time, is according to his decrees in eternity; for if anything comes to pass without the will of God, or contrary to it, or what he has not commanded, that is decreed, (Lamentations 3:37) how is he a sovereign Being, that does according to his will in heaven and in earth, and works all things after the counsel of his will? (Daniel 4:35; Ephesians 1:11) and if anything is by chance and fortune, or the mere effect of second causes, and of the free will of men, independent of the will of God, and if he works under these, in subserviency to them, and takes his measures of operation from them, then he must be dependent on them; and how then can it be said with truth, that "of him, and through him, and to him, are all things?" (Romans 11:36). The "immutability" of God requires eternal decrees in him, concerning everything that is in time; for if anything is done in time, that did not fall under his notice and will in eternity, this must be new to him, and produce a change in him; or if an after will in time arises in him, respecting anything he would have done, which he willed not before, this argues a change in him; whereas, in him there is "no variableness, nor shadow of turning". The knowledge of God, supposes and clearly proves and establishes the decrees of God; he is a "God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed", (1 Samuel 2:13) he has knowledge of all actions done in time; and such an exact knowledge of them, as if they were weighed by him, and before him; and this knowledge of them is not successive, as they are performed; "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning", or from eternity, (Acts 15:18) both what he would do himself, and what he wills to be done by others: and this knowledge is founded on his decrees; he knows that such and such things will be, because he has determined they shall be. Once more, the "wisdom" of God makes it necessary that there should be eternal purposes and decrees in him, concerning things future; he is the all-wise and only wise God, and in wisdom makes all his works; which cannot be supposed to be made without previous thoughts and determinations concerning them: what wise man undertakes a building, without first determining what it shall be, of what materials it shall be made, in what form and manner, as well as for what end? And can we imagine that the all-wise God, who builds all things, should go about them without preconcerted

measures, and settled determinations concerning them; "Who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working?" (Isaiah 28:29).

2. Secondly, The extent of the decrees and purposes of God, deserve notice and consideration: and they reach to all things that come to pass in the world, from the beginning to the end of it. The world, and all things in it, were created by and according to the will and pleasure of God (Revelation 4:11). The heavens, their creation, stability, duration, and passing away, and succeeded by new heavens, are by a decree that cannot pass (Psalms 148:6). The earth, in its different forms, before and after the flood, its continuance, and final destruction, with the day or time of it, are by the word or decree of God (2 Peter 3:5-7; 2 Peter 3:10). The sea, and the place the receptacle of it, and its boundary, the sand, which its waters cannot pass, are by a perpetual decree (Job 38:10-11; Proverbs 8:29; Jeremiah 5:21). The rain which is exhausted out of it, has its decree; and there is not a shower falls but by the will of God; whether it be given as a mercy, to make fruitful seasons, or whether it be withheld, or poured down in too great plenty, in a way of judgment; it is all according to the word, will, and decree of God (Job 28:26; Amos 4:7-8; Amos 5:8). The peopling of the world; the distinction of nations; the rise, progress, and ruin of states, kingdoms, and empires, are all according to the decrees of God; even every petty state and kingdom, as well as the four grand monarchies; the destruction of the first of which, the Babylonian monarchy, as it was by the decree of the Watchers, and by the demand of the Holy Ones; that is, by the decree of the most High; so the origin of it, and its rise to all its glory and grandeur; and the same is true of all the rest (see Deuteronomy 32:8; Daniel 2:38-44; Daniel 4:17; Daniel 4:20). Particularly, the people of Israel, a select and distinguished people from all others; their original from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; their servitude in a land not theirs, for four hundred years; their settlement in the land of Canaan; their government under judges and kings; and their several captivities, were all determined; as well as their last destruction, when the desolations determined, were poured upon the desolate; and so is their future conversion and restoration (Genesis 15:14; Exodus 15:17; Daniel 9:26-27; Romans 11:25-26). The church of God, in its different states, under the legal dispensation; the time appointed of the Father, when it was under tutors and governors, (Galatians 4:1-2) and under the gospel dispensation, the world to come, the time of reformation, when all things became new; the former covenant waxed old, and vanished away, and the ordinances of it, and new ones took place; and which continues to be the accepted time and day of salvation; all are by divine appointment. The persecutions and sufferings of the church of Christ under the ten Roman emperors, signified by ten days, (Revelation 2:10) and under Rome papal, for a time, and times, and half a time; even forty two months, or one thousand, two hundred and sixty days or years; the time of the church’s being in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and of the reign of antichrist, are all fixed by the decree of God; and when the time is up, the Angel will swear by the living God, that time shall be no longer; that is, antichristian time, (Revelation 10:6; Revelation 11:2-3; Revelation 12:14; Revelation 13:5) as well as the glory of the church in the latter day; for which there is a set time; and which God will hasten, in his own time; when there will be great light and prosperity, numerous conversions, a great spread of the gospel, and an enlargement of the interest of Christ, and much purity and righteousness (Psalms 102:13; Isaiah 60:1-22). In short, everything respecting all the individuals of the world, that have been, are, or shall be, all correspond with the decrees of God, and are according to them; mens’ coming into the world, the time of it, and all circumstances attending it; all events and occurrences they meet with, throughout the whole time of life; their places of

habitation, their stations, calling, and employment; their circumstances of riches and poverty, of health and sickness, adversity and prosperity; their time of going out of the world, with everything attending that; all are according to the determinate counsel and will of God, (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2; Ecclesiastes 7:14; Acts 17:26; Job 14:5) and particularly, all that relate to the people of God, as well their spiritual and eternal, as temporal concerns; their election of God, their redemption by Christ, their effectual calling, which is according to the purpose of God; the time, manner, and means of it; all their changes in life; their afflictions and distresses, deliverances, and salvations from temptation and trouble; yea, even the final state and condition of good men and bad men, is settled and determined: but this will be more particularly considered under the special decrees of God, respecting rational creatures. All that Christ was to be, do, and suffer for his people, are what the hand and counsel of God before determined; his incarnation, the time of his coming into the world; all that he met with, from the hand of God, from men and devils, while in it; his sufferings and death, and all circumstances attending the same (Galatians 4:4; Acts 4:28; Acts 2:23; Luke 22:22; Luke 22:37). In a word, everything that comes to pass in this world, from the beginning to the end of it, is pre-ordained; everything, good and bad; good by his effective decrees; that is, such by which he determines what he will do himself, or shall be done by others; and evil things, by his permissive decrees, by which he suffers things to be done; and which he overrules for his own glory; yea, things contingent, which, with respect to second causes, may seem to be, or not be, as the free actions of men; such as the prophesies, founded on decrees, concerning the names of Josiah and Cyrus, and of actions being performed by them of their own free will, many hundreds of years before they were born; nay, even things of the least importance, as well as the greatest; the hairs of mens' heads are numbered; two sparrows, not worth more than a farthing, and yet fall not to the ground, without the knowledge, will, and purpose of God (Matthew 10:29-30).

3. Thirdly, The properties of the purposes and decrees of God, may next be considered.

3a. As they are internal acts, they are immanent ones; they are in God, and remain and abide in him; and while they are so, they put nothing into actual being, they are concerned about, until they bring forth, or are brought forth into execution: then they pass upon their respective objects, terminate on them, and issue in actual operation; and then they are called "transient" acts; and till then they are secrets in God's breast, and are unknown to men.

3b. They are eternal; as God himself is eternal, so are they; for, as some divines express it, God's decrees are himself decreeing, and therefore if he is from everlasting to everlasting, they are so likewise; if the knowledge of God, respecting all his works, is from the beginning, or from eternity, which arises from his decrees, then they themselves must be from eternity; and if the particular decree of election was before the foundation of the world, as it was, (Ephesians 1:4) the same must be true of all the decrees of God, which are all of a date; for no new will, nor new act of the will of God, arise in him in time.

3c. The decrees of God are most free; they are the free acts of his will, without any force or compulsion, and are not influenced by any motive from without himself; as "he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy", and exercises it freely, and on whom he pleases; so he freely decreed to have mercy as he pleased; as he hides the things of the gospel from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes, as seems good in his sight; he freely determined so to do: indeed,

having made those decrees, there is a necessity of the performance of them; but the making of them was quite free.

3d. They are most wise decrees; as God is a wise Being, and does all his works in wisdom, so his decrees are laid in the deepest wisdom; which, though unsearchable by us, and may be unaccountable to us; yet there is, as the apostle expresses it, speaking of them, "a depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God in them" (Romans 11:33).

3c. They are immutable and unalterable; they are the mountains of brass, out of which come forth the horses and chariots, the executioners of divine providence; signified by mountains, for their immoveableness, and by mountains of brass, for their greater stability and firmness (Zechariah 6:1-8). The decrees of the Medes and Persians, when signed and sealed, were not to be changed or altered: but these are more unchangeable and unalterable than they were: we read of the immutability of the counsel of God, (Hebrews 6:17) his purposes and decrees, which, like himself, are the same today, yesterday, and for ever; without any variableness, or shadow of turning.

3f. The decrees of God are always effectual; they cannot be frustrated or disannulled, or become of no effect; "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" (Isaiah 14:27). The purposes of men are often frustrated, through want of foresight, not being able to foresee what may turn up, which may hinder the execution of their designs; but no unforeseen accident can arise to put any stop in the way of executing the decrees of God; since all things are at once in his eternal view, who sees the end from the beginning: men sometimes fail of bringing their resolutions into execution, for want of power: but God is omnipotent, and is able to do, and therefore does whatever he pleases; he is in one mind, and none can turn him; and what he desires, he does; his counsel stands, and he does all his pleasure; and the thoughts of his heart are to all generations. To say no more; the end of the decrees of God is his own glory; he has "made", that is, appointed "all things for himself", for the glorifying his perfections, (Proverbs 16:4) there may be, and are, inferior ends, as the good of his creatures, &c. but his glory is the supreme end, and all others are subordinate to it.

02. Of the Introduction of the New Covenant

Of the Abrogation of the Old Covenant, Or First Administration of it, And the Introduction of the New, Or Second Administration of it. When we speak of the Abrogation of the Covenant this is to be understood, not of the covenant of grace, as to the matter and substance of it, which remains invariably the same in all periods of time; it is an everlasting covenant; it is ordered in all things and sure; it can never be broken and made void; every promise of it is unalterable, and every blessing irreversible; the covenant of peace can never be removed; it will stand firm to all generations; but with respect to the form of the administration of it only, even the form of it, under the former, or Old Testament dispensation, before described; and in order to set this in its true and proper light,

1. First, Let it be observed, that it was never designed that the first administration of the covenant of grace should continue always in that form; it was foretold that there should be a cessation of it, and therefore it might be expected.

1a. It was only intended to continue for a certain time, called, "The time of reformation" (Hebrews 9:10), when there would be a reform from burdensome rites and ceremonies; or "of correction," when what was faulty and deficient would be corrected, amended, and become perfect; or "of direction," when the saints would be directed to look to Christ, the substance of types and figures, and for perfection in him; the same with "the time appointed of the Father," until which time, children, though heirs, are under tutors and governors; so the Israelites were under the elements of the world, the ceremonies of the former dispensation, under the tutorage and pedagogy of the law: for the "law," the ceremonial law, was their "schoolmaster unto Christ," that led them to him, and instructed them in him; but when he came, they were no longer under a schoolmaster; and this was when "the fulness of time was come," agreed on between the Father and the Son; at which time the Son was sent, "that they might receive the adoption of children," and be no more considered as in their nonage, and as needing the instructions of a schoolmaster (Galatians 3:1-4; Galatians 3:24-25).

1b. The ancient form of the administration of the covenant of grace, in a course of time, was limited to a certain people in a certain country, worshipping at a certain place, and sacrificing on the same altar. The word, worship and service of God, peculiarly belonged to the Jews, which was their distinguishing privilege above all the nations of the world (Psalms 147:19-20; Romans 3:1-2; Romans 9:4). All their males were obliged three times in the year to appear at Jerusalem and worship together; and all their offerings and sacrifices were to be brought and offered on the altar there, and no where else (Deuteronomy 12:11; Deuteronomy 12:14; Deuteronomy 16:16). Now such a state of things was never designed to continue always; since when Shiloh, the Messiah, should come, there would be a gathering of the people to him, of people out of all nations of the world, who were to be blessed in him; he was to be set up as an ensign to them, to whom they would seek; from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, his name was to be great among the Gentiles, and incense to be offered to it in every place (Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 11:10; Malachi 1:11). Now to such a dispensation the former state of things could never suit, and

therefore could not be intended to be continued; the people of all nations could never be convened into one country, and worship at one place, and sacrifice on one altar.

1c. It is expressly foretold, that there would be "a new covenant," or a new administration of it; and that the former, in course, would cease (Jeremiah 31:31-32), and it is upon this the apostle reasons, and proves the abrogation of the former covenant, "in that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old" (Hebrews 8:8; Hebrews 8:13). Particularly it was foretold, that sacrifices should cease, and be no longer acceptable to God; which were a considerable branch of the administration of the old covenant. These were from the beginning, as early as the first manifestation of the covenant of grace to fallen man: indeed, while they were in use by divine appointment, they were not in such high esteem with God as moral obedience and spiritual services (1 Samuel 15:22; Psalms 69:30-31; Hosea 6:6). And plain hints were given, that the time would come when they should be no more practiced and regarded David had knowledge, by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, of what Christ, the surety of his people, said to his divine Father in the council and covenant of peace, and what he would say again when he came into the world to be their Saviour; "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire," &c. "Then said I, Lo, I come" &c. (Psalms 40:6-7; Hebrews 10:5-7). Christ's coming into the world to offer up himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, was virtually saying, that God would have legal sacrifices no longer ordered up, and would no more accept of them. And Daniel expressly says, that the Messiah would "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease;" the daily sacrifice, and every other offering according to the law (Daniel 9:27). And the Jews themselves say [1], "that all sacrifices will cease in time to come (in the time of their vainly expected Messiah) but the sacrifice of praise."

According to prophecy, the Levitical priesthood, with which so many rites and ceremonies were connected, and upon which sacrifices were established, and in the exercise of which they were performed, was to be changed; the Messiah was to come, an High Priest of another order of priesthood than that of Aaron; "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalms 110:4), which are the words of God the Father to Christ, and from whence the apostle argues the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and the change of it; and also of necessity the change of the whole law, on which it was founded (Hebrews 7:11-12; Hebrews 7:15-17). The ark was something very remarkable in the former dispensation; in it was the Decalogue, and on the side of it the whole body of the Jewish laws; it was a token, and indeed the place of the divine presence, and a type of Christ, a symbol of the covenant; and therefore called the ark of the covenant, and included the whole of the ceremonial law; and is put for the whole service and worship of that dispensation. Now of this it is foretold, that there would be a time when it should be no more, and should not be so much as thought of any more (Jeremiah 3:16). The ecclesiastical, as well as civil state of the Jews, was to be shaken and removed; the one is signified by the shaking of the heaven, as the other by the shaking of the earth, in Haggai 2:6 which the apostle explains of "the removing of things shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain" (Hebrews 12:26-27), even of the immovable kingdom after spoken of; the second administration of the covenant of grace, which is to remain, and the ordinances of it, until the second coming of Christ; whereas the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant were so shaken as to be removed; and which were made to be removed, as they have been, according to the above prediction.

Prophecy was another considerable way and means by which the covenant of grace was administered, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation; and it was foretold that this should be sealed up, finished, and cease; for one part of the Messiah's work, when come, was to seal up the "vision and prophecy" (Daniel 9:24), all the visions and prophecies of the Old Testament were to have, and had their accomplishment in Christ; were to be sealed up and fulfilled in him, the sum and substance of them; or to "seal up the vision and prophet;" the prophets were to be till John, the forerunner of Christ, and no longer: after Christ, the great Prophet to be raised up, like unto Moses, there was to be no other, he only is to be heard; whatever scheme of things, either as to doctrine or worship, is set up, through pretended vision and prophecy, is to be disregarded; nor has any prophet risen up since prophecy, as foretold, was at an end. From all this now it might be expected, that the first and old administration of the covenant would in time cease.

2. Secondly, There are reasons to be given why the first covenant should and must cease.

2a. It was a typical covenant; the people on whose account it was made, was a typical people, typical of the whole Israel of God, consisting of Jews and Gentiles; of the spiritual Israel, chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, and who shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; the works, duties, and services enjoined them, and required of them with so much strictness, rigor, and severity, were typical of the obedience of Christ, the surety of the spiritual Israel; of that righteousness he was to fulfil and bring in, by which they are made righteous in the sight of God. The blessings promised unto them were typical ones; they were only shadows of good things, of spiritual blessings that were to come by Christ (Hebrews 10:1; Hebrews 9:11). As the earthly Canaan was a type of the heavenly inheritance, obtained in him; the sacrifices offered under that covenant were typical ones; the priests that offered them, the garments they offered them in, and the gifts and sacrifices offered by them, "served to the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:4-5; Hebrews 9:23). The mediator of it, Moses, was a typical mediator, typical of Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant; the blood with which the first testament, or covenant, was dedicated and confirmed, was typical blood, typical of the blood of Christ, called, "The blood of the everlasting covenant" (Hebrews 9:18; Hebrews 13:20). Now when the Antitype of all this came, the types must cease; when Christ, the body, the sum and substance appeared, these shadows must flee away, and disappear, in course (Colossians 2:17).

2b. It was a faulty covenant, and therefore it was proper it should give way to a new and better covenant; so the apostle reasons; "for if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (Hebrews 8:7-8). Not that there was anything sinful or criminal in the first covenant, but it was defective; there were some deficiencies in it, which made the abrogation of it necessary.—

2b1. It did not exhibit Christ present, only in figure, in promise, and in prophecy; it only signified, that he would come and save his people; but it did not hold forth salvation as wrought out by him; it gave an intimation of the righteousness of Christ, that he was to bring in, but not as brought in; under it the propitiation, reconciliation, and satisfaction for sin, were not made, nor redemption from it obtained; wherefore Christ became the propitiation "for the remission of sins that are past;" and he suffered death "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament" (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:15).

2b2. The sacrifices then offered were imperfect; for some sins there were no sacrifices appointed, as for sabbath breaking, murder, adultery, &c. and those that were appointed, could not really take away sin; at most they only made a typical expiation, not a real one; they sanctified only "to the purifying of the flesh;" but could not remove sin from the conscience, and "purge that from dead works;" that only the blood of Christ could do (Hebrews 9:13-14).

2b3. There was but a small measure of the gifts and graces of the Spirit bestowed on men under the first covenant; for though there were here and there one on whom great gifts, and much grace were bestowed, as Abraham and David, &c. yet in common, it was but a scanty measure of grace, light, knowledge, and holiness, that was given to ordinary saints; and the communication was made, for the most part, only to Israelites, and but to a few among them, a remnant, according to the election of grace.

2b4. It was a state of darkness and obscurity under that covenant; it was like a night season, in which lamps are lighted, and torches used; such was the sure word of prophecy; it was like a light or lamp in a dark place; there was light in some particular persons, as in the prophets, and it was held forth by them; but in general there was but little among the people, who "could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished," the ceremonial law; under which the mysteries of grace were couched, were clouded, and lay hid; they could not clearly see the end, design, and scope of them; though there were glorious promises of grace, these were covered with the veil of ceremonies, of which the veil, on the glory of the face of Moses, was a type (2 Corinthians 3:7; 2 Corinthians 3:13).

2b5. It was a state of bondage; this covenant was signified by Hagar the bondwoman, and by mount Sinai, which engendered to bondage, and answered to Jerusalem, as it was in the apostle’s time; to the state of the Jews then, who were in bondage with their children: and the Israelites, while in their nonage, while children, were in bondage, under the elements of the world, which brought upon them a spirit of bondage to fear; for such a number of laws and ordinances being given them, to the breach of which death was annexed without mercy; and they so liable to break them, they, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Galatians 4:3; Galatians 4:24-25; Romans 8:15; Hebrews 2:15).

2c. The rites and ceremonies by which this covenant was greatly administered, are by the apostle called, "weak and beggarly elements;" and being "weak" and "unprofitable," there was, therefore, a "disannulling" of them (Galatians 4:9; Hebrews 7:18-19). The sacrifices, which were a principal part of them, could not make, neither them that did them, nor the comers unto them, perfect, as to the conscience; they could not purge the worshippers, or those that attended ceremonial services, so as that they should have no more conscience of sin; they could not take away sin, neither from the sight of God, nor from the conscience of the sinner; nor so as that there should be no remembrance of them; for notwithstanding the daily sacrifices, morning and evening, and others on particular accounts, there was an annual remembrance made of them all, on the day of atonement (Hebrews 9:9; Hebrews 10:1-4). And especially when the great high priest was come, and his sacrifice was offered, they were quite impotent and useless, to answer any end at all: and therefore of right ought to cease, and be no more used; which leads,

3. Thirdly, To the abrogation of the first covenant, or of the administration of it; which was signified by the rending of the veil between the holy place and the holy of holies, at the death of Christ;

whereby the way into the holiest of all was made manifest, and all within exposed to open view; as are the mysteries of grace, the veil of ceremonies being removed; and now, with boldness and freedom, entrance is had into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, consecrated through the veil of his flesh, which the former veil was a type of. The abrogation of the old covenant is expressed by "breaking down the middle wall of partition," which stood between Jews and Gentiles; such the ceremonial law was, and is so called in allusion to the enclosure of the court of the Israelites, in the temple, over which the Gentiles might not pass; and by abolishing and slaving the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; the same ceremonial law, which had this name; because it indicated the hatred of God against sin, and irritated the hatred of natural men to it, by its numerous and wearisome rites; and because it was the occasion of enmity between Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:14-16). It is moreover expressed by a disannulling of the commandment, the commandment of the priesthood, and of sacrifices and rites belonging to it; and even the whole ceremonial law, as to be of no more force, nor any longer binding; so that no man, henceforward, ought to "judge" another, with respect to them, nor take upon him to command an observance of them, and require obedience to them (Hebrews 7:19; Colossians 2:16-17). It is likewise expressed by "a blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us;" being an accusation for sin, containing a charge of sin, and implying an acknowledgment of it; as if they had given it under their hands, and showing and owning that satisfaction for sin, and that expiation were not yet made; wherefore when Christ came and paid the debt, he took up his bond, and cancelled it, and blotted out this handwriting against his people, that it might not be read any more, and nailed it to his cross; where law and justice are directed to go for satisfaction (Colossians 2:14). Once more, the abolition of the first covenant, and its form of administration, is signified by the fleeing away and disappearance of shadows. The law and its ceremonies were only shadows of good things to come by Christ; when he, the Sun of Righteousness, arose, these shadows fled; when he, the body, sum, and substance appeared, these disappeared: to this the church has respect (Song of Solomon 2:17; Song of Solomon 4:6).

Now the abrogation of the first and old covenant, or of that form of administration of the covenant of grace, was made, not at once, but gradually; and which the apostle suggests, when he says; "In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:13). It began to decay, and there were some symptoms of a decay of it at the Babylonish captivity, and under the second temple; when the land of Canaan, a type of the heavenly inheritance, was seized upon by the Chaldeans, the inhabitants carried captive, a governor appointed over it by the king of Babylon, and people left in it to till it for his use; the temple was burnt, and temple worship and service ceased for many years, and the vessels of it were carried to Babylon; and though after a term of years there was a return of the people to their own land, and the temple was rebuilt, and worship restored; yet, as the Jews themselves own [2], the ark and many other things were wanting in that temple; great declensions there were, both in doctrine and worship; the sect of the Pharisees arose, and set up their own traditions upon a level with the written word, if not above it; and great confusion there was in the priesthood, that and the civil government being blended together; and men were put into it, especially towards the close of this period, that were very unfit for it; and oftentimes obtained it by corruption and bribery; all which showed a decay, and foreboded a change of things as near.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, came and proclaimed the near approach of the Messiah; he declared, that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand" (Matthew 3:2). The gospel dispensation, the new administration of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it: his father, at his birth, called him "the prophet of the Highest," who was to prepare his way, and give knowledge of salvation to his people; and when he entered upon his office, he directed the people to believe on Christ, who was to come; and quickly pointed him to them, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), which the lambs of the daily sacrifice, and all other sacrifices, could not do. Christ himself appeared, and preached the same as John had done, and began his ministry with the same words; but during his life the ceremonies of the law continued in use: he himself was circumcised the eighth day; his mother purified herself according to law, at the proper time, and presented him in the temple, cording to the usual manner; at twelve years of age he went up with his parents to Jerusalem, to keep the passover; and when he had entered on his public ministry, he attended synagogue and temple worship; when he healed the leper he sent him to the priest to offer his gift; and one of the last actions of his life, was keeping the passover with his disciples; but at his death, of right, though not in fact, all ceremonies ceased, and even the whole dispensation or administration of the covenant, as it had been before in use; all things now concerning him had an end (Luke 22:37), all types and figures, shadows, sacrifices, promises, and prophecies; he by his sacrifice, by his sufferings and death, caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease, of right; nor should any afterwards have been offered up (Daniel 9:27), nor any other rite and ceremony observed: yet, through the influence of Judaizing teachers over weak minds, it was thought advisable to continue the use of some of the ceremonies, at least for a time; after it was known by Peter and others, that they were no longer in force, yet because of the many thousands of Jews, who were all zealous of the law, it was judged proper that compliances should be made, and charity and prudence to be exercised, that weak minds might not be offended, until they were better instructed in the doctrine of Christian liberty; which, when that was done, the use of them was strongly opposed against the obstinate and self-willed, who were resolved to retain them at any rate; and the saints were exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled with the yoke of bondage; by which means the Christian churches were freed from those burdensome rites and ceremonies. But still the carnal Jews continued them, and even sacrifices, until the destruction of Jerusalem, which put an end to them; for according to the law of God, no sacrifice might be offered but at Jerusalem, and upon the altar there; so that when the city, temple, and altar were destroyed, they ceased to offer any sacrifice, and never have offered any since; whereby that prophecy is remarkably fulfilled; "the children of Israel shall abide many days without a sacrifice" (Hosea 3:4), as they have for nineteen hundred years, and still do; not even a passover lamb is slain by them, as well as no other sacrifice offered; which yet they would gladly offer, in defiance of Christ, the great Sacrifice, were it not for the above law, which stands in their way, and by which they are awed; and which is no small instance of the wisdom and goodness of God in providence. Now it was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem the apostle wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, and therefore, with great propriety, he says of the old covenant, that it was not only decayed, and waxen old, but was "ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:13). This being the case,

4. Fourthly, The new covenant, or the new administration of the covenant of grace, took place; and as the one was gradually removed, the other was gradually introduced; and this observation will serve to reconcile the different areas fixed by different persons, for the beginning of the new

dispensation; some placing it at the birth of Christ; offsets at the ministry of John the Baptist; others at the death of Christ, and his resurrection from the dead; and others at his ascension, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; whereas these were so many gradual manifestations of it: at the birth of Christ, undoubtedly, "the fulness of time" was come for the redemption of his people from the law who were under it; and on which very day the gospel was first preached by the angels to the shepherds, and afterwards more clearly and fully by John, by Christ and his apostles: Mark the evangelist, seems to make the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God, to be with the ministry of John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-3), and which agrees with what Christ says; "the law and the prophets were until John;" they terminated in him, his ministry put a period to them; "since that time the kingdom of God is preached" in a clearer manner, and attended to by more than it was before (Luke 16:16). Christ appeared, and preached the gospel as never man did; grace and truth came by him in a clearer and fuller manner than it ever had: he not only preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, as John did, but that it was already come; though not with pomp, with outward show and observation, and was actually among the people (Luke 17:20-21). At his death, and by the shedding of his blood, the New Testament was sealed, ratified, and confirmed by him, as the Testator of it; and therefore called, "the blood of the New Testament, and the blood of the everlasting Covenant" (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 13:20), of that new administration of the covenant which should always continue; but this new dispensation more clearly appeared at his ascension, and by the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at the day of Pentecost; at his resurrection he gave them a commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; and ordered them to wait at Jerusalem until they were endued with the Holy Spirit, as they were on the above day; whereby they were furnished and qualified to carry the gospel, and preach it among all nations, as they did. And now it may be observed, that the new administration of the covenant, under the gospel dispensation, lies in the following things:

4a. In an exhibition of Christ as come, and as become the author of eternal salvation; in it he is set and held forth as incarnate; as having obeyed, suffered, and died, and has made peace and reconciliation, and full satisfaction for sin; and has obtained eternal redemption; has risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and has received for and given gifts to men to preach his gospel; these various articles of grace are comprised in the "great mystery of godliness" (1 Timothy 3:16), and in those words, which are the sum of the gospel declaration, "this is a faithful saying," &c. (1 Timothy 1:15).

4b. In a more clear and extensive ministration of the gospel: it first began to be spoken by Christ in the clearest and fullest manner it possibly could be; and then by his apostles, who received it from him, and gifts to minister it; and who by his orders carried it throughout the world, and preached it to every creature under heaven, first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles; and is, "according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, for the obedience of faith" (Romans 16:25-26). so that the administration of the covenant is no longer restrained to a certain people, but men of all nations have the benefit of it.

4c. In a freedom from all bondage and servitude: not from the bondage of sin and Satan, common to all believers under every dispensation; but from the rigorous exaction of the law, as a covenant of works; from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and from the judicial laws, as peculiar to the Jews; and which further lies in the free use of things indifferent, and in the enjoyment of the privileges

and immunities of the gospel church state: this is the glorious liberty of the children of God, the liberty with which Christ has made them free; and who receive the Spirit of adoption, by whom they cry, Abba, Father; and who is a free Spirit, and where he is, there is liberty.

4d. In a large communication of the gifts and graces of the Spirit: of extraordinary gifts, which in the first part of this administration were bestowed, not only upon the apostles, but upon common Christians, men and women, sons and daughters, servants and handmaids, according to the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:28-29), of common and ordinary gifts, to fit men for the ordinary ministry of the word; and of the special graces of the Spirit, in a greater degree to saints in common; as a larger measure of faith, peace, joy, and comfort, and of light and knowledge; for according to this covenant, and the administration of it, all know the Lord from the least to the greatest; and though John was greater than the prophets, the least in this kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation, is greater than he (Jeremiah 31:34; Matthew 11:11).

4e. In ordinances more spiritual than the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant were, which are called "carnal" ones; but these, which are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, do in a very lively and spiritual manner represent the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and hold forth the blessings of the covenant of grace in a comfortable way, and are the means of applying them to believers, to the increase of their joy and peace; and these will continue throughout the present administration of the covenant, even to the end of the world (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26). Of these ordinances I shall particularly treat elsewhere.

Now as the former administration of the covenant was carried through the various periods of time from the first exhibition, after the fall of Adam, to the first coming of Christ; so this second and new administration of the covenant is carried through various successive periods, unto his second coming. The book of the Revelation exhibits the state of the church from the resurrection of Christ to his personal coming; and particularly the seven churches of Asia are emblematical of it in each of the successive periods of time within that interval; and represent it in its various changes and vicissitudes, as sometimes in prosperity and sometimes in adversity; sometimes in the freer use and enjoyment of the ministry of the word and ordinances, and sometimes as under clouds, darkness, and discouragements, through persecutors and false teachers, until the spiritual reign of Christ takes place; when the whole earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and be enlightened with his glory; when the gospel will be in its purity everywhere, and the ordinances kept as they were first delivered, and gospel churches set up, and gospel discipline maintained everywhere; which will be followed with the personal reign of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, and the ultimate glory: of each of which in their proper place.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vajikra Rabba, s. 9. fol. 153. 1. and s. 27. fol. 168. 4.

[2] T. Bab. Yoma. fol. 21. 2.

02. Of the Joy of God

Of The Joy Of God.

Joy, which is often attributed to God in the scriptures, bears some resemblance to the affection of joy in men; but is, by some philosophers[1], denied of him; and, indeed, is not to be considered as a passion in him, as in them; and particularly, when in its height, or at an excess; as it is a transport of the mind, and carries it out of, and beyond itself, as it were; as in the cases of Jacob, when the news of his son Joseph's being alive were brought him; and of the disciples, when they heard of the resurrection of Christ, believed not for joy: and, indeed, all affections that are ascribed to God, are ascribed to him, not as in themselves, but as to their effects; such and such effects being done by men, when so and so affected. Hence when similar ones are done by God, the like affections are ascribed to him; and this of joy is expressed by him in very different effects; as in inflicting punishment, as well as in conferring benefits; in the one he rejoices in the glory of his justice and holiness; and in the other, in the displays of his grace and goodness (see Deuteronomy 28:63). Though joy, as ascribed to God, seems to be no other than delight and complacency in persons and things; so some philosophers and schoolmen make them to be the same; or, however, take joy to be a species of delight; only they observe a difference, with respect to brute animals, in whom there is delight, but not joy[2]; it is also made a question with them[3] whether delight is a passion? but my business with it is only as it concerns God, and is predicated of him; and who may be said,

1. To rejoice and take delight and complacency in himself, in his own nature, and the perfections of it; in which there is an all-sufficiency, and so a fulness of content and satisfaction; and he rests infinitely well pleased in himself. Hence Aquinas[4], who defines joy and delight a certain quietation, or rest of the will, in what is willed by it; observes, that God must greatly rest quiet and satisfied in himself, which is his principal "volitum", or what is willed by him, as having all-sufficiency in him, and therefore by his own will greatly rejoices and delights in himself: and though he makes joy and delight in some respect to differ; delight flowing from a good really conjoined; and joy being not only of that, but of something exterior; hence, he says, it is plain God properly delights in himself; but rejoices in himself and others. Song the Jews[5] interpret (1 Chronicles 16:27) "gladness in his place", of joy in himself.

2. He rejoices and takes delight and complacency in his works (Psalms 104:31). In the works of creation, which, when he had finished, he not only rested from them, but rested in them, with delight and pleasure; he looked them over, and pronounced them all very good; and he still appears to have pleasure in them, by his continuance of them in being, by upholding all things by the word of his power: he rejoices and delights in the works of his providence, in which he is always concerned (John 5:17). These, so far as they are known by men, yield an unspeakable delight and pleasure in the contemplation of them; and especially when they will be manifest; and though they are now, many of them, unsearchable and past finding out, yet there is a depth of riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God in them; but what delight must God take in them,

being all according to his sovereign will and pleasure; by whom they are seen and known in their beauty, harmony, and connection; and the springs and causes of them, and the several ends answered by them? God rejoices and takes delight particularly in the great work of redemption, contrived by his infinite wisdom, and wrought out by his Son; partly because of his own glory displayed therein; as of his love, grace, and mercy, so of his truth and faithfulness, holiness and justice; and partly because of the salvation of his people, secured thereby; a thing his heart was set upon from everlasting; what he resolved should be, and what he appointed them to: he rejoices and delights in his work of grace on the hearts of his people: this is their beauty, even the beauty of holiness, which he, the king, greatly desires; by which they are all glorious within, and well pleasing in his sight; he delights in the graces which he himself, by his Spirit, has wrought in them, and in the exercise of those graces, as drawn forth by him, their faith, hope, love, fear, &c. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy" (Psalms 147:11; Song of Solomon 4:9-10). And so all his people, as they are his workmanship, his poem, curiously wrought by him; the works of his hands, in whom, and whereby he is glorified; he rejoices in them, and blesses on account of them (Isaiah 19:25; Isaiah 60:21). Wherefore,

3. He may be truly said to rejoice, delight, and take pleasure in his people, as he often is; they are his Hephzibah, in whom he delights; his Beulah, to whom he is married; and therefore, as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so does the Lord rejoice over them, (Psalms 149:4; Isaiah 62:4-5) not in all men; for there are some in whom he has no joy, vessels in whom he has no delight and pleasure, (Isaiah 9:17; Isaiah 27:11; Malachi 1:10) but his special covenant people, (Jeremiah 32:38-41) and these not as creatures, and still less as sinful creatures, either as considered in Adam, or in themselves, guilty and defiled; but as in Christ, in whom God is well pleased, and in all that are in him, as chosen in him, and given to him; so God the Father rejoiced in them from everlasting; for as his love to them, so his joy in them, is so early, it being a love of complacency and delight; and of which joy there are new expressions in conversion (see Luke 15:7; Luke 15:9; Luke 15:22-24). And likewise the Son of God, was from all eternity rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth; and his delights were with the sons of men, (Proverbs 8:31) and which joy he felt under all his sorrows and sufferings, when working out their salvation, (Hebrews 12:2) and which he expresses at their conversion; that being the time of finding his lost people; and, indeed, the day of his open espousals to them, and so of the gladness of his heart, (Luke 15:3-5; Song of Solomon 3:11) and they will also be his joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the last day; when they shall be introduced into his presence, not only with joy and gladness in themselves, but with it in him, who will present them before his Father and himself, with exceeding joy, (Psalms 45:13-14; Jude 1:24) and this joy over them, both in him and his divine Father, is to do them good, and issues in it; to bestow benefits upon them, grace here, and glory hereafter; to beautify them with salvation; to make them prosperous, especially in spiritual things, in which prosperity he takes pleasure; and in making all things work together for their good, (Jeremiah 32:41; Psalms 149:4; Psalms 35:27) which joy is full; there is a redundancy, an overflow of it; it is hearty and sincere, is the strength and security of the saints, and will remain for ever (Nehemiah 8:10; Zephaniah 3:17).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Sallustius de Diis, c. 14. Plato in Philebo. p. 384.

[2] Aquin. Sum. Theolog. prima 2 par. Quaest. 31. art. 3. & Avicenna in ibid.

[3] Ibid. art. 1. & Aristot. apud ibid.

[4] Contr. Gentiles, l. 1. c. 90.

[5] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 15.

02. Of the Justice or Righteousness of God

Of The Justice Or Righteousness Of God.

Concerning this attribute of God, I shall,

1. First, Show that it does belong to him, and is natural and essential to him. The scriptures do abundantly ascribe it to him; all rational creatures, angels and men, good and bad, acknowledge it in him, (Revelation 16:5; Exodus 9:27; Jeremiah 12:1; Daniel 9:9; Psalms 145:7) and remove all unrighteousness from him, and affirm there is none in him (Psalms 92:15; Romans 9:14). And, indeed, without this attribute, he would not be fit to be the Governor of the world, and the judge of the whole earth; his government would be tyranny, and not yield that pleasure and delight to the inhabitants of it, it does; the reason of which is, because "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne" (Psalms 97:1-2). And from his love of righteousness, and constant performance of it, it may be concluded it is natural to him; as what is loved by men, and constantly done by them, shows it to be agreeable to the nature of them, (Psalms 11:7; Psalms 9:4) and, indeed, it is originally and essentially in God; it is in and of himself, and not of another; it is his nature and essence, and is not derived from another. Adam was righteous, but not of himself, God made him upright, or righteous; saints are righteous, not by their own righteousness, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. But God is righteous in and of himself; his righteousness is essential and inderivative, and is incommunicable to a creature; it is not that by which men are made righteous, as Osiander dreamed; for though he who is Jehovah is their righteousness, yet not as he is Jehovah; for then they would be deified by him: the righteousness of God being his nature, is infinite and immutable; the righteousness of angels and men, in which they were created, was mutable; Adam lost his, and many of the angels lost theirs; but the "righteousness" of God is "like the great mountains", as high, firm, and stable as they, and much more so (Psalms 36:6). Righteousness in creatures, is according to some law, which is the rule of it, and to which it is conformed, and is adequate so the law of God, which is holy, just, and true, is a rule of righteousness to men; but God has no law without himself, he is a law to himself; his nature and will the law and rule of righteousness to him. Some things are just, because he wills them, as such that are of a posture kind; and others he wills them because they are just, being agreeable to his nature and moral perfections. This is an attribute common to the three Persons in the Godhead, as it must be, since it is essential to Deity, and they partake of the same undivided nature and essence: hence the Father of Christ is called by him "righteous Father", (John 17:25) and Christ, his Son; is called Jesus Christ "the righteous", (1 John 2:1) and no doubt can be made of its being proper to the Holy Spirit, who convinces men "of righteousness and of judgment" (John 16:8). But,

2. Secondly, I shall next consider the various sorts, or branches of righteousness, which belong to God; for though it is but one in him, being his nature and essence; yet it may be considered as diversified, and as admitting of distinctions, with respect to creatures. Some distinguish it into righteousness of words, and righteousness of deeds. Righteousness of words lies in the fulfilment of his words, sayings, prophecies, and promises; and is no other than his veracity, truth, and

faithfulness; which will be considered hereafter, as a distinct attribute. Righteousness of deeds, is either the rectitude, purity, and holiness of his nature; which appears in all his works and actions, and which has been treated of in the preceding chapter; or it is a giving that which belongs to himself, and to his creatures, what is each their due. So justice is defined by Cicero[1], an affection of the mind, "Suum cuique tribuens"; giving to everyone his own. Thus God gives or takes to himself what is his due; or does himself justice, by making and doing all things for his own glory; and by not giving his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images: and he gives to his creatures what is due to them by the laws of creation, and governs them in justice and equity, and disposes of them and dispenses to them, in the same manner. Justice, among men, is sometimes distinguished into commutative and retributive. Commutative justice lies in covenants, compacts, agreements, commerce, and dealings with one another, in which one gives an equivalent in money or goods, for what he receives of another; and when integrity and uprightness are preserved, this is justice. But such sort of justice cannot have place between God and men; what he gives, and they receive from him, is of free favour and good will; and what they give to him, or he receives from them, is no equivalent for what they have from him; "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" (Psalms 116:12) nothing that is answerable to them. Besides, God has a prior right to everything a creature has or can give; "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" (Romans 11:35). Retributive justice is a distribution either of rewards or punishments; the one may be called remunerative justice, the other punitive justice; and both may be observed in God.

2a. Remunerative justice, or a distribution of rewards; the rule of which is not the merits of men, but his own gracious promise; for he first, of his own grace and good will, makes promises, and then he is just and righteous in fulfilling them; for God, as Austin[2] expresses it, "makes himself a debtor, not by receiving anything from us, but by promising such and such things to us." And his justice lies in fulfilling his promises made to such and such persons, doing such and such things; and not in rewarding any supposed merits of theirs. Thus, for instance, "The man that endures temptation shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him", (James 1:12) but the crown of life is not given according to any merit of it arising from enduring temptation, or loving the Lord; but in consequence of the promise of God graciously made to such persons, for their encouragement thereunto. Moreover, the reward is not of debt, but of grace; or God, in the distribution of rewards to men, rewards not their works, but his own grace; he first gives grace, and then rewards that grace with glory; called, "the reward of the inheritance" (Colossians 3:24). And this seems to be no other than the inseparable connection between grace and glory, adopting grace, and the heavenly inheritance; which, he having of his own grace put, does in justice inviolably maintain. Indeed, the remunerative justice of God is sometimes represented in scripture, as rendering to every man according to his deeds, or as his work shall be, (Romans 2:5-7, Romans 2:10). But still it is to be observed, that the reward given or rendered, is owing, to the promise that is made to them for godliness, whether as a principle of grace, or as practised under the influence of grace; or godly persons have "the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come", (1 Timothy 4:8) which promise is punctually and righteously performed. Besides, God does not reward the works and godly actions of men, as meritorious in themselves; but as they are the fruits of his own grace; who works in them both "to will and to do" of his own pleasure; and therefore he is "not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love"; which springs from love, is done in faith, and with a view to his glory (Hebrews 6:10). Moreover,

the works according to which God renders eternal life, are not mens' own personal works; between which, and eternal life, there is no proportion; but the works of righteousness done by Christ, of which his obedience and righteousness consist; and which being done by him, on their account, as their Head and Representative, are reckoned to them; and, according to these, the crown of righteousness is given them by the Lord, as a righteous Judge, in a way of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8).

2b. Punitive, or vindictive justice, belongs to God; It is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble" his people, (2 Thessalonians 1:6) and so to inflict punishment for any other sin committed by men; and this has been exercised by him in all ages from the beginning of the world; and has appeared in casting down from heaven to hell the angels that sinned; in drowning the old world; in destroying Sodom and Gomorrah; in the plagues on Egypt, on Pharaoh and his host; the righteousness of which was acknowledged, in some of the instances of it, by that wicked king, (Exodus 9:27) in each of the captivities of the Jews, and in the destruction of that people; and in the judgments of God on many other nations, in each of the periods of time; and as will be seen in the destruction of antichrist and the antichristian states; the righteousness of which will be ascribed to God by the angel of the waters, and by all his people, (Revelation 16:5-6; Revelation 19:1-2) and in the eternal punishment and everlasting destruction of ungodly men: and this righteousness is natural and essential to God; but this the Socinians[3] deny, because they do not choose to embrace the doctrine of the necessity of Christ's satisfaction for sin, which, if granted, they must give into. But that punitive, or vindictive justice, is essential to God, or that he not only will not let sin go unpunished, but that he cannot but punish sin, is manifest,

2b1. From the light of nature: hence the accusations of the natural conscience in men for sins committed; the fears of divine vengeance falling upon them for it, here or hereafter; the many ways and means devised to appease angry Deity, and to avert punishment, some absurd, and others shocking; to which may be added, the name of dikh, vengeance, or justice, punitive justice, the heathens give to deity; see (Romans 2:14-15; Acts 28:4).

2b2. From the word of God, and the proclamation which God himself has made; in which, among other essential perfections of his, this is one, that he will by no means clear the guilty, and not at all acquit the wicked, (Exodus 34:6-7; Numbers 14:18; Nahum 1:3).

2b3. From the nature of God, "who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity"; cannot bear it, but hates it, and the workers of it; which hatred is no other than his punishment of it (Hebrews 1:13; Isaiah 1:13-14; Psalms 5:5-6). Now as his love of righteousness is natural and essential to him; so must hatred of sin be; to which may be added, that "he is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29).

2b4. From the nature of sin, and the demerit of it, eternal death, everlasting punishment and destruction. Now if sin of itself, in its own nature, merits such punishment at the hands of God, he is obliged to inflict it; or otherwise there can be no demerit in it.

2b5. From the law of God; the sanction of it, and the veracity of God in it: sin is a transgression of the law; which God, as a lawgiver, cannot but punish; otherwise his legislative power and authority is of no effect, and would be despised: he has annexed a sanction to his law, which is death; and his veracity obliges him to inflict it; nor is it any objection to all this, that then all sinners must be necessarily punished; since the perfections of God, though natural to him, the acts and exercises

of them are according to his will; as has been instanced in his omnipotence and mercy. Besides, it will be readily allowed, and even affirmed, that no sin goes unpunished; but is either punished in the sinner himself, or in his Surety. The reason why some are not punished in themselves, is, because Christ has made satisfaction for their sins, by bearing the punishment due unto them. Hence,

2b6. From sin being punished in Christ, the Surety of his people, it may be strongly concluded, that punitive justice is essential to God; or otherwise, where is the goodness of God to his own Son, that he should not spare him, but awake the sword of justice against him, and inflict the whole of punishment on him, due to the sins of those for whom he suffered, if he could not have punished sin, or this was not necessary? and, indeed, where is his wisdom in being at such an expense as the blood and life of his Son, if sin could have been let go unpunished, and the salvation of his people obtained without it? and where is the love of God to men, in giving Christ for them, for their remission and salvation, so much magnified, when all this might have been without it? but without shedding of blood, as there is no remission, so none could be, consistent with the justice of God; no pardon nor salvation, without satisfaction to that: could it have been in another way, the prayer of Christ would have brought it out, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass me" (Matthew 26:39). But,

3. Thirdly, I shall next consider the displays of the righteousness of God in his works; and vindicate his justice in them; for "the Lord is righteous in all his ways" (Psalms 145:17).

3a. In his ways and works of providence: he governs the world in righteousness, orders and disposes of all things in judgment; and though he does according to his sovereign will and pleasure in heaven and in earth, yet he acts according to the strictest rules of justice and equity; "Just and true are his ways"; "he is the Judge of all the earth, who will do right", (Revelation 15:3; Genesis 18:25) and does do it; nor is he chargeable with any unrighteousness in any of his ways and works: men may wrongly charge him, and say, as the house of Israel did; "the way of the Lord is not equal"; when it is their ways that are unequal, and not his, (Ezekiel 18:29) nor is it any sufficient objection to the righteousness of God in his providences, that good men are often afflicted, and wicked men are frequently in very prosperous circumstances: these things have been stumbling and puzzling to good men, and they have not been able to reconcile them to the justice of God (see Psalms 73:4-13; Jeremiah 12:1-2). As for the afflictions of God’s people, these are not punishments for sins, but chastisements of them; were they indeed punishments for sin, it would argue injustice, for it would be unjust to punish twice for the same sins; once in their Surety, and again in themselves: but so it is not; their afflictions come not from God as a judge, but as a father; and not from his justice, but his love; and not to their detriment and injury, but for their good. In short, they are chastened by the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world (1 Corinthians 11:32). And as for the prosperity of the wicked, though their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish, yet they are like beasts that are fattened for the slaughter; their judgment may seem to linger, and their damnation to slumber, but they do not; sudden destruction will come upon them; the tables will, ere long, be turned, and the saints, who have now their evil things, will be comforted; and the wicked, who have now their good things, will be tormented: justice, though it may not so apparently take place now, it will hereafter; when all things will be set to rights, and the judgments of God will be manifest. There is a future state, when the justice of God will shine in all its glory.

3b. God is righteous in all his ways and works and acts of grace; in the predestination of men, the choice of some, and the preterition of others. While the apostle is treating on this sublime subject, he stops and asks this question, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" and answers it with the utmost abhorrence and detestation, "God forbid!" Election is neither an act of justice nor of injustice, but of the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who does what he will with his own; gives it to one, and not to another, without any imputation of injustice: if he may give grace and glory to whom he will, without such a charge, then he may determine to give it without any. If it is no injustice in men to choose their own favourites, friends, confidants, and companions; it can be none in God to choose whom he pleases to bestow his favours on; to indulge with communion with himself now, and to dwell with him to all eternity: if it was no injustice to choose some of the angels, called elect angels, and pass by others; and even to condemn all that sinned, without showing mercy to one individual of them; it can be no injustice in him to choose some of the race of men, and save them, and pass by others, when he could have condemned them all. Nor can the imputation of Adam's sin to all his posterity, be accounted an unrighteous action. God made man upright, he made himself a sinner: God gave him a righteous law, and abilities to keep it; he voluntarily broke it: God constituted the first man the federal head and representative of all his posterity; and who so fit for this as their natural head and common parent, with and in whom they were to stand and fall; and what injustice could be in that; since had he stood they would have partook of the benefits of it; as now he fell they share in the miseries of it? and since they sinned in him, it can be no unrighteous thing to reckon it to them; or that they should be made and constituted sinners, by his disobedience. It is not reckoned unjust, among men, for children to be punished for the sins of their parents, and particularly treason; and what else is sin against God? (Exodus 20:5). The justice of God shines brightly in redemption by Christ; "Zion, and her converts, are redeemed in righteousness"; a full price is paid for the redemption of them; and in it "mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other": and though it is not for all men, no injustice is done to them that are not redeemed; for if God could in justice have condemned all, it can be no act of injustice to redeem and save some. Suppose one hundred slaves in Algiers, and a man out of his great generosity, lays down a ransom price for fifty of them, does he, by this act of distinguished goodness and generosity, do any injustice to the others? or can they righteously complain of him for not ransoming them? In the justification of men, by the righteousness of Christ, the justice of God is very conspicuous; for though God justifies the ungodly, yet not without a perfect righteousness, such as is adequate to the demands of his righteous law; even the righteousness of his own Son, in the imputation of which, and justification by it, he appears to be "just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). Though God forgives sin, yet not without a satisfaction made to his justice; though it is according to the riches of his grace, yet through the blood of Christ shed for it; and upon the ground of the shedding of that blood, God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness", (1 John 1:9) and so it is both an act of grace and of justice; as is eternal glory and happiness, being the free gift of God, through Christ and his righteousness.

ENDNOTES:

[1] De Finibus, l. 5.

[2] Enarrat. in Psalm cix. tom. 8. p. 521.

[3] Socin. de Servatore, par. 1. c. 1. Praelection. Theolog. c. 16. Crellius de Deo, "ejusqque attributis", c. 25. in fine.

02. Of the Kingly Office of Christ

Of the Kingly Office of Christ The prophetic and priestly offices of Christ having been considered; the kingly office of Christ is next to be treated of. Christ is king in a twofold sense: he is a king by nature; as he is God, he, is God over all; as the Son of God, he is heir of all things; as he is God the Creator, he has a right of dominion over all his creatures: and he is king by office, as he is mediator; and accordingly he has a two-fold kingdom, the one natural, essential, universal, and common to him with the other divine persons; the kingdom of nature and providence is his, what he has a natural right unto, and claim upon; it is essential to him as God; dominion and fear are with him; it is universal, it reaches to all creatures visible or invisible, to all in heaven, earth, and hell; it is common to the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are joint creators of all the creatures, and have a joint rule, government, and dominion over them; and as Christ is the creator of all, nothing that is made being made without him, but all things by him, he has a right to rule over them. This kingdom of his extends to angels, good and bad; he is the head of all principality and power; of the good angels, he is their creator, lord, and king, from whom all worship, homage, and obedience are due unto him; and who are at his command to do his will and pleasure; and whom he employs as ministering spirits in nature, providence, and grace, as he pleases: and the evil angels, though they have left their first estate, cast off their allegiance to him, and rebelled against him, yet whether they will or no they are obliged to be subject to him; and even when he was manifest in the flesh, they trembled at him, and were obliged to quit the possession of the bodies of men at his command, and could do nothing without his leave. Men also good and bad, are under the government of Christ as God, who is Lord of all; he not only is king of saints, who willingly become subject to him; but even those who are sons of Belial, without a yoke, who have cast off the yoke, and will not have him to reign over them; whether they will or not, they are obliged to yield unto him; over whom he rules with a rod of iron, and will break them in pieces as a potter’s vessel; so easy, so inevitable, and so irreparable is their ruin and everlasting destruction by him. This his kingdom rules over all men, of all ranks and degrees, the highest and the greatest; he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; he sets them up and puts them down at his pleasure; by him they reign, and to him they are accountable. But besides this, there is another kingdom that belongs to Christ as God-man and Mediator; this is a special, limited kingdom; this concerns only the elect of God, and others only as they may have to do with them, even their enemies; the subjects of this kingdom are those who are chosen, redeemed, and called from among men by the grace of God, and bear the name of saints; hence the title and character of Christ with respect to them is "king of saints"; this kingdom and government of his is what is put into his hands to dispense and administer, and may be called a dispensatory, delegated government; what is given him by his Father, and he has received authority from him to exercise, and for which he is accountable to him; and when the number of his elect are completed in the effectual calling, he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, perfect and entire, that God may be all in all. And this is the kingly office of Christ, now to be treated of; and which will be done much in the same manner the other offices have been treated of.

1. I shall show that Christ was to be a king; as appears by the designation of his Father, in his purposes, council, and covenant; by the types and figures of him; and by the prophecies concerning him.

1a. That he was to be a king, appears by the designation and appointment of him by his Father to this office; "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion", says Jehovah (Psalms 2:6), that is, he had set up Christ his Son, in his eternal purposes, to be king over his church and people; and therefore calls him his king, because of his choosing, appointing, and setting up. And as he appointed him to be a king, he appointed a kingdom to him; which is observed by Christ; "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath, appointed unto me" (Luke 22:29). In the council and covenant of grace, Christ was called to take upon him this office, "feed the flock of slaughter", the church, subject to the persecutions of men; and the act of feeding them, designs the rule and government, care and protection of the people of God; in allusion to shepherds, by which name kings and rulers are sometimes called: to which Christ assented and agreed; saying, "I will feed the flock of slaughter", take the care and government of them (Zechariah 11:4), upon which he was invested with the office of a king, and was considered as such; "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Hebrews 1:8).

1b. It appears from the types and figures of Christ, in his kingly office. Melchizedek was a type of him; not only in his priestly office, of whose order Christ was; but in his kingly office; both offices meeting in him, as they do in Christ, who is a priest upon his throne; from his quality as a king he had his name Melchizedek, king of righteousness, or righteous king; and such an one is Christ, a king that reigns in righteousness; and from the place and seat of his government, king of Salem; that is, king of peace; agreeable to which, one of Christ’s titles belonging to him, in his kingly office, is, prince of peace; (see Hebrews 7:1; Isaiah 9:6). David was an eminent type of Christ in his kingly office; for his wisdom and military skill, his courage and valor, his wars and victories, and the equity and justice of his government; hence Christ, his antitype, is often, with respect to the Jews, in the latter days, called David their king, whom they shall seek and serve; and who shall be king over them (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 33:23; Ezekiel 37:24; Hosea 3:5). Solomon also was a type of Christ as king; hence Christ, in "the Song of Songs", is frequently called Solomon, and king Solomon (Song of Solomon 3:7; Song of Solomon 3:9; Song of Solomon 3:11; Song of Solomon 8:11-12), because of his great wisdom, his immense riches, the largeness of his kingdom, and the peaceableness of it; in all which he is exceeded by Christ; and who, speaking of himself, says, "a Greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42).

1c. This still more fully appears, that Christ was to be a King, by the prophecies concerning him, in this respect; as in the very first promise or prophecy of him (Genesis 3:15), that "the Seed of the woman", meaning Christ, should break the "serpent’s head"; that is, destroy the devil, and all his works; which is an act of Christ’s kingly power, and is expressive of him as a victorious prince, and triumphant conqueror over all his and his peoples enemies. Balaam foretold, that "there should come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre", that is, a Sceptre bearer, a King, should "rise out of Israel" (Numbers 24:17 which prophecy, some way or other, coming to the knowledge of the magi, or wise men in the East, upon the appearance of a new star, led them to take a journey into Judea, to inquire after the birth of the King of the Jews, where he was born. In the famous prophecy of Isaiah, concerning Christ (Numbers 9:6-7 it is said, that "the government should be upon his shoulders"; one of his titles be, "the Prince of peace"; and that of his government, and the peace of

it, there should be no end; as well as it should be ordered and established with justice and judgment: and to the same purpose is another prophecy in Jeremiah (Jeremiah 23:5-6) of the Messiah, the Man the Branch, it is said, "And a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness": and there can be no doubt but Christ is here meant; as well as in that known prophecy of the place of his birth, Bethlehem Ephratah; of which it is said, "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel", the King of Israel, as Christ is sometimes called (Micah 5:2). To which may be added, another prophecy of Christ, as King, and which was fulfilled in him; "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion—behold thy King cometh unto thee" (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4-5), yea, the angel that brought the news to the Virgin Mary, of Christ's conception and incarnation, foretold unto her, that this her Son should be "great, and be called the Son of the Highest"; and that "the Lord God would give unto him the throne of his father David"; and that he should "reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there should be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

2. I proceed to show, that Christ is a King; as it was decreed and determined he should be, and according to the types of him, and prophecies concerning him. And,

2a. Christ was a King before his incarnation, during the Old Testament dispensation. He was King over the people of Israel; not as a body politic; though their civil government was a theocracy; but as a church, a kingdom of priests, or a royal priesthood; and he is the Angel that was with them, the church in the wilderness, which spoke to Moses on mount Sinai; from whose right hand went the fiery law, the oracles of God; for the rule, government, and instruction of that people: he is the Angel that went before them, to guide and direct them, and to rule and govern them, whose voice they were to obey: he appeared to Joshua, with a drawn sword in his hand, and declared himself to be the Captain of the Lord's hosts, to fight their battles for them, and settle them in the land of Canaan. David speaks of him as a King in (Psalms 45:1-17), and represents him as a very amiable Person, grace being poured into his lips, and he fairer than the children of men; as a majestic and victorious Prince, whose queen stands at his right hand, in gold of Ophir, his church, who is called upon to worship him, to yield homage and subjection to him; because he is her Lord and King; and as such he is acknowledged by the church in the times of Isaiah; "The Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King" (Isaiah 33:22; Isaiah 26:13).

2b. Christ was King in his state of incarnation; he was born a King, as the wise men understood it he was, by the prophecy of him, and by the star that appeared, that guided them to come and worship him as such. The angel that brought the news of his birth to the shepherds, declared, that that day was born a Saviour, Christ the Lord, Head and King of his church; agreeable to the prophecy of him by Isaiah, that the child born, and Son given, would have the government on his shoulders, and be the Prince of peace; and Christ himself acknowledges as much, when he was asked by Pilate, whether he was a King? he answered in a manner which implied it, and gave assent unto it; though at the same time, he declared his kingdom was not of this world, but of a spiritual nature (John 18:36-37). He began his ministry with giving notice, that the "kingdom of heaven was at hand"; that is, his own kingdom, which was going to take place, with some evidence of it; and he assures the Jews, that the kingdom of God was then within them, or among them; though it came not with the observation of the vulgar: nor with outward show, pomp, and splendor, like that of an earthly king (Matthew 4:17; Luke 17:20-21), and Christ was known, and

owned by some, as a King, though not by many: Nathaniel made the following noble confession of faith in him, respecting his person and office, upon a conviction of his being the omniscient God; "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God! thou art the King of Israel!" (John 1:49). When Christ entered into Jerusalem, in a very public manner, whereby was fulfilled the prophecy of him as a King (Zechariah 9:9), not only the children cried, Hosanna to the Son of David! expressive of his royal character and dignity; but the disciples, in so many words, said, "Blessed be the King, that cometh in the name of the Lord!" (Matthew 21:4-5; Matthew 21:9 Luke 19:38). Moreover, Christ, in the days of his flesh on earth, received authority from his divine Father, to execute judgment; that is, to exercise his kingly office in equity and justice; and this before his sufferings and death; and had all things requisite to it, delivered unto him by his Father (John 5:22; John 5:27; Matthew 11:27), and after his resurrection from the dead, and before his ascension to heaven, he declared, that "all power was given him in heaven and in earth"; in virtue of which, he appointed ordinances, renewed the commission of his disciples to administer them, promising his presence with them, and their successors, to the end of the world (Matthew 28:18-20). All which shows how false the notion of the Socinians is, that Christ was no King, nor did he exercise his kingly office before his ascension to heaven. It is true, indeed,

2c. That upon his ascension to heaven, he "was made both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), not but that he was both Lord and Christ before, of which there was evidence; but then he was declared to be so, and made more manifest as such; then he was exalted as a Prince, as well as a Saviour, and highly exalted, and had a name given him above every name; and angels, authorities, and powers, were made subject to him. He then received the promise of the Spirit, and his gifts from the Father, which he plentifully bestowed upon his apostles; whom he sent forth into all the world, preaching his gospel with great success, and causing them to triumph in him in every place where they came; and so increased and enlarged his kingdom: he went forth by them with his bow and arrows, conquering and to conquer, making the arrows of his word sharp in the hearts of his enemies, whereby they were made to submit unto him; sending forth the rod of his strength out of Zion, the gospel, the power of God unto salvation; he made multitudes willing in the day of his power on them, to be subject to him; whereby his kingdom and interest were greatly strengthened in the world; and from small beginnings, his kingdom being at first but like a grain of mustard seed, became very flourishing and populous: and in this way, more or less, Christ has been exercising his kingly office in the world; which, though sometimes it has been in great obscurity, yet will more gloriously appear in the latter day, in that remarkable period of time which may be properly called, "the spiritual reign of Christ"; when he shall take to himself his great power and reign; not begin to take it, nor begin to reign; but shall take it and exert it in a more conspicuous manner; and will reign before his ancients gloriously; when the kingdoms of this world shall become his, and he shall be King over all the earth; and there shall be one Lord, and his name one; and more especially, when the kingly office of Christ shall appear in its full glory, in his personal reign on earth a thousand years; of which two types of his kingly office, I shall treat separately and distinctly, in their proper place; and at present shall only observe,

2d. That all the rites and ceremonies used at the inauguration of kings, and their "regalia", are to be found with Christ. Were kings anointed? as Saul, David, and Solomon were, so was Christ; from whence he has his name, Messiah; he whose throne is for ever and ever, is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; that is, with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit without

measure; as he more eminently was, upon his ascension to heaven, when he was made, or declared, Lord and Christ; and, indeed, because of this ceremony used at the instrument of kings into their office, the original investiture of Christ with the kingly office is expressed by it; "I have set", or as in the Hebrew text, "I have anointed my King upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psalms 2:6; Psalms 45:6-7). Were kings crowned at the time of their inauguration? so was Christ at his ascension to heaven; he was then "crowned with glory and honour"; his Father set "a crown of pure gold on his head"; not a material one; the phrase is only expressive of the royal grandeur and dignity conferred upon him: his mother, the church, is also said to crown him; and so does every believer set the crown on his head, when, rejecting all self-confidence, and subjection to others, they ascribe their whole salvation to him, and submit to him, as King of saints; and he, as a mighty Warrior, and triumphant Conqueror, is represented as having many crowns on his head, as emblematical of the many great and glorious victories he has obtained over all his, and the enemies of his people (Hebrews 2:9; Psalms 21:3; Song of Solomon 3:11; Revelation 19:12). Do kings sometimes sit on thrones when in state? Isaiah, in vision, saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, when he saw the glory of Christ, and spake of him: and when our Lord had overcome all his enemies, he sat down with his Father on his throne, as he makes every overcomer sit down with him on his throne; and this throne of his is for ever and ever: and when he comes to judge the world, he will sit on a great white throne; an emblem of his greatness, purity, and justice, in discharging this part of his kingly office, judging quick and dead (Isaiah 6:1; Isaiah 45:6; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 20:11). Do kings sometimes hold sceptres in their hands, as an ensign of their royalty? so does Christ; his sceptre is a "sceptre of righteousness"; he reigns in righteousness; he has a golden sceptre of clemency, grace, and mercy, which he holds forth towards his own people, his faithful subjects; and he has an iron one, with which he rules his enemies; (see Psalms 45:6; Psalms 2:9). Do kings sometimes appear in robes of majesty and state? Christ is arrayed with majesty itself; "The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty" (Psalms 93:1), and so is he appareled, as now set down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; of which his transfiguration on the mountain was an emblem, when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light (Hebrews 8:1; Matthew 17:2).

3. Having shown that Christ was to be a King, and is one; I shall next consider the exercise and administration of the kingly office by him; and observe,

3a. First, his qualifications for it. David, who well knew what was requisite to a civil ruler, or governor, says, "He that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God"; and this he said with a view to the Messiah, as appears by what follows (2 Samuel 23:3-4), and with whom these characters fully agree; he is the righteous Branch, raised up to David; and sits upon his throne, and establishes it with judgment and justice; a king that reigns in righteousness, and governs according to the rules of justice and equity; who with righteousness judges, and reproves with equity; the girdle of whose loins is righteousness, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins, all the while he is executing his kingly office; his sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness; and his throne is established by it; and one of the characters of Zion’s King, by which he is described, is just, as well as lowly; (see Jeremiah 23:5-6; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 11:4-5; Psalms 45:6; Zechariah 9:9). And the other character, "ruling in the fear of God", is found in him; on whom the Spirit of the fear of the Lord rests, and makes him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, so that he judges impartially; not through favour and affection to any, nor according to the outward appearance; but

with true judgment (Isaiah 11:2-3), and a king should be as wise as an angel of God, to know all things appertaining to civil government, as the woman of Tekoah said David was; even to know and to be able to penetrate into the designs of his enemies, to guard against them, to provide for the safety and welfare of his subjects: and such is David's Son and Antitype, the Messiah; on whom rests "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and of knowledge"; and who has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and all that wisdom by which kings reign, and princes decree judgment, is from him; to which may be added, "the Spirit of might" rests upon him (Isaiah 11:2), he has power and authority to execute judgment, to enforce his laws, and command obedience from his subjects; all power in heaven and on earth is given to him, and which he exercises; yea, he is the Lord God omnipotent; and as such reigns (Matthew 28:18; Revelation 19:6), and how capable therefore, on all accounts, must he be to exercise his kingly office? The next inquiry is,

3b. Secondly, Who are his subjects? a king is a relative term, and connotes subjects: a king without subjects, is no king. The natural and essential kingdom of Christ, as God, reaches to all creatures; as has been observed; "His kingdom ruleth over all" (Psalms 103:19), but his kingdom, as Mediator, is special and limited, and is over a certain number of men; who go under the names of Israel, the house of Jacob, the holy hill of Zion, and are called saints; hence Christ is said to be "King of Israel"; to reign over "the house of Jacob"; to be set King upon "the holy hill of Zion"; and to be "King of saints" (John 1:49; Luke 1:33; Psalms 2:6; Revelation 15:3), and by Israel, and the house of Jacob, are not meant the people of the Jews, as a body politic, of whom Christ was never king in such a sense; nor carnal Israel, or Israel according to the flesh, especially the unbelieving part of them, who would not have him to reign over them, in a spiritual sense; nor only that part of them called the election of grace among them; the lost sheep of the house of Israel Christ came to seek and save, and so to rule over, protect, and keep: but the whole spiritual Israel of Gods consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; even that Israel God has chose for his special and peculiar people, among all nations; whom Christ has redeemed by his blood, out of every kindred, tongue, and people; and whom, by his Spirit, he effectually calls, through grace; and who are saved in him, with an everlasting salvation: and these are meant by the holy hill of Zion, over which he is set, appointed, and anointed King; even all those whom God has loved with an everlasting love, and chosen in Christ his Son, and who are sanctified and made holy by his Spirit and grace; and are brought to make an open profession of his name, and become members of his visible church, and are immovable in grace and holiness; for all which they are compared to mount Zion, the object of God's love and choice, a hill visible, holy, and immovable: and to these Christ stands in the relation, and bears the office of a King; and they are his voluntary subjects; and who say of him and to him, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" (Revelation 15:3), the church of God is Christ's kingdom, and the members of it his subjects.

3c. Thirdly, The form and manner of Christ's executing his kingly office; which is done, —lst. Externally, by the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; and in the exercise of discipline in his church, which is his kingdom. And, —2dly, Internally, by his Spirit and grace, in the hearts of his people; and by his power, with respect to their enemies.

3c1. First, Externally, by the word and ordinances, and church discipline.

3c1a. By the ministry of the word; which is his sceptre he holds forth, and by which he invites his people to come and submit to him; and by which he rules and governs them when come; it is the rod of his strength he sends out of Zion, and which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe: it is signified by the weapons of warfare, the sword of the Spirit, the bow and arrows, with which Christ rides forth, conquering and to conquer; and with which he smites the hearts of his people, while enemies to him, and causes them to fall under him, and be subject to him; it is the rule and standard of their faith and practice, he sets before them, showing them what they are to believe concerning him, and what is their duty in obedience to him; it is the "magna charta" which contains all their privileges and immunities he grants them; and which he, as their King, inviolably maintains; and it is according to this his word, that he will execute that branch of his kingly office, judging the world in righteousness at the last day.

3c1b. By the administration of ordinances; as baptism: Christ, in virtue of that power in heaven and earth, which he received as King of saints, issued out a command, and gave a commission to his apostles, as to preach the gospel, so to baptize, such as are taught by it, in the name of the three divine Persons; and directed that all such who become members of his visible church, the subjects of his kingdom, should first submit to this ordinance of his; as the instance of the first converts after the commission given shows; who were first baptized, and then added to the church: this is part of that yoke of Christ's kingdom, which is easy; and one of those commandments of his, which are not grievous. The Lord's Supper is another of the ordinances kept by the church at Corinth, as delivered to them; for which the apostle commends them; the account of which he had from Christ himself, and delivered to them; and which he suggests was to be observed in his churches, and throughout his kingdom, to the end of the world. Public prayer in the house of God, is another appointment in Christ's kingdom, the church; which is distinct from the duty of private prayer, in private meetings, and in the family, and the closet; and is what goes along with the public ministry of the word; and is meant by what the apostles proposed to give themselves continually to; and which was attended to by the first Christians, and continued in, and by which they are described, and for it commended; (see Acts 2:42; Acts 4:31; Acts 6:4). Singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, in a public manner, in the churches, is another ordinance of Christ, enjoined them (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), and in doing which, they express their joy and gladness, in Zion's King (Psalms 149:2).

3c1c. In the exercise of church discipline; about which Christ, as King in his church, has given orders and directions; in case of private offences, the rules how to proceed, are in Matthew 18:15-18. In case of public, scandalous sins, which bring a public disgrace on religion, and the church; the delinquents are to be rebuked before all in a public manner, and rejected from the communion of the church (1 Timothy 5:20). In case of immoralities and disorderly walking, such are to be withdrawn from, till repentance is given to satisfaction; and in case of false doctrines, and heretical opinions, such that hold them, are not only to be rebuked sharply, in a ministerial way, that they may be sound in the faith; but being incorrigible, are to be cut off from the communion of the church (Titus 1:13; Titus 3:10).

3c1d. For the execution and due performance of all this, the ministry of the word, administration of ordinances, and exercise of church discipline, Christ has appointed officers in his church and kingdom; whom he qualifies and empowers for such purposes; who have a rule and government under Christ, and over the churches, to see his laws and rules carried into execution; and who are

to be known, owned, and acknowledged, as having rule over the churches; and to be submitted to and obeyed by them, so far as they act according to the laws of Christ (Ephesians 4:10-12; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17).

3c2. Secondly, The kingly office of Christ is exercised internally, by his Spirit and grace in the hearts of his people, and by his power, with respect to their enemies; and which chiefly lies in the conversion of his people; in the protection of them from their enemies; and in the utter abolition and destruction of them.

3c2a. In the conversion of his people; which is no other than a rescue of them out of the hands of those who have usurped a dominion over them. While unregenerate, they are in a state of enmity to Christ, and in open rebellion against him; they who are reconciled by him, are not only enemies in their minds, by wicked works; but enmity itself, while their minds remain carnal; and such they were when reconciled to God, by the death of Christ; and so they continue until the enmity is slain, by his powerful grace in them; by which the arrows of his word are made sharp in them; and thereby they are conquered, and fall under him. While in a state of nature, other lords have dominion over them, sin, Satan, and the world; sin reigns in their mortal bodies, and they yield their members instruments of unrighteousness! and are servants and slaves to sin, even unto death; for it reigns in them to death; and though its reign is so severe and rigorous, yet they yield a ready obedience to it; "We ourselves", says the apostle, "were foolish and disobedient", disobedient to God, and disobedient to Christ, "serving divers lusts and pleasures": Satan, the prince of the power of the air, works in them, while they are the children of disobedience; and they have their conversation according to him, and according to the course of the world, while in such a state; and live according to the will of men, and not according to the will of God (Isaiah 26:13; Titus 3:3; Ephesians 2:2-3). Satan particularly, the god of this world, has power over them, and leads them captive at his will, until the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered; he is the strong man armed, that keeps the palace and goods in peace, till a stronger than he comes; who is Christ, the King of glory, who causes the everlasting doors of men’s hearts to lift up, and let him in, when he enters, binds the strong man armed, dispossesses him, and spoils his armor, wherein he trusted; sets up a throne of grace in the heart, where he himself sits and reigns, having destroyed sin, and caused grace to reign, through righteousness; and will not suffer sin to have any more dominion there. By the power of his grace he makes those his people willing to submit to him, and serve him, and him only, disclaiming all other lords (Isaiah 26:13; Isaiah 33:22). Christ, as King in Zion, enacts laws, appoints ordinances, and gives out commands, which he enjoins his subjects to observe and obey; and those he writes, not on paper, nor on tables of stone, nor on monuments of brass, but upon the tables of the heart; and puts his Spirit within his people, to enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them. Moreover, Christ being set up as an ensign to the people, they flock unto him, and enlist themselves under his banner, and become volunteers, in the day of his power, or when he musters his armies; and declare themselves willing to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ; to fight the Lord’s battles, the good fight of faith, and against every enemy; when they are clad by him with the whole armor of God, and become more than conquerors, through their victorious Lord and King; by, and under whom, they abide as his faithful subjects and soldiers unto death.

3c2b. Christ’s kingly office is further exercised, in the protection and preservation of his people from their enemies; out of whose hands they are taken, and who attempt to reduce them to their

former captivity and slavery: they are protected and preserved from sin: not from the indwelling and actings of it in them; but from its dominion and damning power; and the grace that is wrought in them is preserved, and its reigning power is continued and confirmed. Christ, as a Prince, as well as a Saviour, gives repentance to his people, attended with the manifestation and application of pardon of sin; and he not only gives this grace; but every other, faith, hope, and love: these are his royal bounties, and are principles of grace, wrought in the souls of his people; according to which, and by the influence of which, he rules and governs them: and these he preserves, that they are not lost; that their faith fail not; their hope remain, as an anchor, sure and stedfast; and their love continue: and the fear of God, put into them, abide; so that they shall never depart from him: he is able to keep them from falling, finally and totally, and he does keep them; they are in his hands, out of which none can pluck them: they are protected by him from Satan; not from his assaults and temptations, to which the most eminent saints are exposed; but from being destroyed by him, who goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and would gladly devour them: but Christ is able to help them, and does; and knows how to deliver them out of temptation, and does, in his time and way, and bruises Satan under their feet; so that, instead of being destroyed by him, he himself is destroyed by Christ: and they are protected from the world, its force and fury; he makes their wrath to praise him, and restrains the remainder of it. In short, he protects them from every enemy; and from the last enemy, death; not from dying a corporal death, but from the sting of it; and from it as a penal evil; and from a spiritual death ever more taking place in them; and from an eternal death, by which they shall not be hurt, and which shall have no power over them.

3c2c. Christ’s kingly office appears to be exercised in the utter destruction of the said enemies of his people. He came to finish transgression, and make an end of sin; and he did it meritoriously, on the cross; where the old man was crucified, that the body of sin might be destroyed; and by his Spirit and grace he weakens the power of sin in conversion; and will never leave, till he has rooted out the very being of it in his people: he came to destroy Satan, and his works: and he has destroyed him; and spoiled his principalities and powers, on the cross; and rescued his people out of his hands, at conversion; and will not only bruise him under their feet shortly, but will bind him, and cast him into the bottomless pit for a thousand years; and after loosed from thence, will cast him into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, where be will continue for ever. Christ has also overcome the world; so that it could not hinder him from doing the work he came about: and he gives his people that faith by which they overcome it also; and nothing they meet with in it, even tribulation, persecution, and everything of that kind, shall not be able to separate them from Christ, from a profession of him, and love unto him; but they become more than conquerors over the world, through Christ that loved them; and who must reign till all enemies are put under his feet; and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death: which will be destroyed at the resurrection; when mortal shall put on immortality, and corruption incorruption; and then that saying will be brought to pass, that "death is swallowed up in victory"; in a victory obtained by Christ over that and every other enemy (1 Corinthians 15:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:54).

3d. Fourthly, The properties of Christ’s kingdom and government; showing the nature and excellency of it.

3d1. It is spiritual; not carnal, earthly, and worldly: "My kingdom", says Christ, "is not of this world" (John 18:36). Though it is in the world, it is not of it; its original is not from it; it is not founded on

maxims of worldly policy; it is not established by worldly power, nor promoted and increased by worldly means, nor attended with worldly pomp and grandeur; "The kingdom of God", that is, of Christ, "cometh not with observation", with outward glory and splendor (Luke 17:20). The Jews, at the coming of Christ, having lost the notion of the spirituality of his kingdom, thought of nothing but an earthly and worldly one; and expected the Messiah as a temporal king, who would deliver them from the Roman yoke; and make them a free and flourishing people, as in the days of David and Solomon: and this was the general and national belief; the disciples and followers of Christ were possessed of it; as appears from the request of the mother of Zebedee's children (Matthew 20:20-21), and from the question of the apostles to Christ, even after his resurrection (Acts 1:6. But this notion was contrary to the prophecies of the Messiah; which represent him as poor, mean, and abject; a man of sorrows and griefs, despised of men; and should be treated ill, and be put to death (Isaiah 53:2-4; Isaiah 53:8; Isaiah 53:12; Zechariah 9:9), and not being able to reconcile these prophecies, with those which speak of him as exalted and glorious, they have feigned and expect two messiahs; the one they call the son of Ephraim, who shall make a poor figure, be unsuccessful, and shall be slain in the war of Gog and Magog; the other they call the son of David, who prosperous, gain many victories, and shall live long; restore the Jews to their own land, and make them an happy people. But the true Messiah was neither to destroy his enemies with carnal weapons; but smite them with the rod of his mouth, and consume them with the breath of his lips, his gospel; nor to save his people by bow, by sword, by horses and horsemen; but by himself, his righteousness and sacrifice. His kingdom was not to be, and has not been, set up and spread by the sword, by dint of arms; as the kingdom of Mahomet has been; but by his Spirit and grace attending the ministration of his gospel. Christ never had, nor never will have, an earthly, worldly kingdom; such will not be his personal reign on earth a thousand years, as some have fancied, imagining it will be a state of worldly grandeur, riches, and civil power; which has brought the doctrine of the millennium into disgrace and contempt; whereas they that are worthy to obtain that world and kingdom, which will take place at the first resurrection, will neither eat nor drink, nor marry, nor be given in marriage; but will be like the angels of God: there will be nothing carnal nor worldly in it; it will be a spiritual state, suited to bodies raised spiritual; and to the spirits of just men made perfect: what will have the greatest appearance of a worldly kingdom, will be in what we call the spiritual reign of Christ, when multitudes of all ranks and degrees shall be converted; and great personages, as kings and queens, shall be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the churches; shall join them, and submit to the ordinances in them; and when they shall bring their riches and wealth into them; and all civil power and authority shall be in the hands of true Christians; and the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the most High; but then there will be such a pouring down of the Spirit, which will be an over balance to this worldly grandeur, and shall check it, that it shall not hurt, or do prejudice to the spirituality of God's people. But of this, more hereafter, in its proper place. The kingdom of Christ is spiritual; he is a spiritual King, the Lord from heaven, the second Adam, that is spiritual, the Lord and Head of his church; his throne is spiritual, he reigns in the hearts of his people by faith; his sceptre is a spiritual sceptre, a sceptre of righteousness; his subjects are spiritual men born of the Spirit, and savour the things of the Spirit of God; they are subdued, and brought to submit to Christ by spiritual means; not by carnal weapons of warfare, but by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; the kingdom of God is within them, set up in their hearts, where grace reigns; and it lies not in outward things; it is "not meat and drink", and such like carnal things; "but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

Ghost"; they are spiritual promises Christ makes to them, to encourage them in their obedience to him; and spiritual blessings and layouts are bestowed upon them by him; and even their enemies, with whom their conflict is, are spiritual wickednesses in high places; and are not to be fought with carnal weapons; nor to be subdued and conquered by means of them; but by the shield of faith and sword of the Spirit; even by the rod of Christ's mouth, and the breath of his lips.

3d2. Christ's kingdom is a righteous one; this has been suggested already; the whole administration of it is righteous; he is a King that reigns in righteousness, his throne is established by it; his sceptre is a right sceptre; justice and judgment are executed in his kingdom, and nothing else, by Christ the King; no injustice, violence, or oppression; just and true are his ways, who is King of saints.

3d3. Christ's kingdom is a peaceable kingdom: he is the prince of peace; his gospel, which is his sceptre, is the gospel of peace; his subjects are sons of peace; the kingdom of grace in them, lies in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; and in the latter day, there will be abundance of peace in Christ's kingdom, the church; and of it, and its increase, there will be no end.

3d4. Christ's kingdom is gradually carried on; so it has been from the first; it arose from a small beginning, in the external administration of it; it was like a little stone cut out of the mountain, without hands, which will, in due time, fill the face of the whole earth; it was like a grain of mustard seed, the least of all seeds, in the times of Christ, which grows up to a large tree; as Christ's kingdom afterwards greatly increased, first in Judea, and then in the Gentile world; notwithstanding all the opposition made unto it; until the whole Roman empire became Christian, and paganism abolished in it: and though it has met with some stops, in some periods, yet it has revived again; as at the reformation; and will hereafter be extended from sea to sea; and from the river to the ends of the earth: and the internal kingdom of Christ in the hearts of his people is gradually carried on: it is like seed sown in the earth, which springs up, and whose appearance is but small, and by degrees grows up to maturity; as grace in the heart does; until it arrives to the fulness of the stature of Christ.

3d5. Christ's kingdom is durable; of his government there will be no end; his throne is for ever and ever; he will reign over the house of Jacob evermore; his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Christ will never have any successor in his kingdom; for he lives for evermore and has the keys of hell and death in his hands: as his Priesthood is an unchangeable priesthood, which passes not from one to another, as the Aaronic priesthood did, by reason of the death of priests; so his kingdom is an unchangeable kingdom, which passes not from one to another; he being an everliving and everlasting King; his kingdom will never give way to another; nor be subverted by another; as earthly kingdoms are, and the greatest monarchies have been: the Babylonian monarchy gave way to the Persian and Median, and was succeeded by that; the Persian to the Grecian; and the Grecian to the Roman: but Christ's kingdom will stand for ever; his church, which is his kingdom, is built on a rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The word and ordinances of the gospel, by which the government of Christ is externally administered, will always continue: the gospel is an everlasting gospel, the word of God, which abides for ever: and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are to be administered until the second coming of Christ: and the internal kingdom of grace, set up in the hearts of Christ's subjects, is a kingdom that cannot be moved; grace can never be lost; it is a governing principle, and reigns unto eternal

life by Christ: and even when Christ shall have finished his mediatorial kingdom, and delivered it up to his Father, complete and perfect; all the elect of God being gathered in; he will not cease to reign, though in another and different manner: he will reign after the spiritual kingdom is ended a thousand years with his saints, in a glorious manner on earth; and when that is ended, he will reign with them, and they with him, in heaven, for ever and ever.

02. Of the Last and General Judgment

Of the Last and General Judgment With respect to the last and general judgment, the things to be considered are,

1. The proof of a general judgment: and it may be observed, that there will be a judgment of men in a future state; which is twofold.

1a. A particular one; and which passes upon particular persons immediately after death; and to which it is generally thought the apostle has respect in Hebrews 9:27. "But after this", that is, death, "the judgment"; though if the words are to be connected with what follows, they may respect the judgment that will be at the second coming of Christ. However, it seems probable enough, if not certain, that whereas at death the body returns to the earth, and the spirit, or soul, to God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7) that then it passes under a judgment, and is condemned either to happiness or woe.

1b. A general one, after the resurrection of the dead at the last day; and this is the judgment that proof is to be given of; and which may be given, 1b1. First, from reason: and it may be observed,

1b1a. That the heathens, destitute of divine revelation, and who have had only the light of nature to guide them, have entertained notions of a future judgment; or, however, when suggested to them, have readily assented to it, and embraced it. When the apostle Paul preached to the wise philosophers at Athens, upon his discoursing about the resurrection, some mocked, and others more serious, said, they would hear him again of that matter, not being satisfied with what he had said concerning it: but though he had most plainly and fully expressed the doctrine of God’s judging the world in righteousness, they did not in the least contradict that, nor make any objection to it. The heathen writers sometimes speak of righteous judges in the infernal regions; as Aeacus, Rhadamanthus, and Minos who judge the souls of the departed brought before them [1]. Sometimes they represent them as sitting in a meadow, where more ways than one meet, two of which lead, the one to tartarus, or hell, and the other to the island of the blessed [2], or the Elysian fields; which, though but fables, have some truth couched in them. So it is storied of Er. Pamphilius, what he related after he was restored to life, having been twelve days dead; that he saw two chasms above, and two below, answering one another, between which the judges sat and judged men; and when they had judged them, the righteous on the right hand they ordered to go upwards to heaven, and the wicked on the left hand to go downward [3]: which is somewhat similar to the account in Matthew 25:1-46 and it may be, that some of those things said by them, are only some broken remains of a tradition received from their ancestors; or what some got by travelling into the eastern countries, from the Jews, and their writings: and pretty remarkable is that expression of Plato [4]; "We ought always to believe the ancient and sacred words which declare unto us, that the soul is immortal, and has its judges, and will undergo very great judgments, or punishments, when anyone is separated from the body."

1b1b. That there is a judgment to come, appears from the accusations of a natural conscience for sin, and from the fears and terrors men are possessed of, and cannot free themselves from; as witness the consternation and dread Belshazzar was thrown into on sight of the handwriting upon the wall; which could not arise from the fear of any temporal evil coming upon him from men, but from a guilty conscience, and the apprehension he had of being called to an account by the divine being, for his impiety and wickedness; so Felix trembled when he heard the apostle Paul discourse of judgment to come: for the doctrine met with the light and conviction of his own conscience, which caused distress and terror.

1b1c. The truth of a future judgment, may be argued from the justice of God, which requires it; for it is easy to observe, that the justice of God is not clearly displayed in the dispensation of things in the present state. Good men are afflicted, and evil men prosper; which has been a stumbling of saints, and an hardening of sinners: it seems reasonable to believe, that there will be a future state, when justice will take place, and the tables will be turned; and such who have had their evil things now, will have their good things; and such who have had their good things here, will have their evil ones hereafter; for it is a "righteous thing", with God, to render tribulation to them that trouble his people, and to reward his saints according to his gracious promises.

1b1d. This may be concluded from the relation men stand in to God, as creatures to a Creator. As God is their Creator, he has a right to give them a law; which he has, either written or unwritten; for the breach of which they are accountable to him: so that whether they have sinned without the written law, or in it, they will be judged accordingly; for everyone must give an account of himself to God.

1b1e. This may be reasoned from the judgments of God in this present life; and especially from the chastisements of good men, sometimes called a judging them (1 Corinthians 11:32), from whence an argument may be framed in the words of the apostle; "If judgment begin at the house of God", &c. (1 Peter 4:17), if the one are judged, most certainly the other will be.

1b1f. The desires of the saints after it, implanted in their hearts by the Spirit of God, furnish out an argument in favor of it; for however dreadful the thought of it is to Christless sinners, saints can look upon it, and for it, with pleasure; it is now their privilege, that they can "come to God the judge of all", in the righteousness of Christ; as he is, through that, the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and they know that the Lord, the righteous Judge, when he comes, will be their advocate and friend, and give them the crown of righteousness laid up for them; and therefore, in the view of this, most earnestly desire his coming to judgment; and importunately pray, saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Now such desires are not implanted in vain.

1b2. Secondly, the truth of this doctrine will more fully appear from divine revelation. In Genesis 4:8 in the Hebrew text, after these words, "And Cain talketh with Abel his brother"; there is a mark for a pause, as if something was wanting, and to be supplied; and which some ancient versions have supplied thus, "Let us go into the field"; but the Chaldee paraphrases add more, and give us an account of the conversation that passed between them in the field; how that Cain said to his brother, "There is no judgment, and there is no Judge, nor another world, &c." but Abel said, "There is a judgment, and there is a Judge, and another world, &c." upon which, Cain rose up and slew him. Now though this is not to be depended on, nor do I lay any stress upon it; and only observe it, to show the sense of the ancient synagogue concerning this article; we have a more

sure word of prophecy to take heed unto, for our direction in this matter; and where this doctrine clearly appears; as,

1b2a. In the prophecy of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, recorded in Jude 1:14-15 which, as it is to be understood of the second coming of Christ, since it will be with all his saints; so of his coming to judgment, which will be general; for he will then "execute judgment upon all"; and will judge men, both for their ungodly deeds, and for their hard speeches.

1b2b. The character Abraham gives of Jehovah, as the "Judge of all the earth, who will do right" (Genesis 18:25), shows that there is a Judge, and that there will be a righteous judgment; and which is committed to the Son of God, who at this time appeared to Abraham in an human form, and was known by him.

1b2c. It may be concluded from the faith of Job, in his living Redeemer, who believed he would stand on the earth in the latter day, and raise the dead, and himself among the rest; and would have his friends know, that there was a judgment, which would then take place (Job 19:25-26; Job 19:29).

1b2d. Also from the declaration of Moses, in his song, "The Lord shall judge his people" (Deuteronomy 32:36), vindicate their cause, render tribulation to them who have troubled them, judge their persons, and introduce them into his glory.

1b2e. Likewise from the song of Hannah; "The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth" (1 Samuel 2:10), even all the inhabitants of it, who have lived in the uttermost parts of it; and that by the Messiah, as is suggested; since it is added, "He shall give strength to his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed!"

1b2f. From some passages in the Psalms; in which God calls to the heavens and earth to be witnesses of his judging his people; which will be, when he comes with a fire devouring before him, and he himself will be judge; when he will come to judge the world with righteousness, and the people with equity (Psalms 50:3-4; Psalms 50:6; Psalms 96:13; Psalms 98:9).

1b2g. From others in the book of Ecclesiastes, where it is said, God will "judge the righteous and the wicked"; and that though young men may indulge themselves in youthful follies and vanities, yet for those things they should be "brought to judgment"; and into which "every work" shall be brought, whether "good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 3:17; Ecclesiastes 9:11; Ecclesiastes 12:14).

1b2h. From various sayings of Christ, recorded by the evangelist; as that whosoever should kill, would be "in danger of judgment"; and he also that was angry with his brother without a cause; and when he exhorts men "not to judge", lest they "be judged"; and upbraids some cities where his mighty works were done, and they repented not; telling them, it would be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, "in the day of judgment", than for them; and when he declares that every idle word must be given an account of in "the day of judgment"; and affirms, that the men of Nineveh, and the queen of the South, will rise up "in judgment" against the wicked generation of the Jews (Matthew 5:21-22; Matthew 7:1; Matthew 11:22; Matthew 11:24; Matthew 12:36; Matthew 12:41-42).

1b2i. From the sermons and epistles of the apostles, particularly the apostles Peter and Paul; the apostle Peter in Acts 10:42; 1 Peter 4:9; 2 Peter 2:9, the apostle Paul in Acts 17:31; Acts 24:25;

Romans 2:3; Romans 2:5; Romans 2:12; Romans 2:16; Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:8).

1b2j. From Hebrews 6:2 where eternal "judgment" is mentioned as an article of a creed; either of a Christian creed, as is commonly thought; or of a Jewish creed, to which I most incline [5]; but understood either way, it is a proof of its being an article of faith to be embraced and professed. To all which may be added, the partial descriptions of the judgment, which are separately given, and which, when laid together, give a complete view of the whole, and show the judgment to be general. Thus for instance, the calling to account, the examination, trial, and judgment of persons in public work; ministers of the word are apart made mention of in the parable of the talents; who, when reckoned with by the Lord at his coming, he that had received five talents, and had gained five more, and he that had received two, and bad gained other two, are commended as good and faithful servants, and rewarded with a rule over many things; in a similar parable it is, with a rule over cities, in proportion to their gain: but he that received one talent, and made no use of it, is condemned as an unprofitable servant (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:15-26). The description of the judgment in Matthew 25:31-46. I take it, that it only refers to members of churches, professors of religion, good and bad; for this account is only an explanation of the two preceding parables; what is there delivered by way of parable, is here declared without one; which, in other places, is sometimes done by Christ: the first of the parables only concerns the wise and foolish virgins, professors of both characters, in the kingdom of heaven, or gospel church state; and the other only respects persons in a public character, in the same church state, whether good or bad; and this account is of such who have belonged to the same flock, and have been folded together in the same church state; only one were goats and the other sheep, but not known what they were; but now at the judgment it will be known, when the Lord shall judge between cattle and cattle, the sheep and the goats, and divide them from one another. Besides, what the wicked are upbraided with, show that they were such who had dwelt among Christians, and had been associates with them, and saw them in distress, and did not relieve them; but this cannot be said of multitudes who never heard of Christ, nor ever saw any of his people in distressed circumstances, and showed them no pity; and moreover, the sentence pronounced upon them, is the same which elsewhere it is said will be pronounced on such that have bore the Christian name, yet bad men, either preachers of the word, or members of churches (Matthew 7:22-23; Luke 13:26-27).

I am aware what will be objected to all this, that it is said, that "all nations" shall be gathered before the Judge: but then it should be observed, that the word "all" is frequently to be restrained, and taken in a limited sense, according to the subject treated of; as it must be here: for if what has been said is sufficient to prove, that only professors of religion are spoken of, then the sense must be, that professors in all nations of the world shall be summoned, and brought before the Judge. Likewise the text in Revelation 20:12 seems only to respect the wicked; the dead said to stand before God, are the wicked dead, the rest of the dead, who lived not till the thousand years were ended (Revelation 12:5), and are the same, who, being raised, shall encompass the camp of the saints, the beloved city; but being defeated in their enterprise, shall be brought, and stated as criminals before God, the Judge of all, and be judged out of the books opened, according to their works: and what may further strengthen this sense, no other use, as appears, is made of the book of life; only that those whose names were not found in it, were cast into the lake of fire, which must be the wicked. However, putting all these descriptions together, they are a full proof of the general

judgment, both of good and had men, of men under every character and class, and of every age.

2. The next enquiry is, who the person is that shall be the Judge, preside in judgment, and carry on the judicial process to the end? God is, and will be Judge, and he only; hence we read of God the Judge of all (Hebrews 12:23), and of the judgment of God; and of the righteous judgment of God, (Romans 2:3; Romans 2:5 and John saw in a vision, the dead, small and great, stand before God (Revelation 20:12), but not God the Father; "for the Father judgeth no man" (John 5:22), that is, no man separate and apart from his Son; nor in a visible form, for he never assumed any: but then he will judge the world by his Son, as he is expressly said to do (Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16), so that he is not excluded from a concern in the judgment; nor the Holy Spirit. The triune God will be the Judge, as to original authority, power, and right of judgment; but according to the economy settled between the three divine Persons among themselves, the work is assigned unto the Son, and is appropriate to him: hence we read of appearing and standing before the judgment seat of Christ, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and kingdom (Romans 14:1; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1), this work belongs to him as Mediator, and is a part of his office as such; it is what is "committed" to him by the Father, and which he has an "authority" from him to "execute" (John 5:22; John 5:27), it is what he was "appointed" to in the council and covenant of God (Acts 10:42), it is a branch of his kingly office, and therefore in the administration of it he is spoken of as a King; "then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed", &c. and when they shall say, Lord, when saw we thee so and so; "the King shall answer and say", &c. (Matthew 25:34; Matthew 25:40). Yea, Christ, by his death and resurrection, has obtained a right of dominion over all, as to be the Judge of them; "for to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living" (Romans 14:9), that is, so as to judge both quick and dead, as the following verses show. And accordingly, upon his resurrection from the dead, all power in heaven and earth were given to him as Mediator; and upon his ascension to heaven, he was made, or declared, Lord and Christ; and at his second coming, he will come as the Lord, the righteous Judge, with an acquired, as well as an allowed right to judge the world; and this office he will execute as God man, in both his natures, human and divine; which are both necessary to the execution of it.

2a. It is highly proper that the Judge of all the earth should be God. The work requires divine omniscience, infinite wisdom, almighty power, and strict justice and faithfulness; all which are to be found in Christ the Son of God. "Omniscience" is necessary to this work, which is proper to God; for all the works, words, and thoughts of men, must be known by him, in order to judge them; to know all the works, words, and thoughts, of only one man, for the space of sixty, seventy, or eighty years, is more than any mere creature can know; but what is even this knowledge to that of all the individuals throughout a kingdom and nation? and what is that to the knowledge of all the works, words, and thoughts, of the millions of individuals in all kingdoms and nations? and of those in every age of the world, from the beginning of the world to the end of it? Such knowledge is too wonderful for us to conceive of; yet this is in Christ, as God; who knows all persons and things, before whom every creature, and all things, are manifest, naked, and open; even before him with whom we have to do; or to whom we must give an account, as the words may be rendered. He is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart and needs not to be told any thing of man, for he knows all that is in him and done by him. Wisdom and sagacity are necessary to a judge. Solomon, by his judgment between the two harlots, became very famous and respectable among

his people; but a greater than Solomon is here: one who is the all wise God, the wisdom of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and on whom the Spirit of knowledge and wisdom rests; a Judge whose head, and whose hairs, are white as wool, as white as snow, his great gravity and wisdom; who is able, as it is necessary he should be, to distinguish between man and man; between that which has only the appearance of a good action, and that which is really such. "Almighty power" is likewise requisite in the Judge of the world, to do what must and will be done by him; as to raise the dead, summon all before him, and not only pronounce the decisive sentences on them, but carry them into execution; for which purpose he is said to come "with power", as well as with great glory: and such an one is Christ, who is the mighty God, styled most mighty, yea, the Almighty. Strict "justice" and "faithfulness" are qualifications in a temporal judge, who is to execute true judgment; is not to be bribed, nor to respect persons; nor to pass sentence in a cause through favor and affection; and such a Judge, and one infinitely more so, is necessary to judge the world in righteousness and the people with equity; and such an one is Jesus Christ the righteous; and who will appear to be the Lord the righteous Judge, and his judgment to be just and true; for he will not judge according to the sight of his eyes, and the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge, and reprove with equity; righteousness will be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins (Isaiah 11:3-5).

2b. That Christ should appear in human nature, when he comes to judge the world, is highly necessary; for God has appointed to judge the world by "that Man" whom he has ordained; so that Christ, as man, mast be concerned in the judgment of the world; yea, the Father has given him authority to execute it, "because he is the Son of man" (Acts 17:31; John 5:27), because he has assumed human nature, and so can appear visibly in it, as it is proper a judge should be visible. The sight of a judge is very striking; it commands awe and reverence in all; it fills the criminal with terror, and the just man with pleasure: so Christ, the Judge, will come in such a visible manner, that every eye shall see him; he will appear to the joy of some, and to the shame and confusion of others. A judge usually appears, and it is proper he should, in some external pomp and splendor, in his habit, in his retinue, and attendants; and as placed on a seat, or throne, a bench of justice, with a court set around him: Christ, the Judge of all, will come in great splendor and glory, in the glory of his human nature visible, the rays of his divine nature beaming through it; attended by his mighty angels, and with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; a glorious great white throne will be prepared for him, on which he will be visibly placed, and thousands, and ten thousands standing about him, and ministering unto him; it is proper he should appear in human nature, to deliver out, with an articulate voice to be heard, the sentences, both the one and the other; "Come ye blessed", and "Go ye cursed!" Moreover, since he, as man, was arraigned at the bar of man, and stood before a judge, and was unjustly condemned by him, and dealt with injuriously by men; it seems highly proper, that when he comes as a Judge he should come as man, and the tables be turned; and he that was his judge stand before him, and see the very man he used so ill, and receive his sentence from him; as well as all such who have spoken against him, his person, doctrines, and ordinances, and maltreated his people; and who will be obliged to confess, "that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Php 2:11). As for the concern of others in the judgment, angels or men, nothing is to be admitted, that derogates from the glory of the office of Christ, as Judge of the world. Angels will be no otherwise concerned, than as they will be attendants on him at his coming; be employed by him in gathering and bringing to him the elect, raised from the dead, in the several parts of the world, at the first resurrection; and in the binding

up of the tares, the wicked, and casting them into hell, after the second resurrection, and final judgment: approvers of the righteous judgment no doubt they will be; but as assisting and advising in it, as there will be no need of it, there is no reason to believe it: how far they may be evidences and witnesses in some cases, I will not say; since they are frequently in religious assemblies, and have been employed in many things in this lower world, and must be privy to many things done in it. As for the saints, there seems to be more that is said of them; as that thrones will be set for them, and judgment be given to them; the apostles are said to sit on twelve thrones, in the kingdom of Christ, and to judge men; and the apostle Paul says, that the saints shall judge the world; yea, judge angels (Revelation 20:4; Luke 22:36; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3), not that the saints will be co-judges with Christ, and assistants to him in judgment; whatever may be said for them, as sitters, by, and approvers of it, as no doubt they will be; and besides this, it is generally allowed, that they, as members of Christ, and as considered in him, their head, will judge the world; and also that their holy lives and conversation will rise up in judgment against their wicked neighbors and condemn them; as that of righteous Lot will rise up against the inhabitants of Sodom.

3. The persons that will be judged; angels and men: as to good angels, nothing is said of the judgment of them in scripture; nor does it seem probable, since they never sinned; were confirmed in their original state by the grace of Christ, and have always been in a fixed state of happiness, always beholding the face of God in heaven: how far their perfect obedience to God, and the faithful services they have performed to men, at his command, may be brought into judgment, to receive their just praise and commendation, I will not say. But as to the case of the evil angels, it is notorious that they will be judged; for if the saints shall judge angels, that is, evil ones, much more will Christ: these, indeed, as soon as they sinned, were cast down to hell, as into a prison; and as criminals are committed to prison, and laid in chains, until the assize, or session comes; so these are laid in chains of darkness, and reserved to the judgment of the great day, when they will receive their final sentence and enter into full punishment; in which it seems they are not as yet (2 Peter 1:4; Jude 1:6; Matthew 8:29). But the judgment spoken of in scripture chiefly concerns men, good and bad; for as the wise man says, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked" (Ecclesiastes 3:17).

3a. The righteous: and these shall be judged first alone; for "the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment" with them, "nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous", and they will be first judged; not only according to the order of the words in Ecclesiastes, before mentioned, on which no stress is to be laid; but their judgment will be dispatched first, as represented in Matthew 25:1-46. Besides, they will be raised first; "The dead in Christ will rise first"; even a thousand years before the rest; and it is not reasonable to suppose, that their judgment will not proceed; but be deferred until the rest are raised. Besides, Christ will "judge the quick and the dead", the living saints changed, and the dead ones raised, "at his appearing and kingdom"; their judgment will be at the beginning of his kingdom, and be continued in it; and it will be proper that they should be judged first, that they may receive the distribution of rewards, made in the kingdom state; though indeed, they may at once be put into the possession of distinguished favors, and have marks of respect, immediately, as soon as that state begins, and their judgment be brought on, to show the justness of the distribution made to them. Moreover, since they are to judge the world, and to judge angels, it is necessary they should be first judged themselves.

Here would have been the proper place to consider the question, whether the sins of the righteous will be brought into judgment? but that I have given my thoughts of this in another place [6]. Thus much for the judgment of the righteous. Some have thought that Enoch and Elijah, and so those who rose after the resurrection of Christ, and of whom it may be supposed, that they went with him at his ascension to heaven; that those will not come into judgment, since they have been so long in a state of perfection, both in soul and body, which will not be the case of the other righteous at the coming of Christ; but this I will not take upon me to determine.

3b. The wicked will be judged; such who have indulged themselves in the gratification of sinful pleasures, and may have been so hardened in sin as to imagine they shall escape the judgment of God; yet they shall not (Ecclesiastes 3:17; Ecclesiastes 11:9; Romans 2:3-5), even all the wicked shall be judged. These are the "dead" John saw stand before God, "small and great"; all the wicked dead from the beginning of the world to the end of it; who will not live again, or be raised from the dead, till after the thousand years are ended (Revelation 20:5; Revelation 20:12), so that the judgment of those will not be till after the thousand years reign of Christ and his saints, and after the second resurrection; after which, all the wicked being raised, shall be brought to judgment, "small and great"; that is, such as were so when they died, being either children or grown persons; though now as they will rise as persons in manhood, will so stand before God: or as high and low, rich and poor, kings and peasants; for now shall the rich and poor meet together, though not now distinguished as such; but having been such in their mortal state, shall not be exempted from the judgment of God: or as greater and lesser sinners, and accordingly shall receive their just punishment; for however it may be a question, whether there will be degrees in the ultimate glory; there is none concerning degrees of punishment; since it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for some cities where Christ preached and wrought his miracles, yet repented not nor believed in him. I am aware, that there are some objections to be made to what has been said concerning the judgment of the righteous before the wicked; as,

3b1. That it seems to contradict the account given of the judgment of both (Matthew 25:1-46), as appearing together, then separated and placed, the one at the right, and the other at the left hand of Christ. To which it will be sufficient to answer, that in descriptions taken from men, and delivered after the manner of men, and in allusion to what is done among men, it is not to be expected that there should be an exact correspondence in every circumstance of them; the general design of them is what is to be attended to: and if that is answered it is enough. Now the general design of this description is, to show that both good and bad men will be judged; that they will be distinguished in judgment, and one will not be taken for the other; the nominal professor will be unmasked: and as for the position of them, at the right and left hand of Christ, it cannot be understood of a natural position to the right and left; any more than in the petition of the two sons of Zebedee, to sit, the one at the right hand, the other at the left hand of Christ, in his kingdom. The allusion is to a sanhedrim, or court of judicature with the Jews; when, whom the judge absolved, he placed at his right hand; and whom he condemned, he placed at his left. So that the whole of what is intended by this description is, that both sorts of persons shall be judged; that they shall be distinguished, and appear to be what they really are; that the one will be acquitted, and the other condemned. All which may as well be done by supposing the judgment of the one to precede the judgment of the other, as if together; and according to the description itself, the

judgment of the righteous will be first dispatched.

3b2. It is objected, that this account of the judgment seems to make two days of judgment. Not at all: there will be but one day of judgment, though it will be a long one. We are not to imagine, that the day of judgment will be only a natural day, consisting of twenty four hours: surely it cannot be thought, that all the affairs of kingdoms, states, and churches, and particular persons, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, which will be brought into judgment, and laid open there, will be huddled over in so short a space of time; when this judgment may well be supposed to be with the utmost precision and exactness. No, this day of the Lord will be a thousand years; and for which reason it may be called a "great day", because of its great and long duration; as well as because of the great things done in it, and by a great Person; and may be also one reason why it is called "eternal judgment", the word eternal, or everlasting, being sometimes used for a long time only, as this will be: the judgment of the righteous will proceed at the beginning of the thousand years, and continue in them; and during this time things will be preparing for the judgment of the wicked, at the close of them; and so things will go on successively till the whole is finished: as the resurrection of the just will be on the morning of this day, so will their judgment begin then; and as the resurrection of the wicked will be at the evening of this day, so likewise their judgment: and as the evening and the morning make but one day, so it will be in this case; there will be but one day of judgment.

3b3. Should it be further objected, that there seems no necessity for such a length of time to judge the world in, seeing Christ, the Judge, is omniscient, and knows all men and their works; and therefore can pass judgment upon them at once. I answer, if there is anything in this objection, it lies as strongly against any formal judgment at all, whether of a shorter or longer space. Besides, the length of time is not taken, and the strict and accurate examination of things entered into, for the sake of the information of the Judge, but that all things might be made clear and plain to every man’s conscience; and that it might be evidently seen, that the distribution of favors by the Judge, in the kingdom state, is made to everyone according to his works. God could have made the world at once, in a moment, but he thought fit to take six days in doing it, to show the greatness of the work, his wisdom, anti the counsel of his will in it; so when the affairs of the world, for six thousand years, and how much longer we know not, shall be called over, the Lord is pleased to take a thousand years for it, to show his exactness and accuracy, strict justice and equity, with which all things shall be managed; and the rather, since the determination is for an eternity to come, in the final issue of things.

3b4. It may seem inconsistent to some, that the time of the saints reigning with Christ, and their being judged by him, should be together. That so it will be, seems most certain, since Christ will judge "the quick and the dead", the living saints changed, and the dead saints raised, "at his appearing and kingdom"; when he shall appear and enter on his visible and glorious kingdom, and take his saints to reign with him: nor can I see any inconsistency in this; since the saints, while they are judging, will be in a sinless, perfect state, be like to Christ, both in soul and body, and shall enjoy his personal presence; so that their judgment will not in the least break in upon their felicity in reigning. Besides, they will not stand before the Judge as criminals, but as the favorites of heaven; and this judgment will not be of their persons, on which their final state depends; but of their works; and that it might appear, that the distribution of favors to them, in this kingdom state, is just and equitable. Before this point is dismissed, it may be proper briefly to observe, what of men

will be brought into judgment.

3b4a. All their works and actions, whether good or evil (Ecclesiastes 12:14; 1 Timothy 5:24).

3b4b. All the words of men, every hard speech against Christ and his people; yea, every idle word, and much more every profane and blasphemous expression (Jude 1:15; Matthew 12:35-37). --Nay,

3b4c. Every thought, good or bad; for there is "a book of remembrance" written, for those that "thought" on the name of the Lord, which are registered there, in order to be observed and taken notice of hereafter (Malachi 3:16). "God will judge the secrets of men"; not only their secret works, but their secret thoughts, "by Jesus Christ, according to the gospel"; and the Lord the Judge will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart" (Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 4:5).

4. The rule of judgment, according to which it will proceed, and from whence the evidence will be taken, are certain "books opened" (Revelation 20:12), the same is observed Daniel 7:10 where the judgment of antichrist, the emblem of this judgment, is described; only there is no mention made of the other book, the book of life; because that only respected what will be done in this present life; but this respects the life to come, and the state of men in it.

4a. The book of divine omniscience will be opened; Christ, the Judge, who is God over all, knows all persons; the "eyes" of his omniscience are "everywhere", throughout the whole world, "beholding the evil and the good"; evil men and good men; evil actions and good actions; "his eyes are upon all the ways of men", and he observes every step they take, and none can hide himself from him, who fills heaven and earth with his presence; and when he comes to judge the world, this book of his omniscience will be opened; he will let all the churches, and all the world know, that he it is who searches the hearts, and tries the reins of the children of men. What is unusual in human courts of judicature, for the judge upon the bench to become an evidence, and be a witness against the prisoner at the bar, will be the case now; "I will come near to you to judgment, saith the Lord, and will be a swift witness against the sorcerers", &c. (Malachi 3:5).

4b. This book seems to be the same with the "book of remembrance" (in Malachi 3:16), not that God needs anything to assist and refresh his memory; he has a strong memory, to remember the sins which are written by him in his book, "with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond"; and what is written with an iron pen, or cut with a diamond, is not easily erased; great Babylon will come up in remembrance before God, with all her sins; and so will the sins of wicked men be remembered, be brought into judgment, and meet with their deserved punishment. Though the above book seems to be written for them only that fear the Lord, whose sins he remembers no more; but then he is not forgetful of their good works, which flow from his own grace; and even when they have been forgotten by them, they will be remembered by him, as appears from Matthew 25:37.

4c. The book of the creatures, or creation, will be opened. Every creature of God is good and useful to men; but those which are given for use are often abused to gratify one carnal sensual lust or another; and which will be produced as witnesses against the sinner.

4d. The book of providence will be opened: the providential goodness of God extends to all his creatures; and such who have despised the riches of his goodness bestowed upon them, which should have led them to repentance, and have abused the forbearance and longsuffering of God towards them, in his providence, will find that by the hardness and impenitence of their hearts, they have treasured up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; when the providential dealings of God with them shall be brought as an evidence against them (Romans 2:4-5).

4e. The book of the scriptures will be opened, both of law and gospel: the law of Moses will accuse those who have lived under the law, and been violators of it, and pronounce them guilty before God; they that have "sinned in the law shall be judged by the law"; nay, the Gentiles will "judge" them "who by the letter and circumcision transgress the law"; that is, will rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them (Romans 2:12; Romans 2:27). Such who have lived under the gospel dispensation, and have neglected, despised, and rejected the gospel of Christ, will be judged according to it and by it; "The word", says Christ, "that I have spoken, the same shall judge him" that rejects it "in the last day" (John 12:48). "God", says the apostle, "shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel" (Romans 2:16), and the grand rule in it, according to which judgment will proceed, is that in Mark 16:16 nay, even the law and light of nature will be a rule of judgment respecting those who have only had the benefit of that; "for as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law" (Romans 2:12).

4f. The book of conscience: in this are recorded the actions of men; and from thence are they to be brought forth upon occasion; and which either accuses or excuses for them, when it does its office; unless cauterized and seared, as it were, with a red hot iron; and even such, in the day of judgment, will have their consciences awaked, and which will be as a thousand witnesses against them.

4g. There is another book that will be opened; and that is "the book of life"; in which the names of some are written, which is the same as to be "written in heaven"; and means no other, than the ordination and appointment of them to eternal life in heaven: this is the Lamb’s book of life, the book of eternal election, in which all the names of all the elect are written; and the use of this book in the day of judgment will be, that such whose names are found written in it, will be admitted into the new Jerusalem, the holy city, and partake of the privileges thereof (Revelation 21:27), and that such whose names are not found written in it; or, as it is expressed in Jude 1:4 who are "forewritten to this condemnation", those shall be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15). Now the "dead" will be "judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works" (Revelation 20:12), which must be understood of the wicked "dead", when raised and brought to stand before God who will have sentence pronounced upon them according to their wicked works; between which, and the punishment condemned to, will be a just proportion; "the wages of sin is death"; eternal death is the just demerit of it: but as there is a difference in the sins of the wicked; some more, others fewer; some greater, others less; some more, and others less aggravated; their punishment will be proportioned to them, as will be seen in the next chapter: and so everyone will be judged according to his works, in the most just and equitable manner. Indeed, good men also will be judged according to their works; but not adjudged to eternal life according to them; for there is no proportion between the best works of men and eternal life; "eternal life is the free gift of God through Christ": but upon the judgment of them, the distribution of rewards, or of

peculiar and distinguished favors, more or less, in the kingdom state, will be according to every man’s works. This judgment out of the books, and according to works, is designed to show with what accuracy and exactness, with what justice and equity, it will be executed, in allusion to statute books in courts of judicature, to be referred unto in any case of difficulty.

5. The circumstances of the judgment, as to time and place.

5a. First, the time of it; the particular judgment of men, or of particular persons in their souls, will be immediately after death; according to Hebrews 9:27 the general judgment, or the judgment of all men, in soul and body, will be after the resurrection; the judgment of the righteous, after the first resurrection; and the judgment of the wicked, after the second resurrection. It is often spoken of in scripture as though it would be quickly, particularly in Revelation 22:7; Revelation 22:12; Revelation 22:20 to alarm men, and keep up a constant expectation of it. There is a "day appointed" for it, as may be reasonably thought; for if there is a "time to every purpose", a time appointed to everything done under the heavens, then certainly for a business of such moment, and of so great importance, as the general judgment is; and, indeed, this is expressly affirmed; "he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31), the time of it is unknown to men, (Matthew 24:36; Acts 1:6-7), hence the Judge is represented as coming "at an unawares", as a thief in the night, at an hour unthought of; and therefore men should watch and pray, and be ready to meet him.

5b. Secondly, the place. This is also uncertain. Some, because of some passages in Joel 3:2; Joel 3:12 have thought of the valley of Jehoshaphat; but no valley can be supposed large enough to hold all that will be judged at the day of judgment; nor does it appear from scripture that there ever was such a valley of such a name; nor does this seem to be the proper name of the valley, whatever valley is intended; in Joel 3:14 it is called, "the valley of decision"; it properly signifies, the judgment of the Lord, and so is applicable to any place where the Lord should judge the enemies of his people, and bring destruction upon them: and to me it seems to refer to the battle, at Armageddon, where will be a great slaughter of the kings of the earth; which will make way for the latter day glory. The two more probable opinions are, that the judgment will be either in the air or on the earth. Some think it will be in the air, because the Judge will come in the clouds of heaven, and the living saints will then be changed, and the dead saints raised; and both will be caught up together unto the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. But I rather think it will be on earth; the judgment of the saints will be on the new earth, on which they will descend from the air with Christ; and which will be the seat of his reign with the saints, and of theirs with him; and which will be the time of their judging: and as for the wicked dead, who will live again after the thousand years are ended, they will come upon the breadth of the earth, where will be the camp of the saints, the beloved city, and encompass that; and being defeated in their design, they will be at once brought to judgment, and stand before God, the Judge of all, and receive their sentence.

6. The properties of this judgment, as may be gathered from what has been said about it, and from express passages of scripture.

6a. It is "future", yet to come: the apostle Paul reasoned before Felix, among other things, "of judgment to come" (Acts 24:25). But because it seems to be deferred, and does not immediately take place, some have their hearts set in them to do evil, and put away this evil day far from them, as they reckon it, and put it very far away indeed, and fancy it will never be. But,

6b. It is "certain"; purpose and prophecy make it so: God has, in his purposes, appointed a day for it, and he will keep it; and fit purpose is never disannulled; Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of it, as well as others; and the word of prophecy is a sure one, and will certainly be fulfilled: therefore let young and old know, that for the things they have committed God will bring them into judgment (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

6c. It will be "universal", both as to persons and things. All men will be judged, sooner or later; in the morning, or in the evening of that day; none shall escape it: and all works will be brought into it, good or bad.

6d. It will be a "righteous judgment"; so it is called (Romans 2:5). The world will be judged in righteousness; the Judge of all the earth will do right; Christ the Lord will be a righteous Judge, and his judgment just.

6e. It will be the last judgment: it will be when the last trumpet shall sound, that the dead shall rise in order to be judged; and it will be at the last day, when the word of Christ, and Christ according to it shall judge men. (1 Corinthians 15:52; John 12:48).

6f. It is called "eternal judgment" (Hebrews 6:2), not only because it will be a long time about, as has been observed; but because it will issue in the final state of men; either in their everlasting destruction, or in their everlasting happiness, (Matthew 25:46 which are next to be considered.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Homer. Odyss. 4. v. 563, 564. & 11. v. 567, 568. Apollodorus de Deor, Orig. l. 3. p. 130, 184. Plato in Axiocho, p. 1308.

[2] Plato in Gorgias, p. 357.

[3] Plato de Republica, l. 10. p. 761.

[4] Epist. 7. p. 1283. Ed. Ficin.

[5] See my Exposition of Heb. vi. 1, 2. See Gill on “Hebrews 6:1”. See Gill on “Hebrews 6:2”.

[6] Book 6. c. 7. p. 359. See point 7c. in topic 1017.

02. Of the Law of God

Of the Law of God

It appears by what has been observed, that there was an intermixture of law and gospel under the former dispensation, as there also is in the present one; they are interspersed in both testaments; though the law was more largely held forth than the gospel, under the former dispensation; and therefore we commonly call it the legal dispensation; and there is more of the gospel than of the law under the present dispensation; for which reason we call it the gospel dispensation; yet there are of each in both; and here will be a proper place to treat of law and gospel distinctly, which will connect what has been already said to what is yet to be said; and by the latter I shall be naturally led to the great and glorious truths of the gospel, I intend to treat distinctly of. And shall begin with the law. The word law is variously used, sometimes for a part of the Scriptures only, the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses; as when it is mentioned in the division of the Scripture by Christ (Luke 24:44), and along with the prophets, and as distinct from them (John 1:45; John 8:5). Sometimes for all the books of the Old Testament, which in general go by the name of the Law, as does the book of Psalms on that account, as the places quoted out of it, or referred to in it, show (John 10:34; John 12:34; John 15:25). Sometimes it signifies the doctrine of the Scriptures in general, both legal and evangelical (Psalms 19:7), and the doctrine of the gospel in particular, even the doctrine of the Messiah (Isaiah 2:3; Isaiah 42:4), called in the New Testament "the law," or doctrine "of faith" (Romans 3:27), and sometimes it signifies the whole body of laws given from God by Moses to the children of Israel, as distinct from the gospel of the grace of God (John 1:17 and which may be distinguished into the laws ceremonial, judicial, and moral.

1. The ceremonial law, of which little need be said, since much has been observed concerning it already; this concerns the ecclesiastical state of the Jews, their priests, sacrifices, feasts, fasts, washings, &c. and though some of these rites were before the times of Moses, as sacrifices, the distinction of clean and unclean creatures, circumcision, &c. yet these were renewed and confirmed, and others added to them; and the whole digested into a body of laws by Moses, and given by him under a divine direction to the people of Israel. This law was a shadow of good things to come by Christ, of evangelical things, and indeed was no other than the gospel veiled in types and figures; the priests served to the example and shadow of heavenly things; the sacrifices were typical of the sacrifice of Christ; the festivals were shadows, of which Christ was the body and substance; the ablutions typified cleansing by the blood of Christ; and the whole was a schoolmaster to the Jews, until he came; but when faith came, that is, Christ, the object of faith, they were no longer under a schoolmaster, nor had they need of the law as such; there was a disannulling of it, because of its weakness and unprofitableness; for it became useless and unnecessary, having its accomplishment in Christ.

2. The judicial law, which respects the political state or civil government of the Jews, and consists of statutes and judgments, according to which the judges in Israel determined all causes brought before them, and passed sentence; in which sentence the people were to acquiesce

(Deuteronomy 17:8-11). Such as related to any injuries done to their persons or property, and to the punishment of offences, both of a greater and of a lesser kind; these were given by Moses, but not made by him; they were made by God himself. The government of the Jews was a very particular form of government; it was a theocracy, a government immediately under God; though he is King of the whole world, and Governor among and over the nations of it, yet he was in a special and peculiar manner King over Israel; and he made laws for them, by which they were to be ruled and governed: nor had the commonwealth of Israel a power to make any new laws; nor any of their judges and rulers, not even Moses, their lawgiver under God: and therefore, when any matter came before him, not clearly determined by any law given by God, he suspended the determination of it until he knew the mind of God about it; see (Leviticus 24:12; Numbers 15:34). And when the people of Israel were desirous of a king, after the manner of neighboring nations, it was resented by the Lord, and reckoned by him as a rejection of him from being their King; and though he gave them a king, or suffered them to have one, it was in anger; and so far he still kept the peculiar government of them in his hands, that their kings never had any power to make new laws; nor did their best and wisest of kings make any, as David and Solomon; and when a reformation was made among them, as by Hezekiah and Josiah, it was not by making any new regulations, but by putting the old laws into execution; and by directing and requiring of the judges, and other officers, to act according to them.

It may be inquired, whether the judicial laws, or the laws respecting the Jewish polity, are now in force or not, and to be observed or not; which may be resolved by distinguishing between them; there were some that were peculiar to the state of the Jews, their continuance in the land of Canaan, and while their polity lasted, and until the coming of the Messiah, when they were to cease, as is clear from (Genesis 49:10), such as related to inheritances, and the alienation of them by marriage or otherwise; the restoration of them when sold at the year of jubilee; the marrying of a brother’s wife when he died without issue, &c. the design of which was, to keep the tribes distinct until the Messiah came, that it might be clearly known from what tribe he sprung. And there were others that were peculiarly suited to the natural temper and disposition of that people, who were covetous, cruel, and oppressive of the poor, froward and perverse, jealous and revengeful; hence the laws concerning the manumission of servants sold, at the end of the sixth year; the release of debts, and letting the land rest from tillage every seventh year; concerning lending on interest; leaving a corner in the field for the poor, and the forgotten sheaf;--and others concerning divorces, and the trial of a suspected wife, and the cities of refuge to flee to from the avenger of blood: these, with others, ceased when the Jewish polity did, and are not binding on other nations. But then there were other judicial laws, which were founded on the light of nature, on reason, and on justice and equity, and these remain in full force; and they must be wise as well as righteous laws, which were made by God himself, their King and Legislator, as they are said to be (Deuteronomy 4:6; Deuteronomy 4:8). And they are, certainly, the best constituted and regulated governments that come nearest to the commonwealth of Israel, and the civil laws of it, which are of the kind last described; and where they are acted up unto, there what is said by Wisdom is most truly verified, "By me kings reign, and princes decree judgment;" and if these laws were more strictly attended to, which respect the punishment of offences, especially capital ones, things would be put upon a better footing than they are in some governments; and judges, in passing sentences, would be able to do that part of their office with more certainty and safety, and with a better conscience. And whereas the commonwealth of Israel was governed by these laws for many hundreds of years,

and needed no other in their civil polity, when, in such a course of time, every case that ordinarily happens, must arise, and be brought into a court of judicature; I cannot but be of opinion, that a digest of civil laws might be made out of the Bible, the law of the Lord that is perfect, either as lying in express words in it, or to be deduced by the analogy of things and cases, and by just consequence, as would be sufficient for the government of any nation: and then there would be no need of so many law books, nor of so many lawyers; and perhaps there would be fewer law suits. However, we Christians, under whatsoever government we are, are directed to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and for conscience sake; even to everyone that is not contrary to common sense and reason, and to religion and conscience; (see Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14).

3. The moral law, which lies chiefly in the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17), and which our Lord has reduced, even both tables of the law, to two capital ones, love to God, and love to our neighbor (Matthew 22:36-40), as the apostle has reduced the commands of the second table to one, that is, love, which he calls the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:9-10). And this law, to love God and our neighbour, is binding on every man, and is eternal, and remains invariable and unalterable; and concerning which I shall treat more largely. And shall consider,

3a. First, The author and giver of this law; God was the author and maker of it; Moses the giver and minister of it from God; it was God that first spoke the ten words, or commands, to the children of Israel; and it was he that wrote and engraved them on tables of stone; the writing was the writing of God, and the engraving was by the finger of God; it was from his right hand this fiery law went: the ministry of angels was made use of in it; it is called, the word spoken by angels; it was given by the disposition of them; it was ordained by them in the hands of a mediator, who was Moses, who stood between God and the people, received the lively oracles from him, and delivered them to them. There was a law in being before the times of Moses; or otherwise there would have been no transgression, no imputation of sin, no charge of guilt, nor any punishment inflicted; whereas death, the just demerit of sin, reigned from Adam to Moses; and besides the positive law, which forbid the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and was given as a trial of man's obedience to the whole moral law, and in the form of a covenant, in which Adam stood as a federal head, to all his posterity; and which covenant he broke, and involved himself and his in misery and ruin. Besides this, there was the law of nature, inscribed on his heart by his Maker, as the rule of his obedience to him; and by which he knew much of God, and of the nature of moral good and evil; and which; though much obliterated by the fall, some remains of it are to be discerned in Adam's posterity; and even in the Gentiles (Romans 1:19-20; Romans 2:14-15), and which is reinscribed in the hearts of God's people in regeneration, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace (Jeremiah 31:33). Now the law of Moses, for matter and substance, is the same with the law of nature, though differing in the form of administration; and this was renewed in the times of Moses, that it might be confirmed, and that it might not be forgotten, and be wholly lost out of the minds of men; of which there was great danger, through the great prevalence of corruption in the world: and it was written, that it might remain, "litera scripta manet;" and it was written on tables of stone, that it might be the more durable; the apostle says, "it was added because of transgressions," to forbid them, restrain them, and punish for them; and it "entered that the offence might abound," the sin of Adam; that the heinousness of it might appear, and the justness of its imputation to all his posterity might be manifest; as well as all other offences

might be seen by it to be exceeding sinful, and righteously punishable: (see Galatians 3:19; Romans 5:20; Romans 7:13). It was not delivered as a pure covenant of works, though the self-righteous Jews turned it into one, and sought for life and righteousness by it: and so it engendered to bondage, and became a killing letter; nor a pure covenant of grace, though it was given as a distinguishing favour to the people of Israel (Deuteronomy 4:6; Deuteronomy 4:8; Psalms 147:19-20; Romans 9:4) and much mercy and kindness are expressed in it; and it is prefaced with a declaration of the Lord being the God of Israel, who had, of his great goodness, brought them out of the land of Egypt (Exodus 20:2; Exodus 20:6; Exodus 20:12). But it was a part and branch of the typical covenant, under which the covenant of grace was administered under the former dispensation; and of what it was typical, has been observed before; and a principal end of its being renewed was, that Christ, who was to come of the Jews, might appear to be made under the law, as the surety of his people, the righteousness of which he was to fulfil, and, indeed, all righteousness; being the end of the law, the scope at which it aimed, as well as the fulfiller of it.

3b. Secondly, The epithets of this law, or the properties of it, may be next considered; such as the scriptures expressly give to it; and which will lead into the nature and quality of it. As,

3b1. That it is perfect. "The law of the Lord is perfect" (Psalms 19:7), which is true of the moral law, by which men come to know "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2), what it is his will should be done, and what not be done; it takes in the whole duty of men, both to God and man; for to fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man; it includes love to God, and love to our neighbour; and which are comprehensive of every duty to both: it is very large and capacious; it is the commandment which is exceeding broad; it is so complete and perfect, that as nothing is to be detracted from it, so nothing is to be added to it, nor can be added to it, to make it more perfect: the papists talk of counsels, exhortations, &c. as additions; but these belong either to law or gospel. And the Socinians say, that Christ came to make the law more perfect; which they infer from some passages in (Matthew 5:1-48), where Christ observes, that it had been said by some of the ancients of old, thus and thus; but he said, so and so; which is not to be understood of any new laws made by him, but as giving the true sense of the old laws, and vindicating them from the false glosses and interpretations of the Scribes and Pharisees: and when the apostle John speaks of a new commandment, he means the old commandment to love one another, as he himself explains it (1 John 2:7-8), and which he calls new, because enforced by a new instance and example of Christ’s love in dying for his people, and by new motives and arguments taken from the same.—

3b2. It is spiritual; We know that the law is spiritual, says the apostle (Romans 7:14), which is to be understood of the moral law; for as for the ceremonial law, that is called, "The law of a carnal commandment;" and is said to stand in "carnal ordinances" (Hebrews 7:16; Hebrews 9:10), which only reached the flesh, and the sanctifying of that: but the moral law is so spiritual in its nature and requirements, that so holy and spiritual a man as the apostle Paul when he compared himself with it, and viewed himself in the glass of it, thought himself "carnal, and sold under sin". The law reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and the affections of the mind, and forbids and checks all irregular and inordinate motions in it, and the lusts of it. Thus, for instance, the sixth command not only forbids actual murder, but all undue heat, passion, anger, wrath, malice, resentment and revenge, conceived in the mind, and expressed by words. So the seventh command not only prohibits the outward acts of uncleanness, as fornication, adultery, &c. but all

unclean thoughts, impure desires, and unchaste affections, as well as looks and words. The law directs, not only to an external worship of God, but to an internal, spiritual one; as to love the Lord, to fear him, and put trust and confidence in him, suitable to his nature as a Spirit; it requires of a man to serve it with his own mind and spirit, with his whole heart, as the apostle did (Romans 7:25), and the assistance of the Spirit of God is necessary to the observance of it; and God in covenant has promised his people, that he "will put his Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his statutes," and "keep his judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:27).

3b3. The law is "holy;" so it is said to be (Romans 7:12), and the commandment holy; it comes from an holy God, from whom nothing unholy can proceed; for holiness is his nature, and he is holy in all his works; and the law is a transcript of his holy will; the matter of it, or what it requires, is holy; even sanctification of heart and life; and it directs to live holily, soberly, righteously, and godly, in this evil world.

3b4. It is also "just," as well as holy and good (Romans 7:12). There are no laws so righteous as the laws of God; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether (Deuteronomy 4:8; Psalms 19:9). It is impartial unto all, and requires the same of one as of another, and renders to every man according to his works; it is just in condemning wicked men for sin, and in justifying those that have a righteousness answerable to its demands; for God is just, according to his law, while he is the justifier of those that believe in Jesus.

3b5. The law is good; the author of it is good only, essentially, originally good; from whom every good and perfect gift comes, and nothing that is evil and bad. The law is materially good, it is morally good; as God by the light of nature, so much more by the law of Moses, does he show to men that which is good; in it he sets before them the good they are to do; and the evil they are to avoid: it is pleasantly good; not to an unregenerate man, whose carnal mind is enmity to all that is good, and so to the law of God; but to a regenerate man, who, as the apostle, delights in the law of God after the inner man, and loves it, as David did, and meditates on it, as every good man does (Romans 7:22; Psalms 119:97; Psalms 1:2). And it is also profitably good; not to God, for when men have done all they can, they are, with respect to God, unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10), but to men, their fellow creatures, and fellow Christians, to whom they are serviceable, by their good works (Titus 3:8), and also to themselves; for though not "for," yet "in" keeping the commands there is great reward, as peace of conscience (Psalms 19:11; Psalms 119:165). The law is good, "if a man use it lawfully" (1 Timothy 1:8). There is a lawful and an unlawful use of the law; it is used unlawfully when men seek to obtain life and righteousness by it; for the law cannot give life, nor is righteousness by it; nor can then be justified by the works of it, in the sight of God; for no man can perfectly keep it; there is not a just man that does good and sins not: but it is lawfully used when obeyed in faith, from a principle of love, with a view to the glory of God, without any selfish and sinister ends. Which leads me to consider more particularly, 3c. Thirdly, The uses of the law both to sinners and saints.

3c1. To sinners.

3c1a. To convince of sin. Sin is a transgression of the law, by which it is known that it is sin, being forbidden by the law; "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" not only of gross actual sins; but of the inward lusts of the mind; "I had not known lust," says the apostle, "except the law had said, Thou shall not covet" (Romans 3:20; Romans 7:7). Yet only as it is used by the Spirit of God, who holds

it up to a mind enlightened by him, whereby it sees the sinfulness of it; for it is the Spirit's work savingly to convince of sin; which he does by means of the law.

3c1b. To restrain from sin; of this use are the laws of men; hence civil magistrates are terrors to evildoers: so the law, by its menaces, deters men from sin, when they are not truly convinced of the evil of it, nor humbled for it; though by such restraints, it does but rise and swell, and rage the more within, like a flood of water stopped in its course.

3b1c. To condemn and punish for sin; for sinners it is made, and against them it lies, to their condemnation, unless justified in Christ (1 Timothy 1:9-10). It accuses of sin, charges with it; brings evidence of it; stops the sinner's mouth from pleading in his own cause; pronounces guilty before God; and curses and condemns: it is the ministration of condemnation and death; and its sentence takes place where the righteousness of Christ is not imputed.

3c2. It is of use to saints and true believers in Christ.

3c2a. To point out the will of God unto them; what is to be done by them, and what to be avoided; to inform them of, and urge them to their duty, both towards God and man; for in that the whole of it lies.

3c2b. To be a rule of life and conversation to them; not a rule to obtain life by; but to live according to; to guide their feet, to direct their steps, and preserve them from going into bye and crooked paths. The wise man says, "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light" (Proverbs 6:23). And the wise man's father says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105).

3c2c. It is as a glass, in which a believer, by the light of the Spirit of God, may see his own face, what manner of man he is; how deformed, how carnal and corrupt, when compared with this law; and how far short of perfection he is in himself; "I have seen an end of all perfection," says David; "Thy commandment is exceeding broad;" to which the imperfect works of men are not commensurate; hence good men are sensible that their own righteousness is insufficient to justify them before God, it being but as rags, and those filthy ones. Hence,

3c2d. They are led to prize and value the righteousness of Christ, since that is perfectly agreeable to the holy and righteous law of God; yea, by it the law is magnified and made honorable; wherefore they desire to be found in Christ, not having on their own righteousness, but his; who is the end of the law for righteousness, to everyone that believes. Now,

3d. Fourthly, The law of God continues under the present dispensation for the said uses; Christ came not to destroy it, and loosen mens obligations to it; but to fulfil it: nor is the law made null and void by faith; by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; so far from it, that it is established by it [See a Sermon of mine called, "The Law established by the Gospel."]: there is a sense in which the law is "done away," and saints are "delivered" from it; "that being dead wherein they were held," as in a prison; and they "become dead to it by the body of Christ," by his obedience and sufferings in it (2 Corinthians 3:11; Romans 7:4; Romans 7:6).

3d1. It does not continue as a covenant of works; and, indeed, it was not delivered to the children of Israel as such strictly and properly sneaking, only in a typical sense; though the Jews turned it to such a purpose, and sought righteousness and life by it: but God never made a covenant of

works with men since the fall, in order to their obtaining life and salvation by it; for it never was in the power of man since to perform the conditions of such a covenant; however, it is certain, believers are not under the law as a covenant of works; but under grace as a covenant of grace.

3d2. Nor does it continue as to the form of administration of it by Moses; it is now no longer in his hands, nor to be considered as such; the whole Mosaic economy is broke to pieces, and at an end, which was prefigured by Moses casting the two tables of stone out of his hands, and breaking them, when he came down from the mount: the law, especially as it lies in the Decalogue; and as to the form of the administration of that by Moses, was peculiar to the Jews; as appears by the preface to it, which can agree with none but them; by the time of worship prescribed them in the fourth command, which was temporary and typical; and by the promise of long life in the land of Canaan, annexed to the fifth command.

3d3. It continues not as a terrifying law to believers, who are not come to mount Sinai, and are not under that stormy and terrible dispensation; but they are come to mount Sion, and to all the privileges of a gospel church state: nor are they brought into bondage by its rigorous exactions; on a strict compliance to which, or perfect obedience thereunto, their peace and comfort do not depend: nor are they awed and urged by its menaces and curses, to an observance of it; but are constrained, by the love of God and Christ, to run with cheerfulness the way of its commandments; they are made willing to serve it with their mind and spirit, through the power and efficacy of divine grace upon them; and they do serve it, not in the oldness of the letter but in the newness of the spirit; or, as they are renewed by the free Spirit of God.

3d4. Nor is it a cursing and condemning law to the saints. As sinners and transgressors of it, they are subject to its curses; but Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them; and so there is no more curse to them here or hereafter; they are out of the reach of its curses, and of condemnation by it; there is none to them that are in Christ: Who shall condemn? it is Christ that died; and who by dying has bore their sentence of condemnation, and freed them from it; and having passed from death to life, they shall never enter into condemnation (Galatians 3:10; Galatians 3:13; Romans 8:1; Romans 8:33; John 5:24).

3d5. Yet it continues as a rule of walk and conversation to them, as before observed; and is to be regarded by them as in the hands of Christ [See another Sermon of mine, called, "The Law in the hand of Christ."]; by whom it is held forth as King and Lawgiver, in his church; and who, and not Moses, is to be heard, and his voice hearkened to, as the Son and Master, in his own house. Believers, though freed from the law, in the sense before declared, yet are "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ," and obliged to regard it; and the rather, as it was in his heart, and he was made under it, and has fulfilled it; and therefore may be viewed and served with pleasure (1 Corinthians 9:21).

02. Of the Liberty of the Sons of God

Of the Liberty of the Sons of God

Among the several effects, or privileges of adoption, liberty is one, and a principal one; and requires to be treated of particularly and distinctly. "Then are the children free", as our Lord says in another case; such are so, who are made free by him; "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). And as it is the Son that makes free, they are sons only who are made free. Freedom is the fruit and effect of sonship, and follows upon it; "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God, through Christ" (Galatians 4:6-7), sonship and servitude, a son and a servant, are opposed to each other, and a spirit of adoption and a spirit of bondage; where the one is, the other is not (John 8:35; Romans 8:15), hence this liberty is called, "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21), being proper and peculiar to them; and is twofold, a liberty of grace, and a liberty of glory; the one is enjoyed in this life, and the other in that to come.

1. First, The liberty of grace; which lies, 1a. In a freedom from sin, Satan, and the law.

1a1. From sin; it is a liberty not to sin, but from it; liberty to sin is licentiousness, and cannot be that liberty wherewith Christ makes free; for it is contrary to his nature, who loves righteousness and hates iniquity; to his gospel, the truth of which makes free, for that is a doctrine according to godliness; and contrary to the Spirit of Christ, who, as he is a free Spirit, so he is the Spirit of holiness; and contrary to the principle of grace in the saints, and is confuted and condemned by the holy lives of the children of God in all ages: but it is a freedom from sin; not from the being of it; for the most eminent saints that have been in the world, have not been free from the indwelling of sin, and acts of it; but from the guilt of it, through the blood and righteousness of Christ applied to them; and from condemnation by it, as well as from the dominion of it, through the grace of God in conversion; when, though sin has reigned in them, in a very powerful and tyrannical manner; yet shall no more have dominion over them, because not under the law, but under grace (Romans 6:14; Romans 6:17-18).

1a2. From the power of Satan, who has usurped a dominion over the sons of men, and leads them captive at his will, until the Spirit of God comes and dispossesses him, and turns men from the power of Satan to God, and translates them from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son; when they are no more slaves and vassals to him, nor do his works and lusts; but the will of their heavenly Father: though they are not freed from his temptations, which the best of men have been beset with; yet they are not overcome by them, nor shall be destroyed through them.

1a3. From the law, and the bondage of it. From the moral law, as a covenant of works, obliging to work for life; but not from it as a rule of life, walk, and conversation; from it as the ministration of Moses; but not from it as in the hands of Christ: from it, so as not to be obliged to seek for justification by it, which is not to be had by the works of it; and from the curses and condemnation of it, Christ being made a curse for them; and from the rigorous exaction of it, requiring perfect and

sinless obedience; and from that bondage of spirit, which, for want of it, it leads into: and from the ceremonial law, as a sign of guilt, that handwriting of ordinances being taken away, and nailed to the cross of Christ; and as a type of Christ, and its ordinances, as shadows of good things to come; which are all done away, Christ, the substance, being come; and as a severe, rigid schoolmaster, as it was, till Christ, the object of faith, came; and as a partition wall between Jew and Gentile, which is now broken down, and all are one in Christ: and from the judicial law, so far as any of the statutes of it were peculiar to the Jewish nation; but such as are founded on nature, reason, justice, and equity, are still binding. Nor are the sons of God, by their Christian liberty, freed from the laws of nations, which are not contrary to religion and conscience; subjection to civil magistrates is not inconsistent with Christian liberty; and which is inculcated by the apostles, in their epistles to the churches, and others (Romans 13:1-4; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14).

1b. Christian liberty consists in a freedom from all traditions of men; such as those of the Pharisees, among the Jews, which were before the times of Christ, and were risen to a very great bulk in his time; and which were imposed as a heavy burden on the consciences of men, and by which the word and commandments of God were transgressed, and made of none effect (Matthew 15:1-6), and such as among heathens, heretics, and false teachers, which the apostle exhorts to beware of, and not conform unto; which he calls philosophy and vain deceit, the tradition of men, the rudiments of the world; ordinances and commandments of men, which forbid the touching, tasting, and handling of some things (Colossians 2:8; Colossians 2:20-23) and such as the unwritten traditions of the Papists, respecting their hierarchy, doctrines, and practices, which have no foundation in the word of God; as the several orders, offices, and sacraments, not to be found in scripture, the doctrines of transubstantiation, purgatory, &c. rites and customs, as the observance of fasts and festivals, on certain days, and at certain times of the year; baptism of infants, signing with the sign of the cross, &c., such like things Christian liberty sets us free from, and our consciences are not bound to pay any regard to them.

1c. Christian liberty lies in the free use of the creatures, which God has provided for food and nourishment, and which were granted to men originally, without any distinction; for though there was very early a distinction of creatures into clean and unclean, with respect to sacrifice, yet not with respect to food, until the Levitical law took place, which made the use of some creatures unlawful; but now, under the gospel dispensation, we are at full liberty to eat of every kind, that is fit, proper, and convenient for food: as Peter, by the vision, was taught to call nothing common and unclean; so we may be persuaded, with the apostle Paul, that there is nothing common and unclean of itself; but that every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; and provided it is used with moderation, and not indulged to excess, to luxury and intemperance; or used as an occasion to the flesh, to pamper that, and fulfil the lusts of it (Acts 10:14-15; Romans 14:14; 1 Timothy 4:3-4). The injunction by the synod at Jerusalem, to abstain from blood, and things strangled, was only "pro tempore", for the peace of the churches, till things could be settled in them, between Jews and Gentiles, to mutual satisfaction.

1d. Another part of Christian liberty respects things indifferent; things which are neither commanded nor forbidden of God, and which may be used and abstained from at pleasure; and which, in the first times of the gospel, chiefly concerned the eating, or not eating, some certain things (Romans 14:2-3), which might be made use of by those who thought fit to use them, provided they did it in faith; for if they made use of them, doubting whether they should or not, they

sinned (Romans 14:22-23), and that they did not lay a stumbling block in the way of weak Christians, and so offend, grieve, and wound them, and destroy their peace (Romans 14:13; Romans 14:15; Romans 14:20-21; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13), and such that abstained from the use of them, were not to reckon it as a point of merit, thereby obtaining the favour of God, and the remission of their sins, and becoming more holy and more perfect; nor as a part of religious worship, and as necessary for the peace of conscience, and continuance in the divine favour; for the "kingdom of God", true, real religion, and godliness, "is not meat and drink"; it does not lie in what a man eats or drinks, or wears, provided moderation, decency, and circumstances, are attended to (Romans 14:17), and care should be taken, on the one hand, lest such things should be reckoned indifferent, which are not indifferent, and so any precept, or ordinance of God, be neglected; and on the other hand, such as are indifferent, should not be imposed as necessary, which may lead to superstition and will worship.

1e. Christian liberty lies in the use of ordinances, which God has enjoined; it is a privilege to come to mount Zion, the city of the living God; to have a place and a name in the church of Christ; to be of the family and household of God, and partake of the provisions which are there made for spiritual refreshment. Subjection to gospel ordinances is not contrary to Christian liberty; but accords with it, and, indeed, is a part of it; but to be subject to the ordinances and commandments of men is contrary to it; but not subjection to the ordinances of God. Carnal men may reckon them bonds and cords, and be for breaking and casting them away; but spiritual men account them their privileges, and receive Christ’s "yoke" as "easy", and his "burden" as "light"; and they yield subjection to them, not with a mercenary and servile spirit, but under the influence, and by the assistance, of the Spirit of God, who is a free spirit; they act from a principle of love; they love the house and worship of God, his word and ordinances, and in love observe them (John 14:15; John 14:21; John 14:23). Christian liberty does not lie in a neglect of gospel ordinances, or in an attendance on them at will and pleasure; men are not to come into a church, and go out when they please, or attend an ordinance now and then, or when they think well: this is not liberty, but licentiousness. The ordinances of Christ, particularly the supper, are perpetual things, to be observed frequently and constantly, unto the second coming of Christ; and it is both well pleasing to God, to keep the ordinances, as they were delivered; and it is profitable to the saints; since these are for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till they come to be perfect men, and arrive to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

1f. Christian liberty lies in worshipping God according to his word, and the dictates of conscience, without the fear of men, which indulged to, brings a snare, and leads to idolatry, superstition, and will worship: though Christians are obliged to regard the laws of men, respecting civil matters, yet not what regard religion and conscience, and are contrary thereunto; by such they are not bound, but should serve God rather than men; as the cases of the three companions of Daniel, of Daniel himself, and of the apostles, and of the martyrs and confessors in all ages, show; who chose rather to suffer imprisonment, confiscation of goods, and death itself, than part with this branch of Christian liberty, to serve God, according to his word, and that light which they had in it. Nor does it become rulers and governors to infringe this liberty of theirs.

1g. Another glorious part of Christian liberty is freedom of access to God, through Christ the Mediator, under the influence of the blessed Spirit (Ephesians 2:18), this is a great privilege the sons of God have, that they can come to God as their Father; not as on a throne of justice,

requiring at their hands satisfaction for their sins; but as on a throne of grace, communicating pardoning grace and mercy, and all supplies of grace to them, as the God of all grace; and this access they have through Christ, the Mediator between God and man, through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and by the Spirit, who is a Spirit of grace and supplication, under whose influence saints can pour out their souls to God with great freedom, and make known their requests to him with thankfulness.

1h. It also lies in a freedom from the fear of death, both corporal and eternal; Christ, through his incarnation, sufferings, and death, has delivered them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage: death, as formidable as it is, is no king of terrors to them; in a view of interest in Christ, and in the exercise of faith, and hope of being for ever with him, they choose to depart; knowing, that to die is gain; and in a prospect of death and eternity, can sit and sing, and say, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" And as to an eternal death, they are comfortably assured, they shall not be hurt by it; that shall have no power over them, though it is the just desert of sin; yet being justified by Christ, and having access, through him, into a state of grace, they rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and being made spiritually alive, they believe they shall never die, neither a spiritual nor an eternal death.

2. Secondly, The liberty of glory, or that which the sons of God will be possessed of in the world to come; and this will be entirely perfect; the soul, in its separate state, will be perfectly free from sin, be with the spirits of just men made perfect; free from all corruption and defilement, from the very being of sin, and any consequences of it; from all unbelief, doubts, fears, and distresses of mind; from all evil thoughts and vain desires; and from all the temptations of Satan: and at the resurrection their bodies will be no more subject to pains, griefs, disorders, and diseases of any kind; but be entirely free from corruption, and mortality, and death; and be, both in soul and body, perfectly pure and holy, and live for ever in the enjoyment of God, and in the company of angels and saints; and be in no danger of ever being brought into bondage in any sense: and as this state is called the adoption, so it may be said to be "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21; Romans 8:23). The author, or "efficient cause", of this liberty, is Christ; it is a liberty with which Christ has made his people free, (Galatians 5:1) it is of his procuring, he has obtained it with the price of his blood, by which he has redeemed them from sin, Satan, and the law: and it is his proclaiming; for he was anointed with the Holy Spirit, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; and it is by his Spirit that they are put into the possession of it, who is a spirit of liberty, being the Spirit of adoption, and so opposed to the Spirit of bondage; and Christ is the author and finisher of faith, by which they receive this privilege; so that it may be truly called, as it sometimes is, by divines, "Christian liberty"; both from Christ, the author of it, and from the subjects of it, Christians, such as truly believe in Christ. The "instrumental cause", or the means by which liberty is conveyed to the sons of God, is the word of God, the truth of the gospel; which is not only a proclamation of this liberty, made by Christ, the great Prophet, in the church, and by his apostles and ministering servants; and was prefigured by the jubilee trumpet, which proclaimed liberty throughout the land; but is the means, attended with the Spirit and power of God, of freeing souls from the bondage they are in by nature, and when first under a work of the law; "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32), and the clearer knowledge men have of the gospel, and the truths of it; and the more they are evangelized, or cast into a gospel mould by it, the farther off they are from a spirit of bondage again to fear. So

that this liberty may be rightly called "gospel liberty"; which, though not restrained entirely to the gospel dispensation, yet is more peculiar to that; since the saints under the former dispensation were as children in bondage, under the elements of the world, the law, which gendered to bondage, and brought upon them that servile bondage spirit which prevailed in them.

Both from the nature of this liberty, and from the influence the Spirit of God has in it, it may be, with great propriety, called "spiritual liberty"; as well as from its having its seat in the spirits, or souls of men; and may be distinguished from corporal liberty, and from civil liberty. Nor does it at all interfere with the latter; it does not dissolve the ties, obligations, connections, and dependencies of men, one with, and on, another; nor free from subjection to parents, masters, and civil magistrates. It is in its nature, pure, holy, and spiritual; it is not a liberty to sin, as has been observed; but a liberty from sin. It is a real liberty, and not a shadow, an appearance of one; "If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed": and it is perpetual; such who are once made free, shall never more be servants, or come into a state of bondage; they shall never be disfranchised, or lose their freedom; and the fruits and effects of it are, peace, joy, and comfort, and a capacity and disposition of worshipping and serving the Lord, in the most spiritual, evangelical, and acceptable manner!

02. Of the Life of God

Of The Life Of God.

Having considered the attributes of Simplicity, Immutability, Infinity, Omnipresence, and Eternity, which belong to God, as an uncreated, infinite, and eternal Spirit; and which distinguish him from all other spirits; I shall now proceed to consider such as belong to him as an active and operative Spirit, as all spirits are, more or less; but he is infinitely so, being "actus, purus, et simplicissimus"; he is all act; and activity supposes life and operations; power, such as God performs, almighty power, or omnipotence; which are the attributes next to be considered; and first his "life". Some think this is not a single perfection of God, but expressive of all the divine perfections: and, indeed, it is his nature and essence, it is himself; and so is every other attribute his nature, under different considerations, and as variously displayed; wherefore this may be treated of as a distinct attribute; and a very eminent and fundamental one it is; by which God exerts his nature and essence, and displays all his perfections. And in order to apprehend somewhat of the life of God, for comprehend it we cannot, it may be necessary to consider life in the creatures, what that is; and by rising from the lowest degree of life to an higher, and from that to an higher still, we may form some idea of the life of God, though an inadequate one. Life is a principle in the creature by which it moves itself; what has motion has life, and what has not is without it; as long as a creature has any motion, it is supposed to have life; but when motionless, it is thought to be dead; the phrases, to move, and to have life, are synonymous, and express the same thing; (see Genesis 7:21-23) but it is not any kind of motion that can lay a claim to life; the sun, moon, and planets move, yet they are inanimate; so a dead carcass may be moved, though it cannot move; it is self-motion only that shows a creature to be alive, that is under a divine agency; for all creatures live and move and have their being in and of God; and hence it is that such who only seem to have self-motion, are, in an improper sense, said to live; as a fountain, flowing with water, is called living, (Genesis 26:19) to which the allusion is in Song of Solomon 4:15; Jeremiah 2:13; John 4:10, and water that is stagnated in pools and lakes, and remains unmoved, is dead. The lowest degree of real life is in vegetables, in herbs, plants, and trees; which are truly said to live (Ezekiel 47:7; Ezekiel 47:9), for though they have not a local motion, yet a motion of growth and increase; they become bigger and larger, and rise up to a greater height, and put forth leaves and fruit; which shows life. In animals there is an higher degree of life; in them there is the breath of life, which is common with the bodies of men, who live the same animal life with them; these are possessed of sensitive powers, of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling; and perform the common functions of life, eating, drinking, walking, &c. But neither of these sorts of life can assist us in our ideas of the life of God; there being nothing in theirs similar to his. There is an higher degree of life still, which is in rational creatures, angels, and the souls of men; by which they are capable not only of operating on bodies, on matter, without them, but of performing acts within themselves, by a self-motion, suitable to their nature as spirits, and rational ones; such as to understand, to will, to choose, and refuse; love, and hate, &c. which may be called the motions of the mind; as the first thoughts of, and inclinations to sin, are called, "motions" (Romans 7:5). And now these internal acts of the

mind, which are good in angels or men, and show a rational life in them, most resemble what is in God; who can, in, and of, and by himself, understand all things, will and decree whatever he pleases; and loves and hates what is agreeable or disagreeable to him, &c. But what comes nearest to the life of God, that we can conceive of, is that which is in regenerated persons, who have a principle of spiritual life, grace, and holiness, implanted in them, by the Spirit of God, and are made partakers of the divine nature, have Christ formed in them; "and they live, yet not they, but Christ lives in them"; and, by having such a principle of life wrought in them, they understand divine and spiritual things; they will that which is spiritually good, and do what is such; the Spirit of God working in them a disposition thereunto, and giving them power to perform; "being in Christ, and created in him unto good works", they perform vital spiritual acts, and live a life, a spiritual holy life, and which is called, "the life of God", unconverted men are strangers to (Ephesians 4:18). Now this most resembles the life of God, especially, as it will be perfect and eternal in a future state, though it comes abundantly short of what is in God; every imperfection in the life of angels and men, carried to its greatest height, must be removed from God; and everything that is great and excellent must be ascribed to him; and as infinitely transcending what is in finite creatures. God is life essentially, life eternally, and life efficiently.

1. God is life "essentially", it is his nature and essence, it is himself, it is in and of himself. The natural life of creatures is not in and of themselves; but is in God, and from him: the spiritual and eternal life of the saints is not in and of themselves; but is from God, "hid with Christ in God". But the life of God is in and of himself; "the Father has life in himself" (John 5:26), and so has the Son and Word of God (John 1:1; John 1:4), and likewise the Spirit, called, therefore, "the spirit of life" (Revelation 11:11), and what is true of all the Persons in the Godhead, they partaking of the same undivided nature and essence, and living the same life, is true of God, essentially considered. And as the life of God is "of himself", it is independent; there is no cause from whence it is, or on which it depends. The natural and spiritual life of men is of God, depends on him; they live not so much their own life as another’s; they have their life from God in every sense, and are supported in it by him; "he is thy life, and the length of thy days" (Deuteronomy 30:20). But God lives his own life; which, as it is without a cause, has no dependence on any other. It does not arise from any composition of parts, and the union of them, as the life, even the natural life, of man does, who consists of soul and body; and his life is the result of the union of these, which when dissolved, it ceases; for "the body without", or separate from, "the spirit", or soul, "is dead" (James 2:26). And the spiritual life of saints arises from the union of Christ and his Spirit, as a principle of life unto them; which, could it be dissolved, as it cannot, death would ensue, even death spiritual and eternal: but God is a Spirit, a simple and uncompounded Being; consists not of parts, from the union of which his life arises; and so his life is "infinite", "eternal", and "immutable", as also "most perfect". In the life of creatures, even in the highest degree; being finite and dependant, there is always something wanting; but in God there is none; he is "El-Shaddai", God all-sufficient, blessed and happy in himself for evermore. The scriptures frequently speak of God as the "living God" both in the Old and New Testament, (Deuteronomy 5:26; Joshua 3:10; Psalms 42:2; Psalms 84:2; Matthew 16:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16) who has life in himself, and gives life to all that have it; and not the Father only, but the Son of God also, is called the living God, (Hebrews 3:12 and the Spirit is called the Spirit of the living God, (2 Corinthians 3:3 each person is the living God, and God, essentially considered, is so; and this title and epithet he has in opposition to, and contradistinction from, them that are not by nature God: the living God is opposed to idols, lifeless and motionless,

(Jeremiah 10:10; Jeremiah 10:15-16; Acts 14:15; 1 Thessalonians 1:9) he is distinguished by this essential attribute of his from the first objects of idolatrous worship, the sun, moon, and stars, which are inanimate; from heroes, kings, and emperors, deified after their death; which idolatry was very early; and worshipping them is called eating the sacrifices of the dead (Psalms 106:28), and from all images of wood, stone, brass, silver, and gold, which are dumb idols, and lifeless ones (see Psalms 115:4-7). And God is not only acknowledged to be the living God, and to live for ever and ever, by some of the greatest personages, and proudest monarchs that ever were upon earth, and who even had set up themselves for God, (Daniel 4:34; Daniel 6:26 but he asserts it of himself, which must be true, and may be depended on; "And lift up my hand, and say, I live for ever", (Deuteronomy 32:40. yea; it is an oath of his affirming the same, and it is the common form of swearing with him, "as I live, saith the Lord"; and which is very frequently used by him (see Numbers 14:28) and this is no other than swearing by his life, which is himself; "for when he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself" (Hebrews 6:13), and so both men and angels swear by the living God; "by him that lives for ever and ever" (Jeremiah 5:2; Jeremiah 12:16; Daniel 12:7; Revelation 10:5-6), which distinguishes him from, and prefers him to all other beings: and, indeed, he is "most properly" said to live; the life of creatures is no life in comparison of his; especially the life of man: what is it? "it is but a vapour, that appears for a while, and then vanishes away" (James 4:14). But,

2. God is life eternally, without beginning, succession, or end; he is without beginning of life or end of days, and without any variableness; "the same today, yesterday and for ever"; he that is the "true God", is also "eternal life" (1 John 5:20). It is indeed said of Christ, the Word and Son of God, that he is the "eternal life", which was with "the Father" from eternity, before "manifested" unto men; and so lives from eternity to eternity; and, as before observed, what is true of God personally, is true of him essentially considered: he lived from eternity, and will live for ever and ever; as several of the above scripture testimonies assure us; and which may be concluded from the "simplicity" of his nature: what consists of parts may be resolved into those parts again, and so cease to be; but God is a simple and uncompounded Being, as has been established; not consisting of parts, and so not capable of being reduced to them, or being dissolved, and therefore must live for ever: and from his "independency"; he has no cause prior to him, from whom he has received his life, or on whom it depends; there is none above him, superior to him, that can take away his life from him, as he can from his creatures, who are below him, and dependent on him; but he is above all, and dependent on none. Likewise from his "immutability"; there is no change, nor shadow of change, in him; and yet, if his life was not eternal, he must be subject to the greatest of changes, death; but he is the same, and of his years there is no end (Psalms 102:27). The same arguments which prove his "eternity", must prove also that he lives for ever; he "is the true God", "the living God, and an everlasting King" (Jeremiah 10:10), he is called "immortal eternal", (1 Timothy 1:17) the very heathens have such a notion of Deity as immortal; nothing is more common with them than to call their gods, "the immortal ones". God, says Socrates {1}, is, I think, the very species or idea of life, and if anything else is immortal, and confessed by all that he cannot perish. Aristotle {2}, has this remarkable observation, ``The energy, act, or operation of God, is immortality, this is everlasting life; wherefore there must needs be perpetual motion in God.'' And he reports {3}, that Alcmaeon supposed that the soul was immortal, because it was like to the immortals. But our God, the true God, is he "who only hath immortality" (1 Timothy 6:16), that is, who hath it in and of himself, and gives it to others. Angels are immortal, they die not; but

then this immortality is not of themselves, but of God, who supports and continues them in their being; for as he made them out of nothing, he could, if he would, annihilate them, and bring them to nothing again: the souls of men are immortal; they cannot be killed, nor do they die with their bodies; but then what has been said of angels may be said of them. The bodies of men, after the resurrection, are immortal; this mortal then puts on immortality, and always is clothed with it, and ever continues; but this is the gift of God, and the effect of his will and power; yea, even the bodies of the wicked are immortal, but not of themselves, it is even against their wills; they choose and seek for death, but cannot have it; their torments are endless, and the smoke of them ascends for ever and ever. God only has immortality in and of himself.

3. God is life "efficiently", the source and spring, the author and giver of life to others; "With thee is the fountain of life", (Psalms 36:9 which he would not be, if he had not life in and of himself, essentially, originally, independently, most properly, and in the most perfect manner.

God is the author and giver of life, from the lowest to the highest degree of it. The vegetative life that is in herbs, plants, and trees, is from him, and supported by him; and he takes it away, when his Spirit blows upon them (Genesis 1:11-12; Isaiah 40:7). The animal life is owing to him; the life of all animals, of the fishes in the sea, the fowl of the air, and the beasts of the field; and he gives them life and breath; and when he takes it away, they die, and return to the dust (Genesis 1:20-21; Genesis 1:24-25; Acts 17:25; Psalms 104:29). The rational life in angels and men, is from him; angels are made rational living spirits by him, and in him they consist: to men he grants life and favour, and his visitation preserves their spirit, and he is the God of their life, that gives it, and, continues it, and takes it away at pleasure (Psalms 42:8). No creature can give real life; men may paint to the life, as we say, but they cannot give life: no man can make a living fly; he may as soon make a world. The spiritual life that is in any of the sons of men, is from God. Men, in a state of unregeneracy, are dead, dead in a moral and spiritual sense: and while they are corporally alive, they are dead in trespasses and sins; and because of them dead as to their understanding of, will to, affection for what is morally and spiritually good; and their very living in sin is no other than death: nor can they quicken themselves; nothing can give what it has not; the resurrection of the dead, in a corporal sense, requires almighty power; and, in a spiritual sense, the exceeding greatness of God’s power; so that it is not by might or power of man, but by the Spirit and Power of the living God. It is God, that of his rich mercy, and because of his great love, and by his almighty power, quickens men dead in sin, dead in law, and exposed unto eternal death; he speaks life into them, when he calls them by his grace, breathes into the dry bones the breath of life, and they live spiritually; a life of justification, through the righteousness of Christ, which is the justification of life, or adjudges and entitles them to eternal life; and a life of faith on Christ, and of holiness from him; they live in newness of life, soberly, righteously, and godly; which life is preserved in them, it springs up to everlasting life; it is hid and secured with Christ in God, is a never dying one, and shall issue in eternal life; in which all the three Persons in the Godhead are concerned (John 5:21; John 5:25; John 11:25; Romans 8:2).

Eternal life, so often spoken of in scripture, as what the saints shall enjoy for evermore, is of God; it is what he has provided and prepared for them in his council and covenant: what they are foreordained unto in his purposes and decrees, and do most certainly enjoy; what he who cannot lie has promised to them before the world began, and which is his free gift, and flows from his free favour and good will, through Christ, (Acts 13:48; Titus 1:2; Romans 6:23) and in which the Son

and Spirit have a concern; Christ came that his people might have it, and he gave his flesh for the life of them; it is put into his hands, and he has a power to dispose of it, and give it to his sheep; so that none of them shall perish, but have it (1 John 5:12; John 17:2; John 10:28). And the Spirit, whose grace springs up to it, and issues in it; and he dwells in his people, as the earnest of it, and works them up for it, and brings them into the full enjoyment of it. Now God must have life in the highest degree of it, as explained; even essentially, originally, infinitely, and perfectly; or he could never give life in every sense unto his creatures; and he must live for ever, to continue eternal life, particularly to his people, and preserve them in it.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Apud Platon. in Phoedo, p. 79.

[2] De Coelo, l. 2. c. 3.

[3] De Anima, l. 1. c. 2.

02. Of the Longsuffering of God

Of The Longsuffering Of God. The longsuffering of God, the same with his forbearance and patience, arises from his mercy, is a display of it, or is one way in which mercy shows itself; and so, by the Cabalistic Jews, it is said to belong to the predicament of "Chesed", or mercy, as they express themselves[1]; and it may be observed, that wherever God is said to be longsuffering, he is represented as gracious and merciful, or as of great mercy and kindness; and by this attribute, as by them and with them, he is pleased to describe and make known himself, for the encouragement of faith and hope in him, (Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Psalms 86:15) and therefore the consideration of it very properly follows that of mercy. The Hebrew word Mypa Kra which literally signifies "long of both nostrils", is sometimes rendered "longsuffering", as in the places referred to; and sometimes "slow to anger", (Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 103:8) and to which the Greek words makroyumew, and makroyumia, in the New Testament, answer, (Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; 2 Peter 3:15) the allusion is to the nose, the seat of anger, which restrains or shows it, as it is long or contracted.

God is sometimes called, "the God of patience", (Romans 15:5) not only because he is the author and object of the grace of patience, and that is grateful to him; but because he is patient, or longsuffering in himself, and towards his creatures, and is a pattern of patience to them; for this is one of the attributes of God, in which he may in some measure be imitated (see Ephesians 4:1-2 Colossians 3:12). This is not to be considered as a quality, accident, passion, or affection in God, as in creatures; who bear with patience things grievous, distressing, and torturing to them, (Colossians 1:11) but it is the very nature and essence of God, which is free from all passion and perturbation, from all suffering, grief, and pain; it springs from his goodness, and is as essential to him as that, and is joined with it, (Romans 2:4) it is no other than a moderation of his anger, a restraint of that, a deferring the effects of it, at least for a while, according to his sovereign will; it is an extension and prolongation of mercy for a season; for mercy is always in it and with it; and in this it differs from it, that the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting; but the longsuffering of God, as to the exercise of it, is only for a time, until some certain end is answered, and in which it issues; either in the damnation and destruction of the wicked, when they are fitted for it, (Romans 9:22) or in the salvation of God’s elect, (2 Peter 3:15) for it is exercised towards both, till each take place; which will be distinctly considered.

1. The longsuffering of God is exercised towards his chosen people; they are the "us" towards whom he is said to be "longsuffering", (2 Peter 3:9) even who are called beloved, (2 Peter 3:8) not only beloved of the apostle, and by one another, but by the Lord; and the elect according to the foreknowledge of God, (1 Peter 1:2) for to the same persons are both epistles written; and therefore being the beloved and chosen of God, it was his will that none of them should perish, but come to repentance; even all of the same character, and of the same company and society, the whole election of grace; and until everyone of these are called and brought to repentance, God is, and will be, longsuffering towards them; and longsuffering to the world for their sakes; wherefore Christ’s not coming to judgment sooner than he will, is not owing to any negligence, dilatoriness, or

slackness in God, concerning the promise of it, but to the longsuffering of God; which has been eminently displayed with respect to the people of God.

1a. In the saints of the Old Testament dispensation, which time is expressly called "the forbearance of God" (Romans 3:25). The case stood thus; Christ became the Surety for them in eternity, engaged to assume their nature, pay their debts, and make satisfaction for their sins: this was notified immediately after the fall of Adam, (Genesis 3:15) but it was four thousand years from thence to the time fixed in Daniel's prophecy, "to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness"; to the fulness of time when Christ should come to redeem all his people, and particularly, to obtain the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament, (Daniel 9:24; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 9:15). Now all this time was a time of patience, forbearance, and longsuffering with God, in respect to his people under this dispensation; he did not stir up his wrath, and execute it on them; but reserved it for his Son, their Surety; he forbore to inflict the punishment on them their sins deserved; he did not impute sin to them, place it to their account, charge it on them, and demand of them satisfaction for it; but placed it to his Son's account, and expected satisfaction from him: he accepted of the sacrifices of slain beasts, as vicarious ones in their stead, though they had no true value, nor real efficacy in them, to atone for sin; only were typical of Christ's sacrifice; and were to continue, and did, until that should be offered up; God waited till he should come and make his soul an offering for sin; and, upon his credit, bore with them, and bestowed the blessings of his grace on them: they were justified by him on the foundation of Christ's righteousness to be wrought out; and their sins pardoned, through his atoning sacrifice to be offered up; they were saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, even as we are, and we as they; they were carried to heaven, and glorified, before the payment of their debts were made by their Surety, before satisfaction for their sins was given to justice, and before the actual redemption of them was obtained. All which, as it shows the trust and confidence God put in his Son, so his forbearance and longsuffering towards Old Testament saints; which also has appeared, and does appear.

1b. In and towards everyone of his people in their state of unregeneracy, in every age and period of time, or of whatsoever nation, or under whatsoever dispensation they be; the Lord bears with them, while in a state of nature, and waits patiently all that while, to be gracious to them (Isaiah 30:18). There was much grace in his heart, in his Son, and in his covenant, laid up for them. This is abundantly displayed in conversion, when there is an abounding and a superabounding of it. But then the calling and conversion of them is according to purpose; and as there is a time for every purpose, for the execution of it, so for this; and till that time comes, the Lord waits, forbears, suffers much and long; he does not cut them off in their sins, as they deserve; but saves them, and sometimes from very imminent dangers, to be called, (2 Timothy 1:9) and with some he bears and waits a long time, who are called at the ninth and eleventh hours, and, as the thief on the cross, at the last day and hour of his life; and he waits, as it were, in a longing manner; speaking after the manner of men, "When will it once be?" (Jeremiah 13:27).

1c. The apostle Paul is a remarkable instance of God's longsuffering; which was exercised towards him throughout all his blasphemy of Christ, his persecution of his people, and the injuries he did unto them; he waited, through all, to be gracious to him; his eye was upon him, and his heart was towards him; and hence such notice is taken of him in that state, before the account is given of his calling; (see Acts 7:58; Acts 8:1; Acts 8:3; Acts 9:1) yea, he himself says, "For this

cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting", (1 Timothy 1:16) meaning the people of the Jews, in the latter day: his sense seems to be this, that as Christ bore much, and exercised great longsuffering towards him, and at last showed him mercy; so he would bear with, and show much longsuffering to the people of the Jews, of which that towards him was a pattern, and which should issue in their salvation, as it had in his; when "all Israel shall be saved", (Romans 11:26) God’s longsuffering towards them is very great and very remarkable; as it was towards him; though they are under the marks of his displeasure, he has not stirred up all his wrath, so as to cut them off from being a people; but has reserved them for future times, and good things for them, and waits to be gracious to them.

2. The longsuffering of God is exercised towards the ungodly, even towards "the vessels of wrath" whom he "endures with much longsuffering", till they are "fitted to destruction", (Romans 9:22) and this appears by his supporting them in their beings, notwithstanding their grievous provocations of him; which are such, that it is amazing he does not at once strike them, dead, as he did Ananias and Sapphira; or that the earth does not open and swallow them up, as it did Dathan and Abiram. This can be attributed to nothing else but, to his patience, forbearance, and longsuffering: and by the multitude of his mercies bestowed upon them, who have many of them, more than other men; and which are called "the riches of his goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering"; (see Job 21:7-13; Psalms 73:4-7; Romans 2:4) and by granting to many of them the outward means of grace, which are despised and rejected by them; and by deferring his judgments on them; which, because they are not speedily executed, their hearts are set in them to do evil; they are more and more hardened, and promise themselves impunity in sin. Now the ends of God’s thus dealing with them, are partly for his own glory; "to show his wrath, and make his power known"; to vindicate him from all cruelty and injustice, when he righteously executes his wrath, and exerts his power in their destruction: as in the instance of Pharaoh, (Romans 9:17; Romans 9:22) and partly for the sake of his own people who dwell among them, that they may not suffer with them; thus he would have spared Sodom, had there been ten righteous men in it, for their sakes: and he forbears to take vengeance on those that have shed the blood of his saints, until the number of his elect, in like manner, is fulfilled; and he spares a wicked world from being burnt up and destroyed, until all his chosen ones are brought to repentance, (Genesis 18:32; Revelation 6:11; 2 Peter 3:9) and another end is for their sakes, that they may be rendered inexcusable, and the execution of wrath on them at last, appear just and righteous (Romans 2:1; Romans 2:4-5).

There are many instances of the patience, forbearance, and longsuffering of God, with respect to the wicked; as in the men of the old world, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, (1 Peter 3:20; see Genesis 6:3) and in the inhabitants of Sodom, daring sinners, who had first hints of God’s displeasure, yet had mercy shown them, a respite for a while, and then destroyed by fire from heaven, (Genesis 13:13; Genesis 14:11; Genesis 14:21; Genesis 18:21; Genesis 19:24) in Pharaoh, refusing to let Israel go, whom God had spared some time, beginning with lighter judgments, then executed heavier ones; and at last drowned him, and his host, in the Red Sea, (Exodus 5:2; Exodus 5:7 &c., Exodus 14:17-18; Exodus 14:28) in the people of Israel, in the wilderness, whose manners God suffered and bore with, and was grieved with them forty years, (Acts 13:18) in the Amorites and Canaanites, until their sin was full, and till the land itself would bear them no longer; but spewed them out of it, (Genesis 15:16; Leviticus 18:28) in the

Gentile world, during their times of ignorance, (Acts 17:30) in fruitless professors of religion, signified by the barren fig tree, (Luke 13:6-9) and in antichrist, during the time of his reign, and no longer, (Revelation 2:21; Revelation 13:6; Revelation 18:8).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Lexic. Cabalist. p. 155.

02. Of the Love of God

Of The Love Of God

Next to the attributes which belong to God, as an intelligent Spirit, to his understanding and will, may be considered, those which may be called "Affections"; for though, properly speaking, there are none in God, he being a most pure and simple act, free from all confusion and disorder; yet there being some things said and done by him, which are similar to affections in intelligent beings, they are ascribed to him; as love, pity, hatred, anger, &c. from which must be removed everything that is carnal, sensual, or has any degree of imperfection in it; and among these, Love stands in the first place; and this enters so much into the nature of God, that it is said, "God is love" (1 John 4:8; 1 John 4:16). So the Shekinah, or the divine majesty and glory, is, by the Jews,[1] called hbha "Love"; and the heathens give the same name to God; Plato[2] expressly calls him "Love": and Hesiod[3] speaks of love as the fairest and most beautiful among the immortal gods. In treating of this divine attribute, I shall, 1. Consider the objects of it. And,

1a. The principal object of the love of God is himself. Self-love is in all intelligent beings; nor is it discommendable, when it Is not carried to a criminal excess, and to the neglect of others; none are obliged to love others more than themselves, but as themselves (Matthew 22:39). God first and chiefly loves himself; and hence he has made himself, that is, his glory, the ultimate end of all he does in nature, providence, and grace, (Proverbs 16:4; Romans 11:36; Revelation 4:11; Ephesians 1:6) and his happiness lies in contemplating himself, his nature and perfections; in that love, complacency and delight he has in himself; nor needs he, nor can he have anything out of himself that can add to his essential happiness. The three divine Persons in the Godhead mutually love each other; the Father loves the Son and the Spirit, the Son loves the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit loves the Father and the Son. That the Father loves the Son, is more than once said, (John 3:35; John 5:20) and the Son is sometimes called the well beloved and dear Son of God, (Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5; Colossians 1:13) he was from all eternity as "one brought up with him"; and was loved by him before the foundation of the world; and that with a love of complacency and delight; as he must, since "he is the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person", and is of the same nature, and possessed of all the same perfections with him, (Proverbs 8:30-31; John 17:24; Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 2:9) yea, he loved him as his Servant, as the Mediator, in his state of humiliation, and obedience, and under all his sufferings, and on account of them; and even while he bore his wrath as the sinner’s surety, he was the object of his love, as his Son, (Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 3:17; John 10:17) and now he is at his right hand, in human nature, he looks upon him with delight, and is well pleased with his sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness. The Father loves the Spirit; being the very breath of him, from whence he has his name, and proceeding from him, and possessing the same nature and essence with him (Job 33:4; Psalms 33:6; John 15:26; 1 John 5:7). The Son loves the Father, of whom he is begotten, with whom he was brought up, in whose bosom he lay from all eternity, as his own and only begotten Son; and as man, the law of God was in his heart; the sum of which is to love the Lord God with all the heart and soul; and as Mediator he showed his love to him by an obedience to his

commandment, even though that was to suffer death for his people (Psalms 40:8; John 14:31; John 10:18; Php 2:8). The Son also loves the Spirit, since he proceeds from him, as from the Father, and is called the Spirit of the Son, (Galatians 4:6) and Christ often speaks of him with pleasure and delight, (Isaiah 48:16; Isaiah 61:1; John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7; John 16:13). And the Spirit loves the Father and the Son, and sheds abroad the love of them both in the hearts of his people; he searches into the deep things of God, and reveals them to them; and takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto them; and so is both the Comforter of them, and the Glorifier of him (1 Corinthians 2:10-12; John 16:14).

1b. All that God has made is the object of his love; all the works of creation, when he had made them, he looked over them, and saw that they were good, "very good", (Genesis 1:31) he was well pleased, and delighted with them; yea, he is said to "rejoice in his works", (Psalms 104:31) he upholds all creatures in their beings, and is the Preserver of all, both men and beasts; and is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works, (Psalms 36:6; Psalms 145:9) and particularly, rational creatures are the objects of his care, love, and delight: he loves the holy angels, and has shown his love to them in choosing them to happiness; hence they are called "elect angels", (1 Timothy 5:21) by making Christ the head of them, by whom they are confirmed in the estate in which they were created, (Colossians 2:10) and by admitting them into his presence, allowing them to stand before him, and behold his face, (Matthew 18:10) yea, even the devils, as they are the creatures of God, are not hated by him, but as they are apostate spirits from him: and so he bears a general love to all men, as they are his creatures, his offspring, and the work of his hands; he supports them, preserves them, and bestows the bounties of his providence in common upon them, (Acts 17:28; Acts 14:17; Matthew 5:45) but he bears a special love to elect men in Christ; which is called his "great love", (Ephesians 2:4) whom he has chosen and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, (Ephesians 1:3-4) and which love is distinguishing and discriminating (Malachi 1:1-2; Romans 9:11-12). I go on to,

2. Give some instances of the love of God, particularly to chosen men in Christ, and who share in the love of Father, Son, and Spirit. The love of the Father has appeared in thinking of them, thoughts of peace; in contriving and forming the scheme of their peace and reconciliation in Christ, from eternity, (2 Corinthians 5:18-19) in choosing them in him from the beginning, even from everlasting, to salvation, by him, (2 Thessalonians 2:13) in putting their persons into the hands of Christ, and securing and preserving them in him, (Deuteronomy 33:3; Jude 1:1) in laying up all blessings in him for them, and blessing them with them so early, (Ephesians 1:3-4) in appointing Christ to be the Saviour of them; in providing, promising, and sending him into the world, to work out their salvation, (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-10; Titus 3:4-5) in the pardon of their sins through the blood of Christ, (Isaiah 38:17; Ephesians 1:7) in their adoption, (1 John 3:1) in their regeneration and conversion, (Jeremiah 31:3; Ephesians 2:4-5) and in the gift of eternal life unto them (Romans 6:23). The love of the Son of God appears in espousing the persons of the elect, those sons of men, in whom his delights were before the world was, (Proverbs 8:31; Hosea 2:19) in becoming their Surety for good, undertaking their cause, engaging to do the will of God with that cheerfulness he did; which was to work out their salvation, (Psalms 40:6-8; Hebrews 7:22) in assuming their nature, in the fulness of time, to redeem them, work out a righteousness, and make reconciliation for them, (Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 8:3-4; Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:17) by giving himself a Sacrifice for them; laying down his life on their account; and shedding his blood for the

cleansing of their souls, and the remission of their sins (Ephesians 5:2; Ephesians 5:25; Titus 2:14; 1 John 3:16; Revelation 1:5). The love of the Spirit, of which mention is made in (Romans 15:30) appears in his coming into the hearts of God's elect, to convince them of sin and righteousness, and to comfort them; by showing the grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it to them; by opening and applying the promises of it; and by shedding abroad the love of God and Christ in their hearts; by implanting every grace in them, and drawing them forth into exercise; by witnessing to their spirits their adoption; by assisting them in every duty, particularly in prayer, making intercession for them, according to the will of God; and in being the earnest, pledge, and seal of them to the day of redemption (John 16:7-8; Romans 8:15-16; Romans 8:26-27; Ephesians 1:13-14).

3. It may be proper next to consider the properties of the love of God towards chosen men, which will lead more into the nature of it. And,

3a. There is no cause of it out of God; there is no motive or inducement to it in them, no loveliness in them to excite it; all men by nature are corrupt and abominable; rather to be loathed than loved; and those that are loved, are no better than others, all being under sin; and are, "by nature, children of wrath, as others"; as deserving of that as those that are not loved, (Romans 3:9; Ephesians 2:3) what loveliness or beauty is in saints, is owing to the righteousness of Christ, imputed to them; which is that comeliness that is put upon them, whereby they are made perfectly comely; and to the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, whereby they are all glorious within, and appear in the beauties of holiness: so that all this is the fruit of the love of God, and not the cause of it. Nor can it be any love in them to God, that is the cause of his to them; for they had no love in them when Christ died for them; nor until regenerated by the Spirit of God; and when they love him, it is because he first loved them, (1 John 4:10; 1 John 4:19) and though Christ is said to love them that love him, and the Father is said to love them too; yet this must not be understood of the first love of God and Christ, unto them, nor of the first display of it; but of further and larger manifestations of it to them; and is descriptive of the persons who are most certainly and evidently the objects of their love; but not as being the cause of it, (Proverbs 8:17; John 14:21; John 14:23; John 16:27). Nor are good works the cause of this love; for this, at least, in one instance of it, was before either good or evil were done, (Romans 9:11-12) and in other instances it broke forth towards them, and broke in upon them while they were yet in their sins, and before they were capable of performing good works, (Romans 5:8; Titus 3:3-4; Ephesians 2:2-4) and how can it be thought, that since the best works of men are so impure and imperfect as to be reckoned as filthy rags, that these should be the cause of God's love to men? no, even faith itself is not; that "is the gift of God", and flows from electing love, and is a fruit and evidence of it (Ephesians 2:8; Acts 13:48; Titus 1:1). God loves men, not because they have faith; but they have faith given them, because God loves them; it is true indeed, that "without faith it is impossible to please God"; that is, to do those things which are pleasing in his sight; but then the persons of God's elect, may be, and are, well pleasing to God, in Christ, before faith, and without it. In short, the love of God purely flows from his good will and pleasure; who "is gracious to whom he will be gracious", (Exodus 33:19) it is that pure river that proceeds out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb, as an emblem of sovereignty, (Revelation 22:1) as God loved the people of Israel because he loved them, or would love them; and for no other reason, (Deuteronomy 7:7-8) in like manner he loves his spiritual and mystical Israel.

3b. The love of God is eternal, it does not commence in time, it is without beginning, it is from eternity: this is evident from the love of God to Christ, which was before the foundation of the world; and with the same love he loved him, he loved his people also, and as early, (John 17:23-24) and from various acts of love to them in eternity; as the election of them in Christ, which supposes the love of them, (Ephesians 1:4) the covenant of grace made with them, in which, grants of grace, and promises of glory, were made before the world began; and Christ was set up as the Mediator of it from everlasting: all which are strong proofs of love to them (2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; Proverbs 8:22-23).

3c. The love of God is immutable, unalterable, and invariable; it is like himself, "the same today, yesterday, and for ever": and, indeed, God is love; it is his nature; it is himself; and therefore must be without any variableness, or shadow of turning. It admits of no distinctions, by which it appears to alter and vary. Some talk of a love of benevolence, by which God wishes or wills good to men; and then comes on a love of beneficence, and he does good to them, and works good in them: and then a love of complacency and delight takes place, and not till then. But this is to make God changeable, as we are: the love of God admits of no degrees, it neither increases nor decreases; it is the same from the instant in eternity it was, without any change: it is needless to ask whether it is the same before as after conversion, since there were as great, if not greater gifts of love, bestowed on the object loved, before conversion, as after; such as the gift of God himself, in the everlasting covenant; the gift of his Son to die for them when in their sins; and the gift of the Spirit to them, in order to regenerate, quicken, and convert them; heaven itself, eternal life, is not a greater gift than these; and yet they were all before conversion. There never were any stops, lets, or impediments to this love; not the fall of Adam, nor the sad effects of it; nor the actual sins and transgressions of God’s people, in a state of nature; nor all their backslidings, after called by grace; for still he loves them freely, (Hosea 14:4) for God foreknew that they would fall in Adam, with others, that they would be transgressors from the womb, and do as evil as they could; yet this hindered not his taking up thoughts of love towards them, his choice of them, and covenant with them. Conversion makes a change in them; brings them from the power of Satan to God, from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty; from fellowship with evil men to communion with God: but it makes no change in the love of God; God changes his dispensations and dealings with them, but never changes his love; he sometimes rebukes and chastises them, but still he loves them; he sometimes hides his face from them, but his love continues the same, (Psalms 89:29-33; Isaiah 54:7-10) the manifestations of his love are various; to some they are greater, to others less; and so to the same persons, at different times; but love in his own heart is invariable and unchangeable.

3d. The love of God endures for ever; it is an everlasting love, in that sense, (Jeremiah 31:3) it is the bond of union between God and Christ, and the elect; and it can never be dissolved; nothing can separate it, nor separate from it (Romans 8:35; Romans 8:38-39). The union it is the bond of, is next to that, and like it, which is between the three divine persons (John 17:21; John 17:23). The union between soul and body, may be, and is dissolved, at death; but neither death nor life can separate from this; this lovingkindness of God never departs; though health, and wealth, and friends, and life itself may depart, this never will, (Isaiah 54:10) whatever God takes away, as all the said things may be taken away by him, he will never take away this, (Psalms 89:33) having loved his own which were in the world, he loves them to the end, to the end of their lives, to the

end of time, and to all eternity (John 13:1).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 15. l. & Lex. Cabal. p. 43, 44.

[2] Theogonia, v. 120.

[3] "Praeclarum illud est et si quaeris rectum quoque et verum, ut eos qui nobis carissimi esse debeant, aeque ac nosmetipsos amemus; at vero plus fieri nulio facto potest, ne optaedum quidem est in amicitia, ut me ille plus quam se amet", Cicero. Tusc. Quaest. l. 3.

02. Of the Mercy of God

Of The Mercy Of God The Mercy of God differs, in some respects; both from the love and grace of God; from the love of God in its objects, and order of operation: in its objects; which, though the same, are regarded under different considerations. Love pitched itself originally on objects, in the pure mass of creatureship, as unfallen, though it continues with them in their fallen state, and through all the imperfections of this life, to eternal happiness; mercy supposes its objects miserable, and so fallen: in order of operation; for though they are together in God, the one as early as the other, yet love seems to work by mercy, and mercy from it; the objects being viewed as dead in sin, and for it, love stirs up mercy to quicken them with Christ, and in themselves; God, "who is rich in mercy, for the great love", &c. (Ephesians 2:4-5). Mercy also differs from grace; for though all mercy is grace, because it is free, unmerited, undeserved; yet all grace is not mercy[1]: much grace and favour are shown to the elect angels; in the choice of them in Christ; in the preservation of them from the apostasy others of their species fell into; in constituting Christ the head of them, by whose grace they are confirmed in the state in which they were created; and in their being indulged with the presence of God, and communion with him; they always beholding his face in heaven; all which is abundant grace, but not mercy; since they never were miserable, and so not objects of mercy. The things to be considered respecting this attribute, are, 1. The properties of it, which will lead more clearly into its nature, and the knowledge of it.

1a. Mercy is natural and essential to God; yea, it is his nature and essence: hence he is often described as "merciful", (Exodus 34:6; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 116:5) indeed it is not to be considered as a passion, or affection in God, as it is in men; attended with grief and sorrow, with anguish and anxiety of mind for the party in misery; which become the more vehement, the nearer the relation is, and the stronger the love and affection is, bore to the object. Hence the stoic philosophers[2] denied mercy to belong to good men, and so not to God; and, indeed, it does not, in such sense, unless by an anthropopathy, or speaking after the manner of men; since he is free from all passion and perturbation of mind. The Latin word "Misericordia" signifies, as one[3] observes, having another’s misery at heart; but not a miserable heart, or one made so by the misery of another, especially as applied to God; with whom it is no other than a propensity of his will to help persons in distress, whether in a temporal or spiritual way; and this is as essential to him as is his goodness; of which it is a branch: and therefore as God is essentially, originally, independently, and underivatively good, so is he in like manner merciful. This is one of the perfections which are in some measure imitable by creatures; "Be ye merciful as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). The Socinians[4] deny that mercy is essential to God, supposing that mercy and justice are opposite, whereas they are not, not even in men; a man may be just, and yet merciful, merciful and yet just: and not caring to allow justice to be essential to God, which they think they must grant, if mercy is; which would establish the doctrine of Christ’s satisfaction, and make that necessary which they do not choose to embrace. But though mercy is natural and essential to God, it is not naturally and necessarily bore towards, and exercised on every object in misery: for then all would share in it, that are in misery, even all wicked men and devils; whereas it

is certain they do not; but it is guided in the exercise of it by the love of God; and is governed and influenced by his sovereign will; who "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy", (Romans 9:15; Romans 9:18) just as omnipotence is essential to God, but is not necessarily put forth to do everything it could; but is directed and guided by the will of God; who does whatsoever he pleases.

1b. Mercy being essential to God, or his nature and essence, nothing out of himself can be the cause of it; for then there would be a cause prior to him, the Cause of himself, and that would be god, and not he: the misery of a creature is not the cause of mercy in God; who is not to be moved and wrought upon as creatures are; being a most simple act, and having no passive power to work upon; besides, was this the case, all must partake of mercy, since all are miserable; which they do not; see (Isaiah 27:11) nor are the merits of the creature, or works of righteousness, the cause of mercy; these are opposed to each other in the business of salvation, (Titus 3:5) nor are those to whom mercy is shown, more deserving than those to whom it is not; and oftentimes less deserving, or more vile and sinful; see (Romans 3:9; Ephesians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Timothy 1:13). Nor are even the merits of Christ, or his obedience, sufferings, and death, the cause of mercy in God; for they are the fruits and effects of it, and flow from it; it is "through the tender mercy of our God, that the dayspring from on high hath visited us", (Luke 1:78) that is, it is owing to mercy, that Christ, who is meant by "the dayspring from on high", became incarnate, obeyed, suffered, and died, in our room and stead, and wrought out salvation for us. The mercy of God arises from the goodness of his nature, from his special love to his people, and from his sovereign will and pleasure; who, as he loves whom he pleases, and "is gracious to whom he will be gracious"; so "he has mercy on whom he will have mercy" (Exodus 33:19).

1c. The mercy of God is infinite; as his nature is infinite, so are each of his attributes. His "understanding is infinite", (Psalms 147:5) and so his knowledge, wisdom, justice, holiness, and goodness, and likewise his mercy; it is so in its nature, and in its effects; and this appears both by bestowing an infinite good on men, which is Christ, who is the gift of God, and owing to the love, grace, and mercy of God; and who though, as man, is finite; yet, in his divine person, infinite; and as such given, (Isaiah 9:6) and by his delivering them from an infinite evil, sin: sin, as an act of the creature, is finite; but objectively, infinite, as it is committed against God, the infinite Being, (Psalms 51:4) and therefore is not only infinite with respect to number, (Job 22:5) but with respect to its object, and also with respect to punishment for it; the demerit of it is eternal death; and this cannot be endured at once, or answered for in a short time; it is carried on "ad infinitum", without end; and therefore spoken of as everlasting and eternal. Now mercy has provided for the forgiveness of sin, and for the deliverance of men from the punishment of it, and from being liable to it (Hebrews 8:12).

1d. The mercy of God is eternal; the eternity of mercy is expressed in the same language as the eternity of God himself; and, indeed, since it is his nature, it must be as eternal as he himself is; see (Psalms 90:2; Psalms 103:17) it is from everlasting, as his love is; which is to be proved by the instances of it, called his "tender mercies", which "have been ever of old", or from everlasting, (Psalms 25:6) the council and covenant of peace were in eternity; in which the scheme of reconciliation to God was formed, and the method of it settled, which supposed them enemies, and so considered them as fallen creatures, and objects of mercy: and, indeed, the covenant of grace, which was from everlasting, is a superstructure of mercy, (Psalms 89:1-3) and since mercy is from everlasting, not anything in time can be the cause of it; not the misery of the creature, by

the fall of Adam, nor works of righteousness done after conversion; nor the obedience and sufferings of Christ; things in time: and the mercy of God is to everlasting, in its fruits and effects; it is kept with Christ, and for him, the Mediator of the covenant; into whose hands are put all the promises and blessings of mercy; called, therefore, "the sure mercies of David", (Psalms 89:24; Psalms 89:28; Isaiah 55:3) even temporal blessings, which flow from the mercy of God, are new every morning, and are daily continued; and spiritual ones always remain; the mercy of God never departs from his people, notwithstanding their backslidings; and though he chides them for them, and hides his face from them, yet still he has mercy on them (Psalms 89:30-33; Isaiah 54:6-10; Jeremiah 3:12; Jeremiah 3:14). Hence,

1e. The mercy of God is immutable, as he himself is, and his love also; and therefore the objects of it are not consumed, (Malachi 3:6) it is invariably the same in every state and condition into which they come; it is, as the Virgin Mary expresses it, "from generation to generation", without any variation or change (Luke 1:50).

1f. It is common to all the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; for as there is one common undivided essence, of which each equally partakes, the same divine perfections and attributes belong to them, and so this of mercy: mercy is ascribed to the God and Father of Christ, (1 Peter 1:3) and to our Lord Jesus Christ; not only as Man and Mediator, but as the true God and eternal life; to whose mercy we are to look for it, (Jude 1:21) and to the blessed Spirit, who helps the infirmities of the saints, "and makes intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

1g. Mercy is displayed only in and through Christ; God out of Christ is a consuming fire; it is only in him God proclaims his name, "a God gracious and merciful"; he is the mercy seat, and throne of grace, at which men obtain mercy and find grace; he is the channel through which it flows, and through whom it, in its effects, is conveyed to the sons of men: they are right who cast themselves not on the absolute mercy of God out of Christ; but upon his mercy, as displayed in him, as the Publican did (Luke 18:13). In a word, it is represented, as great, large, and ample, and very abundant; we read of a "multitude" of tender mercies; and God is said to be "rich" and "plenteous" in it; as will appear more fully by considering the objects and instances of it (Psalms 103:11; Psalms 51:1; 1 Peter 1:3; Ephesians 2:4; Psalms 86:5).

2. The objects of mercy may be next observed: and that this may appear in a plain and clear light, it will be proper to remark, that the mercy of God is general and special: with respect to the general mercy of God, all creatures are the objects of it; "the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works", (Psalms 145:9) there is not a creature in all the earth but partakes of it; hence says the Psalmist, "The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy!" (Psalms 119:64) even the brute creation, the mute animals, share in it; it is owing to mercy that they are preserved in their beings, (Psalms 36:5-6) and that a provision of food is made for their sustenance; and who sometimes are in great distress, and when they cry to God he gives them their food, (Joel 1:18-20; Psalms 104:27-28; Psalms 147:9; Job 38:41). All men, good and bad, partake of the providential goodness and mercy of God; he is kind to the unthankful and unholy, and makes the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Luke 6:35; Matthew 5:45). He preserves and supports all men in their beings, and so is the Saviour of all, and especially of them that believe, (1 Timothy 4:10) and gives them the necessaries of life, food and raiment, and

all things richly to enjoy, both for convenience and pleasure: yea, even the devils themselves partake of mercy, in some sense; for though God has not spared them, so as to save them, and not condemn them; yet he has given them a kind of reprieve, and reserved them to the judgment of the great day; so that they are not yet in full torments, as their sins have deserved; and as God punishes none more but less than their sins require, this may be reasonably supposed to be the case of devils, even hereafter. As to the special mercy of God, none are the objects of that but elect men, who are called "vessels of mercy", (Romans 9:23) because they are filled with it, even with all spiritual blessings, which flow from it, and which are bestowed on them according as they are chosen in Christ, (Ephesians 1:3-4) and so particularly regeneration, which is according to the abundant mercy of God, they are favoured with, being the elect of God, (1 Peter 1:2-3) and these, as they are redeemed by Christ, share in the special mercy and goodness of God; and therefore are under obligation to say, with wonder and thankfulness, "the Lord is good; his mercy endures for ever", (Psalms 107:1-2) and especially, being effectually called by the grace of God, they appear to be the objects of mercy; then they who "had not obtained mercy", did not know their interest in it, nor actually enjoyed the blessings of it, "now have obtained mercy"; are blessed both with knowledge of interest in it, and with the open possession of the blessings of it (1 Peter 2:10). These are described sometimes by them "that call upon" the Lord, to whom he is plenteous in mercy, (Psalms 86:5) by "them that love him, and keep his commandments; to whom he shows his mercy", (Exodus 20:6; Nehemiah 1:5; Daniel 9:4) and by them that fear him, and towards whom his mercy always is (Psalms 103:11; Psalms 103:13; Psalms 103:17). Not that calling upon God, love to him, and observance of his commands, and the fear of him, are the causes of his mercy to them, since that is prior to all these, and is the cause of them; but these describe the persons who openly, and manifestly, share in the mercy of God, and to whom the effects of it have been applied, and who may expect a continuance of it, and larger discoveries and displays thereof to be made unto them; as well as they show that the mercy of God is special and distinguishing, and yet that it is not limited to any family or nation, but is enjoyed by all that love and fear the Lord in every nation (Acts 10:34-35).

3. The instances of mercy, to the objects of it, are many and various.

3a. It appears in election: it is, indeed, a controversy among divines, whether election is an act of love or of mercy: I am inclined to be of the opinion of those who take it to be an act of love, and not mercy; as God chose literal Israel, because he loved them, (Deuteronomy 7:7-8) so spiritual Israel are first beloved, and then chosen, (2 Thessalonians 2:13) "electio praesupponit dilectionem"; but then, though the decree of election flows from love, and not mercy; yet God has in it decreed to show mercy; he has resolved within himself, saying, "I will have mercy, and will save"; and therefore in this decree he has appointed them not unto wrath, which they deserve, but to obtain salvation by Christ; which supposes them fallen creatures, and so objects of mercy; for the decree of election may be distinguished into the decree of the end and the decree of the means: with respect to the end, the glory of God, men were considered as unfallen, in the pure mass out of which God designed to make them for himself: but with respect to the means, redemption by Christ, and faith in him, the Redeemer, and sanctification of the Spirit; here they were considered as fallen creatures; and so, with propriety, those chosen ones may be called vessels of mercy.

3b. The covenant of grace is a display of the mercy of God, as before observed; it is built upon mercy, and built up with it; it is stored with it, and is full of it. Mercy called Christ to engage in it, and

set him up as the Mediator of it, and came before him with the blessings of goodness: the provisions of Christ, as a Redeemer and Saviour in it; of forgiveness of sins through his blood; and of reconciliation and atonement by his sacrifice; and of regeneration and sanctification by his Spirit, are so many displays of mercy.

3c. Redemption itself is a signal instance of the mercy of God. Mercy resolved upon the redemption and salvation of the elect; being viewed as fallen in Adam, and as sinners, mercy provided a Redeemer and Saviour of them, and laid their help upon him; mercy called Christ to undertake the work of redemption, and engaged him in it; mercy sent him, in the fulness of time, to visit them, and perform it; mercy delivered them up into the hands of justice and death, in order to obtain it, and it is most illustriously glorified in it; "mercy and truth have met together", (Psalms 85:10) yea, Christ himself, in his love and pity, has redeemed his people (Isaiah 63:9).

3d. The forgiveness of sin is another instance of the mercy of God, to which it is frequently ascribed (Psalms 51:1; Daniel 9:9; Luke 1:77-78). God has promised it in covenant, as the effect of his mercy; "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness" (Hebrews 8:12). He has set forth Christ, in his purposes, to be the propitiation for the remission of sins; and has sent him, in time, to shed his blood for it, (Romans 3:25) and it is the mercy of God, which is the foundation of hope of it; and encourages sensible sinners to ask, and through which they obtain it (Psalms 103:8; Luke 18:13; 1 Timothy 1:13).

3e. The mercy of God is displayed in regeneration, to which that is ascribed in (1 Peter 1:3) and it is wonderful and special mercy, to quicken a sinner dead in trespasses and sins; to enlighten such that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; to deliver from the bondage of Satan those, that are led captive by him at his will; to snatch them as brands out of the burning, and save from everlasting fire; to bring men out of a pit, wherein there was no water, no relief and comfort, and in which they must otherwise die; and to reveal Christ to them, and in them, the hope of glory; and give them a good hope, through grace, of being for ever happy. These are some of the great and good things which God does for his people in the effectual calling, having compassion on them.

3f. Complete salvation, and eternal life itself, flow from the mercy of God; he saves, "not by works of righteousness, but according to his mercy", (Titus 3:5) and when he shall put his people into the full possession of salvation, then they shall find and obtain mercy in that day, even in the day of judgment, when they shall go into life eternal; and therefore are now directed to look unto the mercy of Christ for it, (2 Timothy 1:18; Jude 1:21).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vid. Maccov. Theolog. Quaest. loc. 13. p. 32.

[2] Zeno apud Cicero. Orat. 23. pro Muraena, Laert. in Vita ejus, l. 7. p. 512. Seneca de Clementia, l. 2. c. 4, 5, 6.

[3] Zanchius de Natura Dei, l. 4. c. 4. p. 372.

[4] Socinus de Servatore, l. 1. par. 1. c. 1. Praelectiones, c. 16. Racov. Catechism, c. 8. qu. 20.

02. Of the Millennium

Of the Millennium, or Personal Reign of Christ with the Saints on the New Earth a Thousand Years

I have treated already of the kingly office of Christ, as executed by him in various dispensations, particularly under the gospel dispensation, and have observed, there are two branches of it yet to come; one called the "spiritual," the other the "personal reign;" the former has been considered, and this is a proper place to treat of the latter; which I shall do by showing,

1. That Christ will have a special, peculiar, glorious, and visible kingdom, in which he will reign personally on earth.

1a. I call it a special, peculiar kingdom, different from other kingdoms of Christ; from the kingdom of nature and providence, which lies in the government of this world; which he, as God, has an equal right to with his Father; but when this kingdom will take place, this present world will be at an end: and from his spiritual kingdom, which belongs to him as Mediator; which rule he has exercised in the hearts of his people from the beginning of the world; and which has been, under the gospel dispensation, more large and manifest; and will be more so in the latter day, when his spiritual reign will take place; but this is different from that.

1b. It will be very glorious and visible; Christ’s kingdom, in the spiritual reign, will be very glorious, when all the glorious things spoken of it, will be fulfilled; and it will be very visible, when exalted above all the mountains and hills, the kingdoms of this world: but this will be more so, since Christ will be in it; not only by his Spirit, and the effusions of his grace, but he will personally appear in all his glory, and reign gloriously before his ancients; hence his "appearing" and "kingdom," are put together, as contemporary (2 Timothy 4:1), he in person will appear, and his tabernacle be with men on earth.

1c. This kingdom will be after all the enemies of Christ, and of his people, are removed out of the way. In his spiritual reign antichrist will be destroyed, "with the Spirit," or breath of Christ, his gospel; and with "the brightness of his coming," that clear light which will attend his coming, by the effusion of his Spirit [1]; which will be with such spiritual efficacy, as to dispel all darkness, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan; and cause an universal reception of the gospel; which will open the way for the Christian princes, to carry their victorious arms every where, and seize upon, and possess all the antichristian states; and in this order things lie in the prophecy of Daniel (Daniel 7:1-28), where, after the vision of the "fourth" beast, of the judgment of it, of the slaying it, and burning its body, the Roman empire, and the remains of it, in antichrist, and the antichristian states; Daniel, had a vision of Christ, the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven, and having an universal kingdom given him, which will not be succeeded by any other. And in the same order things lie in the book of the Revelation 19:1-21 where the beast, antichrist, and the kings of the earth, the antichristian princes, are represented as gathering together, to make war with Christ, described as an illustrious Warrior; when the beast and false prophet, antichrist, in both his civil and ecclesiastic characters, are taken and destroyed, and the rest slain, by the sword of Christ’s mouth: all which

will be done, with the ruin of the Turk, the Eastern antichrist, at the beginning of the spiritual reign: but still there will remain a most potent enemy, Satan, with his principalities and powers; wherefore, in Revelation 20:1-15 an angel descends from heaven, who is no other than Christ, who will then personally descend from thence; described as having a great chain, and a key in his hand; the one to bind Satan and all his angels; the other to open the bottomless pit, and cast them in it, and lock it up; that they may neither deceive the nations, nor disturb the saints, for the space of a thousand years [2]. And all enemies being thus out of the way, follows the account of the Millennium, or personal reign of Christ.

1d. This glorious and visible kingdom of Christ, will not take place till after the resurrection of the just, and the renovation of the world [3]. As soon as Christ personally appears, the dead in him will rise first; this is the first resurrection, which they that have a part in, shall reign with Christ a thousand years; as appears from the above place in the Revelation referred unto. These "children of the resurrection," as Christ calls them (Luke 20:35-36), and who will be worthy of "that world," the new world, in which Christ and they will reign, will be like the angels, die no more; nor will they eat and drink, in a corporal sense; nor marry and be given in marriage; carnal appetites will not be indulged; nor carnal pleasures enjoyed: in this state, nothing but pure, refined, spiritual pleasures, will be had, suited to the bodies and souls of men, united in the resurrection state. Our Lord, indeed, speaks of his disciples eating and drinking at his table, in his kingdom; and of his drinking new wine in his Father’s kingdom, which is the same (Luke 22:30; Matthew 26:29), but then all this is to be understood of divine repasts, of spiritual joys and pleasures, they shall then partake of. The Jews, it seems, had very carnal notions of the kingdom of God, of a great affluence of meats and drinks in it, and of rich and delicious living; hence a certain person said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" (Luke 14:15), meaning, that shall live deliciously there. And such gross and carnal conceptions, some that have bore the Christian name, have entertained of the millennium, as well ancient [4] as modern writers, at least, as represented by their adversaries; and therefore it has been objected to them, as if their notion savored more of a Turkish paradise, than of a kingdom of Christ; and which has brought disgrace upon the doctrine of the kingdom, and given disgust to pious and spiritual minds; as it did to Austin [5], who had some light into it, and owned, that could it be restrained to spiritual delights and pleasures, it might be allowed: but now the manner in which I conceive it, clears it from such absurdities, and represents it as quite unclogged, and free from such an objection. All the prophesies of temporal blessings in the latter day, as length of life, a numerous offspring of the people of God, plenty of corporal food, an affluence of wealth and riches, will have their accomplishment in the spiritual reign, or latter day glory; when there will be such au effusion of the Spirit of God, as will be a counterbalance to such earthly enjoyments, that they will not do the hurt they would in the present circumstances of things; and even then, when the influences of the Spirit shall go off, and be withdrawn, that state will gradually sink into lukewarmness, pride, self-conceit, and carnality (Revelation 3:15-16). But nothing of this kind will appear in the millennium.

1e. This kingdom of Christ will be bounded by two resurrections; by the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the just, at which it will begin; and by the second resurrection, or the resurrection of the wicked, at which it will end, or nearly; for it is expressly said, that "the rest of the dead," that is, the wicked, "lived not again until the thousand years were finished": now in the interval between the resurrection of the one, and the resurrection of the other, will be the millennium, or thousand

years reign of Christ and his people together.

1f. This kingdom will be before the general judgment, especially of the wicked. There is a particular judgment that passes on every man at death; "After death, judgment!" and there will be a virtual judgment immediately upon the appearance of Christ, who will come to judge both "quick" and "dead." Dead saints will be raised, and living saints changed, and both be with Christ; which will be virtually pronouncing them righteous; and as for the wicked, their bodies will be burnt in the conflagration of the earth, and their souls will be shut up with Satan and his angels in the bottomless pit; which will be virtually pronouncing them guilty: but the formal judgment will proceed afterwards. Indeed, in the thousand years reign, will be the judgment of the saints, as will be seen hereafter; and some time after the close of the millennium, will come on the general judgment of the wicked; for John, after he had given an account of the former (Revelation 20:1-15), relates a vision of the latter.

1g. This glorious, visible kingdom of Christ, will be on earth, and not in heaven; and so is distinct from the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory: the souls of the martyrs, and others, said to reign with Christ a thousand years, cannot be understood of their reigning with him in heaven; for so they had reigned with him from the time of the death of their bodies; and was their reigning with him in heaven meant, there would have been no need of binding Satan and his angels, and shutting them up in the bottomless pit; as not to deceive the nations, so not to molest them; since being in heaven, they were out of their reach, and could not be disturbed by them: but it is on earth they are to reign with Christ; of which the living creatures, and four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel churches, and the redeemed of the Lamb, express their strong faith; "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth;" meaning, no doubt, in the millennium; for they speak of it as future, saying, not "we do," but "we shall reign on earth;" and that the millennium reign will be there, is clear, since the Gog and Magog army, at the end of the thousand years, are said to go up "on the breadth of the earth," and "compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city;" the same with the saints before described as reigning with Christ, which therefore must be on the earth; and the same with the holy city John saw descending from God out of heaven, that is, on earth, with whom his tabernacle is said to be, and he to dwell with them (Revelation 20:4; Revelation 20:6; Revelation 20:8-9; Revelation 21:2-3). But then this kingdom will not be upon this present earth, or upon this earth in its present circumstances; the present heavens and earth will be burnt up before this kingdom takes place; this world is not good enough for the second Adam, and his saints, to dwell in; the curse must be removed from it, and it must be refined, and new fitted up, for such inhabitants; and all the wicked of it be no more in it, as unfit to dwell where such persons do. Christ’s kingdom is not of this world, nor never will be. This has been the mistake of many, fancying that the millennium will be in the present earth; which have given the adversaries of this doctrine, an occasion to object unto it; as subversive of civil government, and as encouraging sedition and rebellion in commonwealths, and as giving just umbrage to the kings and princes of the earth, and to all civil magistrates. And, indeed, in the seventeenth century, in this nation, there were a set of men, called "fifth monarchy men," and who were levelers, and riotous persons, were for pulling down civil magistracy, and all order of civil government, and setting up what they called a kingdom of Christ; which brought the doctrine of the millennium into great contempt, and under which it has much lain ever since. But putting it upon the footing I have, that this kingdom will not be in the present earth, the kings of it

have nothing to fear from it; it will not interfere with theirs; civil government will not be hurt by it; for it will not be till that is no more, and the world itself at an end; and so can give no encouragement and countenance to persons of a riotous and seditious disposition. Indeed, in the spiritual reign, the dominion under the whole heaven, will be given to the people of the saints of the most High, which will last to the end of the world: but then there will be no alteration made in the order of civil government, much less will that be destroyed; it will only be translated into other hands; only Christian princes shall possess it; there will be no more pagan princes, nor papal kings, nor Mahometan emperors; only such who are not only nominal but truly Christian princes, according to Psalms 72:10-11; Isaiah 49:23; Isaiah 60:3; Isaiah 60:10; Isaiah 60:16. But as for the personal reign of Christ with his saints, that will be on the new earth, wherein will "dwell righteousness," and that only; that is, Christ, who is the Lord, the Righteousness of his people; and they who are made righteous by him (2 Peter 3:13), so the new heavens and new earth John had a vision of, are, according to that vision, the seat of the new "Jerusalem," or church of God, and of Christ, who will there tabernacle with them (Revelation 21:1-3), and then the Lord will be King over all the earth; there will be no offset; there will be one Lord, and his name one (Zechariah 14:9).

Having explained the nature of Christ's kingdom, I shall proceed to give the proof that there will be such a glorious, visible kingdom of Christ on earth: this proof, as it depends on prophesies of future things, cannot be expected to be so full and clear in all respects, as a proof may be of things past or present; the prophesies respecting the first coming of Christ, doubtless, did not appear so clear and plain before their fulfillment, as since: so the prophesies of the second coming of Christ, and of his kingdom, may not be so evident as they will be, the nearer is the approach of it; or as when it will be. Besides, the prophesies of the Old Testament are delivered in very general, concise, and comprehensive terms; and sometimes include both his first and second coming, and things that intervene between them; and therefore it should be no objection to a proof of Christ's second coming and kingdom, that there are some things in the context which respect his first coming; and others which respect the spiritual reign; but these are to be separated, and distinctly considered; and what belongs to the one, should be applied to that; and what belongs to another, should be appropriated to that. Now the proof of this point, may be taken from various passages in the Psalms, in the Prophets, and in the books of the New Testament.

1g1. First, from some passages in the Psalms; and to begin with the Psalms 45:1-17, which was made "concerning the King," the King Messiah, who is called "the King," by way of eminence, the famous King; and who is described as a divine Person, as God, whose throne is for ever and ever; and as graceful, and full of grace, as Man and Mediator; and as a most potent Prince, riding in great majesty, and as a triumphant conqueror. And though some things said of him may agree with the conquests of his grace, in the first and after ages of Christianity; yet they will have their full accomplishment at his second coming, when all his enemies shall be subdued by him. His court is represented in the Psalm as a very brilliant one; some in it have the name of queen, others are called honorable women, or maids of honour; and among those, kings daughters, and others the rich among the people; which may respect the different degrees of honour among the saints, in the resurrection and kingdom state, which will only obtain then; not in the ultimate glory. The glory and purity of the church are strongly expressed; the "queen" is said to be at the King's right hand, "in gold of Ophir," her clothing of pure gold; which agrees with the new Jerusalem, on the new earth, a city of pure gold. The King's daughter, the same, is said to be "all glorious within," being perfectly

pure and holy; such as the new Jerusalem will be, into which nothing sinful, defiling, and abominable, shall enter. The church is also, in the Psalm, represented as introduced into the King's presence, in a magnificent manner, "in raiment of needlework," as well as in "clothing of wrought gold;" which fitly agrees with the kingdom state, in which Christ will present his church to himself a glorious church, being as a bride adorned for her husband; not only having on the robe of his righteousness, but the shining garments of immortality and bliss. Moreover, at this time he will make his people "princes in all the earth;" which shows that this his kingdom will be on earth, and agrees with the faith and expectation of his saints, that as they are made by him "kings and priests unto God," they shall "reign on earth."

I take no notice of Psalms 72:1-20 for though it relates to Christ and his kingdom, yet to that branch of it, his spiritual reign, and expresses the prosperity, peace, glory, extensiveness, and duration of it. But Psalms 96:1-13 must not be overlooked; which begins, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice!" which shows that the psalm respects the kingdom of Christ on earth; and which will take place at his coming to judge the world, as appears by its connection with the last verse of the preceding psalm; and which coming of his, as hereafter described, will be in the clouds of heaven, and with flames of fire, as has been observed in a preceding chapter. The Psalms 145:1-21 treats of the kingdom of Christ, and the glory of it, and represents the saints as speaking to one another of it; of its glory, majesty, and duration (Psalms 145:11-13), which can suit no state so well as this; in which the saints will be employed in converse with each other, about the glory of their King, the glory of his coming to his kingdom, of his glorious acts done by him in it, and of the glorious things they enjoy therein.

1g2. Secondly, from various passages in the prophets: and,

1g2a. From Isaiah 24:23. "Then the moon shall be confounded," &c. this glorious reign will take place after the punishment of the "kings of the earth upon the earth" (Isaiah 24:21), by whom may be meant the beast and the false prophet, with the kings of the earth, the antichristian kings; who will make war with the Lamb, and be overcome and slain by him (Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:20-21), and whose army may be called "the host of the high ones that are on high;" being in high places, and in great power and dignity; and may be also very well applied to Satan, and his principalities and powers, those "spiritual wickednesses in high places;" and what is said in Isaiah 24:22 of the shutting of them up and confining them as in a prison, and then after many days visiting them, very aptly agrees with the binding of Satan and his angels, and the shutting of them up in the bottomless pit; and then after a thousand years letting them loose for a short time, which will issue in their everlasting punishment; see Revelation 20:2-3. Moreover this reign will not take place until the utter dissolution of the earth, when it shall fall and not rise again in the form it now is (Isaiah 24:19-20), the person reigning is the Lord of hosts, the Lord of the armies of the heavens, the angels, and of the inhabitants of the earth, the greatest among them; who is King of kings and Lord of lords; all which is true of Christ, who reigns now in the kingdom of providence as God, and the Creator of all things; and in the kingdom of grace, as Mediator in the hearts of his people; and in his churches, where he will reign more illustriously in the latter day; but this is still a more glorious reign that is here spoken of: the place where he will reign is in Zion and Jerusalem, which may be literally understood of that spot of ground where these cities were, which may be the chief residence of Christ in this his kingdom; or mystically of that Zion where he and the one hundred and forty four thousand, having his Father's name on their foreheads, stood; and the new

Jerusalem, that will come down from heaven, among whom his tabernacle will be (Revelation 14:1; Revelation 21:2-3). The persons "before" whom, and in whose sight he will reign, for this kingdom will be visible, are his ancients; not his ancient people the Jews only, but all his elect that have been from the beginning of the world; Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New; and the four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel churches; and even all those ancient ones whom God has loved with an everlasting love, chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, called the "ancient people" (Isaiah 44:7), with these Christ will reign "gloriously," or "in glory;" he will appear in glory, in the glory of his deity, and in the glory of his human nature, and in the glory of his kingly office; and such will be his lustre and splendour, that the "sun" and "moon" will be "ashamed" and "confounded;" they will blush and withdraw their light, as it were, or that will not be comparable to his; and that city, the new Jerusalem, where he will reign, will stand in no need of their light, for the Lamb will be the light of it (Revelation 21:23).

1g2b. With this agrees another prophecy in Isaiah 30:26. "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun," &c. this prophecy will not be fulfilled until "the day of the great slaughter is over," the great slaughter of the antichristian kings, captains, and mighty men; which carnage of them is called the supper of the great God, to which the fowls of the air are invited to prey upon (Revelation 19:17-18), "when the towers fall," when the city of Babylon or Rome, with its towers, and the cities of the nations, of the antichristian nations, with their towers, will fall (Revelation 16:19), nor will it be fully accomplished until "the name of the Lord," or the Lord himself, comes "with the flame of a devouring fire," to burn up the world, and all things in it (Isaiah 30:27; Isaiah 30:30), and so much respect the second coming of Christ, which will be from heaven with flames of fire: and another criterion of the fulfillment of this prophecy is, that it will be when the Lord will "bind" up and "heal" the "wounds" of "his people;" that is, forgive their iniquities, which in the kingdom state will be publicly and completely done; the sins of God’s people will be so fully blotted out, that they shall not be seen by themselves, nor by others, any more; see Acts 3:19-21, and though great will be the light and knowledge of men in the spiritual reign, the first branch of Christ’s kingdom; yet this sevenfold light, which is expressive of a perfection of it, best agrees with that state, the light whereof exceeds that of the sun and moon; and when the Lord shall be the everlasting light of his people, and their God their glory (Isaiah 60:19-20), a prophecy which respects the same thing.

1g2c. There is another prophecy which seems to belong to this glorious kingdom of Christ on earth in Jeremiah 23:5-6. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch," &c.; there can be no doubt but Christ is here meant, who is the Lord our righteousness, the author of righteousness to his people; he is the man whose name is the Branch, and is raised up to David as such, and a righteous one he is; a King that shall reign in righteousness, and so prosper as to be king over all the earth; and on the earth this his reign will be, since it is "in the earth" he will execute judgment and justice: and though his saints, who are meant by Judah and Israel, are always safe under his protection, being in his hands, and kept by his power; yet what state or period can be named wherein they will dwell in more safety, and in such freedom from the oppression and molestation of their enemies, as in the millennium? when all their enemies will be no more, and even Satan and his angels will be bound and shut up in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, and so during that time can give them no disturbance.

1g2d. There are some passages in Ezekiel which seem to have respect to this kingdom state; as in Ezekiel 21:27. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until he come, whose right it is, and I will give it him;" which may be understood not only of the overturnings in the Jewish state before the first coming of Christ, but also of the overturnings of empires before his second coming; and being expressed three times, may denote the overturning of the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan empires, which when overturned will be no more; and after Christ will come, who is heir of all things, and by the designation of his Father, will be king over all the earth. In Ezekiel 48:1-35 there is a prophecy of a city, the dimensions of which are such as cannot agree with any city on earth literally taken; but must be understood either of the gospel church state; or it may be rather of the city of the new Jerusalem, described in Revelation 21:1-27 in which Christ will reign, and his saints with him, in a most glorious manner; and the rather this may be meant, since the name of the city is "Jehovah shammah," the Lord is there (Ezekiel 48:35), and in the new Jerusalem will be the tabernacle of Christ with men on earth, where he is said to be with his saints, and dwell with them (Revelation 21:3).

1g2e. There are some prophecies in Daniel which respect the kingdom of Christ, as in Daniel 2:1-49 the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream is explained by Daniel as an emblem of the four monarchies, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; and in Daniel 2:44 it is said, "In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," &c. that is, after these kings have reigned, and their kingdoms are ended, as Junius [6] interprets it; for this kingdom could not be set up in the days of them all, since their kingdoms were successive. Nebuchadnezzar also saw in his dream, "a stone cut out without hands, which smote the image, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth;" which must be understood of Christ, both in his human nature, which is a tabernacle not made with hands; and which God pitched, and not man; and in his kingdom, which was very small in its first beginning, but by degrees increased, and will still more increase, and become a great mountain, a mighty kingdom, and fill the whole earth, and so jostle out all other kingdoms: this will be, in part, fulfilled in the spiritual reign of Christ, when the kingdoms of this world shall become his; but most completely in the millennium, when he shall be King over all the earth. There is a prophecy of the same kind in Daniel 7:1-28 where Daniel had a vision of four beasts coming up out of the sea; which design the same four monarchies rising up successively in the world: and after this, he had a vision of a judicial process, issuing in the slaying of the fourth beast, the destruction of the Roman monarchy; and the burning of the body of the beast, the remains of that monarchy, antichrist, and the antichristian states: after which he has a vision of Christ, the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven; and so it must respect the second coming of Christ, and of his then having a dominion, and glorious kingdom given him, which is an everlasting one, that is, which shall not be left to another people, as in Daniel 2:1-49 nor be succeeded by another kingdom; but shall continue until the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory, takes place; and this kingdom will not be in heaven, but "under the whole heaven;" as in Daniel 2:27.

1g2f. There is a passage which has been frequently referred to, and belongs to this kingdom state, in Zechariah 14:9. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." This kingdom will be on earth; and will be when there is no other; and when the homage and worship paid to Christ, this King, will be universally the same. And though there may be some passages in this chapter which belong to the spiritual reign, the first branch of

Christ’s kingdom; yet there are others, as well as this, which can only agree with his personal reign, upon his second coming; for it is expressly said, "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee;" which will be fulfilled, and not before, when Christ shall descend from heaven, and bring all his saints with him (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:16). And this reign of Christ over all the earth, will be when the saints are in a perfect state; and so not before his second coming, and the resurrection of the just. Holiness will now be so universal, that, proverbially speaking, it will be written on "the bells of the horses;" and every member in the new Jerusalem church state, into which nothing defiling shall enter, meant by "every pot in Jerusalem and Judah, shall be holiness to the Lord," or be completely holy; and there shall be "no Canaanite," neither a profane sinner, nor a carnal professor, in the house and church of God; nor any sinful lust in any of its inhabitants.

1g3. Thirdly, The proof of this glorious kingdom of Christ, may be given from various passages in the New Testament; and,

1g3a. From Matthew 6:10. "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." To this, as a proof, it may be objected, at first sight, that this is the kingdom of the Father; since it is "Our Father which art in heaven," the petitions arc directed to. To which it may be replied, that the same kingdom may he called, the kingdom of the Father, and the kingdom of Christ, as it is certain this kingdom we arc treating of is so called; as appears by comparing Matthew 26:29 with Luke 22:30 and there is a good reason to be given for it; because this kingdom is a kingdom which the Father had appointed to Christ, and which will be given him by him (Luke 22:29; Daniel 7:14), and for the same reason the Father calls him his King, because appointed and set by him as king over his holy hill of Zion (Psalms 2:6), this kingdom may be called his. Now this is a kingdom yet to come, and is prayed for as being future; and so cannot design neither the kingdom of providence, nor the kingdom of grace, nor the gospel dispensation; and though it may include the spiritual reign, the first branch of Christ’s kingdom, yet will not be fulfilled in that; since it respects a perfect state, when the will of God will be done on earth by men, as it is in heaven by the angels; the saints, in the kingdom state, will serve Christ their king constantly and incessantly, and so perfectly; and this will be a kingdom on earth, where the will of God will be perfectly done, as it is in heaven, and so is a distinct state from that. To all which may be added, that the coming of this kingdom is to be prayed for [7]; not only the first branch of it, in the spiritual reign, as in Isaiah 62:6-7 but the second coming of Christ, to take possession of his kingdom personally, saving, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" and this may, and should be a prayer of faith; for since he has directed his people to pray daily for the coming of this kingdom, it may be assured that it certainly will come; for Christ would not direct his saints to pray for that which never will be.

1g3b. From Matthew 20:21-23. "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children, desiring that her two sons may sit the one on Christ’s right hand, and the other on the left, in his kingdom." The same request is made by the two sons themselves (Mark 10:35-40). Now though these petitioners were tinctured with the national notion of the Messiah setting up a temporal kingdom on earth, at the time of his first coming; and with which all the apostles seem, more or less, tinctured, until the Spirit was poured down upon them on the day of Pentecost; yet our Lord does not deny, but rather owns, there would be a kingdom of his, in which distinctions of honour would be made, and peculiar privileges, and marks of respect, bestowed on some; but that these would only be given to such for whom they were prepared by his Father: he blames them for their pride and ambition, in

affecting to have preeminence above their brethren; and suggests, that their petition was an unseasonable one; it was not a time to think of, and expect honours and preferments, they being now in a suffering state, and must expect sufferings for his sake; yea, that he himself must drink of a bitter cup, and be baptized with a bloody baptism, before he entered into his kingdom and glory; and this would also be their case: this glorious kingdom of Christ, and honours in it, are not to be expected in a militant suffering state; the saints must suffer with Christ first, before they reign and are glorified together with him; the crown of righteousness will not be given, till the good fight of faith is fought; and not before the glorious appearing of Christ, and only to them that love that: this cannot be understood of the kingdom of heaven, or a kingdom there, because there is no sitting at Christ's right hand there; he is set down indeed in his Father's throne, and sits at his right hand, where no creatures, angels nor men, are admitted: but in the kingdom state, he will have a throne distinct from his Father, in which his saints will sit with him (Revelation 3:21), on his right and left; and in which state will be thrones, whereon some will sit, being distinguished from others, with some matins of honour and esteem; for such there will be in this kingdom of Christ, though what they will be is not easy to say; they are signified by one being a ruler over ten cities, and another a ruler over live cities; which is not to be understood literally, but of some posts of honour, and distinctive marks of respect some will have; for as one star differs from another star in glory, so will be the resurrection of the dead; or such a distinction be in the resurrection state----in this glorious kingdom of Christ. In Mark 10:37 instead of, "In thy kingdom," it is, "In thy glory."

1g3c. From Luke 1:32-33. "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end!" These words were spoken by the angel to the virgin, concerning her son, who should be great, and be called, "the Son of the Highest;" and which respects him, not in his incarnate state on earth, for then he appeared; not great, but mean; and his kingdom was not with observation: but hereafter, in the latter day, when his name should be great among the Gentiles, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same (Malachi 1:11), and especially at his second coming, which will be with power and great glory; and he will appear, as the Son of the Highest, as the great God, and our Saviour; and whereas he was the Son of David, according to the flesh, it is foretold, that he should have the throne of his father David, not literally, but mystically; which will have its accomplishment, in part, at the conversion of the Jews in the last day, when they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king, the true Messiah, and yield subjection to him; but more fully when all the elect of God are gathered in, both Jews and Gentiles, over whom be will reign, even over the house of Jacob, that Jacob, the Lord has chosen for himself; and this his kingdom will be for ever; it will not give way to, nor be succeeded by another; in the same sense as in the prophecy of Daniel, it is said to be an everlasting kingdom; there will be no end of it; for when Christ has reigned with his people on earth a thousand years, he will reign with them, and they with him, in heaven, to all eternity; see Micah 4:7.

1g3d. From Luke 22:29-30. "As my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom," &c. Here is a special and peculiar kingdom of Christ, which he calls, "my kingdom;" and which he has by the designation and appointment of his Father; and which was yet to come, as well as that he appointed to his followers; in which kingdom there will be a table, at which all Christ's people will sit, and eat and drink; not temporally, but spiritually, and shall feed upon a divine repast, suited to their resurrection state; for at this table shall sit Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and multitudes from

divers parts, and who have lived in the several periods of time; and here will be thrones placed, on which the saints shall sit; for they will now be "kings and priests unto God," and shall reign as such, and have judgment given them, and on some distinct honours will be conferred.

1g3e. From Luke 23:42-43. "And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!" The light and faith the penitent thief had in the kingdom of Christ, and in his future coming to it, were very great; for though Christ appeared now very mean and despicable, suffering a shameful death, and lying under the greatest reproach and ignominy; yet he believed that he would come again, and take possession of a kingdom that belonged to him; and desires that he might be remembered by him at his appearing and kingdom: to which an answer is returned; "And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, today shall thou be with me in paradise": signifying, that he should not stay so long without partaking of his favors; for that day he should be with him in the third heaven, and continue with him till his second coming; and then he, with all his saints, should come with him, and share in the glories of his kingdom.

1g3f. From Acts 1:6. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel?" The sceptre, according to ancient prophecy, was now departed from Judah, and Judea was become a province to the Roman empire; now the Jews had a notion, that when the Messiah came, he would restore the kingdom, and redeem them from the Roman yoke, and make them a happy people, as to temporal things; and with this notion, the disciples themselves were tinctured; and as they believed that Jesus was the Messiah, they had raised expectations of this matter; but when he was dead, their hopes seem to be almost quite gone (Luke 24:21), but Christ being raised from the dead, their hopes revived: and it was a notion that prevailed with the Jews, and does to this day, that the coming of the king Messiah, to deliver them, and the resurrection of the dead, will be at the same time: and, indeed, Christ's personal reign will take place after the resurrection of the just. And now there having been a resurrection of many of the saints (Matthew 27:52-53), and especially Christ himself being risen, and also had spoken to his disciples of things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Matthew 27:3), they might hope that this was the time the kingdom would be restored. Now though they had very obscure and carnal notions of the kingdom; yet Christ does not deny that there would be a kingdom hereafter he should enjoy, and which should be restored to Israel; only blames them for their curiosity in inquiring into the time of it (Matthew 27:7), and which shows that this kingdom will not be till Christ comes to judge the quick and dead, which time none knows but the Father only (Matthew 24:36), and exactly agrees with this passage.

1g3g. From 2 Timothy 4:1. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, and his kingdom." This appearing of Christ cannot be meant of his first appearing in human nature, that was past, this future; that was not to judge the world, this will be: nor did his kingdom then appear, now it will: but of his appearing a second time to those that look for him (Hebrews 9:28), and then his personal reign, and glorious kingdom will take place, he now personally appearing in his glory; and when he will judge both quick and dead, will virtually judge, as has been before observed, the dead and living saints, by raising the one and changing the other, when he shall descend from heaven, and thus appear; and the wicked also, by burning their bodies in the general conflagration which now will be, and by shutting up their souls with Satan, in the bottomless pit. And moreover, the actual judgment, both of the righteous and the wicked, will follow on this appearing of his kingdom; the judgment of the saints will be at the beginning of it, and in it, and the judgment of the wicked at the end of it.

1g3h. From Hebrews 2:5. "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak;" though the "world to come," may be understood of the gospel dispensation the apostle had been speaking of in the preceding verses, in distinction from the legal, or Jewish dispensation, angels had a concern in; whereas they have none in the ministry of the gospel. And the Jewish dispensation is sometimes called "the world," the end of which fell upon the times of Christ and his apostles (Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 1:1-14), and with respect to which, the gospel dispensation may be called "the world to come," it being usual with the Jews, to call the days of the Messiah by this name; which may take in the whole time between the first and second coming of Christ. But though the apostle may have respect to what he was speaking of in the preceding verses, yet so as to include what he was going on to speak of in the following verses, concerning the second Adam's world; for the proof of which he refers to the eighth Psalm; which is spoken, not of the first Adam, not even in his state of innocence; the name of the Lord was not then so excellent in all the earth as it has been since, and especially will be; nor were there then babes and sucklings, out of whose mouth strength, or praise, could be ordained; nor was Satan, the enemy and avenger, stilled, he soon got the advantage over Adam; nor could Adam be called then Enosh, a frail mortal man, as that word is thought to signify; nor was he a son of man; nor were the works of God's hands so universally put under him as is said, not the angels: but Christ, the second Adam, is meant, with whom everything agrees; though, as yet, all things, in the fullest sense, are not in subjection to him, nor will be, till his second coming, till after the binding of Satan, and the resurrection of the dead; and then the last enemy, death, will be destroyed, and his glorious kingdom take place, which angels will have no concern in; they will be employed at the beginning of it, in gathering together the risen saints; and at the end of it, in casting the wicked into hell; but not in the kingdom itself; nor will they be needed. Moreover, this world to come, seems to include the new world, the new heavens and the new earth, the apostle Peter speaks of; for his beloved brother Paul, he says, had wrote and spoke of those to the same persons the apostle Peter wrote unto; now he wrote to the converted Jews, scattered abroad in various places, and therefore must refer to the epistle to the Hebrews, written by the apostle Paul; and where, in that epistle, can he be thought to speak of this new world, the heavens and the earth, but in this passage under consideration? and which may be very well rendered, as it is by Dr. Burnets [8], "the habitable earth to come;" which will be the seat of Christ's personal reign.

I take no notice now of the proof from the passages Revelation 5:10; Revelation 20:4-6 which are very plain, because I have already made mention of them, and shall have occasion to make more use of them; though Socinus [9] thinks this kingdom cannot be proved from Revelation 20:1-15 since the whole place, he says, must be taken and explained in an allegorical way; but he owns, that should he be asked, what is the allegorical interpretation of it, he is not ashamed to confess his ignorance of it. But that it is to be taken in a literal sense, will appear hereafter.

I go on,

2. To show, that in this glorious, visible, and personal reign of Christ, all the saints will have a share; they will "reign with him" (Revelation 20:4; Revelation 20:6). I shall not dwell long on the proof of this; because those scriptures which speak of Christ's kingdom, give plain and clear hints of the reign of his saints in it.

2a. First, there are various passages of scripture, which give plain intimations of the reign of the saints with Christ in his kingdom; these are they which he will then "make princes in all the earth" (Psalms 45:16), these, however mean in their original, are, through his grace, set among princes, and shall inherit the throne of glory; and these princes are altogether kings; and being such, shall reign with Christ on earth; for when he, the King, shall "reign in righteousness," these are the "princes" that shall "rule in judgment" (Isaiah 32:1). In the same prophecy of Daniel, which speaks of the kingdom that shall be given to Christ, upon his coming in the clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:14), it is also said (Daniel 7:27). "And the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom;" all which is expressive of a glorious kingdom under the whole heaven; and so not a kingdom in heaven, but under it, on earth, and which will extend to all the earth. Such a kingdom "shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High;" to the people and saints of Christ, who is Jehovah, the most High in all the earth; such a kingdom they never had yet, nor never will have, till the Son of man comes in the clouds of heaven; "Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominion shall serve and obey him": which shows, that this kingdom is of the same nature, extent, and duration, with Christ's (Daniel 7:14), and in which the saints will share with him. Brenius [10] thinks, that by one "like the Son of man" (Daniel 7:13), is not meant Christ personally, but his glorious kingdom in the latter day; that as the four preceding monarchies are represented by beasts, for their fierceness, cruelty, and tyranny; his by a man, for the mildness, gentleness, lenity, and humanity of it: and that coming in the clouds of heaven, denotes the divine and heavenly original of it not rising out of the sea, or earth, as the other kingdoms: and he supposes the Son of man, and the people of the saints of the most High (Daniel 7:27), to be the same to whom the dominion will be given. There is a passage in Micah 4:7-8 which plainly intimates, that when Christ reigns, his church and people shall reign also; "The Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion, from henceforth even for ever;" to which reference seems to be had by the angel, in Luke 1:32 and then it follows; "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion;" which may be understood of Christ, the tower and strong hold of his people: "Unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion;" he shall have the first, the chief, the principal share in this reign; yet also, "the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem," the church of God, the new Jerusalem, the holy city of the saints. Our Lord tells his disciples, "That ye which have followed me," who had embraced him as the Messiah, and received his doctrines, and submitted to his ordinances: here should be a stop, and then another clause begin: "in the regeneration;" meaning, not the grace of regeneration, or the new birth; but a new state of things, the resurrection state [11]: the word paliggenesia, is used by Greek writers, both philosophers and the Christian fathers [12], for the renovation of the world; and the Syriac version of it here, is, "in the new world," that is, the new heavens and the new earth, the apostle Peter speaks of; in which new state, the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, reign in it before his ancients gloriously; and then "also," adds he, "ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" should have posts and places of honour in the church of God (Matthew 19:28), similar to this, is what Christ says to them in Luke 22:29-30 that as his Father had appointed him a kingdom, so he appointed one to them, in which they should "eat and drink at his table, and sit on thrones," &c. which is expressive of great nearness to him, communion with him in his kingdom, and of great honour conferred upon them. The saying of Christ, in Luke 20:35 refers to this state; where he speaks of some that "shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead;" by which is meant the world to come, in distinction from this present world (Luke 22:34), even the new world, the apostle

Peter’s new heavens and new earth, which will take place upon the resurrection of the dead; and they that are worthy of the first resurrection, through the grace of Christ, those shall obtain, possess, inherit, and dwell in the new world, and reign with Christ in it. The kingdom to be restored to Israel (Acts 1:6), which Christ seems to allow will be, is what will be restored and given to the mystical Israel, even the whole Israel of God, all his elect, consisting of Jews and Gentiles. When the apostle Paul speaks of saints that suffer with Christ, being "glorified together" (Romans 8:17), he elsewhere expresses, by their "reigning with him" (2 Timothy 2:12), and to this reigning together with Christ, he may well be thought to have respect in 1 Corinthians 4:8. "Ye have reigned as kings without us;" treating him, and his fellow ministers, with some degree of contempt, as if they were below them, and they stood in no need of them: and adds, "I would to God that you did reign," in the best sense, and in the highest degree, even with Christ, in his personal reign; "that we also might reign with you;" in which state the saints will all reign together. Once more, Christ promises (Revelation 3:21). "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne": this promise will be made good to every overcomer; to everyone that is made more than a conqueror through Christ; and will be fulfilled in the kingdom state, when he will have a throne of his own; now he sits on his Father’s throne with him; then he will sit on his own throne, and this will be large enough for all his saints to sit upon with him; which is as strongly expressive of reigning with him, as words can possibly be. To all which may be added, the relations and characters the saints bear in scripture, which will strengthen the proof of their sharing with Christ in the glories of his kingdom. "They are," and will then appear to be, "the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36), as Christ was declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead; so they will be declared also to be the sons of God, by their resurrection from the dead; "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). Christ is heir of all things, and they are joint heirs with him; he is heir of the world, and the world is theirs, Christ being theirs; not the present world, in which they have but a small share; but the world to come, the new world, the world that Abraham was heir of, through the righteousness of faith; as are also all his spiritual seed, even they that are Christ’s; and these are heirs according to the promise, and shall inherit the new earth, and reign with Christ in it. The church and people of God, stand in the relation of a bride to Christ, being espoused to him; hence as he is king, the church is queen; and not only stands at his right hand in gold of Ophir, but sits on the same throne with him; and as she bears the same name with him (Jeremiah 23:5-6; Jeremiah 33:16), she shares in his honour, dignity, and glory. The saints have the character of kings, being made so by Christ to God; and they have the regalia of kings, have thrones to sit on, crowns on their heads, and shall not want a kingdom; being kings, they shall reign on earth, and reign with Christ there (Revelation 1:6; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 3:3; Revelation 5:10; Revelation 20:4).

2b. Secondly, all the saints will share in the glories of Christ’s kingdom; though some will have distinguished honours, yet all will reign with Christ. Some think only the martyrs will rise first, and reign; and, according to the opinion of some, not on earth neither; but shall ascend to heaven, and reign there, while the other saints, during the millennium, are on earth; and which is grounded on a passage in Revelation 20:4. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them," those next described; "and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God -- and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." That these were martyrs, no doubt is to be made; they suffered death for the testimony they bore to

Jesus and his gospel; and by the manner of their death, beheading, it appears that such are designed who suffered under the persecutions of the Roman pagan emperors, this being a Roman punishment; hence the axe used to be carried before the Roman magistrates; and this one sort of death is put for all others that Christians, in those times, were put to: and these souls seem to be the same with those in Revelation 6:9-10 such, indeed, who have been slain in the cause of Christ, shall "live," that is, live again; their bodies shall be raised and united to their souls, and "reign with Christ" in their whole person, body, and soul: but not a word is here said, or elsewhere, of their ascension to heaven, and reigning there; but, on the contrary, those who are said to dwell with Christ, and he with them, are said to come down from God out of heaven (Revelation 21:2-3), and that there should be two sorts of persons in the millennium, one in heaven and the other on earth; or, as others imagine, that there shall be on earth some in an immortal, perfect state, and others in a mortal and imperfect one; some having the word and ordinances among them, and others not, are mere chimeras, for which there is no foundation: and what communion can saints have with each other, who are either at such a distance from one another, or in such different circumstances? and as to the martyrs, it is certain, there are others besides them who shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years: and who are mentioned in the same text; for it follows, "And which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image; neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they," as well as the martyrs before described, "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years;" these are not represented as sufferers for Christ, only as confessors and professors of his name; who bore their testimony against the papacy, in every shape of it, and did not yield unto it, neither by word nor deed; and may include all such persons, who, in every age and period of time, abstain from all corrupt worship, false doctrines, and ordinances of men. The reason why such who suffered under Rome pagan, and those who submitted not to Rome papal, are particularly pointed at and described, is, because the book of the Revelation is chiefly concerned with the state of the church, from the resurrection of Christ to his second coming. Otherwise, all the Old Testament saints, as well as new, will have a part in the first resurrection, and share in the millennium reign; even all the saints that have been from the beginning of the world, now are, or shall be, to the end of it; for,

2b1. All the saints will come with Christ, who have departed this life, when he comes a second time; this is asserted both in the Old and New Testament (Zechariah 14:5; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:14).

2b2. All that are Christ’s shall rise from the dead at his coming (1 Corinthians 15:23), and, in consequence of their resurrection, shall reign with him. Now all the people of God, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, all true believers in Christ, are his, belong to him; he has an interest in them, and they in him; and when he comes a second time, they will rise first; and having a part in the first resurrection, shall reign with Christ a thousand years (Revelation 20:4; Revelation 20:6).

2b3. All the elect of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb, are kings and priests; and being such, shall reign on earth; those that are a "chosen generation," or who are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," are a "royal priesthood," or are kings and priests (1 Peter 1:2; 1 Peter 2:9), and all that are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, "out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, are made unto God kings and priests," and "shall reign on earth," on the new earth, with Christ, a thousand years; even all of them, all that are chosen, all that are redeemed (Revelation

5:9-10; Revelation 20:6).

2b4. The whole church of God, and the members of it, in every dispensation, shall have a share in the kingdom of Christ. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, will have a seat in it, and multitudes from all parts of the world, and who have lived in different ages, shall come and sit down with them (Matthew 8:11 Luke 11:28-29. The four and twenty elders, the representatives of the gospel church, under the New Testament dispensation, being redeemed out of every nation, and being kings and priests, declare their strong faith that they shall reign on earth; and accordingly, are sometimes represented as having on their heads crowns of gold, as well as clothed in white, the raiment of priests arid princes (Revelation 4:4; Revelation 5:9-10). In a word, the whole body of the elect, and redeemed of the Lamb, the church universal, consisting of all its members, not one wanting; and so a bride, completely prepared and adorned for her husband; even the holy city and new Jerusalem, will descend from God, out of heaven, on earth; arid the tabernacle of God, of Immanuel, will be with them; and he will dwell and reign with them, and they with him (Revelation 21:2-3), compared with Revelation 20:9.

2c. Thirdly, in what sense the saints, even all the saints, will reign with Christ, may be next considered. This will not be after the manner of his spiritual reign among his saints; that is a reign in them, this is a reigning "with" them, and of them with him. His reign of grace takes place at the conversion of men, when, as King, he sets up his throne in their hearts, and reigns there; and such a reign has been from the beginning of the world, as soon as the first man was called by grace; and has continued ever since, more or less, in every dispensation, and will continue until the last man is converted. Nor does this reign we are treating of, take place in the separate state of the soul in heaven, before the resurrection: that state is expressed, by a "being with Christ" (Luke 23:42; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Php 1:23), but never, as I remember, by "reigning with him." This reign will not be until the resurrection, till soul and body are reunited; for there can be no proper reigning while the body is under the power of death and the grave, at least not fully and completely: the saints will first "live," that is, live again in their bodies, have a part in the first resurrection, and then reign with Christ, soul and body, a thousand years (Revelation 20:4; Revelation 20:6). And so,

2c1. This will be a reign "with Christ" personally and visibly; he will appear in person, and be visible by them; and they shall appear with him, in a most glorious manner, in soul and body; and will be "like him," being glorified, and reigning together with him; and shall see him as he is, personally and visibly, in the glory of his person, as God man, reigning before his ancients gloriously; see Colossians 3:4 and 1 John 3:2.

2c2. This reigning with Christ, implies some kind of share with him in the glories of his kingdom; hence "thrones" are said to be set for them to sit upon; and "judgment given them," which denotes regal power to be exercised by them; yea, they are said to sit on the same throne with Christ, on "his throne," and to "eat and drink at his table, in his kingdom": all which expresses a great share of honour and dignity, and of large enjoyments; see Revelation 20:4; Revelation 3:21; Luke 22:30.

2c3. This supposes dominion over all their enemies; as Christ will now have all enemies put under his feet, being subdued by him; so all enemies will be put under the feet of the saints, and they will have dominion over them. "Sin" will now be no more troublesome to them. Their power over sin, in the present state, is expressed rather negatively, by sin "not having dominion over them;" than affirmatively, by their having dominion over sin; nay, they are sometimes so far from it, that they

are brought "into captivity by it": but now the straggle for dominion will be over, the warfare will be accomplished, and an entire victory obtained over sin, which will be no more. Satan, and his principalities and powers, though spoiled and bruised by Christ, and triumphed over by him, yet there is a wrestling and combat between the saints and them in the present life; and though the devil cannot devour and destroy them, yet he greatly disturbs and distresses them; but now he will be bruised under their feet also; when he, and his angels, shall be shut up in the bottomless pit, where they will remain during the thousand years Christ and his saints shall reign together in the world, in which the saints have now so much tribulation; and the "wicked" men of it, from whom they meet with so much persecution, in one shape or another, shall be trodden down by them, and be ashes under the soles of their feet, their bodies being burnt up in the general conflagration; and their souls in no capacity to hurt or molest them, being shut up with Satan in the bottomless pit. The last enemy, "death," will now be destroyed, being "swallowed up in victory," by the resurrection of the dead; so that the risen saints, reigning with Christ say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" and, indeed of this, and every other enemy, they may say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!" 1 Corinthians 15:26; 1 Corinthians 15:54-55; 1 Corinthians 15:57.

ENDNOTES:

[1] So the author of Onus Ecclesiae, published A. D. 1524. vid. Heidegger Dissert. 23. de Chiliasmo, s. 8.

[2] See p. 744.

[3] This is the sense of the ancient writers concerning the millennium; as of Papias, a hearer of the apostle John, and a companion of Polycarp, Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 39. and of Justin Martyr, and the orthodox Christians in his time, Dialog. cum Trypho, p. 307. and of Irenaeus, adv. Haeres. l. 5. c. 20, 32. and of Apollinarius, Hieron, Catalog. Script. Eccles. c. 28. and of Tertullian. contr. Marcion, l. 3. c. 24. and of Lactantius, Instit. l. 7. c. 14. 24. And of Victorinus Pictaviensis, vid. Hieron. ut supra. and of Sulpicius Severus, Hieron. in Ezekiel 36:1-38. fol. 235. I.

[4] Vid. Euseb. Ec. Hist. l. 7. c. 24, 25. Hieron. in Esaiam, c. 66. fol. 120. D. & Dionysium apud ib. proem. in Esaiam, com. 18. fol. 112. L.

[5] De Civitate Dei, l. 20. c. 7.

[6] So the Hebrew particle b sometimes signifies; see Noldius.

[7] It is a rule with the Jews, that every blessing or prayer, in which there is no mention of God and his kingdom, is no blessing or prayer. Maimon. Hilchot, Beracot, c. 1. s. 5.

[8] Theory of the Earth, vol. 2. b. 4. ch. 2. p. 198.

[9] Opera, tom. 2. contra Chiliastas, p. 458, 460.

[10] Not. in Dan. vii. 13. et de regno Eccl. glorioso, c. 2. fol. 11.

[11] Austin says, without doubt the resurrection of the dead is meant, De Civ. Dei, l. 20. c. 5.

[12] Antoninus de Seipso, l. 11. f. 1. Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 15. c. 19. Basil. de Creat. Orat. 1. Epiphan. contr. Haeres. l. 1. tom. 3. haer. 37.

02. Of the Names of God

Of the Names of God Being about to treat of God, and of the things of God, it may be proper to begin with his names: the names of persons and things are usually the first that are known of them; and if these are not known, it cannot be thought that much, if any thing, is known of them; and where the name of God is not known, he himself cannot be known; and the rather the consideration of his name, or names, is worthy of regard, because they serve to lead into some knowledge of his nature and perfections; and therefore a proper introduction to such a subject. Indeed, properly speaking, since God is incomprehensible, he is not nominable; and being but one, he has no need of a name to distinguish him; and therefore Plato [1] says, he has no name; and hence he commonly calls him to on , "Ens", "The Being". So when Moses asked the Lord, what he should say to the children of Israel, should they ask the name of him that sent him to them, he bid him say, "I am that I am"; that is, The eternal Being, the Being of beings; which his name Jehovah is expressive of: nevertheless, there are names of God in the Scriptures taken from one or other of his attributes, which are worthy of consideration. The names of God, as Zanchy [2] observes, some of them respect him as the subject, as Jehovah, Lord, God: others are predicates, what are spoken of him, or attributed to him, as holy, just, good, &c. Some respect the relation the divine Persons in the Godhead stand in to each other, as Father, Son, and Spirit: others the relation of God to the creatures; and which are properly said of him, and not them, as Creator, Preserver, Governor, &c. some are common to the Three divine persons, as Jehovah, God, Father, Spirit; and some peculiar to each, as the epithets of unbegotten, begotten, proceeding from the Father and the Son: some are figurative and metaphorical, taken from creatures, to whom God is compared; and others are proper names, by which he either calls himself, or is called by the prophets and apostles, in the books of the Old and New Testament; which are what will be particularly considered.

1. "Elohim" is the first name of God we meet with in Scripture, and is translated God, (Genesis 1:1) and is most frequently used throughout the whole Old Testament; sometimes, indeed, improperly of creatures, angels, and men, and of false deities, (Psalms 8:5; Psalms 82:1; Psalms 82:6; Jeremiah 10:11) but properly only of God.

Some derive this word from a root, which signifies to curse and swear; but as to the reasons why this name is given to the divine Being on that account, it is not agreed; some [3] of late, have given this as a reason, because the three divine Persons, as they in a shocking manner express it, bound themselves with an oath, under a curse, to redeem mankind; which, to say no worse of, is indecent and unworthy of the dignity and majesty of God, "who is blessed for evermore"; for to bind himself with an oath, and that under a conditional curse; which is no other than to imprecate a curse upon himself, if his oath and covenant are not fulfilled; is so harsh, if not something worse, as is not to be endured: and though Christ agreed to redeem men, and to be made a curse for them, that they might receive the blessing; yet he was not accursed through any failure of his oath and covenant; but on another account, being the Surety of his people; nor is he ever called Eloah on that account, and still less the other two persons: besides there are other and better reasons to

be given for this name of the divine Being, supposing it to be taken from the word signifying as above; as, because he adjures and causes others to swear, and binds them with an oath to himself; in which sense the word is used of men, (1 Samuel 14:24; 1 Samuel 1:1-28 King 8:31) and is the business of judges; by which oath men are bound to God [4], and not he to them; and so, according to the Jewish writers [5], the word is expressive of God as a judge; in which they are followed by some learned men [6]: or, because he pronounces a man accursed who breaks his law, and neglects and despises the sacrifice and righteousness of Christ; so Cocceius [7]: or, because he is the object men must swear by, whenever they swear at all (see Deuteronomy 6:13; Isaiah 65:16). Though this word Elohim cannot be derived from the word so signifying, because it has the immoveable and immutable h, as appears from the point "mappick", in its singular Eloah, and from the construction of it, which that word has not; and besides, that is never used of God when he is said to swear, but always another. The word Elohim may be better derived from a word in the Arabic language, which signifies to "worship", as is thought by many learned men [8] and so is a fit name for God, who is the sole object of religious worship and adoration; not idols of gold, silver, &c. nor living men, nor persons deified after death, nor angels; but the Lord God only, (Matthew 4:10. It is a word of the plural number; and though it has a singular, which is sometimes used, yet it is most frequently in this form; and being joined with a singular verb, as in (Genesis 1:1 it is thought [9] to denote a plurality of persons in the unity of the divine essence; and certain it is, that three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, appeared, and were concerned in the creation of all things (Genesis 1:1-3; Psalms 33:6).

2. Another name of God is "El"; and which may be observed in the word Beth-el, which signifies, "The house of God" (Genesis 12:7-8). Both the singular and plural, El Elim, the God of gods, are used in Daniel 11:36 and the word is left untranslated in Matthew 27:46 "Eli, Eli; my God, my God". It is commonly rendered, by Junius and Tremellius, the strong or mighty God; an epithet that well agrees with the divine Being, (Job 9:4; Job 9:19; Psalms 89:8; Psalms 89:13) and is one of the names of the Messiah (Isaiah 9:6). Hillerus [10] takes this to be a part of the word Eloah, the singular of Elohim; which, according to him, signifies the first in essence; being the first and the last, the beginning and the end, (Isaiah 44:6; Revelation 1:8) it is expressive of the power of God.

3. The next name of God we meet with is "Elion", the most high, (Genesis 14:18-20; Genesis 14:22). So Christ is called "The son of the Highest", and the Spirit, "the power of the Highest", (Luke 1:32; Luke 1:35) and which name God has either from his habitation, the highest heavens; which is his palace, where he keeps his court, and which is his throne; in which high and holy place he, the high and lofty One, dwells, (Isaiah 57:15; Isaiah 56:1) or from his superiority, power, and dominion over all creatures, over the highest personages on earth, and the highest angels in heaven, (Psalms 83:18; Psalms 97:9; see also Ecclesiastes 5:8) or from the sublimity of his nature and essence, which is out of the reach of finite minds, and is incomprehensible, (Job 11:7-8). This name was known among the Phoenicians, and is given to one of their deities, called Elioun, the most high [11]; it is expressive of the supremacy of God.

4. Another name of God is "Shaddai": under this name God appeared to Abraham, (Genesis 17:1) and to which reference is had, (Exodus 6:3) we translate it Almighty in both places, and in all others, particularly in the book of Job, where it is often mentioned; and it well agrees with him whose power is infinite and uncontrollable, and appears in the works of his hands, creation and providence. Some choose to render it "sufficient", or "all-sufficient" [12] God; having a sufficiency

in and of himself, and for himself, to make himself completely and infinitely happy; nor does he need, nor can he receive any thing from his creatures to add to his happiness; and he has a sufficiency for them; he can, and does, supply all the wants of his people, temporal and spiritual; "his grace is sufficient for them." Others render it "Nourisher" [13]; deriving it from a word which signifies "a breast"; that being what creatures nourish their young with; and is made mention of when this name of God is spoken of (Genesis 49:25). God not only fills mens' hearts with food and gladness, but "he opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of all creatures, and gives them their meat in due season" (Acts 14:17; Psalms 145:15-16). Hillerus [14] derives it from a word which signifies to pour out, or shed; and it well agrees with God, who pours forth, or sheds his blessings, in great plenty, on his creatures; and which flow from him as from a fountain; to which he is often compared: though others give a very different etymology of it; deriving it from a word [15] which signifies to "destroy"; to which there seems to be a beautiful allusion in (Isaiah 13:6. "Destruction from Shaddai, the destroyer", who destroyed the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah, the firstborn of the Egyptians, and Pharaoh and his host: though God is so called, previous to most of these instances; indeed he is "the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy"; even to destroy body and soul in hell, with an everlasting destruction. And some render the word the "Darter", or "Thunderer" [16]; whose darts are his thunderbolts (Job 6:4; Psalms 18:13-14). The heathens called their chief god, Jupiter, "Tonans, The Thunderer": and, perhaps, from another etymology of this word before given, from dv "a breast". Some of their deities are represented as full of breasts; so Ceres, Isis, and Diana. This name seems to be expressive of the all-sufficiency of God, and of the supply of his creatures from it.

5. Another of the names of God is, the "Lord", or "God of hosts"; it is first mentioned in 1 Samuel 1:3; 1 Samuel 1:11 but frequently afterwards; and is left untranslated in James 5:4 where the Lord is called, "the Lord of Sabaoth", not "Sabbath", as it is sometimes wrongly understood; and as if it was the same with "Lord of Sabbath", (Matthew 12:8) for though the words are somewhat alike in sound, they are very different in sense; for "Sabbath" signifies "rest", and "Sabaoth" means "hosts" or "armies": the Lord is the God of armies on earth, a man of war, expert in it; that teacheth mens' hands to war, and their fingers to fight, and is the generalissimo of them, as he was particularly of the armies of Israel, as they are called, (Exodus 7:4) which he brought out of Egypt, and went at the head of them, and fought their battles for them; (see Exodus 14:14; Exodus 15:3) and who gives success and victory on what side soever he takes: and he is the Lord of the hosts of the starry heavens; the sun, moon, and stars, called the host of heaven, (Genesis 2:1; 2 Kings 21:3, 2 Kings 23:5) and by this military term, because under the Lord they sometimes fight as the stars did against Sisera, (Judges 5:20) and also of the airy heavens; and the locusts that fly there are his army, (Joel 2:7; Joel 2:11) and the meteors, thunder and lightning, snow and hail, which are laid up by him against the day of battle and war, are the artillery he sometimes brings forth against the enemies of his people; as he did against the Egyptians and Canaanites, (Job 38:22-23; Exodus 9:24-25; Joshua 10:11) the angels also are the militia of heaven, and are called "the heavenly host", (Luke 2:13; see 1 Kings 22:19) the place where the angels of God met Jacob, was called from thence Mahanaim, (Genesis 32:1-2) two hosts or armies, one going before him, and the other behind him; or the one on one side him and the other on the other, to guard him; hence they are said to "encamp" about them that fear the Lord (Psalms 34:7). These are the creatures of God by whom he is adored and served; they are at his command, and sometimes employed in a military way, to destroy his and his peoples' enemies (see 2 Kings 19:35). This name is expressive of

God’s dominion over all his creatures, and the several armies of them.

6. Another name of God is "Adonai", or "Adon", (Genesis 15:2) and is commonly rendered Lord. Hence the Spanish word "don" for "lord". God is so called, because he is the Lord of the whole earth (Zechariah 4:14). Some [17] derive it from a word which signifies the basis, prop, or support of any thing [18]. So a king in the Greek language is called basileuv, because he is the basis and support of his people: and so God is the support of all his creatures; "he upholds all things by the word of his power"; he bears up the pillars of the earth; all men move and have their being in him; and "he upholds his saints with the right hand of his righteousness"; and even his Son as man and mediator, (Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 42:1). Some think it has the signification of a judge [19]; "God is the judge of all the earth"; and is a righteous one, protects and defends good men, and takes vengeance on the wicked; and will judge the world in righteousness at the last day. Though, perhaps, Hillerus [20] is most correct in rendering it "the Cause", from which, and for which, all things are; as all things are made by the Lord, and for his will, pleasure, and glory (see Romans 11:36; Hebrews 2:10; Revelation 4:11). Adon is used in the plural number of God, (Malachi 1:6) and so Adonai is used of the Son, as well as of the Father, (Psalms 110:1) and of the Holy Spirit, Isaiah 6:8 compared with Acts 28:25. Hence Adonis, with the heathens, the same with the sun, their chief deity, according to Macrobius [21], by whom Bacchus is called [22] Ebon, or rather Edon; who, he says, is also the same with the sun.

7. The famous name of God is "Jehovah"; this is a name he takes to himself and claims it, (Exodus 6:3; Isaiah 42:8) and is peculiar to him; his name alone is Jehovah, and incommunicable to another, (Psalms 83:18) because this name is predicated of God, as a necessary and self-existent being, as a learned Jew [23] observes, which no other is; for though it is sometimes spoken of another, yet not singly and properly, but with relation to him. So the church is called "Jehovah-shammah", because of his presence with her, (Ezekiel 48:35). The Jews, from a superstitious abuse of it, assert it to be ineffable, and not to be pronounced, and even not to be read and written, and therefore they substitute other names instead of it, as Adonai, and Elohim. This might arise, originally, from their very great awe and reverence of this name, according to Deuteronomy 28:58 but every name of God is reverend, and not to be taken in vain, nor used in common, nor with any degree of levity, (Psalms 111:9). It is written with four letters only; hence the Jews call it "tetragrammaton", and is very probably the tetraktuv of the Pythagoreans, by which they swore; and it is remarkable, that the word for God is so written in almost all languages; denoting, it may be, that he is the God of the whole world; and ought to be served and worshipped, and his name to be great and had in reverence in the four quarters of it; it takes in all tenses, past, present, and to come [24]: the words of the evangelist John are a proper periphrasis of it; "which is, and which was, and which is to come", (Revelation 1:4) or, "shall be", as in Revelation 16:5 it comes from the root hyh or hwh which signify, "to be", and is expressive of the essence of God; of his necessary and self-existence, for God naturally and necessarily exists; which cannot be said of any other: creatures owe their being to the arbitrary will of God; and so might be, and might not be, as he pleased; but God exists in and of himself, he is a self-existent and independent Being, as he must needs be, since he is before all creatures, and therefore cannot have his being from them; and he is the cause of theirs, and therefore must be independent of them; and yet, when we say he is self-existent, it must not be understood as if he made himself; for though he exists, he is not made. He is the Being of beings; all creatures have their beings from him and in him, "the

heavens, earth, and sea, and all that is in them"; he is the former and maker of all things; he is eminently "the Being", and all in comparison of him are mere non-entities; "all nations", and the inhabitants of them, "are as nothing before him; yea, less than nothing, and vanity" (Isaiah 40:17).

8. "Jah" is another name of God, which is mentioned in Psalms 68:4; Psalms 150:6, Isaiah 26:4, though it may be only an abbreviation or contraction of the word Jehovah, and may signify the same; according to Cocceius [25], it comes from hay (Jeremiah 10:7) and signifies "decency", or what is meet and becoming.

9. "Ejeh" is a name God gave as a name of his to Moses, when he sent him to the children of Israel; and is translated "I AM that I AM", (Exodus 3:13-14) and may be rendered, "I shall be what I shall be", and what I have been; so the Jews [26] interpret it; "I am he that was, I am he that is now, and I am he that is to come, or shall be." It seems to be of the same signification with Jehovah, and to be derived from the same word, and is expressive of the same things; of the being and existence of God, of his eternity and immutability, and of his faithfulness in performing his promises: our Lord has a manifest respect unto it, when he says, "Before Abraham was I AM", (John 8:58). Hillerus [27] renders it "I remain", that is, always the same.

10. The names of God in the New Testament are these two kuriov and yeov, the one is usually rendered Lord and the other God. The first is derived either from kurw, "to be" [28], and signifies the same as Jehovah, to which it commonly answers, and denotes the essence or being of God; or from kurov [29], "power and authority"; and agrees with God, who has a sovereign power and authority over all creatures, having a property in them, by virtue of his creation of them; it is generally used of Christ, "who is Lord of all", (Acts 10:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6). The etymology of yeov, "God", is very different; as either from a word which signifies "to run", or from one that signifies "to heat", or from one that signifies "to see"; which seem to be calculated by the heathens for the sun, the object of their worship, applicable to it, for its constant course, being the fountain of light and heat, and seeing all things, as they affirm: though each of them may be applied to the true God, who runs to the assistance of his people in distress, (2 Chronicles 16:9; Psalms 46:1) is light itself, "the Father of lights", and "a consuming fire" (1 John 1:5; James 1:17; Hebrews 12:29) and sees all men, their ways and works, and even their hearts, and the thoughts of them (Job 34:21-22; 1 Samuel 16:7). Some derive it from a word which signifies to dispose; and which agrees with God, who disposes of, and orders all things "in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth, according to the council of his will", and to answer the purposes of his own glory, and the good of his creatures. Though, perhaps, it may be best of all to derive it from a word which signifies "fear" [30], and so describes God as the object of fear and reverence; who is not only to be stood in awe of by all the inhabitants of the earth, (Psalms 33:8) but more especially is to be feared with a godly fear by his saints, (Psalms 87:7; Hebrews 12:28) and fear sometimes takes in the whole worship of God, both internal and external; and so the true God, in distinction from others, is called, "the fear", that is, the God of Isaac, (Genesis 31:53), and alxd "fear", is sometimes used in the Targum [31] for the true God, as it sometimes is of idols. From all these names of God we learn that God is the eternal, immutable, and almighty Being, the Being of beings, self-existent, and self-sufficient, and the object of religious worship and adoration.

ENDNOTES:

[1] oud’ ara onoma estin austo, in Parmenide, p. 1120. Ed. Ficin. So. Trismegistus apud Lactant. Institut. l. 1. c. 6.

[2] De Natura Dei, l. 1. c. 4.

[3] Called Hutchinsonians; see Catcott’s Sermon, called The Supreme and Inferior Elahim, p. 8.

[4] Marckii Compend. Theolog. c. 4. s. 5. Mastrict. Theolog. l. 2. c. 4. s. 9. Leigh’s Critica Sacra in voce hla.

[5] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 87. 1. Sepher Cosri, par. 4. fol. 197. 2. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim. par. 2. c. 6.

[6] Lud. Capellus et alii.

[7] Lexic. col. 35.

[8] Stockii Clavis S. Ling. p. 61. Hottingeri Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 8. p. 123. Schultens in Job i. 1. Noldius, No. 1093, Alting. Dissert. 4. de plural. Elohim, p. 177.

[9] Schindler. Lexic. Pentaglott. col. 78.

[10] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 254, 256.

[11] Sanchoniatho apud Euseb. Evangel. praepar. l. 1. c. 10. p. 36.

[12] So Cocceius in Lex. col. 859. Jarchi in Gen. xvii. 1. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 63.

[13] Paschii Dissert. de Selah p. 2. s. 6.

[14] Onomast. Sacr. p. 260, 261.

[15] ddv "vastavit", Buxtorf.

[16] So Schmidt in Job vi. 4.

[17] Paschius in Dissert. de Selah, ut supra. Alsted. Lexic. Theolog. p. 82.

[18] ynda "foundations", "bases", Job xxxviii. 6. often rendered sockets in Exodus.

[19] A Nwd "judicavit".

[20] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 258.

[21] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 21.

[22] Ibid. c. 18.

[23] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 28.

[24] Buxtorf. de Nomin. Dei, Heb. s. 10.

[25] Lexic. p. 283.

[26] Shemot Rabba, s. 3. fol. 93. 3.

[27] Onomast. Sacr. p. 248.

[28] kurei, "est, existit", Suidas: kuriw, "sum", Scapula.

[29] kurov, "autoritas"; kuriov, "autoritatem habens", Scapula; so Philo, quis rer. divin. Haeres, p. 484.

[30] apo tou yeein, "currere", so Plato in Cratylo, p. 273. Clem. Al. protrept. p. 15. vel ayein "adurere, accendere", vel yeasyai, "cernere", vel a yw "dispono"; so Clem. Al. Stromat. in fine, Herodot. Euterpe, c. 52. vel a deov "timor", Philo ut supra. These several etymologies may be seen in Zanchy de Natura Dei, l. 1. c. 16. Alsted. Lexic. Theolog. p. 8.

[31] Targum Hierosol. in Deuteronomy 32:15.

02. Of the Nature and Effects of the Sin of Man

Of the Nature, Aggravations, and Sad Effects Of the Sin of Man.

1. First, The nature of this sin: It seems to have been brought on through inadvertency, thoughtlessness, and being off of guard; it began with doubting and disbelief of what God had said; appeared in an inordinate desire after the forbidden fruit; and in an unlawful curiosity of knowing more than he did: and in pride, affecting to be as God; at least to be upon an equality with angels. The nature of it may be learnt in some measure from the names it goes by; it is called "sin", and the "sin", the grand "sin", the first and fountain of all sin among men (Romans 5:12). It is called a "transgression" (Romans 5:14), a transgression of the law, as every sin is defined (1 John 3:4), a transgression of the covenant, a breach of that; and what is more heinous than covenant breaking? to break covenant with men is a great evil; but to break the covenant with God is a greater still. It is called "disobedience" (Romans 5:19), disobedience to the will of God, and to his law; and as obedience to God is well pleasing to him; so disobedience, in any case, is highly resented by him. It is often called the "offence" (Romans 5:15; Romans 5:17-18; Romans 5:20), it being in its nature, and in all its circumstances, very offensive to God, and abominable in his sight, as all sin is; and in the last mentioned places the word used signifies a "fall"; and hence it is common with us to call this sin the "fall of Adam"; it being that by which he fell from a state of integrity, honour, and happiness, into an estate of sin and misery.

2. Secondly, The aggravations of this sin were, the place where it was committed, and the time when, with other things.

2a. With respect to place; it was committed in the garden of Eden. Here man was put when he was formed; nor was he cast out of it till after he had sinned, and for that reason: here were all manner of trees for his use; and he was allowed to eat of them all excepting one, which was forbidden him; and not to attend to that prohibition was great ingratitude to his Creator and Benefactor, who had so richly provided for him; and in the midst of all which plenty he sinned. Had it been in a remote part of the world, or in a desert, where this tree grew, and where scarce anything else was to be had, it would in some measure have extenuated the crime; but in a garden, where he had enough of everything, it was a very aggravated crime; and by how much the less that was which was forbidden him, by so much the greater was his crime in not abstaining from it.

2b. With respect to the time when it was committed; that is, how long after the creation of our first parents. This cannot be precisely determined: some make the time after it too long, and others too short. Some think that the first Adam kept his state of integrity as long as the second Adam lived here on earth; but this is a mere fancy, without any foundation. Some have fancied that he fell on the tenth day of September, and they suppose the creation of the world began with that month; so that as Adam was created on the sixth day, his standing could be no longer than three or four days; and this is supposed for no other reason, but because the Jews in later times had their grand fast on that day; but that was not for Adam’s sin, but their own; and had it been for that, it should have been general, and kept by all mankind, if at all. And others are of opinion that he fell

the same day he was created; but the text of which it is founded will not support it (Psalms 49:12), since it speaks not of the first man, but of his sons, and those in honour, whose continuance in it is not long; and the word for "abideth" or "lodgeth", as some choose to render it, signifies often a longer duration than a night's lodging. However, it must be very early that man fell, since the account of his fall is very closely connected with what was done on the first day of his creation; and Satan is said to be a "murderer", that is, a destroyer of mankind "from the beginning" (John 8:44). Now this was an aggravation of Adam's sin, that he should be guilty of it so soon, having just received his being from God; placed in so happy a situation; and blessed with so much honour, power, and authority, and with so many indulgent favors; he and his consort taking their walks in the garden, no doubt, often "sung the praises" of their great Creator and kind Benefactor, in tuneful lays, in melodious strains; but, like some of their sons afterwards, "soon forgot his works". (He may have fallen toward the end of sabbath day or the seventh day after creation. Then Christ, the second Adam, could truly be said to have preeminence in all things, including the keeping of the sabbath. (Colossians 1:18).

2c. The sin of Adam was a complicated one; he sinned against light and knowledge, and when he was in full power to have resisted the temptation; he could neither plead ignorance nor weakness in excuse of his sin; it was the height of ingratitude to his Maker; it was affronting him in the highest degree, by disbelieving his word, and thereby making him a liar; it was intolerable pride, an affectation of deity, or of equality to God; a want of thought, of care, concern, and affection for his posterity, with whose all he was entrusted. In short, it included all sin in it. For the laws of God are so connected together, that he that "offends in one point is guilty of all" (James 2:10).

Some have labored to make it appear, that Adam by his sin transgressed the whole Decalogue, or the law of the ten commandments, and no doubt but many, the most, if not all, were broken. Dr. Lightfoot [1] expresses it thus, "Adam, at one clap, breaks both the tables, and all the commandments.

1. He chose him another God, when he followed the devil.

2. He idolized and deified his own belly, as the apostle's phrase is; his belly he made his God.

3. He took the name of God in vain, when he believed him not.

4. He kept not the rest and estate wherein God had set him.

5. He dishonored his Father which was in heaven; wherefore his days were not long in that land which the Lord his God had given him.

6. He massacred himself and all his posterity.

7. In eyes and mind he committed spiritual fornication.

8. He stole that (like Achan) which God had set aside not to be meddled with; and this his stealth is that which troubles all Israel, the whole world.

9. He bore witness against God when he believed the witness of the devil above him.

10. He coveted an evil covetousness, which cost him his life, and all his progeny. "

3. Thirdly, The sad effects and consequences of this sin. The account of what befell Adam after his fall, is so short, that much is not to be expected from it; and besides, he was so quickly recovered by the grace of God, and brought to repentance for his sin, and had a better image restored to him than what he had lost; and had so early the revelation of the seed of the woman, as a Saviour from this and all other sins; so that the mischiefs that personally accrued to him, are not so manifest; but appear more clearly in his posterity. However, there are so many things said, and hints given, as may lead us plainly to observe some of the sad effects of this sin.

3a. A loss of original righteousness followed upon it. God made man upright; but sinning, he lost the uprightness and rectitude of his nature; or the righteousness in which he was created; so that he because unrighteous, nay, full of all unrighteousness; hence it is that there is none of his posterity righteous, no not one. Now this was signified by the nakedness of our first parents, which was immediately perceived by them after their fall; for though it primarily respects the nakedness of their bodies, which was the same before the fall, but then was no occasion of shame to them; but afterwards it was; the reason of which was, because of the loss of their inward clothing, the righteousness and holiness of their nature; the want of which the nakedness of their bodies was now an emblem to them of: and as Adam immediately betook himself to get something to cover himself with, so natural it is for men to seek to obtain a righteousness of their own, to cover their naked souls with; for to be self-righteous is as natural to man as to be sinful; and what men do attain to as a righteousness by their own works, is of no more avail than Adam’s fig leaves were to him; cannot cover a body from the sight of divine Justice, nor shelter him from the stormy winds of divine wrath and vengeance; nor justify him in the sight of God; nor entitle him to heaven and happiness, nor introduce him into it.

3b. Guilt on the consciences of our first parents presently appeared, and that in an endeavour to hide them selves from the presence of God among the trees of the garden. Guilt is the consequence of sin in all men; the whole world of Adam’s posterity is guilty before God; and this is sometimes intolerable, and nothing can remove it but the blood of Christ. And from this consciousness of guilt, flow shame, fear, and hiding themselves from God; they were ashamed to appear before him; and sin causes shame in everyone, more or less, unless hardened, stupefied, and past all sense, and are like those that declare their sin, as Sodom: hence men choose to commit sin in secret, in the dark, that their sins may not be seen; nor do they care to come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved. Fear followed upon a consciousness of guilt in Adam; "I was afraid because I was naked"; as there is in every man, more or less, a fearful looking for of judgment and indignation, even in the more audacious; yea, those daring creatures the devils themselves believe and tremble; and through guilt, shame, and fear, Adam hid himself, but to no purpose; there is no fleeing from the presence of God, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike; of what avail could the shade cast by the trees in the garden be to Adam, to hide him from the all seeing eye of God? and yet such a notion possesses his posterity; (see Amos 9:2-3; Revelation 6:15-17).

3c. Loss and want of knowledge and understanding were soon perceived in him. The last instance, of hiding himself, betrays his ignorance and folly; as if the trees in the garden could secure him from the sight and vengeance of the Almighty; instead of gaining the knowledge he unlawfully sought after, he lost much of what he had; hence he is ironically and sarcastically upbraided with it; "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil!" and his posterity are

represented as foolish, ignorant, and devoid of understanding; "There is none that understandeth" (Romans 3:11). Though they may understand natural things and civil things, and somewhat of moral things, though not clearly and distinctly, at least so as to do them; to do good they have no knowledge: but they understand not spiritual things, the things of the Spirit of God, which they neither receive nor know, because they are spiritually discerned. They know not God, so as to glorify him; and much less as in Christ: they know not Christ, nor the way of peace, life, and salvation by him: they know not the Spirit of God, his person, office, and operations; yea, men are as stupid as the beasts of the field, and in some things more so; man is born like a wild ass's colt, and is more ignorant, and less knowing, than the ox and ass, which know their owner; and than birds of passage, which know the time of their coming and going, when men know not the Lord and his judgments (Job 11:12; Isaiah 1:3; Jeremiah 8:6-7).

3d. Our first parents, upon their sinning, were immediately obnoxious to the curse of the law, and it was pronounced on them, along with the serpent; though it is expressed as if it only concerned the body, and temporal things; in which strain run the several curses of the law afterwards; "Cursed shalt thou be in the city", &c. (Genesis 3:16-19; Deuteronomy 28:15; Deuteronomy 28:18), yet they extend further, even to the wrath of God on the soul, both here and hereafter; for the curse of the law is no other than the sanction of it, death; and which, as has been seen, is death corporal, spiritual or moral, and eternal; Adam, upon sinning, was at once stripped of the immortality of his body, which God had bestowed on it, and became mortal, subject to diseases, and a corporal death, and so all his posterity; "In Adam all die"; and a spiritual or moral death seized on all the powers and faculties of his soul; his understanding darkened; his mind and conscience defiled; his affections inordinate; his will biased to that which is evil, and to every good work lifeless and reprobate, until restored by the grace of God; as every man is dead in trespasses and sins, until quickened. And eternal death is the just wages of sin, which is no other than the wrath of God revealed against all unrighteousness, and which comes upon the children of disobedience: and there are none of the sons of Adam but as such, and in themselves, are obnoxious to it; even God's elect are "by nature children of wrath as others" (Ephesians 2:3). This is the grand curse, the flying roll in Zechariah's vision, that goes over the face of the whole earth, and cuts off the sinner on this and the other side; and which the wicked will hear at last denounced on them, "Go, ye cursed!" But the righteous will be saved from it, because Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, and delivered them from wrath to come.

3e. Ejection out of paradise is another thing which followed on the sin of Adam; "So he drove out the man" (Genesis 3:24). An emblem of that alienation from God, from the life of God, and communion with him, which sin has produced, and which has set man at a distance from God; hence Christ suffered to bring his people near unto him; and by his blood they that were afar off were made nigh unto God. And besides these, There are many others, which are the effects of the sin and fall of Adam; as a general corruption and depravity of all the powers and faculties of the soul, which are all immersed in sin, and full of it; and all the members of the body yielded as instruments of unrighteousness; a propensity and proneness to all that is sinful; an inordinate desire after the lusts of the flesh, and of fulfilling them; a serving of various lusts and pleasures; a serving lusts as pleasures, being lovers of sinful pleasures more than lovers of God. There is, moreover, a disinclination to all that is good, yea, an aversion to it; an hating the good, and loving the evil; yea, the carnal mind is enmity itself to God, and all that is good; and there is also an

impotency, an inability to do that which is good; hence man is represented as without strength, having lost it, and become unable to do anything that is spiritually good; to which may be added, that sin has brought man into a state of slavery to sin, Satan, and the world; this is what we commonly call the corruption and depravity of nature, the effect of the first sin of Adam. This is the "pandora" from whence have sprung all spiritual maladies and bodily diseases; all the disasters, distresses, mischiefs, and calamities, that are, or have been in the world.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Works, vol. i. p. 1027, 1028.

02. Of the Nature of God

Of the Nature of God

There is a nature that belongs to every creature, which is difficult to understand; and so to God, the Creator, which is most difficult of all: that "Nature" may be predicated of God, is what the apostle suggests when he says, the Galatians, before conversion, served them, who, "by nature, were no gods", (Galatians 4:8) which implies, that though the idols they had worshipped were not, yet there was one that was, by Nature, GOD; otherwise there would be an impropriety in denying it of them. Mention is also made of the "divine Nature", (2 Peter 1:4) which, indeed, is not the nature that is in God, but what is infused and implanted in men in regeneration; so called, not only because it is from God, as its author, but because it is the image of him, and bears a likeness and resemblance to him; but then there must be a nature in him to which this is similar, being "created, after him, in righteousness and true holiness"; or there would be no propriety in the denomination of it from him. This is what is called Divinity, Deity, or Godhead; which must not be thought to be "like to gold, silver, or stone, graven by art, or man’s device"; or to be in the similitude of any creature, in a picture, painting, or sculpture; and which is to be seen and understood by the visible works of creation, and is what, "in all its perfection and fulness, dwells bodily in Christ", (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9). It is the same with the form of God, in which Christ is said to be, (Php 2:6) which designs not any external form, for God has no visible shape, but his internal Glory, excellency, nature, and perfections, in which "Christ is equal with him, and his fellow"; and he is not only the express image of him, but one with him; not merely of a like, but of the same nature; so that he that sees the one, sees the other. Essence, which is the same thing with nature, is ascribed to God; he is said to be "excellent hyvwt in essence", (Isaiah 28:29) for so the words may be rendered, that is, he has the most excellent essence or being; this is contained in his names, "Jehovah", and "I am that I am", which are expressive of his essence or being, as has been observed; and we are required to believe that he is, that he has a being or essence, and does exist, (Hebrews 11:6) and essence is that by which a person or thing is what it is, that is its nature; and with respect to God, it is the same with his "face", which cannot be seen, (Exodus 33:20; Exodus 33:23) that is, cannot be perceived, understood, and fully comprehended, especially in the present state; and, indeed, though in the future state saints will behold the face of God, and "see him face to face, and as he is", so far as they are capable of, yet it is impossible for a finite mind, in its most exalted state, to comprehend the infinite Nature and Being of God. This nature is common to the three Persons in God, but not communicated from one to another; they each of them partake of it, and possess it as one undivided nature; they all enjoy it; it is not a part of it that is enjoyed by one, and a part of it by another, but the whole by each; as "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ", so in the holy Spirit; and of the Father, there will be no doubt; these equally subsist in the unity of the divine essence, and that without any derivation or communication of it from one to another. I know it is represented by some, who, otherwise, are sound in the doctrine of the Trinity, that the divine nature is communicated from the Father to the Son and Spirit, and that he is "fons Deitatis", "the fountain of Deity"; which, I think, are unsafe phrases;

since they seem to imply a priority in the Father to the other two persons; for he that communicates must, at least in order of nature, and according to our conception of things, be prior to whom the communication is made; and that he has a superabundant plenitude of Deity in him, previous to this communication. It is better to say, that they are self-existent, and exist together in the same undivided essence; and jointly, equally, and as early one as the other, possess the same nature. The nature of God is, indeed, incomprehensible by us; somewhat of it may be apprehended, but it cannot be fully comprehended; "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (Job 11:7). No: but then this does not forbid us searching and inquiring after him: though we cannot have adequate ideas of God, yet we should endeavour to get the best we can, and frame the best conceptions of him we are able; that so we may serve and worship him, honour and glorify him, in the best manner. "The world", the heathen world, even the wisest in it, "by wisdom knew not God", (1 Corinthians 1:21) they knew, or might know, there was a God, but they did not know what he was, and so glorified him not as God. An heathen philosopher[1] being asked this question, what God was? required a day to think of it; when that was up, he asked a second, and still more time; and a reason of his dilatoriness being demanded of him, he replied, that the longer he considered of the question, the more obscure it was to him. Yet, somewhat of God, of his nature and perfections, may be known by the light of nature, (Romans 1:19-20) and more by divine revelation; for though it may with propriety be said, "what is his name", or nature, "if thou canst, tell?" (Proverbs 30:4) yet he??? whom the heathens "ignorantly worshipped", the apostle Paul "declared" unto them, (Acts 17:23) and though the Samaritans worshipped they knew not what, yet Christ declared to the woman of Samaria, what God, the object of spiritual worship, is; saying "God is a spirit"; that is, he is of a spiritual nature, (John 4:22; John 4:24) and this we may be sure is a true definition, description, and declaration of God, and of his nature; since this was given by the Son of God, who lay in his bosom, and perfectly knew his nature, as well as his will; see (John 1:18; Matthew 11:27) and by which we are taught,

1. That God is not a body, and that we are, in our conceptions of him, to remove every thing from him that is corporeal; for spirit, and body or flesh, are opposed to one another, (Isaiah 31:3; Luke 24:39) and yet there have been some, both ancients and moderns, atheistically inclined, who have asserted, that matter is God, and God is universal matter; and that the whole universe is God, and that extension is one of his attributes: and a sort of people called Anthropomorphites, who bore the Christian name, ascribed an human body, and the parts of it, to God, in a proper sense, mistaking some passages of scripture; and the common people, among the papists, have no other notion of God, than of a grave old man: in this respect both Jews and Heathens have better notions; of the Jews, R. Joseph Albo[2], Maimonides[3], and others, deny that God is a body, or consists of bodily parts: and of heathens, Pythagoras[4], Xenophanes[5], Sallustius[6], and others[7], affirm God to be incorporeal; and the Stoics say, he has not an human forms.[8] But if God was matter, which is inert, inactive, and motionless, he could not be the maker and mover of all things, as he is; "for in him we live, and move, and have our being", (Acts 17:28). Matter is without consciousness, is not capable of thinking, and without understanding, wisdom, and knowledge; and as it is not capable of acting, so much less of doing, such works as require contrivance, skill, wisdom, and knowledge, as the works of creation and providence; and therefore if God was matter, he could not be the Creator and Governor of the world; nor if a body, could he be omnipresent; a body is not every where, cannot be in two places at the same time; whereas God fills heaven and earth: and was he

of so huge a body as to take up all space, there would be no room for other bodies, as there certainly is; nor would he be invisible; a body is to be seen and felt; but God is invisible and impalpable; "no man hath seen God at any time"; and if a body, he would not be the most perfect of beings, as he is, since angels, and the souls of men, being spirits, are more excellent than bodies.

It is no objection to this, that the parts of an human body are sometimes attributed to God; since these are to be understood of him not in a proper, but in an improper and figurative sense, and denote some act and action, or attribute of his; thus his face denotes his sight and presence, in which all things are, (Genesis 19:13) sometimes his favour and good will, and the manifestation of his love and grace, (Psalms 27:8; Psalms 80:3) and sometimes his wrath and indignation against wicked men, (Psalms 34:16; Revelation 6:17). His "eyes" signify his omniscience and all-seeing providence; concerned both with good men, to protect and preserve them, and bestow good things on them; and with bad men, to destroy them, (Proverbs 15:3; 2 Chronicles 16:9; Amos 9:8). His "ears", his readiness to attend unto, and answer the requests of his people, and deliver them out of their troubles, (Psalms 34:15; Isaiah 59:1). His nose and nostrils, his acceptance of the persons and sacrifices of men, (Genesis 8:21) or his disgust at them, anger with them, and non-acceptance of them, (Deuteronomy 29:20; Isaiah 65:5; Psalms 18:8). His mouth is expressive of his commands, promises, threatenings, and prophecies delivered out by him, (Lamentations 3:29; Isaiah 1:20; Jeremiah 23:16). His "arms" and "hands" signify his power, and the exertion of it, as in making the heavens and the earth, and in other actions of his, (Psalms 102:27; Job 26:13; Psalms 89:13; Psalms 118:16; Deuteronomy 33:27). Nor is it any proof of corporeity in God, that a divine person has sometimes appeared in an human form; so one of the men that came to Abraham, in the plains of Mamre, was no other than the Lord omniscient and omnipotent, as the after discourse with him shows, (Genesis 18:3). And the man that wrestled with Jacob till break of day, was a divine person, of which Jacob was sensible; and therefore called the place where he wrestled with him, "Peniel", the face of God, (Genesis 32:24; Genesis 32:30). So he that appeared to Manoah, and his wife, (Judges 13:6; Judges 13:10; Judges 13:18) with other instances that might be mentioned. But then these were appearances of the Son of God in an human form, and were presages of his future incarnation; for as for the Father, no man ever saw his shape, (John 5:37) and, it may be, the reason why the parts of an human body are so often ascribed to God, may be on account of Christ’s incarnation, to prepare the minds of men for it, to inure them to ideas of it, to raise their expectation of it, and strengthen their faith in it; and the rather since these attributions were more frequent before the coming of Christ in the flesh, and very rarely used afterwards. Nor will the formation of man in the image, and after the likeness of God, afford a sufficient argument to prove that there is something corporeal in God, seeing man has a soul or spirit, in which this image and likeness chiefly and principally lay; and which was originally created in righteousness and holiness, in wisdom and knowledge: and though he has a body also; yet, inasmuch as a body was prepared in the council and covenant of grace, from eternity, for the Son of God to assume in time; and in the book of God’s eternal purposes, "all the members of it were written; which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them", (Hebrews 10:5; Psalms 139:16). God might, according to the idea of it in his eternal mind, form the body of the first man.

2. The description of God, as a Spirit, teaches us to ascribe to God all the excellencies to be found in spirits in a more eminent manner, and to consider them as transcendent and infinite in him. By

spirits, I understand not subtilized bodies, extracted out of various things; nor the wind and air, so called because invisible, and very piercing and penetrating, though bodies, and very ponderous ones; nor the spirits of animals, which are material, die, and go downwards to the earth: but rational spirits, angels, and the souls of men; the former are called spirits, (Zechariah 6:5; Hebrews 1:1; Hebrews 1:5) and so are the latter, (Job 32:8; Hebrews 12:23) they are indeed created spirits, (Psalms 104:4; Zechariah 12:1) but God an uncreated one, and is the Creator of these, and therefore said to be, "the Father of spirits", (Hebrews 12:9). These are creatures of time, and finite beings; made since the world was, and are not every where: but God is an eternal, infinite, and immense Spirit, from everlasting to everlasting; and whom "the heaven of heavens cannot contain"; yet there are some excellencies in spirits, which may lead more easily to conceive somewhat of God, and of his divine nature.

Spirits are immaterial, have no corporal parts, as flesh, blood, and bones, (Luke 24:39) and though eyes, hands, &c. are ascribed to God, yet not of flesh, (Job 10:4) but such as express what is suitable to spiritual beings in the most exalted sense. Spirits are incorruptible; for having no matter about them, they are not liable to corruption; they are, indeed, capable of moral corruption, as appears from the angels that sinned, and, from the depravity of the souls of men by the fall; but not of natural corruption: but God is not subject to corruption in any sense, and is therefore called the "incorruptible God", (Romans 1:23) Spirits are immortal; angels die not, (Luke 20:36) the souls of men cannot be killed, (Matthew 10:28) not consisting of parts, that are capable of being divided and separated, they cannot be brought to destruction. It is one of the characters of God, that he is "immortal", yea, "only hath immortality"; and so more transcendently, and in a more eminent manner immortal than angels, and the souls of men; he has it of himself, and underivatively, and is the giver of it to others, (1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:16). Spirits are invisible; it is a vulgar mistake that they are to be seen; who ever saw the soul of a man? or an angel, in its pure form? whenever they have made themselves visible, it has been by assuming another form, an human one. "God is invisible, and dwells in light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see", (1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:16) and therefore as no likeness and similitude of a spirit can be formed and taken, so none of God: who can tell of what colour, form and figure, shape and size, the soul of a man is? Nor can any describe the form and figure of an angel: as for the pictures, paintings, and sculptures of them, they are the fruit of mere fancy and imagination, and at most but emblematical: because angels have appeared in an human form, therefore they are painted as young men; and because of their quick dispatch, and swiftness, in doing the errands and messages they have been sent upon, wings are given, them; but never was such a creature in real being, or ever seen in the whole world, in any age, as a young man with wings at his shoulders. So no likeness can be formed of God; no similitude was ever seen of him, and to whom can he be likened and compared? (Deuteronomy 4:12; Isaiah 40:18; Isaiah 46:5). Some of the Heathens[9] have acknowledged the invisibility of God, as a Spirit; and Aristotle[10] argues the invisibility of God, from the invisibility of the soul of man. But besides these properties, there are others still more excellent in spirits, by which they approach nearer to God, and bear a greater resemblance to him, and serve to give us clearer ideas of his nature; they are living, active, endowed with understanding, will, and affections; they are lively, have a principle of life; angels are commonly thought to be the living creatures in Ezekiel’s vision; however, they are such, and so the souls of men: the body of Adam, when first made, was a lifeless lump of clay; but when God breathed into him the breath of life, "he became a living soul", (Genesis 2:7). God is the living God,

has life in and of himself, and gives life to all creatures that have it. Spirits are active, and can operate upon others, as the souls of men on their bodies; God is all act, "actus simplicissimus", as he is sometimes styled, the most simple act; there is nothing passive in him, as matter, to be wrought upon; he works, and always works; and "all creatures live and move, and have their being in him", (John 5:17; Acts 17:28). Spirits, angels, and the souls of men, are intelligent beings, have a faculty of understanding things natural and spiritual; the understanding of God is infinite, there is no searching of it; lie understands himself, and all created beings, and their natures, (Psalms 147:6; Isaiah 40:28). Spirits have the power of willing, they are voluntary agents; and God wills whatever he does, and does whatever he wills; his will is boundless, uncontrollable, and sovereign, (Psalms 115:3; Daniel 4:35). Spirits have the affections of love, mercy, pity, &c. God not only loves his creatures, but "is love itself", (1 John 4:16). "His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, on them that fear him"; and he pities them as a father pities his children, (Psalms 103:13; Psalms 103:17).

3. God being a Spirit, we learn that he is a simple[11] and uncompounded Being, and does not consist of parts, as a body does; his spirituality involves his simplicity: some indeed consider this as an attribute of God; and his spirituality also: and, indeed, every attribute of God, is God himself, is his nature, and are only so many ways of considering it, or are so many displays of it. However, it is certain God is not composed of parts, in any sense; not in a physical sense, of essential parts, as matter and form, of which bodies consist: nor of integral parts, as soul and body, of which men consist: nor in a "metaphysical" sense, as of essence and existence, of act and power: nor in a "logical" sense, as of kind and difference, substance and accident; all which would argue imperfection, weakness, and mutability. If God was composed of parts he would not be "eternal", and absolutely the first Being, since the composing parts would, at least, co-exist with him; besides, the composing parts, in our conception of them, would be prior to the compositum; as the body and soul of man, of which he is composed, are prior to his being a man: and, beside, there must be a composer, who puts the parts together, and therefore must be before what is composed of them: all which is inconsistent with the eternity of God: nor would he be "infinite" and "immense"; for either these parts are finite, or infinite; if finite, they can never compose an infinite Being; and if infinite, there must be more infinities than one, which implies a contradiction: nor would he be "independent"; for what is composed of parts, depends upon those parts, and the union of them, by which it is preserved: nor would he be "immutable", unalterable, and immortal; since what consists of parts, and depends upon the union of them, is liable to alteration, and to be resolved into those parts again, and so be dissolved and come to destruction. In short, he would not be the most perfect of Beings; for as the more spiritual a being is, the more perfect it is; and so it is, the more simple and uncompounded it is: as even all things in nature are more noble, and more pure, the more free they are from composition and mixture. Nor is the simplicity of God to be disproved by the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead; for though there are three distinct persons, there is but one nature and essence common to them all, and which is not parted and divided among them, but is jointly and equally possessed by them; nor do these persons really differ from the divine nature and essence, nor from one another, but by their distinct modes of subsisting; so that they only distinguish and modify, but do neither divide nor compose the divine nature: nor is it to be disproved by the decrees of God; the decrees of God are within himself, and, as it is commonly said, whatever is in God, is God, and so are no other than God himself, as to the act of decreeing, though not with respect to the things decreed; and though they are many and various, as to the

objects of them, yet not in God, who, by one eternal act, in his infinite mind, has decreed every thing that has been, is, or shall be; and is what Plato[12] means by en kai polla, "one" and "many" in God; one, as to his essence; many, as to the ideas and decrees in it, which many are one: nor is it to be disproved by the attributes of God; for they are no other than God himself, and neither differ from one another, but with respect to their objects, and effect, and in our manner of conception of them; nor from the nature and essence of God; they are himself, and his nature; he is not only eternal, wise, good, loving, &c. but he is eternity itself, wisdom itself, goodness itself, love itself, &c. and these are not parts of his nature, but displays of the same undivided nature, and are different considerations of it, in which we view it; our minds being so weak as not to be able to conceive of God at once and together, and in the gross, but one thing after another, and the same in different lights, that we may better understand it: these several things, called attributes, which are one in God, are predicated of him, and ascribed to him distinctly, for helps to our finite understandings, and for the relief of our minds; and that we, with more facility and ease, might conceive of the nature of God, and take in more of him, as we can by parcels and piecemeals, than in the whole; and so, as a learned Jew[13] observes, all those attributes are only intellectual notions; by which are conceived the perfections that are in the essence of God, but in reality are nothing but his essence; and which attributes will be next considered.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Simonides apud Cicero. de Natura Deor. l. 1.

[2] Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 6.

[3] Hilchot Yesude Hatorah, c. 1. s. 5. ,6.

[4] Apud Laetant. de Ira, c. 11.

[5] Apud Clement. Stromat. 5. p. 601.

[6] De Diis et Mundo, c. 2.

[7] So Aristotle, Laert. l. 5, in Vita ejus.

[8] Laert. l. 7. in Vita Zeno.

[9] Philemon et Orpheus apud Justin. de Monarch. p. 104, 105.

[10] De Mundo, c. 6. so Minutius Felix, in octavia, p. 35, 36.

[11] aploun te einai, kai pantwn hkista thv eautou ideav ekba. nein, is simple, and least of all departs from his own idea, --remains alway simply in his own form, Plato de Republ. l. 2. p. 606.

[12] In Philebo, p. 372, &c. et in Parmenide, p. 1110, &c.

[13] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher lkkarim, l. 2. c. 8.

02. Of the New Heavens and Earth

Of the New Heavens and Earth, and the Inhabitants of them.

We have seen the world laid in ashes; and now we shall take a view of it as rising out of them. The eastern people had a tale, or fable, concerning a bird, called the "phoenix;" which many writers, both Heathen, Jewish, and Christian, have taken notice of [1]; concerning which they say, there is but one of them in the world at a time; that it is very long lived, according to some it lives a thousand years; and when its end draws near, it makes itself a bed of spices, and seats itself on it, and by some means or other fire takes it, and it is burnt to ashes in it; from whence springs a worm, or egg, and from thence another "phoenix": this some take to be an emblem of the resurrection; but it rather seems to be a fable, devised by the Indians, or Arabians, to transmit to posterity their traditional doctrine of the conflagration, and renovation of the world. The heathens had some notion of good men dwelling in pure and beautiful habitations on earth; so Plato says [2], it was the opinion of the Stoics [3], that at a certain determined time the whole world would be burnt; so that it would immediately be beautified and adorned again, and exist as it was before, perfectly beautiful. This is more clearly revealed in the sacred scriptures; and as the apostle Peter fully expresses the former, as we have seen, so he strongly asserts the latter, and his faith, hope, and expectation of it: nevertheless, though the heavens and the earth shall be burnt up, we believers, we Christians, favored with a divine revelation, "look for," believe and expect, "new heavens and a new earth," in the room of the former, consumed by fire, "wherein dwelleth righteousness," righteous persons, and they only (2 Peter 3:13). The promise of this referred to, is in Isaiah 65:17 which is introduced with a "Behold," as being something extraordinary and wonderful, and worthy of attention; "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth," &c. which being obscure in itself, is explained by the apostle: and what makes prophesies respecting the last times, so difficult of interpretation, is, their being mixed; some things in the context belonging to the spiritual, and others to the personal reign of Christ, which is the case here: however, the passage itself [4], most certainly belongs to a perfect state, in which righteousness will dwell, as Peter says; and entirely agrees with John’s account of the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth; who represents the new Jerusalem as coming down from heaven, to dwell on the new earth, where the tabernacle of God will be with men; and he will show himself to be their God, and them to be his people; and so it will be a time of great joy and gladness; and in Isaiah it is said, "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy!" John says, in this state "there shall be no more sorrow nor crying": which entirely agrees with the prophet, who says, "The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying!" which cannot be said of any state of the church in the present earth; and is only true of its perfect state in the new heavens and the new earth. The things to be inquired into are, what these new heavens and earth be, and who the inhabitants of them.

1. What are meant by the new heavens and the new earth in the above passages? these are to be understood not in a figurative, but in a literal sense.

1a. First, not in a figurative sense;

1a1. Not of the gospel church state, or the gospel dispensation, in which indeed old things passed away, and all things became new; the former covenant waxed old and vanished away; the old Jewish church state was abolished, and a new church state set up; the ordinances of the former dispensation were removed, and new ones appointed: but then, as observed in the preceding chapter, this state had taken place before the apostle Peter wrote his epistle; and therefore he could never speak of the new heavens and new earth in this sense as future; nor say, that he and others were looking for them when they were already in being; and so likewise before the apostle John had his vision of them. John the Baptist and Christ began their ministry with saying, "the kingdom of heaven" was "at hand," the gospel dispensation was just ushering in; yea our Lord afterwards says, the kingdom of God was among the Jews, though it came not with observation, and was weak and obscure; but after his death and resurrection, when he gave his disciples a commission to preach the gospel to all the world, and furnished them with gifts and abilities for it, and they accordingly preached it everywhere with success; then it plainly appeared that the gospel church state had commenced: besides, the gospel church state, even in the first and purest ages of it, was not so perfect as the state of things will be in the new heavens and new earth, in which none but righteous persons, and such as are perfectly righteous, will dwell; for into the new Jerusalem, the seat of which will be the new heavens and new earth, none shall enter that defiles or makes an abomination or a lie; whereas in the gospel church state, there always was, is, and will be, a mixture of true believers and carnal professors; look into the first churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Corinth, &c. and you will find persons either of bad principles or of bad practices complained of. Moreover, in the new Jerusalem state, which will have its seat in the new heavens and new earth, there will be no temple, no worship, in the manner that now is in the gospel church state; no ministry of the word, nor administration of ordinances; the Lamb will be the temple and the light thereof; to which may be added, that in that state there will be no more death, sorrow, and crying: but death did not cease when the gospel church state took place, it has continued ever since, and is the last enemy that shall be destroyed; the putting men to death for the sake of Christ and his gospel began very early, in the first times of the gospel, both in Judea and in the Gentile world; and continued under Rome pagan and papal, and more or less to this day. Other things might be observed which show that the new heavens and the new earth cannot be understood of this state; and for the same reasons they cannot be understood of the times of Constantine and following ones, at least for some of the above reasons.

1a2. Nor of the state of the Jews at the time of their conversion; for though there will be a new face of things then with respect to them; they will quit their old notions of the Messiah, and relinquish their old laws, customs, and modes of worship; and embrace the gospel, and submit to the ordinances of it, and join themselves to gospel churches, or be formed upon the same plan with them; and be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. But then this will be before the new heavens and the new earth are formed; the conversion of the Jews is designed in Revelation 19:7-8 and is what will introduce, or be a part of the spiritual reign; but the vision of the new heavens and the new earth is in Revelation 21:1-27 which respects a more glorious state of the church, and the personal reign of Christ in it.

1a3. Nor of the spiritual reign of Christ, which will be in the present earth and not in the new one; and in which will be the ministry of the word and ordinances; the everlasting gospel will be

preached to all nations, by means of which the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and gospel churches be planted everywhere, and gospel worship be carried on as now, only with greater purity; but in the new Jerusalem state, the seat of which will be the new heavens and the new earth, there will be nothing of this kind, as before observed; and though there will be then a great degree of spirituality and holiness, yet it will not be so perfect a state as that will be in the new heavens and the new earth; in which there will be only righteous persons, nothing that defileth, only the holy city, having the glory of God upon her, will dwell in them. But in the spiritual reign, the church will not be quite clear of hypocrites and nominal professors, and will sink into lukewarmness and indifference, into spiritual pride and carnality, even into a Laodicean state.

1a4. Nor of the heavenly state, or the ultimate glory; for these new heavens and earth are distinct from the third heaven, the seat of that. The new Jerusalem, the inhabitants of it, are said to come down out of heaven to reside upon the new earth; where the tabernacle of God will be with them, which denotes a moveable state, as a tabernacle is a moveable thing, and so distinct from the fixed state of the saints in the ultimate glory. The camp of the saints, and the holy and beloved city, are represented as on earth, even at the end of the thousand years (Revelation 20:9). But,

1b. Secondly, the new heavens and new earth are to be understood in a literal sense of the natural heavens and earth. It is a rule to be observed, that a literal sense is not to be departed from without necessity. Now there is no necessity, nothing that obliges to depart from such a sense here; it does not contradict any other passage of scripture; it is not contrary to the perfections of God, his wisdom, power, and goodness, yea these are displayed therein; nor is it to the disadvantage but to the advantage of his people, to have such new heavens and earth made for them to dwell in their raised state; and as there is no necessity to depart from the literal sense, there seems to be a necessity to abide by it; since the phrase, "heaven and earth," are used by the apostle Peter in 2 Peter 3:1-18 frequently, and always literally of the sublunary world, the natural heavens and earth; as when he says, the heavens and the earth that were of old, that were created in the beginning, are that world that was overflowed with a flood and perished; and that the same heavens and earth are reserved to fire against the day of judgment, when the one will pass away and be dissolved, and the other be burnt up; now as these can be understood in no other than in a literal sense, so the new heavens and the earth he speaks of in the room of these, can be meant of no other, to keep up the sense of the apostle uniform and of a piece; only these renewed, not as to their substance, or made entirely new, but as to their qualities.

1b1. First then, the "new heavens" must be interpreted of the airy heavens, and of a new air in them: we have seen that the heavens that shall be set on fire, and be liquefied and dissolved by it, are not the starry heavens, but the airy heavens only; which will be purged, purified, and refined by fire, and become a new air; and Aben Ezra interprets the new heavens in Isaiah 65:17 of a good air, an healthful and salubrious one; and such will the new heavens be when purged by fire; they will be clear of all noxious vapors and exhalations, be free from all unhealthful fogs, mists and meteors, watery and fiery, such as are enumerated in Psalms 148:8. God has his treasures of hail, snow, &c. in the air (Job 38:22-23), but the new heavens will be clear of all these; no storms of hail, no stores of snow, no blustering storms and tempests, no coruscation and flashes of lightning, nor peals of thunder; nothing of this kind will be heard or seen, but a pure, serene, and tranquil air, quite suited to the bodies of raised saints [5]; for none else will inhabit the new earth, whose bodies will be incorruptible and spiritual. Moreover the air will now be cleared of devils, which have

their residence in it: the devil is called "the prince of the power of the air," of the posse of devils which dwell in the air; and he and his principalities and powers are "spiritual wickednesses in high or heavenly places" in the air above us (Ephesians 2:2; Ephesians 6:12), and it has been the sentiment both of Jews and heathens, that the air is full of demons; and which is not at all improbable; for when they were cast out of the third heaven, their first habitation, they fell into the air; where they are, at least at times, until their full torment; and here they are hovering over our heads, watching all opportunities to tempt, disturb, and distress the sons of men: but when Christ shall come in the clouds, and be met by his saints in the air, he will clear the air of all the devils in it; he will lay hold of Satan, the prince of them, and of the whole body of them under him, and bind them, and cast them into the abyss, the bottomless pit; so that they shall not be able to stir, nor give the least molestation to the saints for the space of a thousand years; and then, instead of being over their heads, they will be bruised under their feet.

1b2. Secondly, The "new earth" will be an earth refined and renewed, and restored to its paradisiacal estate; or as it was before the fall, free from the curse which came upon it on that account. But now the curse will be removed, and it shall no more bring forth thorns and thistles, nor require labour and pains to cultivate it; nor will there be any difficulty about a livelihood from it, which will not be wanted; it shall be as before the fall, when the whole of it was a paradise, and one part of it more especially so: and hence in that state, of which the new heavens and new earth will be the seat, figures are taken from thence to describe that; as a river of water of life proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb; and a tree of life in the midst of the new Jerusalem, bearing all manner of fruit every month, and its leaves for the healing of the nations (Revelation 22:1-2), and as the earth, before the fall, was subject to the first man, and all things in it (Psalms 8:6-8), so this new earth will be to the second Adam; at his first coming, though Lord of all, yet in the present earth he had not where to lay his head; and now he is crowned with glory and honour, yet we see not all things put under him; but "the world to come," or "the habitable earth," which is future, and is not put in subjection to angels, will be put in subjection to him; so that where he was once in the form of a servant, and suffered much, he will now reign, as a King, and a triumphant Conqueror. And it must be but reasonable, that since he hath redeemed his people from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, that every degree of that curse should be removed, which, as yet is not, from the earth: and particularly, it is but reasonable, that when the second Adam, and his seed, come to enjoy the earth alone, that it should be free from the curse, the redemption from which he is the author of, and that for them; and accordingly so it will be in that state; there shall be no more curse (Revelation 22:3).

2. The inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth are next to be considered. When God had made the first earth, and which was made by him to be inhabited, there were at first but "two" whom he created to dwell upon it; and when it was destroyed by the flood, and recovered from that deluge, there were but "eight" persons preserved in the ark to repeople it. But when the new heavens and new earth are formed there will be enough to stock them at once. It may be asked from whence will they be had, since the air will be cleared of devils, and all wicked men will be burnt up with the earth; so that there will not be a devil in the air, nor a wicked man upon the earth; and who shall then inhabit them? Let it be observed, that Christ will bring with him the souls of all his saints, of all the chosen people that have been from the beginning of the world, whose bodies he will then raise, and reunite them to their souls; and the living saints that will be found on earth

when he shall come, will be changed, and caught up with the raised ones, to meet the Lord in the air, where they will abide till the earth is fit for them; and then they will be let down, millions and millions of them, even the whole general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, and will fill the earth at once. And these are described,

2a. First, by the name of "righteousness" itself; "wherein," in the new heavens and earth, "dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13), that is, righteous persons, the abstract for the concrete; a like phrase see in Isaiah 1:21 and designs such to whom Christ is made righteousness, and they are made the righteousness of God in him; as Christ, the husband of the church, is called, "the Lord our Righteousness;" so she, by virtue of a marriage union to him, is called by the same name (Jeremiah 23:6; Jeremiah 33:16), and this denotes such persons as are truly righteous; not in appearance only, but really; and not in the sight of men, but in the sight of God; and who are thoroughly righteous in every sense; who have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and are created in righteousness and true holiness; are inherently holy and righteous, and that perfectly: and it designs such only; not a sinner, not a wicked man, nor an hypocrite, will be among them; and this is confirmed by other scriptures; particularly Isaiah 60:21. "Thy people shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever;" and though the former part of this prophecy respects the spiritual reign of Christ in the present earth; yet the latter part of it belongs to the perfect state of the church, the new Jerusalem state, in the new earth; as appears by comparing Isaiah 60:19 with Revelation 21:23. Again in Psalms 37:29. "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever;" not the present earth which the saints have not by inheritance, and much less for ever; and it is but a small part of it they enjoy in any sense. Besides, this respects something future; it is not said they "do," but "shall" inherit it. There are other characters in the same Psalm, descriptive of the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth, as in Psalms 37:9. "Those that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth," when the wicked will be cut off, as they will be at the general conflagration; and those who wait on the Lord, are the same with the apostle Peter, and others, who looked for new heavens and a new earth, and waited on the Lord for the fulfillment of his promise; and in Psalms 37:11. "The meek shall inherit the earth": the same is asserted by Christ (Matthew 5:5), these are opposed to proud and haughty sinners, and design the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who have but a very small share in the present earth: it is your proud, bold, blustering sort of men who share the earth among them; as for the meek spirited saints, it is as much as they can do to get a livelihood in it; but they shall inherit the new heavens and the new earth.

2b. Secondly, the inhabitants of which are the palm bearing company in Revelation 7:9 for this vision is synchronal, or contemporary, with that of the new heavens and the new earth, the seat of the new Jerusalem, the church of God, consisting of all the elect, and respects the same time and things; as appears by comparing Revelation 7:15 of that chapter with Revelation 21:3; Revelation 22:3; Revelation 22:16-17 with Revelation 21:4 the same persons are described by their number (Revelation 21:9), "which no man could number;" who, though but a few, in comparison of others, are a great number considered by themselves; and though numbered by God and Christ, cannot be numbered by men: and by their origin and descent, being "of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues;" chosen, redeemed, and called out of all; and will be collected together at the coming of Christ: and by their position, standing "before the throne, and before the Lamb;" the throne of the Lamb, placed in the new Jerusalem, before which they will stand without fault, behold his glory,

and enjoy his presence: and by their habit and gesture, "clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;" appearing now as kings and priests; who, as such, shall reign with Christ on the new earth, being now not only clothed with the robe of his righteousness, but with the shining robes of immortality and bliss: and the "palms" in their hands is not so much expressive of their past uprightness and integrity, and of their having bore up under all their pressures and afflictions; but chiefly of their now victory over all their enemies: also they are described by their ascription of salvation to God and the Lamb, even their temporal salvation, and especially their spiritual and eternal salvation; to God, as the contriver of it, and to Christ the Lamb, as the procuring cause and author of it; in which they will be joined by all the angels around them, as guardians of them, ministering spirits to them, and fellow worshippers with them; who will then ascribe a sevenfold praise to God (Revelation 7:10-12). And some discourse passing between one of the elders about the throne and John, occasioned a further description of the same persons (Revelation 7:13-14), by their being "come out of great tribulation;" which may signify, not only the afflictions of every individual of this great number; but more especially the public troubles of the saints, as a body, in the various periods of time; both of the Old Testament saints, and particularly of the New Testament saints, under Rome pagan and papal, to the end of the reign of antichrist; and may have special respect to the last struggle of the beast, and the slaying of the witnesses. But now all will be at an end, and their "robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb," and so pure, without spot or blemish: and they are further described, by their constant service of God, "day and night," that is continually; for there will be no night in this state; and their service will lie, not in an attendance on the word and ordinances; but in praising God, adoring his perfections, admiring his works of providence and grace, and ascribing the glory of salvation to him: "And he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them," the tabernacle of God being now with men on earth; "and they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;" neither in a literal sense, which is sometimes the case now; nor in a mystical sense, after the word and ordinances, they will have no need of; nor have any uneasy desires after spiritual things, which will now be enjoyed in plenty; "nor shall the sun light on them, nor any heat;" neither the sun of persecution, nor the heat of Satan’s fiery darts, nor of any fiery affliction: the reason of all this happiness is, "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them;" not by his ministers, word, and ordinances, as now; but with the discoveries of his love, will feast them at his table, and cause them to drink new wine in his kingdom; "and shall lead them to living fountains of water," to the river of the water of life, the everlasting love of the three Persons; "and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;" and there shall be no more tears on account of indwelling sin, Satan’s temptations, divine desertions, and any trouble and affliction; but being come to the new Jerusalem, everlasting joy shall be upon them, sorrow and sighing shall flee away. These are the persons, and this will be the happy case of the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth.

2c. Thirdly, a further account is given of those inhabitants in Revelation 21:1-2 &c. after John had a vision of the new heavens and the new earth, the former being passed away; he had a sight of those that were to dwell in them; and by the account, they appear to be persons not in a mortal and sinful state, but in an immortal and perfect one. They are called "the holy city, and new Jerusalem," by which the church is meant; but not as in any state on this present earth, and in the present circumstances of things; a state so glorious, pure, and holy, as this is represented, can never be expected here. Mortal men, dwelling in houses of clay, would never be able to bear such a glory as the church is said to have on her (Revelation 21:11), and following; nor be so pure and

holy as this new Jerusalem, so as to have nothing defiling, nor that commits iniquity in it (Revelation 21:27), and yet it cannot be meant of it as in heaven; since it is said to descend from thence (Revelation 21:2; Revelation 21:10), nor can the kings of the earth, in any sense, be said to bring their honour and glory, and that of the nations, into heaven (Revelation 21:24; Revelation 21:26). But it designs a state in the new earth, and under the new heavens, where the tabernacle of God will be (Revelation 21:1-3), and we find the camp of the saints, the beloved city, the same with the holy city here upon the earth, that is, the new earth (Revelation 20:9), even after the first resurrection, and even after the millennium. Now this church, called the holy city, is no other than the church of the firstborn, the whole body of the elect, and the same with the palm bearing company, and the church consisting of them. The inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth are here described under the names of "the holy city" and "new Jerusalem;" a "city," as consisting of the whole family of God, who are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; a "holy" one, as made up of persons perfectly holy, in spirit, soul, and body, and entirely free from sin; called Jerusalem, though in a state superior to the church under the gospel dispensation, called by that name; and even to it in the Philadelphian state, in the spiritual reign; since it is promised to the overcomer in that state, as something greater, and yet to come, that he should be a pillar, and have the name of the new Jerusalem written on him (Revelation 3:12), which signifies the vision of peace, and fitly expresses that state, in which peace of every kind, in its utmost perfection, shall be enjoyed, the Prince of peace, Christ, being with his people; and called new, because the seat of this church will be the new heavens and new earth; all which shows, that the inhabitants will be in a perfect state of holiness and peace. And they are further described by their "descent from heaven;" which designs, not their original, as regenerate persons; but their local descent with Christ; when he comes, the souls of all his saints will come with him; their bodies will be raised and united to them; anti with the living saints, be caught up to meet him in the air, from whence they will descend with him on the new earth, and dwell on it with him, their head and husband; hence said to be "the bride, the Lamb’s wife;" which intend not individuals, nor particular churches of Jews or Gentiles; but the whole body of the elect, given to Christ, and espoused by him; who will now be "prepared and adorned for her husband," being all gathered in, and their number completed; and adorned, not only with the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ, but with the glorious robes of immortality and bliss; and so fit for Christ their head. And it will be the church and her members, thus prepared and ornamented, who will, with Christ, inhabit the new earth; for now "the tabernacle of God will be with men" on the new earth; which being for a determinate time, a thousand years, his being with them is signified by a tabernacle, which is moveable; which is further explained; "he will dwell with them, in person," for the space of time mentioned. "God himself shall be with them; Immanuel," God with us, God in our nature; "and they shall be his people," owned by him as such; and he "be their God": which covenant interest may be claimed, as being out of all question. The inhabitants of the new earth are moreover described by their freedom from all evils (Revelation 3:4). "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;" which is said of the palm bearing company (Revelation 7:17), which show them to be the same with those; the words are taken from Isaiah 25:8 and refer to the resurrection state, when "death shall be swallowed up in victory; and there shall be no more death," not even corporal death; for this is said of risen saints; "neither sorrow nor crying," on account of disorders and diseases of body, loss of friends, &c. which will all be at an end; "neither shall there be any more pain; of body," or mind; "for the former things are past away;" the old world, its lusts, temptations, and

snares; all troubles from within and from without; from persecutors and false friends; which shows that those inhabitants will not be in a sinful and mortal state: yea, they are described, as "having the glory of God upon them" (Revelation 21:11), upon their bodies being raised, and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ, and upon their souls being perfect in grace, righteousness, and holiness; and the light, glory, lustre, and splendour of this church and her members, the inhabitants of the new earth, are expressed in such language in the following part of the chapter, that no adequate ideas can be formed thereof; and describe such a state as can never be imagined will be in the present world: and those inhabitants are again described by their holiness and purity (Revelation 21:27), in such a manner, as show them to be in a sinless state. To which may be added, the provision to regale those inhabitants, suitable to their state, is described in Revelation 22:1-2 as in the earthly paradise, particularly in that spot of it, the garden of Eden, there was a river for delight and use, and a tree of life in the midst of it, for the preservation of health, and the continuance of life; so in this city, in the new earth, will be a river and tree of life, and, for ought I see to the contrary, in a literal sense; only, they will be emblematic, as the other might be in Eden; for here will be no need of corporal food, only of entertainment for the mind. Here will be a river, an emblem of the everlasting love of God, clear and free from all motives and conditions in men, arising purely from the sovereignty of God; which, for its abundance, will be a river to swim in, and not to be passed over; and will yield inexpressible pleasure to this city and its inhabitants: and there will be a tree of life in the midst of the street of this city, bearing monthly all kind of fruit, and its leaves of an healing nature; an emblem of Christ, the tree of life (Proverbs 3:18; Revelation 2:7), and of all spiritual blessings to be continually enjoyed from him, in great variety, and with great pleasure. And though there will be no diseases of body and mind in that state; yet as the tree of life in Eden was for the preservation of the life and health of Adam, had he continued in his state of innocence; so the healing leaves of this tree may denote that everything in Christ will contribute to the comfort, health, and happiness of the saints. Moreover, the happiness of those inhabitants is expressed by a variety, which shows it to be an accumulated happiness, a perfect one; "there shall be no more curse;" node upon the new earth, and its inhabitants; nor any accursed person or thing in it; "but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it," the seat of his glorious majesty, who will reign as King here; "and his servants shall serve him;" both the ministering angels and his saints, especially the latter; "and his name shall be in their foreheads;" by which it will appear they are his people and servants, as if his name was written there; "and there shall be no more night;" either in a literal sense, or rather figurative, meaning no night of ignorance and error, of darkness and desertion, and of affliction of any kind; "and they need no candle, neither light of the sun;" neither artificial nor natural light; "for the Lord God giveth them light," what vastly exceeds either; "and they shall reign for ever and ever;" first with Christ on the new earth, for a thousand years, next to be considered, and then in heaven to all eternity.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Vid. Texelii Phoenix.

[2] In Phaedone, p. 84.

[3] Aristot. apud Euseb. Evangel. Praepar. l. 15. c. 14. Numenius in ibid. c. 18. Philo, “quod mundus sit incorrupt.,” p. 940.

[4] Aben Ezra observes, that it respects the world to come, and is not in connection with the context, and is a truth that is alone by itself.

[5] “Atque ipsa substantia (mundi) eas qualitates habebit, quae corporibus immortalibus mirabili mutatione conveniant, ut scilicet mundus in melius innovatus aperte accommodetur hominibus etiam carne in melius innovatis,” Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 20. c. 16.

02. Of the Objects of Redemption by Christ

Of the Objects of Redemption by Christ

Thirdly, the objects of redemption come next under consideration. These are a special and distinct people; they are said to be "redeemed from the earth"; that is, from among the inhabitants of the earth, as after explained, "redeemed from among men"; and one end of Christ's redemption of them is, "to purify to himself a peculiar people" (Revelation 14:3-4; Titus 2:14). The inspired writers seem to delight in using the pronoun "us", when speaking of the death of Christ, and redemption by it; thereby pointing at a particular people, as the context shows: "Christ died for us"; God "delivered him up for us all; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us; hath redeemed us unto God by thy blood" (Romans 5:8; Romans 8:32; Titus 2:14; Revelation 5:9). They are many indeed for whom Christ has given "his life a ransom", a ransom price, the price of their redemption (Matthew 20:28). But then these are so described as show they are a peculiar people; they are the "many" who are ordained unto eternal life; the "many" the Father has given to Christ; the many whose sins he bore on the cross; the "many" for whom his blood was shed for the remission of their sins; the "many" who are made righteous by his obedience; the "many" sons, he, the Captain of their salvation, brings to glory. That the objects of redemption are a special people, will appear by the following observations.

1. The objects of redemption are such who are the objects of God's love; for redemption, as has been observed, flows from the love of God and Christ; and which love is not that general kindness shown in providence to all men, as the creatures of God; but is special and discriminating; the favour which he bears to his own people, as distinct from others; "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated": and the love which Christ has expressed in redemption is towards his own that were in the world, whom he has a special right and property in, "his" people, "his" sheep, "his" church; as will be seen hereafter.

2. The objects of election and redemption are the same; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?--It is Christ that died!" died for the elect: so the same, us all, for whom God delivered up his Son, are those whom he foreknew, and whom he predestinated; and whose calling, justification, and glorification are secured thereby (Romans 8:30-33), and the same us, who are said to be chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, have redemption in him through his blood (Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 1:7). Election and redemption are of equal extent; no more are redeemed by Christ than are chosen in him; and these are a special people: what is said of the objects of the one is true of the objects of the other. Are the elect the beloved of the Lord? and does the act of election spring from love? Election presupposes love: so the redeemed are the beloved of God and Christ; and their redemption flows from love. Are the elect a people whom God has chosen for his peculiar treasure? the redeemed are purified by Christ, to be a peculiar people to himself. Do the vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory, consist of Jews and Gentiles; even of them who are called of both? so Christ is the propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, or the Redeemer of them only; but for the sins of the Gentile world also, or the Redeemer of his

people among them. Are the elect of God a great number, of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues? Christ has redeemed those he has redeemed unto God, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. Is it true of the elect, that they cannot be totally and finally deceived and perish? it is true of the ransomed of the Lord, that they shall come to Zion with everlasting joy; Christ will never lose any part of the purchase of his blood.

3. Those for whom Christ has died, and has redeemed by his blood, are no other than those for whom he became a Surety. Now Christ was the Surety of the better testament, or covenant of grace; and of course became a Surety for those, and for no other, than who were interested in that covenant, in which he engaged to be the Redeemer: Christ's suretyship is the ground and foundation of redemption; the true reason of the sin of his people, and the punishment of it, being laid upon him, and of his bearing it; of the payment of the debts of his people, and of redeeming them out of the hands of justice; was because he engaged as a Surety, and laid himself under obligation to do all this. But for those for whom he did not become a Surety, he was not obliged to pay their debts, nor to suffer and die in their room and stead. Christ's suretyship and redemption are of equal extent, and reach to the same objects; they are the Lord's Benjamins, the sons of his right hand, his beloved sons, that Christ, the antitype of Judah, became a surety for, and laid himself under obligation to bring them safe to glory, and present them to his divine Father,

4. The objects of redemption are described by such characters as show them to be a special and distinct people; particularly they are called, the people of God and Christ; "for the transgressions of my people", saith the Lord, "was he stricken"; that is, Christ was, or would be, stricken by the rod of justice, to make satisfaction for their sins, and thereby redeem them from them (Isaiah 53:8), and when he was about to come and redeem them, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, at his birth said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel! for he hath visited and redeemed his people"; by sending Christ, the dayspring from on high, as he afterwards calls him, to visit them, and redeem them by his blood (Luke 1:68; Luke 1:78). Hence, also, the angel that appeared to Joseph, and instructed him to call the Son that should be born of his wife by the name of Jesus, gives this reason, "for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Now though all men are, in a sense, the people of God, as they are his creatures, and the care of his providence; yet they are not all redeemed by Christ; because those that are redeemed by Christ are redeemed "out of every people"; and therefore cannot be every or all people (Revelation 5:9), the redeemed are God's covenant people; of whom he says, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God": they are his portion and his inheritance; a people near unto him, both with respect to union and communion; a people given to Christ, to be redeemed and saved by him; of whom it is said, "Thy people shall be willing", &c.

5. The objects of redemption; or those for whom Christ laid down his life a ransom price, are described as "sheep"; as the sheep of Christ, in whom he has a special property, being given him of his Father; and who are represented as distinct from others, who are not his sheep (John 10:15; John 10:26; John 10:29), and such things are said of them as can only agree with some particular persons; as, that they are known by Christ; "I know my sheep", not merely by his omniscience, so he knows all men; but he knows them distinctly as his own; "the Lord knows them that are his", from others; he has knowledge of them, joined with special love and affection for them; as he has not brothers, to whom he will say, "Depart from me: I know you not". Likewise Christ is "known" by those sheep of his he has laid down his life for; they know him in his person, offices, and grace;

whereas there are some that neither know the Father nor the Son; but those know the voice of Christ; that is, the gospel of Christ, the joyful sound; whereas the gospel is hid to them that are lost: and the sheep Christ has died for "follow" him, imitate him in the exercise of grace, of love, patience, humility, &c. and in the performance of duty; and this is said of the redeemed from among men; that they "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes" (Revelation 14:4). It is also affirmed of those sheep, that they shall "never perish"; whereas the goats, set on Christ's left hand, shall he bid to go, as "cursed", into everlasting fire (Matthew 25:33-34).

6. The objects of redemption are the sons of God; redemption and adoption belong to the same persons; according to the prophecy of Caiaphas, Christ was to die, not for the nation of the Jews only, but to "gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" throughout the Gentile world (John 11:52), and those who are predestinated to adoption by Christ are said to have redemption in him, through his blood (Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:7), and the blessing of adoption, in the full enjoyment of it, in the resurrection, is called "the redemption of the body"; when redemption, as to the application of it, will be complete also (Romans 8:23). Now these sons, or children of God, are a peculiar number of men, who are given of God to Christ, to redeem; the seed promised to him in covenant, that he should see and enjoy; and to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father; these are they on whose account he became incarnate, "took part of the same flesh and blood"; and these are the many sons he brings to glory (Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 2:13-14). Now these are not all men; "the children of the flesh", or such as are never born again, they are "not the children of God"; only such are openly and manifestly the children of God who believe in Christ; and this is owing to special grace, to distinguishing love; and is a favour that is only conferred on some (Romans 9:8; Galatians 3:26; John 1:12; 1 John 3:1).

7. The objects of redemption are the church and spouse of Christ; it is the church he has loved, and given himself as a sacrifice and ransom price for; it is the church he has purchased with his blood; even the general assembly, the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; that is, the elect of God, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life (Ephesians 5:25; Acts 20:28), of that church of which Christ is the head and husband, he is the Redeemer; "thy Maker is thine husband; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel!" (Isaiah 54:5). This cannot be said of all communities and bodies of men: the whore of Babylon is not the spouse of Christ; nor sects under the influence of false teachers, though there may be "threescore queens, and fourscore concubines", of this sort; yet, says Christ, "my dove, my undefiled, is but one"; and who only is redeemed by Christ, and espoused to him (Song of Solomon 6:9).

Now from all this it appears, that redemption is not universal, is not of all men; for though they are many for whom the ransom price is paid; yet though all are many, many are not all; and if the redeemed are such who are the objects of God's special love and favour, then not all men; for there are some of whom it is said, "He that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them, will show them no favour" (Isaiah 27:11). If they are the elect of God who are redeemed by Christ, and them only, then not all men; for all are not chosen; "The election hath obtained it"; and "the rest are blinded" (Romans 11:7), if only those are redeemed for whom Christ became a surety, then not all men; since Christ did not engage to pay the debts of all men; and if they are the people of God and Christ, then not all; since there are some on whom God writes a "loammi", saying, "Ye are not my people; and I will not be your God" (Hosea 1:9). And if they are the sheep of Christ, to whom he gives eternal life; then not the goats, who will go into everlasting

punishment; and if they are the children of God, and the church and spouse of Christ; then not all men; for all do not bear these characters, nor stand in these relations. What may be further necessary, will be to produce some reasons, or arguments, against universal redemption; and to give answer to such scriptures as are brought in favour of it. It should be observed, that it is agreed on both sides, that all are not eventually saved: could universal salvation be established, there would be no objection to universal redemption; the former not being the case the latter cannot be true; Christ certainly saves all whom he redeems.

7a. First, I shall give some reasons, or produce some arguments against the universal scheme of redemption. And,

7a1. First. The first set of arguments shall be taken from hence, that universal redemption reflects highly on the perfections of God; and what is contrary to the divine perfections, cannot be true; for God cannot deny himself, nor say, nor do anything contrary to his nature and attributes.

7a1a. The universal scheme greatly reflects on the love of God to men: it may, at first sight, seem to magnify it, since it extends it to all; but it will not appear so; it lessens it, and reduces it to nothing. The scriptures highly commend the love of God, as displayed in the death of his Son, and in redemption by him; but what kind of love must that be, which does not secure the salvation of any by it? it is not that love which God bears to his own people, which is special and distinguishing; when, according to the universal scheme, God loved Peter no more than he did Judas; nor the saints now in heaven, any more than those that are damned in hell; since they were both loved alike, and equally redeemed by Christ; nor is it that love of God, which is immutable, invariable, and unalterable; since, according to this scheme, God loves men with so intense a love, at one time, as to give his Son to die for them, and wills that they all should be saved; and afterwards this love is turned into wrath and fury; and he is determined to punish them with everlasting destruction. What sort of hove must this be in God, not to spare his Son, but deliver him up to death for all the individuals of mankind, for their redemption; and yet, to multitudes of them, does not send them so much as the gospel, to acquaint them with the blessing of redemption by Christ; and much less his Spirit, to apply the benefit of redemption to them; nor give them faith to lay hold upon it for themselves? Such love as this is unworthy of God, and of no service to the creature.

7a1b. The universal scheme, highly reflects on the wisdom of God: it is certain, God is "wonderful in counsel", in contriving the scheme of redemption; and is "excellent in working", in the execution of it: he is the wise God, and our Saviour; and is wise as such. But where is his wisdom in forming a scheme, in which he fails of his end? there must be some deficiency in it; a want of wisdom, to concert a scheme, which is not, or cannot be carried into execution, at least as to some considerable part of it. Should it be said, that the failure is owing to some men not performing the conditions of their redemption required of them; it may be observed, either God did know, or did not know, that these men would not perform the conditions required: if he did not know, this ascribes want of knowledge to him; which surely ought not to be ascribed to him that knows all things: if he did know they would not perform them, where is his wisdom, to provide the blessing of redemption, which he knew beforehand, would be of no service to them? Let not such a charge of folly, be brought against infinite Wisdom.

7a1c. The universal scheme, highly reflects on the justice of God: God is righteous in all his ways and works; and so in this of redemption by Christ; and, indeed, one principal end of it is, "To

declare the righteousness of God, that he might be just", or appear to be just, "and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus". But if Christ died for the sins of all men, and the punishment of their sins is inflicted on him, and bore by him, and yet multitudes of them are everlastingly punished for them, where is the justice of God? It is reckoned unjust with men, to punish twice for the same act of offence: if one man pays another man’s debts, would it be just with the creditor to exact, require, and receive payment again at the hands of the debtor? If Christ has paid the debts of all men, can it be just with God to arrest such persons, and cast them into the prison of hell, till they have paid the uttermost farthing? Far be it from the Judge of all the earth to do so, who will do right.

7a1d. The universal scheme, reflects on the power of God; as if he was not able to carry his designs into execution; whereas, "The Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save"; but, according to this scheme, it seems as if it was; for if Christ has redeemed all men, and all men are not saved, it must be either from want of will in God to save them, or from want of power: not from want of will; for, according to this scheme, it is the will of God that every individual man should be saved: it must be therefore for want of power; and so he is not omnipotent. Should it be said, that some men not being saved, is owing to evil dispositions in them, obstructing the kind influences and intentions of God towards them; to the perverseness of their wills, and the strength of their unbelief. But, what is man mightier than his Maker? Are the kind influences of God, and his gracious intentions, to be obstructed by the corrupt dispositions of men? Is not be able to work in them, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure? Cannot he remove the perverseness of their wills, and the hardness of their hearts? Cannot he, by his power, take away their unbelief, and work faith in them, to believe in a living Redeemer? Far be it to think otherwise of him, with whom nothing is too hard, nor anything impossible.

7a1e. The universal scheme reflects on the immutability of God, of his love, and of his counsel: God, in the scripture, says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6). But, according to this scheme, it should be, rather, I am the Lord, I change; and therefore the sons of men, or at least some of them, are consumed, are lost and perish, though redeemed by Christ; for the love of God, as has been observed, is changeable with respect unto them: one while he loves them, so that he wills their salvation; at another time his love is changed into hatred, and he is resolved to stir up his wrath to the uttermost against them. He is said to be "in one mind, and who can turn him?" and yet, according to this scheme, he is sometimes in one mind, and sometimes in another; sometimes his mind is to save them; and at another time his mind is to damn them. But let not this be said of him, "with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning".

7a1f. The universal scheme disappoints God of his chief end, and robs him of his glory. The ultimate end of God, in the redemption of men; as has been observed; is his own glory, the glory of his rich grace and mercy; and of his righteousness, truth, and faithfulness: but if men, any of them who are redeemed, are not saved, so far God loses his end, and is deprived of his glory; for should this be the case, where would be the glory of God the Father, in forming a scheme which does not succeed, at least with respect to multitudes? and where would be the glory of the Son of God, the Redeemer, in working out the redemption of men, and yet they not saved by him? And where would be the glory of the Spirit of God, if the redemption wrought out, is not effectually applied by him? But, on the contrary, the "glory of God", Father, Son, and Spirit, "is great in the salvation" of all the redeemed ones (Psalms 21:5).

7a2. Secondly, Another set of arguments against universal redemption, might be taken from its reflecting on the grace and work of Christ: whatever obscures, or lessens, the grace of Christ in redemption, or depreciates his work as a Redeemer, can never be true. Whereas,

7a2a. The universal scheme reflects on the love and grace of Christ. The scripture speaks highly of the love of Christ, as displayed in redemption; and Christ himself intimates, that he was about to give the greatest instance of his love to his people, by dying for them, that could be given; even though and while they were enemies to him, (John 15:13). But what sort of love is that, to love men to such a degree as to die for them, and yet withhold the means of grace from multitudes of them, bestow no grace upon them, and at last say to them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!"

7a2b. The universal scheme reflects upon the work of Christ; particularly his work of satisfaction, which was to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, by satisfying divine justice for it; by putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Now, either he has made satisfaction for every man, or he has not: if he has, then they ought to be set free, and fully discharged, and not punishment inflicted on them, or their debts exacted of them: if he has not made satisfaction by redeeming them, this lessens the value of Christ's work, and makes it of no use, and ineffectual; and indeed, generally, if not always, the advocates for general redemption deny the proper satisfaction, and real atonement by Christ; plainly discerning, that if he has made full satisfaction for the sins of all men, they must all be saved; and so the work of reconciliation, which is closely connected with, and involved in satisfaction, is not perfect according to the scriptures: Christ, by redeeming then with the price of his blood, has made satisfaction to justice for them, and thereby has procured their reconciliation; for they are said to be reconciled unto God by the death of his Son; and peace is said to be made by the blood of his cross, which is the redemption price for them; and he is pacified towards them for all that they have done; which is meant by Christ being a propitiation for sin, whereby justice is appeased. But, according to the universal scheme, God is only made reconcilable, not reconciled, nor men reconciled to him: notwithstanding what Christ has done, there may be no peace to them, not any being actually made for them; and, indeed, the work of redemption must be very incomplete; though Christ is a "Rock", as a Saviour and Redeemer, and his work is "perfect", his world of redemption; and hence called a "plenteous" one; and Christ is said to have obtained "eternal redemption" for us; and yet if all are not saved through it, it must be imperfect; it cannot be a full redemption, nor of eternal efficacy; the benefit of it, can at most, be only for a time to some, if any at all, and not be for ever; which is greatly to depreciate the efficacy of this work of Christ.

7a2c. According to the universal scheme, the death of Christ, with respect to multitudes, for whom he is said to die, must be in vain; for if Christ died to redeem all men, and all men are not saved by his death, so far his death must be in vain: if he paid a ransom for all, and all are not ransomed; or if he has paid the debts of all, and they are not discharged, the price is given, and the payment made, in vain. According to this scheme, the death of Christ is no security against condemnation; though the apostle says, "Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died!" so that there is no condemnation to them whose sins are condemned in Christ; and he has condemned them in the flesh (Romans 8:1; Romans 8:33), and yet there is a world of men that will be condemned (1 Corinthians 11:32), and therefore it may be concluded, that Christ did not die for them, or otherwise they would not come into condemnation; or else Christ's death has no efficacy against

condemnation.

7a2d. The universal scheme separates the works of Christ, the work of redemption, and the work of intercession; and makes them to belong to different persons; whereas they are of equal extent, and belong to the same; for whom Christ died, for them he rose again from the dead; and that was for their justification; which is not true of all men: for those he ascended to heaven, to God, as their God and Father, for the same he entered into heaven, as their forerunner, and appears in the presence of God for them and ever lives to make intercession for them; and for the same for whom he is an advocate, he is the propitiation; for his advocacy is founded upon his propitiatory sacrifice: now those for whom he prays and intercedes, are not all men, himself being witness; "I pray for them; I pray not for the world" (John 17:9). Yet, according to the universal scheme, he died for them for whom he would not pray; which is absurd and incredible.

7a2e. If Christ died for all men, and all men are not saved, Christ will not see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; as was promised him (Isaiah 53:11), for what satisfaction can he have to see his labour, with respect to multitudes, all lost labour, or labour in vain? it was the joy that was set before him, of having those for whom he suffered and died, with him in heaven: but what joy can he have, and what a disappointment must it be to him, to see thousands and millions whom he so loved as to give himself for, howling in hell, under the everlasting displeasure and wrath of God?

7a3. Thirdly, Other arguments against universal redemption, may be taken from the uselessness of it to great numbers of men. As,

7a3a. To those whose sins are irremissible; whose sins will never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come: that there are such sinners, and such sins committed by them, is certain, from what Christ himself says (Matthew 12:31-32), and the apostle speaks of a sin which is "unto death", unto eternal death; which he does not advise to pray for (1 John 5:16), and surely Christ cannot be thought to die for such sins, for which there is no forgiveness with God, and no prayer to be made by men for the remission of them; to say that Christ died for those, is to say that he died in vain: besides, there were multitudes in hell at the time when Christ died; and it cannot be thought that he died for those, as he must, if he died for all the individuals of mankind; as the men of Sodom, who were then, as Jude says, "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire"; and the inhabitants of the whole world, the world of the ungodly, destroyed by the flood; those that were disobedient in the times of Noah; whose spirits, as the apostle Peter says, were, in his time, in the prison of hell (Jude 1:5-7; 1 Peter 3:20), if he died for these, his death must be fruitless and useless; unless it can be thought, that a jail delivery was made at his death, and the dominions and regions of hell were cleared of their subjects.

7a3b. Redemption, if for all, must be useless to those who never were favored with the means of grace; as all the nations of the world, excepting Israel, for many hundred of years were; whose times of ignorance God winked at and overlooked, and sent no messengers, nor messages of grace unto them; (see Psalms 147:19-20; Acts 17:30), and since the coming of Christ, though the gospel has, in some ages, had a greater spread, yet not preached to all; nor is it now, to many nations, who have never heard of Christ, and of redemption by him (Romans 10:14).

7a3c. The universal scheme affords no encouragement to faith and hope in Christ: redemption, as it ascertains salvation to some, it encourages sensible sinners to hope in Christ for it; "Let Israel

hope in the Lord, for with him is plenteous redemption" (Psalms 130:7), a redemption full of salvation; and which secures that blessing to all that believe. But, according to the universal scheme, men may be redeemed by Christ, and yet not saved, but eternally perish: what hope of salvation can a man have upon such a scheme? it requires no great discernment, nor judgment of things, to determine, which is most eligible of the two schemes, that which makes the salvation of some certain; or that which leaves the salvation of all precarious and uncertain; which, though it asserts a redemption of all; yet it is possible none may be saved.

7a3d. Hence, even to those who are redeemed and saved, it lays no foundation for, nor does it furnish with any argument to engage to love Christ, to be thankful to him, and to praise him for the redemption of them; since the difference between them and others, is not owing to the efficacy of Christ's death, but to their own wills and works; they are not beholden to Christ, who has done no more for them than for those that perish; they are not, from any such consideration, obliged to walk in love, as Christ has loved them, and given himself for them; since he has loved them no more, and given himself for them no otherwise, than for them that are lost; nor are they under obligation to be thankful to him, and bless his name, that he has redeemed their lives from destruction; since, notwithstanding his redemption of them, they might have been destroyed with an everlasting destruction; it is not owing to what Christ has done, but to what they have done themselves, performing the conditions of salvation required, that they are saved from destruction, if ever they are, according to this scheme: nor can they indeed sing the song of praise to the Lamb, for their redemption; saying, "Thou art worthy--for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by that blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation!" since, according to this scheme, Christ has redeemed every kindred, every tongue, every people, and every nation.

02. Of the Omnipotence of God

Of The Omnipotence Of God.

Some of the names of God, in the Hebrew language, are thought to be derived from words which signify firmness and stability, strength and power; as Adonai, El, El-Shaddai, which latter is always rendered almighty, (Genesis 17:1; Exodus 6:3) and very frequently in the book of Job; and the Greek word pantokratwr is used of God in the New Testament, and is translated almighty and omnipotent, (Revelation 1:8; Revelation 4:8; Revelation 19:6) and power is one of the names of God, (Matthew 26:64 compared with Hebrews 1:3) the angel said to the Virgin Mary, "with God nothing shall be impossible", (Luke 1:37) and Epicharmus, the heathen, has the same expression[1]; and so Linus[2]: Omnipotence is essential to God, it is his nature; a weak Deity is an absurdity to the human mind: the very heathens suppose their gods to be omnipotent, though without reason; but we have reason sufficient to believe that the Lord our God, who is the true God, is Almighty; his operations abundantly prove it; though if he had never exerted his almighty power, nor declared it by any external visible works, it would have been the same in himself; for it being his nature and essence, was from eternity, before any such works were wrought, and will be when they shall be no more; and hence it is called, his "eternal power", (Romans 1:20) and may be concluded from his being an uncreated eternal "Spirit". All spirits are powerful, as their operations show; we learn somewhat of their power from our own spirits or souls, which are endowed with the power and faculties of understanding, willing, reasoning, choosing and refusing, loving and hating, &c. and not only so, but are able to operate upon the body; and to quicken, move, direct and guide it to do whatever they please, and that that is capable of; and angelic spirits are more powerful still, they excel in strength, and are called mighty angels, (Psalms 103:20; 2 Thessalonians 1:7) and have done very strange and surprising things; one of them slew in one night one hundred and eighty five thousand men, in the Assyrian camp, (2 Kings 19:35) and what then cannot God, the uncreated and infinite Spirit, do; who has endowed these with all their power, might, and strength? can less than omnipotence be ascribed to him? This may be inferred from his "infinity". God is an infinite Being, and so is every perfection of his; his understanding is infinite, and such is his power; for, as a Jewish writer[3] argues, since power is attributed to God, it must be understood that it is infinite; for if it was finite, it might be conceived that there was a greater power than his; and so privation would fall on God; as if there was not in him the greater power that is to be conceived of. He is unlimited and unbounded, as to space, and so is omnipresent; and he is unlimited and unbounded as to time, and so is eternal; and he is unlimited and unbounded as to power, and so is omnipotent: to deny, or to call in question, his omnipotence, is to limit the Holy One of Israel, which ought not to be done; this the Israelites are charged with, for distrusting his power to provide for them in the wilderness (Psalms 78:19-20; Psalms 78:41). The omnipotence of God may be argued from his "independency"; all creatures depend on him, but he depends on none; there is no cause prior to him, nor any superior to him, or above him, that can control him; none, who, if his hand is stretched out, can turn it back, or stop it from proceeding to do what he will; none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou? "he does what he pleases in heaven and in earth" (Daniel

4:35). Moreover, this attribute of God may be confirmed by his "perfection"; God is a most perfect being; but that he would not be if anything was wanting in him: want of power in a creature is an imperfection, and would be so in God, was that his case; but as he is great, his power is great; there is an exuberance, an exceeding greatness of power in him, beyond all conception and expression; he is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think" (Ephesians 1:19; Ephesians 3:20). And this may be strengthened yet more by observing the "uselessness" of many other "perfections" without it; for what though he knows all things fit and proper to be done, for his own glory, and the good of his creatures, what does it signify, if he cannot do them? and though he may, in the most sovereign manner, will, determine, and decree, such and such things to be done; of what avail is it if he cannot carry his will, determinations, and decrees into execution? what dependence can there be upon his faithfulness in his promises, if he is not able also to perform? and of what use is his goodness, or an inclination and disposition in him to do good, if he cannot do it? or where is his justice in rendering to every man according to his works, if he cannot execute it? So that, upon the whole, it is a most certain truth, that "power belongs to God", as the Psalmist says, (Psalms 62:11) and to whom he ascribes it, even "power" and "might", by which two words he expresses the greatness of power, superlative power, power in the highest degree, even omnipotence, (1 Chronicles 29:12) and it may be observed, that in all the doxologies or ascriptions of glory to God, by angels and men, power or might is put into them (Revelation 4:10-11; Revelation 5:13; Revelation 7:11-12). And indeed it belongs to no other; it is peculiar to God: nor is it communicable to a creature; since that creature would then be God; for omnipotence is his nature; nor is it even communicable to the human nature of Christ, for the same reason; for though the human nature is united to a divine person, who is omnipotent, it does not become omnipotent thereby; though the two natures, divine and human, are closely united in Christ; yet the properties of each are distinct and peculiar; and it is easy to observe, that the human nature of Christ was subject to various infirmities, though sinless ones, and stood in need of help, strength, and deliverance; for which, as man, he prayed; and at last, he was crucified, through weakness (Hebrews 4:15; Psalms 22:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:4). And as for Matthew 28:18 that is said not of the attribute of divine power, which is not "given" him, but is natural to him, as a divine person, but of his authority over all, and their subjection to him as Mediator. The power of God reaches to all things, and therefore is, with propriety, called Omnipotence; all things are possible with God, and nothing impossible; this is said by an angel, and confirmed by Christ, (Luke 1:37; Mark 14:36) what is impossible with men is possible with God; what cannot be done according to the nature of things, the laws, rules, and course of nature, may be done by the God of nature, who is above these, and not bound by them, and sometimes acts contrary to them; as when he stopped the sun in its course, in the times of Joshua; made iron to swim by the hands of the prophet Elisha; and suffered not fire to burn in the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, so that the three persons cast into it were not hurt by it, nor their clothes so much as singed, nor the smell of fire upon them: whereas, it is the nature of the sun to go on in its course, without stopping, nor can any creature stop it; and for ponderous bodies, as iron, to sink in water; and for fire to burn. There are some things, indeed, which God cannot do, and which the Scriptures express as, that "he cannot deny himself", (2 Timothy 2:13) nor do anything that is contrary to his being, his honour and glory, or subversive of it; thus, for instance, he cannot make another God, that would be contrary to himself, to the unity of his Being, and the declaration of his Word; "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord", (Deuteronomy 6:4) he cannot make a finite creature infinite; that would be to do the same, and

there would be more infinites than one, which is a contradiction; he cannot raise a creature to such dignity as to have divine perfections ascribed to it, it has not, which would be a falsehood; or to have religious worship and adoration given it, which would be denying himself, detracting from his own glory, and giving it to another, when he only is to be served and worshipped: in such manner it is also said of him, that he "cannot lie", (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18) for this would be contrary to his truth and faithfulness; he can do nothing that is contrary to his attributes; he cannot commit iniquity, he neither will nor can do it; for that would be contrary to his holiness and righteousness; (see Job 34:10; Job 34:12; Job 36:23) he cannot do anything that implies a contradiction; he cannot make contradictions true; a thing to be, and not to be at the same time; or make a thing not to have been that has been[4]; he can make a thing not to be, which is, or has been; he can destroy his own works; but not make that not to have existed, which has existed; nor make an human body to be everywhere; nor accidents to subsist without subjects; with many other things which imply a manifest contradiction and falsehood: but then these are no prejudices to his omnipotence, nor proofs of weakness; they arise only out of the abundance and fulness of his power; who can neither do a weak thing nor a wicked thing, nor commit any falsehood; to do, or attempt to do, any such things, would be proofs of impotence, and not of omnipotence. The power of God may be considered as absolute, and as actual or ordinate. According to his absolute power, he can do all things which are not contrary to his nature and perfections, and which does not imply a contradiction; even though he has not done them nor never will: thus he could have raised up children to Abraham out of stones, though he would not; and have sent twelve legions of angels to deliver Christ out of the hands of his enemies; but did not (Matthew 3:9; Matthew 26:53). He that has made one world, and how many more we know not for certainty, (Hebrews 11:3) could have made ten thousand; he that has made the stars in the heaven innumerable, could have vastly increased their number; and he that has made an innumerable company of angels, and men on earth, as the sand of the sea, could have added to them infinitely more. The power of God has never been exerted to its uttermost; it is sufficient to entitle him to omnipotence, that he has done, and does, whatsoever he pleases, and that whatsoever is made, is made by him, and nothing without him; which is what may be called, his ordinate and actual power; or what he has willed and determined, is actually done; and of this there is abundant proof, as will appear by the following instances.

1. In creation; the heaven, earth, and sea, and all that in them are, were created by God, is certain; and these visible works of creation are proofs of the invisible attributes of God, and particularly, of his "eternal power" (Acts 4:24; Romans 1:20). Creation is making something out of nothing; which none but omnipotence can effect; (see Hebrews 11:3) no artificer, though ever so expert, can work without materials, whether he works in gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, stone, or in anything else: the potter can cast his clay into what form and figure he pleases, according to his art, and make one vessel for one use, and another for another; but he cannot make the least portion of clay: but God created the first matter out of which all things are made; and which were made out of things not before existing by the omnipotent Being; whom the good woman animating her son to martyrdom, exhorted to acknowledge, in the Apocrypha:

``I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God made them of things that were not; and so was mankind made likewise.'' (2Ma 7:28) Nor can any artificer work without tools; and the more curious his work, the more curious must his tools

be: but God can work without instruments, as he did in creation; it was only by his all commanding word that everything sprung into being, (Genesis 1:3; Psalms 36:9) and everything created was done at once; creation is an instantaneous act, is without succession, and requires no length of time to do it in; everything on the several days of creation were done immediately: on the first day God said, "Let there be light"; and it immediately sprung out of darkness: on the second day he said, "Let there be a firmament", an expanse; and at once the airy heaven was stretched out like a curtain around our earth: on the third day he said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs, and fruit trees"; and they arose directly out of it, in all their greenness and fruitfulness: on the fourth day he said, "Let there be lights in the heavens"; and no sooner was it said, but the sun, moon, and stars, blazed forth in all their lustre and splendour: on the fifth and sixth days orders were given for the waters to bring forth fish, and fowl, and beasts, and cattle of every kind; and they accordingly brought them forth in full perfection immediately; and last of all, man was at once made, complete and perfect, out of the dust of the earth, and the breath of life was breathed into him: and though there were six days appointed, one for each of these works, yet they were instantaneously performed on those days; and this time was allotted not on account of God, who could have done them all in a moment; but for the sake of men, who, when they read the history of the creation, there is a stop and pause at each work, that they may stand still and meditate upon it, and wonder at it. Whereas the works of men require time; and those that are most curious, longer still. Add to all this, that the works of creation were done without weariness; no labour of men is free from it: if it be the work of the brain, the fruit of close reasoning, reading, meditation, and study; "much study", the wise man says, "is a weariness of the flesh", (Ecclesiastes 12:12) or if it be manual operation, it is labour and fatigue; but the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, though he has wrought such stupendous works, "fainteth not, neither is weary", (Isaiah 40:28) and though he is said to rest on the seventh day, yet not on account of fatigue; but to denote he had finished his work, brought it to perfection, and ceased from it. And now, to what can all this be ascribed but to omnipotence? Which,

2. Appears in the sustaining and support of all creatures, in the provision made for them, with other wonderful works done in providence: all creatures live, move, and have their being in God; as they are made by him, they consist by him; "he upholds all things by the word of his power"; the heavens, the earth, and the pillars thereof, (Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:3; Psalms 75:3) which none but an almighty arm can do: and the manner in which the world, and all things in it, are preserved, and continue, is amazing and surprising, and cannot be accounted for, no other way than by the attribute of omnipotence; for "he stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing; he bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under him"; though these are no other than condensed air, which carry such burdens in them, and yet are not burst by them--he has "shut up the sea with doors"; with clifts and rocks, and even with so weak a thing as sand; "and said, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed--and has caused the dayspring to know its place--divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, and a way for the lightning of thunder, to cause it to rain on the earth"; which none of the vanities of the Gentiles can do; he gives that "and fruitful seasons, filling mens' hearts with food and gladness", and provides for all the fowls of the air, and "the cattle on a thousand hills"; (see Job 26:7-8; Job 38:10-12; Job 38:25-26; Acts 14:17). But what hand can do all these but an almighty one? To which may be added, those wonderful events in providence, which can only be accounted for by recurring to omnipotence, and to supernatural power and aid;

as the drowning of the whole world; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain; the strange exploits of some particular persons, as Jonathan and David; the amazing victories obtained by a few over a multitude, sometimes by unarmed men, sometimes without fighting, and always by him that helps, whether with many, or with them that have no power, as the cases of Gideon, Jehoshaphat, and Asa show; with various other things too numerous to mention, as the removing of mountains, shaking the earth, and the pillars of it, commanding the sun not to rise, and sealing up the stars, (Job 9:5-7) etc.

3. The omnipotence of God may be seen in the redemption of men by Christ, in things leading to it, and in the completion of it: in the incarnation of Christ, and his birth of a virgin, which the angel ascribes to "the power of the Highest", the most high God, with whom "nothing is impossible", (Luke 1:35; Luke 1:37) and which was an expedient found out by infinite wisdom, to remove a difficulty which none but omnipotence could surmount, namely, to bring "a clean thing out of an unclean"; for it was necessary that the Saviour of men should be man, that the salvation should be wrought out in human nature, that so men might have the benefit of it; and it was necessary that he should be free from sin, who became a sacrifice for it; yet how it could be, since all human nature was defiled with sin, was the difficulty; which was got over, through omnipotence forming the human nature of Christ in the above manner: and which was also evident in the protection of him from the womb; in his infancy, from the malice of Herod; after his baptism, from the violence of Satan’s temptations, who put him upon destroying himself; and from the wild beasts of the wilderness; and from all the snares and attempts of the Scribes and Pharisees, to take away his life before his time: and in the miraculous works wrought by him, which were proofs of his Messiahship; such as causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and cleansing lepers, and even raising the dead to life; and which were such instances of omnipotence, as caused in those that saw them amazement at the mighty power of God, (Matthew 11:5; Luke 9:43) and more especially this might be seen in making Christ, the man of God’s right hand, strong for himself; in strengthening him in his human nature to work out salvation, which neither men nor angels could have done, by fulfilling the law, and satisfying justice; in upholding him under the weight of sins and sufferings; in enabling him to bear the wrath of God, and the curses of a righteous law, and to grapple with all the powers of darkness, and to spoil them, and make a triumph over them; and in raising him from the dead for justification; without which salvation would not have been complete; and in which "the exceeding greatness of" the divine "power" was exerted; and whereby Christ was declared to be the Son of God "with power" (Ephesians 1:19; Romans 1:4).

4. Almighty power may be discerned in the conversion of sinners; that is a creation, which is an act of omnipotence, as has been proved. Men, in conversion, are made new creatures; "created in Christ, and after the image of God"; have new hearts and spirits, clean and upright ones, created in them; new principles of grace and holiness formed in them; "are turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God; and are made willing in the day of God’s power" upon them, to be saved by Christ, and serve him; to submit to his righteousness, and to part with their sins and sinful companions: all which are effects of the exceeding greatness of the power of God towards them and upon them: they are quickened when dead in sins, and raised by Christ the resurrection and the life, from a death of sin to a life of grace; the Spirit of life enters into them, and these dry bones live; conversion is a resurrection, and that requires almighty power. And if we consider the

means of it, generally speaking, "the foolishness of preaching", the gospel put into earthen vessels, for this end, "that the excellency of the power of God may appear to be of God", and not of men; and when these means are effectual, they are "the power of God unto salvation" (2 Corinthians 4:7; Romans 1:16). And also the great opposition made to this work, through the enmity and lusts of mens' hearts, the malice of Satan, willing to keep possession; the snares of the world, and the influence of wicked companions; it cannot be thought to be any thing short of the omnipotent hand of God, that snatches men, as brands, out of the burning: and the same power that is put forth in the beginning of the work of grace, is requisite to the carrying of it on; the rise, progress, and finishing of it, are not by might and power of men, but by the mighty, efficacious, and all-powerful grace of God (2 Thessalonians 1:11; Zechariah 4:6).

5. That the Lord God is omnipotent, may be evinced from the rise and progress of Christianity, the success of the gospel, in the first times of it, and the continuance of it, notwithstanding the opposition of men and devils. The interest of Christ in the world rose from small beginnings; it was like the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth; and this by means of the preaching of the gospel; and that by such, who, for the most part, were men illiterate, mean, and contemptible, the foolish things of this world; and who were opposed by Jewish "rabbins", and heathen philosophers, by monarchs, kings, and emperors, and by the whole world; yet these went forth, and Christ with them, conquering and to conquer, and were made to triumph in him over all their enemies everywhere; so that in a short time the universal monarchy of the earth, the whole Roman empire, became nominally Christian; and the Gospel has lived through all the persecutions of Rome pagan and papal, and still continues, notwithstanding the craft of false teachers, and the force of furious persecutors; and will remain and be the everlasting Gospel; all which is owing to the mighty power of God.

6. The final perseverance of every particular believer in grace and holiness, is a proof of the divine omnipotence; it is because he is great in power that not one of them fails; otherwise their indwelling sins and corruptions would prevail over them; Satan's temptations be too powerful for them; and the snares of the world, the flatteries of it, would draw them aside; but they are "kept by the power of God", the mighty power of God, as in a garrison, "through faith unto salvation" (1 Peter 1:5).

7. The almighty power of God will be displayed in the resurrection of the dead; which considered, it need not be thought incredible; though otherwise it might; for what but the all-commanding voice of the almighty God can rouse the dead, and raise them to life, and bring them out of their graves; "some to the resurrection of life, and some to the resurrection of damnation?" What else but his almighty power can gather all nations before him, and oblige them to stand at the judgment seat of Christ, to receive each of their sentences? And what but his vengeful arm of omnipotence can execute the sentence on millions and millions of devils and wicked men, in all the height of wrath, rage, fury, and rebellion? (see Php 3:21; John 5:28-29; Matthew 25:32-46; Revelation 20:8-10).

ENDNOTES:

[1] Apud Clement, Stromat. l. 5. p. 597.

[2] radia panta yew telesai, kai adunaton ouden, Linus.

[3] Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, fol. 68. 2.

[4] So Agathon apud Aristot. Ethic. l. 6. c. 2.

02. Of the Omniscience of God

Of The Omniscience Of God

Having considered such attributes of God, which belong to him as an active and operative Spirit; as the Life of God, and his Power, or Omnipotence; I proceed to consider such perfections, which may be ascribed to him as an intelligent Spirit; to which, rational spirits, endowed with understanding, will, and affections, bear some similarity. God is said to have a "mind" and "understanding", (Romans 11:34; Isaiah 40:28) to which may be referred, the attributes of "knowledge" and "wisdom", which go together, (Romans 11:33. I shall begin with the first of these. And,

1. Prove that knowledge belongs to God, which is objected to, and called in question, by impious and atheistical persons, (Psalms 73:11) particularly with respect to human affairs; the grounds of which doubts about it, and objections to it, seem to arise, partly from the supposed distance of God in heaven, from men on earth, and partly from the thick and dark clouds which intervene between them, (Job 22:12-14) and which are easily answered by observing the omnipresence of God, or his presence in all places; and that the darkness hides not anything from his all-piercing, all-penetrating eye, the darkness and the light being alike to him (Psalms 139:7-12; Jeremiah 23:23-24). Let it be further observed, that in all rational creatures there is knowledge; there is much in angels, and so there was in man, before the fall, both of natural, divine, and civil things; and since the fall there is a remainder of it, notwithstanding the loss sustained by it; and there is more, especially divine and spiritual knowledge, in regenerate men, who are renewed in knowledge. Now if there is knowledge in any of the creatures of God, then much more in God himself. Besides, all that knowledge that is in angels or men, comes from God; he is a "God of knowledge", or "knowledges", of all knowledge, (1 Samuel 2:3) the source and fountain of it, and therefore it must be in him in its perfection: knowledge of all things, natural, civil, and spiritual, is from him, is taught and given by him; wherefore strong is the reasoning of the Psalmist, "He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?" (Psalms 94:10). His knowledge may be inferred from his will, and the actings of it; that he has a will is most certain, and works all things after the counsel of his will, which cannot be resisted, (Ephesians 1:11; Romans 9:19) and this can never be supposed to be without knowledge; it is generally said and believed of the will of man, that it is determined by the last act of the understanding; and it cannot be imagined that God wills anything ignorantly and rashly; he must know what he wills and nills, and to whom he wills anything, or refuses, (Romans 9:15; Romans 9:18) and it appears from all his works, from the works of creation, the heavens, earth, and sea, and all in them; which are ascribed to his wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, and could never be made without them, (Proverbs 3:19-20) the government of the world, and the judgment of the last day, suppose and require the same (Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 4:5). Without knowedge God would not be perfectly happy; the blessed one, and blessed for ever, as he is. It is knowledge that gives men the preference to the brute creation, and makes them happier than they, (Job 35:11) and the spiritual knowledge which good men have, gives them a superior excellency and felicity to bad men; and their happiness in a

future state will lie, as in perfect holiness, so in perfect knowledge, or "to know", as they "are known", (1 Corinthians 13:12). In short, without knowledge, God would be no other than the idols of the Gentiles, who have eyes, but see not; are the work of errors, and are falsehood and vanity; but the portion of Jacob is not like them (Jeremiah 10:14-16). I go on,

2. To show the extent of the knowledge of God; it reaches to all things, (John 21:17; 1 John 3:20) and is therefore with great propriety called "omniscience", and which the very heathens[1] ascribe to God; and extend it to thoughts. Thales[2] being asked, Whether a man doing ill, could lie hid to, or be concealed from God? answered, No, nor thinking neither. And Pindar[3] says, If a man hopes that anything will be concealed from God, he is deceived.

2a. God knows himself, his nature and perfections: somewhat of this is known by creatures themselves, even by the very heathens, through the light of nature, and in the glass of the creatures, wherein God has showed it to them; even his invisible things, his eternal power and Godhead, (Romans 1:19-20) and which are more clearly displayed in Christ, and redemption by him; and more evidently seen by those who are favoured with a divine revelation: and if creatures know something of God, though imperfectly, then he must know himself in the most perfect manner: and rational creatures are endowed with knowledge of themselves, of their nature, and what belongs to them, as angels may reasonably be supposed to be; since even men, in their fallen and imperfect state, know something of themselves, of the constitution, temperament, and texture of their bodies, and of the powers and faculties of their souls; what is in them, in the inmost recesses of their minds, their thoughts, purposes, and intentions (1 Corinthians 2:11). "Nosce teipsum, Know thyself", has been reckoned a wise maxim with philosophers, and the first step to wisdom and knowledge; and good men, illuminated by the Spirit of God, attain to the highest degree of it; and if creatures know themselves in any degree, infinitely much more must the Creator of all know himself. God knows himself in all his persons, and each person fully knows one another; the Father knows the Son, begotten by him, and brought up with him; the Son knows the Father, in whose bosom he lay; and the Spirit knows the Father and Son, whose Spirit he is, and from whom he proceeds; and the Father and Son know the Spirit, who is sent by them as the Comforter (see Matthew 11:27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11). God knows the mode of each person’s subsistence in the Deity, the paternity of the Father, the generation of the Son, and the spiration of the Holy Ghost; that these three are one, and one in three; three persons, but one God; which is a mystery incomprehensible by us; but inasmuch as God, who knows his own nature best, has so declared it to be, it becomes us to yield the obedience of faith unto it: he knows his own thoughts, which are the deep things of God, and as much above us as the heavens are above the earth, and as much out of our reach; but he knows them, (Jeremiah 29:11) that is, his decrees, purposes, and designs, as he needs must, since they are purposed in himself; he knows the things he has purposed, and the exact time of the accomplishment of them, which he has reserved in his own power (Ephesians 1:11; Ecclesiastes 3:1; Acts 1:7).

2b. God knows all his creatures, there is not any creature, not one excepted, "that is not manifest in his sight" (Hebrews 4:13). Known unto him are all his works; all that his hand has wrought, (Acts 15:18) when he had finished his works of creation, "he saw everything that he had made", looked over it and considered it, and pronounced it good, (Genesis 1:31) and his eye sees all things in their present state and condition; he knows all things "inanimate", all that is upon the earth, herbs, grass, trees, &c. and all in the bowels of it, metals and minerals; all that are in the heavens, not

only the two great luminaries, the sun and moon, their nature, motion, rising, and setting, with everything belonging to them, but the stars innumerable; he "bringeth out their host by number", or them as a mighty army, and numerous; and yet, as numerous as they are, "he calleth them all by names"; such a distinct and particular knowledge has he of them, and that because he "hath created" them; and he upholds them in being, "by the greatness of his might", so that "not one faileth", (Isaiah 40:26) he knows all the "irrational" creatures, the beasts of the field, "the cattle on a thousand hills"; "I know", says he, "all the fowls of the mountains", (Psalms 50:10-11) as worthless a bird as the sparrow is, "not one of them falls" on the ground without the knowledge and will of God, (Matthew 10:29) he knows all the fishes of the sea, and provided one to swallow Jonah, when thrown into it; and which, at his order, cast him on dry land again (Jonah 1:17; Jonah 2:10). And if Adam had such knowledge of all creatures, as to give them proper and suitable names, (Genesis 2:19-20) and Solomon, a fallen son of his, could "speak of trees, from the cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop that springs out of the wall"; and "of beasts, fowl, creeping things, and fishes", (1 Kings 4:33) even of their nature, properties, use, and end; can it be thought incredible that God, the Creator of them, should have a distinct and perfect knowledge of all these? he knows all "rational" beings, as angels and men; the angels, though innumerable, being his creatures, standing before him, beholding his face, and sent forth by him as ministring spirits: the elect angels, whom he must know, since he has chosen them and put them under Christ, the head of all principality and power; and confirmed them, by his grace, in their happy state; and who stand on his righthand and left, hearkening to his voice, and ready to obey his will; and are employed by him in providential affairs, and in things respecting the heirs of salvation. Yea, the apostate angels, devils, are known by him, and are laid up in chains of darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day, and are under the continual eye of God, and the restraints of his providence: the questions put to these by God, (Job 1:7) and by Christ, (Mark 5:9) do not imply any kind of ignorance of them; the one is put to lead on to a discourse concerning Job, and the other to show the greatness of the miracle wrought in casting them out. God knows all men, good and bad, all the sons of men, the inhabitants of the earth, wherever they are, in all places and in all ages, (Psalms 33:14; Proverbs 15:3) he knows their hearts, for he has fashioned them alike, and is often said to be the searcher of them; he knows the thoughts of the heart; as his word, so is he a "discerner" of them, (Hebrews 4:12; Psalms 139:2) which is peculiar to God, and a strong proof of the Deity of Christ, the essential Word, (Matthew 9:4; John 2:24-25; Hebrews 4:12-13) the evil thoughts of men, which are many and vain, (Psalms 94:11) and the good thoughts of men, as he must, since they are of him, and not of themselves; and he takes such notice of them, as to write a book of remembrance of them, (2 Corinthians 3:5; Malachi 3:16) he knows the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart, the first motions to thought, whether good or bad, (Genesis 6:5; 1 Chronicles 28:9) he knows all the words of men, there is not one upon their tongues, or uttered by them, but he knows it altogether, (Psalms 139:4) the words of wicked men, even every idle word, which must be accounted for in the day of judgment; and much more their blasphemies, oaths, and curses; and all their hard speeches spoken against Christ and his people (Matthew 12:36; Jude 1:15). And the words of good men, expressed in prayer and thanksgiving, and in spiritual conversation with one another (Malachi 3:16). And all the works and ways of men, (Job 34:21) their civil ones, their downsitting and uprising, going forth and coming in, (Psalms 139:2-3; Psalms 121:3; Psalms 121:8) and all their sinful ways and works, which will all be brought into judgment, and for which an account must be given at the bar of God, (Ecclesiastes 12:14; 2 Corinthians 5:10) as well as all the

good works of God’s people, who knows from what principles they spring, in what manner they are done, and with what views, and for what ends (Revelation 2:2; Revelation 2:19).

2c. God knows all things whatever, as well as himself and the creatures: he knows all things possible to be done, though they are not, nor never will be done; such as have been observed under the preceding attribute; and this knowledge is what is called by the schoolmen, "Knowledge of simple intelligence" of things that are not actually done. He knows what "might" be, and in course, "would" be, should he not prevent them by the interposition of his power and providence, and which he determines to do: so he knew the wickedness and treachery of the men of Keilah to David, and that if he stayed there, they would deliver him up into the hands of Saul, and therefore gave him notice of it, that he might make his escape from them, and so prevent their giving him up, acccording to his determinate will (1 Samuel 23:11-12). God knows the wickedness of some mens’ hearts, that they would be guilty of the most shocking crimes, and that without number, if suffered to live, and therefore he takes them away by death; and that such is the temper of some, that if they had a large share of riches, they would be so haughty and overbearing, there would be no living by them; and that even some good men, if they had them, would be tempted to abuse them, to their own hurt, and therefore he gives them poverty. Moreover, God knows all things that have been, are, or shall be; and which the schools call, "knowledge of vision"; an intuitive view of all actual things; things past, present, and to come; so called, not with respect to God, with whom nothing is past nor future, but all present; but with respect to us, and our measures of time. He knows all former things, from the beginning of the world; and which is a proof of Deity, and such a proof that the idols of the Gentiles cannot give, nor any for them, (Isaiah 41:22; Isaiah 43:9) all past transactions at the creation, the fall of Adam, and what followed on that; the original of nations, and their settlement in the world; with various other occurrences to be met with only in the Bible, inspired by God; which, as it is the most ancient, so the truest and best history in the world: nothing that has been can escape the knowledge of God, nor slip out of his mind and memory; oblivion cannot be ascribed to him; could he forget past facts, or they be lost to him, how could everything, open or secret, be brought into account, at the day of judgment, as it will? (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Forgetting the sins of his people, and remembering them no more, are attributed to him after the manner of men; who, when they forgive one another, do, or should, forget offences. God sees and knows all things present; all are naked and open to him, he sees all in one view; all that is done everywhere; as he must, since he is present in all places; and all live, and move, and have their being in him. He knows all things future, all that will be, because he has determined they shall be; it is his will that gives futurition to them, and therefore he must certainly know what he wills shall be: and this is another proof of Deity wanting in heathen idols (Isaiah 41:22-23; Isaiah 44:7; Isaiah 46:10). And this is what is called:

"Prescience" or "Foreknowledge"; and of which Tertullian[4], many hundreds of years ago, observed, that there were as many witnesses of it as there are prophets; and I may add, as there are prophecies; for all prophecy is founded on God’s foreknowledge and predetermination of things; and of this there are numerous instances; as of the Israelites being in a strange land four hundred years, and then coming out with great substance, (Genesis 15:13-14) of their seventy years captivity in Babylon, and deliverance from thence at the end of that time, (Jeremiah 29:10) with many other things relating to that people, and other nations; the prophecies of Daniel, concerning the four monarchies; the predictions of the Old Testament, concerning the incarnation

of Christ, his sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and session at God’s right hand. And what is the book of the Revelation but a prophecy, and so a proof of God’s foreknowledge of future events, which should be in the church and world, from the times of Christ to the end of the world? and this prescience, or foreknowledge of God, is not only of the effects of necessary causes, which necessarily will be, unless prevented by something extraordinary; and of which men themselves may have knowledge; as that things ponderous will fall downwards, and light things move upwards; and that fire put to combustible matter will burn; but of things contingent, which, as to their nature, may or may not be, and which even depend upon the wills of men; and which, with respect to second causes, are hap and chance. Indeed, with respect to God, there is nothing casual or contingent[5]; nothing comes to pass but what is decreed by him, what he has determined either to do himself, or by others, or suffer to be done, (Lamentations 3:37-38) that which is chance to others is none to him; what more a chance matter than a lot? yet though that is cast into the lap, and it is casual to men, how it will turn up, "the whole disposing of it is of the Lord" (Proverbs 16:33). What more contingent than the imaginations, thoughts, and designs of men, what they will be? and yet these are foreknown before conceived in the mind, (Deuteronomy 31:21; Psalms 139:2) or than the voluntary actions of men, yet these are foreknown and foretold by the Lord, long before they are done; as the names of persons given them, and what should be done by them; as of Josiah, that he should offer the priests, and burn the bones of men on the altar at Bethel, (see 1 Kings 13:2; 2 Kings 23:15-16) and of Cyrus, that he should give orders for the building of the temple, and city of Jerusalem; and let the captive Jews go free without price, (Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:13; Ezra 1:1-3) all which were predicted of these persons by name, some hundreds of years before they were born: how all this is reconcileable with the liberty of man’s will, is a difficulty; and therefore objected to the certain foreknowledge and decree of God; but whether this difficulty can be removed, or no, the thing is not less certain: let it be observed, that God’s decrees do not at all infringe the liberty of the will, nor do they put anything in it, nor lay any force upon it; they only imply a necessity of the event, but not of coaction, or force on the will; nor do men feel any such force upon them; they act as freely, and with the full consent of their will, whether good men or bad men, in what they do, as if there were no foreknowledge and determination of them by God; good men willingly do what they do, under the influence of grace, though foreordained to it by the Lord, (Ephesians 2:10 Php 2:13 and so do wicked men; as Judas in betraying Christ, and the Jews in crucifying him; though both were "according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23).

There is another sort of "prescience", or "foreknowledge", the Scriptures speak of; on which the election of persons to eternal life is founded, and according to which it is, (Romans 8:30; 1 Peter 1:2) which is not a foreknowledge of faith, holiness, and good works, and perseverance therein, as causes of it; for these are effects and fruits of election, which flow from it; no bare foreknowledge of persons, but as joined with love and affection to the objects of it; and which is not general, but special; "The Lord knows them that are his", (2 Timothy 2:19) not in general, as he knows all men; but distinctly, and particularly, he loves them, approves of them, and delights in them, and takes a particular care of them; while of others he says, "I know you not", (Matthew 7:23) that is, as his beloved and chosen ones. But as this belongs to the doctrine of predestination, I shall defer it to its proper place.

3. Though enough has been said to prove the omniscience of God, by the enumeration of the above things; yet this may receive further proof from the several attributes of God: as from his "infinity"; God is infinite; he is unlimited and unbounded as to space, and so omnipresent; he is unbounded as to time, and so eternal; and he is unbounded as to power, and so omnipotent; and he is unbounded as to knowledge, and so omniscient; there is no searching, no coming to the end of his understanding. From his eternity; he is from everlasting to everlasting, and therefore must know everything that has been, is, or shall be. Men are but of yesterday, and therefore, comparatively, know nothing; "ars longa, vita brevis"; science is of a large extent, and man’s life but short, and he can gain but little of it. Likewise from the "omnipresence" of God; he is every where, in heaven, earth, and hell; and therefore must know every creature, and everything that is done there, (Psalms 139:7-12) and it may be observed, that what is said there of this attribute, follows upon an account of the onmiscience of God, and serves to confirm it: it may be argued from the "perfection" of God; if any thing was wanting in his knowledge, neither that, nor he himself, would be perfect. If the circuit of the sun is from one end of the heaven to the other, and nothing is hid on earth from its light and heat; and hence the heathens[6] represent it as seeing all things; then much more may be said of God, who is a sun, that "he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven" (see Psalms 19:6; Job 28:24). From each of the works of God his omniscience may be inferred; he has made all things, and therefore must perfectly know them; every artificer knows his own work, its nature, composition, parts, use, and end. God upholds all things, and is present with them, and therefore must have knowledge of them; he governs the world, orders, directs, and disposes of all things in it; provides for all his creatures; feeds them, and gives them their portion of meat in due season; and therefore must know them all: all the deeds of men, good and evil, public and private, will be all brought into judgment by him; which to do, requires onmiscience (see Ecclesiastes 12:14; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Revelation 2:23).

4. The manner in which God knows all things, is incomprehensible by us; we can say but little of it, "such knowledge is too wonderful for us", (Psalms 139:6) we can better say in what manner he does not know, than in what he does: he does not know things by revelation, by instruction, and comnmnication from another; or any way by which men come at the knowledge of things from others; for "shall any teach God knowledge?" or "who has taught him?" (Job 21:22; Isaiah 40:13-14) all things were known to God from eternity, when there were none in being to inform him of anything: besides, to suppose this, is not only contrary to his eternity but to his independency; for this would make him beholden to, and dependent on another, for his knowledge; whereas "all things are of him, for him, and through him". Nor is his knowledge attained by reasoning, discoursing, and inferring one thing from another, as man’s is; who not only apprehends simple ideas, but joins and compounds them, and infers other things from them; but then this implies some degree of prior ignorance; or at best, imperfect knowledge, till the premises are clear, and the conclusion formed; which is not to be said of God: and this method of knowledge would be contrary to the simplicity of his nature, which admits of no composition, as well as to his perfection: nor does he know things by succession, one after another; for then it could not be said, that "all things are naked and open to him"; only some at one time, and some at another; which would also argue ignorance of some things, in one instant and another; and imperfection of knowledge; and would be contrary to his immutability, since every accession of knowledge would make an alteration in him; whereas with him "there is no variableness"; he sees and knows all things at once and, together, in one eternal view. In a word, he knows all things in himself, in his own

essence and nature; he knows all things possible in his power, and all that he wills to do in his will, and all creatures in himself, as the first cause of them; in whose vast and eternal mind are all the original ideas of them; so that the knowledge of God is essential to him, it is his nature and essence, and therefore is incommunicable to a creature, and even to the human nature of Christ; which, though united to a divine person that is omniscient, yet does not thereby become omniscient; and though the human soul of Christ may know more than the soul of any man, yet not everything; (see Mark 13:32). The knowledge of God is also infinite, (Psalms 147:5) he knows himself, that is infinite; which he could not, unless his knowledge was infinite; for it is impossible, as a Jewish[7] writer observes, that he should know what is perfectly infinite, if his knowledge was not perfectly infinite; for what is finite, can never comprehend that which is infinite; and he knows all things "ad infinitum"; there is no searching of his knowledge; it is perfect, and nothing can be added to it, (Job 36:4 and it is not conjectural, but certain, depending on his will; he knew from all eternity, most certainly, that all things would be, that are, because he determined they should be; and his will cannot be frustrated, nor his power resisted (Job 42:2).

ENDNOTES:

[1] panta idwn diov ofyalmov kai panta nohsav, Hesiod. Opera et Dies, l. 1. v. 263.

[2] Apud Laert. Vita ejus, Val. Maxim. l. 7. c. 2. extern. 8.

[3] Olymp. Ode l. so Epicharmus apud Clement. Stromat. l. 5. p. 597.

[4] Adv. Marcion. l. 2. c. 5.

[5] "Mihi ne in Deum quidem cadere videatur, ut sciat quid casu et fortuito futurum sit; si enim scit certe, illud eveniet; sin certe eveniet, nulla fortuna est, Cicero de Divinatione, l. 2.

[6] heliou, os pant’ efora, Homer. Odyss. 11. v. 108. & 12. v. 323. Vid. Sophoclis Trachin. v. 102.

[7] Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, fol. 68. 2.

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